Participatory Development Communication among community development NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Case of Malilangwe Trust

By

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, Linia Ruzive, declare that the mini-dissertation hereby submitted for the Masters in Development Studies at the Centre for Development Support, University of the Free State, is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted this work for a qualification at/in another university/faculty.

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Abstract

Development practitioners around the world are now increasingly considering participatory communication a principal component of development projects.

For that reason, this research has been conducted in-order to give a detailed review and comparison with regards to how Participatory Development Communication principles were conceived and employed all through the process, in the different project cycle phases. Through this investigation, it is anticipated that an insight about the implementation of participatory communication among community development NGOs in the specific context of contemporary Zimbabwe would be gained. Thus the research identifies implementing challenges and prospects of this social development medium Participatory Development Communication (PDC) using Malilangwe Trust (a wildlife conservation non-governmental organisation in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe) as case study. The main intention is to ascertain ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives and to advice other Malilangwe Trust projects with the hope also that the results might have an impact on other NGOs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

Thus, this dissertation argues that due to the fact that Participatory Development Communication is horizontal and people-centred in nature, it is an approach that is capable of facilitating the involvement of people in the decision-making process. When prudently employed, it is likely that PDC can facilitate "a new development" that is well able to address people's particular priorities and needs that are pertinent while on the other hand helping in empowering them.

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List of Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDC	Participatory Development Communication
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Community development can be defined as the process of assisting a community to reinforce itself as well as progress towards its full potential and communication is a key component in this process (Sarvaes and Liu 2007). Communication leads to effective collaborative efforts in the issue of development when employed effectively. If adequately adopted and employed ,communication can foster participation among the marginalized and vulnerable population groups and as such will lead to the transformation of the community (Dutta 2011). For these reasons according to Sarvaes and Liu (2007), communication is a principal or the intermediary aspect that facilitates and contributes towards a communal transformation process. Communication plays an indispensible part in developmental missions and interventions and it has the capacity to advance their accomplishment (Rogers 2006).

A closer look into the field of communication for development reveals that focus in models has shifted to the participatory bottom-up approaches of the later periods from the top-down or mechanistic approaches that emerged in the 1950s (Davids, et al. 2009). Since conception, the Participatory Development Communication (PDC) approach's set of principles have increased influence over development communicators' work. Today a significant number of Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) development efforts in Africa are driven by the principles of PDC. This proposal therefore, focuses on the execution of PDC among community development NGOs in the specific context of contemporary Zimbabwe. The research seeks to identify implementing challenges and prospects of this social development medium. Malilangwe Trust has been taken as case study for this research.

1.2 Problem statement

This research proposal has been drawn on the assumption that PDC has the potential to be used as an instrument for community development because of the ability to empower people and place them at the centre of their own development initiatives (Rogers 2006). In the past decade, there has been a huge shift in making participation of stakeholders, particularly the common people, an integral part of

NGO work. As one of the poorest countries in Africa, Zimbabwe encounters severe developmental challenges which include rural and urban poverty, economic stress, and political instability (Poverty Institute 2010). Numerous developmental interventions have been commenced by several global or external agencies of development and several local NGOs on the enhancement of the country towards realizing the set global Millennium Developmental objectives. Most of such initiatives present traces of participatory communication in practice. Being that as it may, the researcher has learnt that the use of the bottom-up model of communication in actual development settings has proven to be laden with challenges (Muturi & Mwangi, 2006). Development experts have been condemned for promoting adverse kinds of participation, or faced with both unforeseen effects and complications of the process (Theron 2008).

PDC scrutinizes the process of practically employing the theoretical PDC model to ensure that the factors that influence the implementation process are better understood. However, the factors are examined by only a few authors and the process is not adequately discussed. Nagging questions that the researcher is concerned with in this study are: Is there any significant relationship between participatory communication and effective community development? Is participatory communication really helpful in the implementation of development initiatives? What is the hope for this well celebrated instrument of development in such a country like Zimbabwe where the "culture" for public participation hardly exists? Finally Is this human focused approach to development worth investing in?

1.3 Aim

The research aims at assessing and presenting the degree of feasibility and efficiency of employing PDC in development initiatives. The research seeks to analyse the challenges facing NGOs in making participation of the grassroots an effective tool in development management. The use of PDC in community development in Zimbabwe remains a rich theme for academic inquiry. Limited efforts have been made by academics to study the use PDC as a mobilisation tool for communities and for development in the country. Published literature on the subject remains scarce. There is an enormous need for more study to be carried out on the

new challenges and changing trends in communication and development and PDC specifically. The necessity of such research is aggravated especially because of the challenging socio-economic and political situation currently prevailing in the country which presents potential threats to the successful implementation of the participatory approach.

1.4 Objectives

Despite Zimbabwe's continuous efforts to curb developmental crises, the country like most African countries still suffers serious development challenges particularly in its rural areas. Many agencies of development integrate PDC in their projects because of the likelihood to result in sustainability (Tufte and Mefalopulos, 2009). The key objectives of this research are therefore as follows:

- To survey the ways Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe is employing Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an agenda of people centred development;
- To assess the effectiveness of using PDC, identifying both good practises if any, and challenges;
- To advise other Malilangwe Trust projects with the hope also that the results might have an impact on other NGOs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

CHAPTER OUTLAY

The research is set out in five chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction – this chapter introduces the PDC concept and its application in the Malilangwe trust projects/Programmes. The chapter also gives an outline of the problem statement, aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review – this chapter covers the literature review which provides a more detailed look at the topic of communication in development with specific focus being given to Participatory Development Communication. Before focusing on aspects that are particularly related to participatory communication, the chapter presents an overall background synopsis of the origins, purpose as well as principal development models and how these are linked to communication in order to provide a deep insight on the pertinent issues that surround this subject matter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology – this segment describes the research methodology employed in this research. It goes on to explain the research design, sampling methods used, as well as the data collection tools. The section also explains how the collected data is analysed and gives a discussion of the ethical considerations as well as the research limitations.

Chapter 4: Empirical Findings and Analysis – this chapter presents the empirical findings of this study as well as summarising the main results of the research.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations – this chapter discusses and analyses of the findings of the research and provides an interpretation of the results. The chapter also includes an exploration of the findings and closes with the conclusion and recommendations based on the study carried out.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This segment evaluates current literature on the topic of communication in development with particular attention being given to Participatory Development Communication. An overall background synopsis regarding the origins, purpose as well as principal development models.A summary of how these models are linked to communication is also given so as to give a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding this topic. Before focusing on issues that are particularly related to participatory communication a discourse of the notions of communication and participation in development is presented. The section finally ends with literature on the approaches which are participatory that can be employed in development projects.

2.2 What is Development?

Definers have made countless attempts to define the concept 'Development' and ideological disparities as well as bias have been the resultant characteristic of their endeavours. Being a broad concept, Adesiyan and Arulogun (2005) observed that no single definition has been found that sufficiently explains the term development. While others consider development as a "process" of transformation, some see it as a static condition or situation. The term is often casually used by politicians, economists and others in discussions regarding a particular thing, place or society's state of growth. Somewhat linked to the development of capitalism and the culmination of feudalism, 'Development' as a term has several meanings such as there are countless conflicting perceptions, theories with regards to the whole concept of development. In broader terms development can be taken to represent concepts and activities that are designed with the objective of bringing positive change in human communities. According to Gene Shackman et al (2002), Development entails the capability of society to combine and organize resources, human effort and produce. As further conceptualised by Schiavo-Campo and Singer (1970), development is characterised by improved nutrition, reduced rate of

mortality, wide selection of consumption, improved living standard, skilled labour development as well as advancement in technology.

As Rodney (1972) understands it, development is a multifaceted process. He believes that material wellbeing is the ultimate goal at the individual level. and that attaining this wellbeing is linked closely to the state of society as a whole. A more comprehensive definition is used by The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as described by Streeten (1979). According to this adopted UNDP definition development entails leading healthy long lives, being knowledgeable, and access to the basic resources necessary for a decent standard of living including having the ability to take part in the life of the community.

A more concise explanation of the term development is provided by Todaro (1997) when he describes development as a multidimensional process that involves reorganizing and restructuring of the whole social and economic systems rather than a purely economic phenomenon. Todaro contends that development encompasses the course of enhancing all people's standard of lives including three aspects that are equally important. To begin with, he ascertains fundamental indices of development as improving human living conditions, (that is consumption and incomes and consumption, medical services, level of food as well as quality of education through relevant processes of growth). Todaro cites the second objective of development as the creation of environments that are favourable for development of people's self-esteem. These favourable environments are achieved through establishing social, economic and political institutions and systems which promote human self-worth and respect. The third objective was identified as the increase of people's freedom of choice through the expansion of their range of variables of choice, for example ranges of goods as well as services.

In the international parlance 'the term "development" therefore entails the need as well as the ways of providing better lives for people in poor communities. It does not only include economic growth, although that is essential, but also human development (providing for nutrition, health, education, as well as a clean environment (UNDP, 1990; Griffin and Knight, 1990).The achievement of human development is connected to a third perception of development which recognises it

as the liberation of people from hindrances that disturb their capability to improve their individual lives and communities. With this capabilities approach, having a list of variable choices and enjoying the accompaniment of well-being achievements is the best evidence of developed welfare (Sen 1985).

Defined by some African leaders who attended a meeting that was arranged, by former Nigeria President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, development is a process that has to do with the ability of people to manage and prompt transformation (Udoakah 1998). According to them this entails predicting, planning, understanding and monitoring change as well as reducing or eliminating undesirable change. Like most economists, they indicated that the rise of GDP, increasing opportunities for employment, improvement of health, housing and information, knowledge and technological creativity are principal to the development of a society. In that light the ultimate aim of development is desirable change for the better. The common aspect amongst all the given descriptions of development is however the aspiration for changes that will yield positive impact on the welfare of the citizens or give them freedom from poverty and inequality.

2.3 Theories of Development
This section identifies the successive stages and views of development in the past years and discusses the concepts of communication intrinsic and connected to them.

2.3.1 The Modernist Approach to Development
Initial assumptions regarding development were undoubtedly embedded in the modernist tradition. The assumption was that for undeveloped areas mainly in the Third World to realise development, there was a need for countries to shift from their current traditional state to a more "modern" one. The description of a modern nation was given as one that enjoys an industrial base, most technologically advanced, and one that strives for continually escalating economic gains. According to Scott (1995) this model assumes that there is a pre-determined sequence of stages along which every country is pursuing in the wake of the United States. This economically inclined view of development is theoretically rooted in Walt Whitman Rostow's works, particularly The Stages of Economic Growth (1961). Rostow's proposed five stages are as follows:

Table 1: The Stages of Economic Growth

The traditional society	Constructed around a subsistence economy, characterised by limited financial and commercial activity, and structured around traditional production methods.
Take off Conditions	These include specialisation of work, excess production, trade increase, budding transport infrastructure.
Take-off	Increased industrialisation levels, resulting in the movement of workers from the primary sector. Political and social institutions responsible for promoting industrialisation are strengthened
Drive to maturity	Increase in economic diversity as well as available goods and service is promoted by technological innovation.
Age of high-mass consumption	Increase of Industries which produce quality and lasting customer goods, accompanied by significant services industries growth.

With this modernist model development is perceived in pure economic terms, and it is assumed positive social changes will result following the economic growth. Through the 'trickle-down effect', riches of the people on the economic scale apex will in due course benefit the rest of the society through increase in production and consequently employment (Gardner & Lewis 1996). Embedded in the modernist view is the opinion that societies that are undeveloped have to leave backward or traditional ways of life and accept concepts that are more modern. Thus from the modernisation approach perspective, the means to the transmission of modernity are mass media and information technologies. The information technologies and mass media serve in the dissemination of the Northern messages amongst recipients that ought to be convinced to embrace prescribed strategies for development.

The described modernist approach to development has had its fair share of criticism especially because of its assumption that the only route to development is the Western model as well as its suggestion that economic growth will be adequately and fairly shared amongst all citizens. The model has also been mostly criticised for the fact that even after decades of being a guide to development, economic growth rates in developing countries are still substandard with records of poverty increases

in some cases (Gardner & Lewis, 1996). Such criticism has led to the institution of other development models. However as Scott (1995) cautions, the modernisation model's theoretical foundations continue to have their undeniable power despite its demise. Undeniably, there has not been any theory of development that has been accepted as widely. One of the major reasons that explains the continued power of the modernist model is the fact that there has not been any other model except a collection of perceptions with marginally different emphases and focus. However, common amongst the collection of new approaches is the notion of participation in development. Contemporary development theories have had great influence from Paulo Freire's work and Participatory Action Research through providing principal insights on the value of grass-root level participation.

2.3.2 Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) arose as a potential community led remedy for the failure of the modernist approach to social change. It originated in Latin and South America and was strongly rooted in Marxist critiques but was centrally focused on change at the level of grassroots. Like other models that came after the modernisation approaches, the aim of PAR was to challenge the current social order and amend the social system or replace existing social structures (Friesen, 1999). As a result, through PAR local knowledge was brought to the centre of inquiry, research and directed social change. It marked the shift from the modernist dependence on Western science to an approach which places value on indigenous knowledge. Fals-Borda and Rahman (1991) explain this substitution of knowledge in their treatment of PAR. They emphasise that the immediate aim of PAR is to accept as authentic the knowledge that people in the local community are able to produce through their own verification systems as well as allowing them the right to use it as guide in their own action. According to the explanation of the two authors increasing the focus on 'people knowledge' ensures the participation of the marginalised from the beginning.

Important also to highlight about PAR is the fact that its philosophy and procedures are particularly relevant for development dialogues regardless of it being focused on the research process. The notion of communal or community knowledge is central in

PAR, yet the concept clearly acknowledges the need to strike a balance between knowledge and action for social transformation to happen. As such, PAR establishes three guiding steps which are: Situation or problem identification and analysis, possible solutions and ideas discussion and proposal, and lastly putting solution into practice. It is crucial for parties carrying out PAR to always negotiate these three steps as they balance knowledge and action. Thus the PAR perspective detests the idea of viewing the locals as passive recipients of set development plans and actions. Rather people should be understood as active participants who are able to create or find solutions to the problems that affect them.

2.3.3 Human Scale Development

Following many years of working with the problem of development in the Third World articulating the inappropriateness of conventional models of development that have led to increasing poverty, massive debt and ecological disaster, Manfred Max-Neef came up with the Human-scale Development model (HSD). According to Max-neef, Human Scale Development is aimed and centred on satisfying fundamental human needs, generating growing levels of self-reliance, and on establishing organic articulations of people with nature and technology, of global processes with local activity, of the personal with the social, of planning with autonomy, and of civil society with the state (Max-Neef 1991).

The HSD model identifies needs, self-reliance and organic articulations as the central pillars. Max-neef highlighted the need for these pillars to be sustained on a concrete base which is the establishment of environments in which people are the lead role players in their future. He further highlighted that both the diversity and autonomy of spaces in which people act should be respected if people are to be the main actors in Human Scale Development. Achieving the state where people are no longer objects but subjects in the process of development is, among other things, highly challenging processes. Opportunity for the active participation of people is always hindered where systems are bureaucratic and hierarchically organised with decisions flowing from the top down to the bottom.

Human Scale Development proposes a democracy which is direct as well as participatory. This kind of democracy cultivates those conditions that allow for the transformation of the traditional, semi-paternalistic role of development agencies into

an empowering role of encouraging creative solutions to flow from the bottom to the top. This method of facilitating development is more consistent with the people's real expectations.

2.3.4 Conscientization and advocacy

Paulo Freire (1970) is one of the renowned critiques of education. His work is widely celebrated amongst the most influential discourses on experiential education, community development as well as grassroots organising. Based on his experience in adult education, he developed a strong understanding that conceiving education as merely the transfer of knowledge from a teacher (subject) who is a reservoir of knowledge to the shallow-minded student (object) is insufficient and unfair. According to Freire education is rather a much more two-way process where all participants are considered to be subjects. Critical reflection is what is vital to this form of education. In his theory Freire's suggests dialogue has power to make people critically aware of their own problems leading them into starting to create or find solutions. When the marginalised or the oppressed are denied conscious participation in the transformation of their society it is extremely difficult for them to achieve the critical awareness (Crotty, 1998).

The concept of dialogue as understood by Freire "originates" from the 'I-Thou' notions by Buber, which emphasise that dialogue is not an individual act but instead a community act (Thomas 1994). Dialogue frees oneself from being object as well as from the chains of individualism and transforms them into active part of their own community. Thus, the goal for marginalised peoples involved in dialogue must be recreating a social reality where they are subjects, principal players as well as instruments of change. The critically anticipated result of dialogue is increase in participation.

Although Freire's theories originated from his experience in adult education, his dialogue, critical thinking, and participation in particular have been embraced by other theorists especially development theorists. A clear connection of these theories and development is given by Thomas when he explains how Freire's action of critical reflection is a significant part in the making of an alternate approach of participatory development. HSD , PAR and Freire have provided necessary and vital contributions

to present-day development strategies that consider participation as central. The link between dialogue and local participation (as understood by Buber and Freire) is remarkably emphasised in the development process by researchers with an interest in the idea of participation and communication in the development context. Significant participation in the process of development is important if development is to be of benefit to the intended groups such as the local, poor or the disadvantaged peoples.

This research looks closely at the role of communication in this participatory approach to development, and aims to investigate and assess contemporary conceptions and practices of participation from a social construction perspective. However, before all this is, the next part of this literature review section considers the role of communication in development.

2.4 Development and the role of communication

Daniel Lerner was the first to issue out literature about the connection between development and communication in his 1958 publication 'The passing of the traditional society' (Rogers, 2006). As a special aspect in the mass communication field, development communication is focused on the use of the tools of mass communication for social and economic development in developing countries.

One can define development communication as the incorporation of planned communication in projects that deal with community advancement (The World Bank, 2004). Further elaboration on the definition presents development communication as an instrument that works through total involvement of "the poor" in decision-making practices critical to their lives.This entails including and considering their 'voice' in terms of influencing policy-making, or encouraging the poor to make use of new practices that have potential to improve their way of life, raise their level of security, enhance their education and advance their health (Rogers 2006).

In 1986, a revolutionary conception of development was developed by Narula and Pearce. They argued that development is not an economic or political process involving communication as a more or less significant part. Rather they suggested that development in itself is a form of communication (p.1). Due to the way

communication had been conceptualised in modernist development up to that time, such a claim broke new grounds. Even though communication was considered instrumental in modernising underdeveloped societies (Narula & Pearce, p. 26), it was not accepted as a collaborative process. Rather according to Rogers (1976) communication was employed as way of "conveying informative and persuasive messages from a government to the people in a downward, hierarchical way". Thus, according to the modernist development models communication was understood in terms of the "message" instead of the process. Ultimately, marketing and media persuasion were commonly used to plan and implement development programs. As such, in this context even 'participation' was employed to persuade.

In the early modernist theories development programs inquired from local people to learn their needs or dislikes (Jacobson and Kolluri 1999). This information would then be used as bases for creating the most effective messages. As such the concept of participation was promoted merely as method useful in media programming to guarantee increased success in development. Indeed in the essence of PAR such is not considered as true participation. Thus, as Narula and Pearce noted in early theories of development, communication was thought of as 'conveying' a commodity to the grassroots. It was assumed that through the acquisition of information and education as products the grassroots would embrace Western innovations, gain modern attitudes and be active participants in an economy that is progressively industrial (p. 27). Under such one-sided and superficial notions of communication individuals are inactive and treated as objects. The assumption is that the listeners are dormant receptors of either constructive or negative messages created by the sender. This is quite contrary to the views of both PAR and Freire which negate the concept of 'passive receiver' and emphasise on the importance of respecting individuals' active participation in social change.

Development communication functions as a common bridge between development practitioners or institutions, funding agencies or implementers and the program beneficiaries through facilitating dialogue as well as the sharing of ideas. However, the fate of development agencies which are funded by many interest groups is the mandate to act on the funders' directive and according to their standards and requirements. Normally this indirectly gives these funding groups behind the

development agencies power in the selection and framing of social conditions and groups as problematic. The main weakness of this method of selection is that input from the recipients is not accommodated. The result is that crucial 'insider' contribution on cultural, social and political information which is rarely readily and openly available to the 'outsider' is missed and not considered in development initiatives (Wilkins & Moody, 2001).

Ultimately one can agree that development communication is far from being an engagement that is unbiased between development agencies and the recipients of development programs. Rather, it should be viewed as a type of engagement in form of social interventions that is political and targeted at eliminating cultural, social and economic challenges. In this engagement solutions are mutually strategised and legitimized through negotiating, articulating and ordering of social problems (Wilkins, 1999). Thus effective development has to be participatory and this argument is supported by Wilkins and Mody (2001) as they refer to the work of Jacobson and Servaes (1999) which emphasises the importance for beneficiaries to take part in planning, implementing and evaluating of development interventions if the power for development is focused on participation. Matous (2013:221) also further highlights that the splendor of the participatory development model lies in that it points to the necessity of a much more radical transformation in traditional concerns.

In light of the above the last decades have encountered significant changes with regards to how development work is conceptualised, despite the fact that there is no single central model even to date. A number of important issues have been raised following the emergence of new views from theorists who disregard the modernist theory. The need for an approach that is more participatory has become the popular focus in development studies.

2.5 Emergence of Participatory Development Communication

The early years of the 1970s marked the origins of participatory approaches in development communication. Within this era a substantial number of development practitioners as well as academics started to be sceptical about the diffusion method to development which had triumphed between the 1950s and 1960s prescribing the

advancement of countries economically as its focal development end. In the period between these two decades (1950s and 60s) the advancement of the developed countries was renowned as the ideal to desire and aim at. The wide-scale diffusion and embracing of new modernisation technologies were believed to be the key driving forces behind the generation of "development" (Davids 2009). That sort of modernisation was premeditated in the capital cities of developing countries, being directed and led by foreign experts imported from the well doing 'first world' countries. The approach marginalised the local villagers who were mere objects of alien development plans. Villagers were always taken by surprise by the arrival of strange development workers into their community to survey project sites. The strangers would show up with their imposed development projects plans and implement without consulting with villagers (Davids 2009).

Mass communication was manipulated in promoting the reception of this "modernisation" by the target village population. The radio, leaflets, posters and other publications were some of the crucial instruments that were used as a part of this method to disseminate information to the remote areas of the 'magnificent' transformations that came with the acceptance of new ideas and what luxury imported concepts would deliver into the local people's lives. It became well-known as Development Support Communication. However it was not long before this world-wide approach towards the modernisation approach of development started having notable glitches.

As a result of the fact that development would have been planned centrally without any consultation with and thoughts of the local people, inappropriate resolutions and interventions were often impelled downwards to the disconcerted societies. Centralised administration also marginalised the locals from owning the initiated community development ideas and strategies (Davids et. al 2009). Development became the obligation of the government and not the common people. The expensive draw-backs of the top to bottom, robotic approach were witnessed in the cities and campaigners started to publicly disapprove them for focusing mainly on the symptoms rather than the root causes of poverty. Activists were horrified by the conceited top to bottom communication approach which fractured the already crumbling developing communities by disregarding and underrating local beliefs,

knowledge and social systems. Participation became one of the buzzwords of development. Ultimately from the criticism of the top-down communication in the dependency and modernisation model, the Participatory Communication approach emerged. Today, this participatory approach to communication is regarded as a new model in the field of communication for development.

2.6 Participatory Development Communication in development projects: Theoretical consideration

PDC enables participation in a development initiative identified and chosen by a community, with or without the outside support of other stakeholders (Davids et.al 2009). Uphoff (1985) identifies four different methods of participation which can be found evident in many development initiatives which claim to be participatory in their form. The following are the methods:

a) When people participate in implementation i.e. actively motivating and mobilising people to be involved in the execution of projects. Thus, either people are allocated particular duties and tasks. Or they are obligated and expected to donate specific identified resources.

b) When there is participation in the evaluation: People are requested to evaluate the failure or success of a project upon completing it.

c) Participation in profit: People benefit from the outcomes or fruits of a project, such as agriculture produce from market garden, medical care by a "bare-foot doctor", a vehicle to transport the harvest to market.

d) Participation in administrative processes: People are responsible for identifying problems and starting discussions on problem solving, as well as planning activities which they will jointly carry out as a community.

e) Participation in the conceptual and planning phases.

As frequently used, the term "Participatory Development Communication" (PDC), highlights inclusive bilateral processes of communication, and to remove development agents from one direction approaches of communication which

comprise broadcasting messages, conveying information, or influencing people towards behaviour transformation (Brodie 2009). Participation refers to "empowering people to mobilise their own capacities, be social actors, rather than passive subjects, manage the resources, make decisions, and control the activities that affect their lives" (International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) 2010:13). This way development practitioners are merely taking the role of facilitators, whilst the members of the community are at the core of the process of development.

The failures in most development efforts in Africa have been attributed to the side-lining of the so-called beneficiaries in the process of decision-making for projects and programs (Fraser & Villet 1994 and Chambers 1997). The attainment of socio-economic development for the beneficiary communities through inclusive interventions which accept the grassroots as key fixers of their own problems is the aim for most development agencies. However, within the process of empowerment there is always a persistent tension between compliance and resistance emanating from power relations (Pease, 2002). As a result development agencies may come up with an intervention they consider to be a gesture to empower, and yet the same program may be considered as imposed and unsuitable to the culture or values of recipient communities, due to the one-sided movement of information and resources from agencies of development to the beneficiaries.

According to Linnehan and Konrad (1999:400) the problems of balance of power can only be resolved when the groups with limited power (recipients) can influence the powerful (development agencies) to recognise the link between their interests. Balance of power between beneficiary communities and development agencies is a key factor to development success. Failing to strike this balance in power relations results in perpetual hierarchical power relations (Solas, 1996); one-sidedness, marginalisation, and force on program recipients to embrace the standards of the development agencies (Linnehan & Konrad, 1999). This results in programs failing as a result of being rejected by communities (the powerless) or sanctions with regards to development agencies (the powerful).

Several other factors are also considered responsible for the failures of projects. According to Hornik (1998), the causes for development programs failure can be

categorised into three principal parts. These parts entail the failure of theories, mismatching of problems and solutions; inadequate and shoddy program design or implementation as well as failure due politically hostile environment. According to Anyaegbunam et al., (1998) and Hornik, (1998), inadequate understanding of local realities, employing unsuitable technology, unavailability of supporting policies, ineffectual training procedures have been cited as other causes for project.

In summary, the majority of the root reasons for development initiatives that fail can be identified as being due to the inadequate and sometimes even lack of participation of people whom the development efforts are aimed in the processes of decision-making (Fraser and Villet 1994). A number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as well as international organizations that operate in the development field are in agreement regarding the fact that not incorparating people's involvement in development initiatives is amongst the chief explanations for the malfunctioning of many development agendas and programs (Anyaegbunam et al., 1998). This lack of participation has been often blamed as being the main cause for not only the achievement of the set goals and objectives, but it is also the cause for the absence of sustainability in development initiatives that at first look like they are running successfully.

It can be observed that there is an obvious need for the participation of the grassroots in development and also the crucial role of communication in encouraging development regardless of a multiplicity of models and conceptions is uncontested. This is powerfully articulated in a popular slogan of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) of the United Nations "There is no development without communication" (Balit 1988).

To date, many researchers and development communication experts accept that in participatory communication the most appropriate concept which they can use to govern their work in the developing world has been found. Although advocates of participation acknowledge more good as compared to evil in the approach, they realise that there are also limitations to the approach. White (1994) shares the same view and says "It is a concept that has proven to be immensely challenging in application". This explains why progress in participatory development communication

has been fractional in the last 10 years. The challenge can be summarized as circumstantial factors affecting the particular developing country, for example the social and cultural situation, the religious environment, the power structure, as well as the presence of other agencies. According to Bessette (2004) these factors regulate the applicability of employing PDC in a specific setting. Credibility, authenticity, and commitment to the agenda of development also emerge as contributing factors that influence the success of Participatory Development Communication (Eversole 2012).

Muturi (2006) emphasised the need to consider the community when he said "In order to make use of the PDC strategies successfully, there is need to understand the audience". Conversely, development agences or institutes often do not fully consider and incorporate the cultural and social framework in the planning of developmental initiatives in their practices. The obvious result of such an omission is that the activities of PDC will fail to be embraced by the local people or patrons.

2.7 Conclusion

Realising the above emerging almost universal problems surrounding the use of Participatory Development Communication one wonders what the situation is like in the case of Zimbabwe. This research therefore is set to embark on an exploration of the practises of Participatory development Communication by NGOs in Zimbabwe in their development projects. The idea is to celebrate the best practise if any and to find and propose customised remedy for identified challenges being met in the employment of the concept in the context of Zimbabwe. Thus this study in a way also dares to show how participatory communication approaches can still work better compared to initiatives without.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 About the study area and case study projects

This section gives a description of Malilangwe trust and the three selected case study projects

Fig 2: Malilangwe Location map
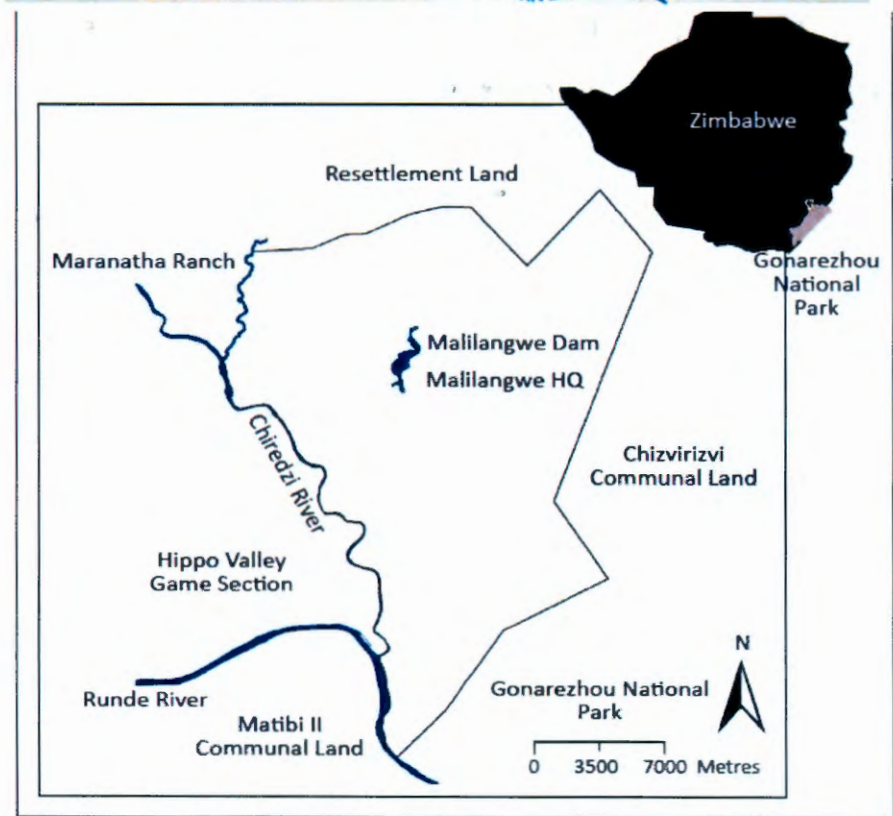
(Source:www.koedoe.co.za/index.php/koedoe/article/viewFile/1081/1481/6982)

ABOUT MALILANGWE TRUST

Malilangwe Trust is a wholly Zimbabwean, non-profit making organisation formed in 1994 and registered under Zimbabwe Investment Centre Authority 000044.The Organisation that focuses on harmonising conservation initiatives, community outreach programs and commercial tourism activities.

Malilangwe Trust aims to restore and maintain the bio-diversity to its former pristine condition developing wildlife populations that provide a spectacle that supports top-quality tourism for financial sustainability of the Trust's operations.

Beyond this vision the Trust focuses at making a material and lasting contribution to the development of the Lowveld, especially with the immediate communal and resettlement neighbours.

Source:*www.themalilang wetrust.org/conservation*

The activities of Malilangwe Trust are focused around the Malilangwe Estate, a 40,000 hectare property located in the Chiredzi District of Zimbabwe's South Eastern Lowveld. To its South, the Malilangwe wildlife estate is edged by another reserve called the Gonarezhou National Park and to the north and east by communal land, while the Hippo Valley Game Section borders the west side of the reserve (Figure 2).

3.1.1 The case study projects

Wildlife conservation

Malilangwe Trust manages a 40,000 Ha sanctuary for wildlife. The main objective of this wildlife reserve is to create and preserve a natural functioning bionetwork, in which the wide range of wildlife native to the area is protected, and where the different species can live as they have for thousands of years. It hosts the widest variety of mammals in southern Africa including the Lichtenstein's hartebeest, roan antelope, wild dog, brown hyena as well as the Big 5 species (elephant, both species of rhino, lion leopard and buffalo). Zebra, giraffe and hippo are again some of the more common species found in the reserve. The reserve also records more than 400 species of birds with one of the highest concentration of breeding raptors in the world.

Child Supplementary Feeding

Fig 3 (Pamushana Feeding station: Source field Photos)

Fig 3 is an initiative jointly developed with the beneficiary communities together with the Ministries of Education and Culture and Health and Child Welfare. The project has been running since 2003 providing one fully balanced meal per day to 25, 000

children in pre-schools at designated feeding points throughout the District. The rural communities surrounding Malilangwe Trust depend mostly on farming for subsistence. However, the region is not so conducive for farming due to the high temperatures and low rains and also the area has always been seriously affected by the recurring droughts that have hit the nation it the past years. For these reasons and others the project aims to supplement feeding especially for the little children to boost their nutrition consumption for better health. Currently the project is providing a morning meal of nutritious porridge per day.

Schools Bursaries

This program was launched again in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Culture and also the Health and Child Welfare with the purpose of enhancing education opportunities in the District. The program awards a variety of bursaries to intelligent young people learning at primary, secondary and even tertiary institutions. Over the years the project has since provided financial educational support of more than 3,077 person-years' worth of bursary support. The other component of this project is arranging competitions and prize giving to successful students in several disciplines held for schools within the district.

3.2 Research design

Research design can be taken to describe the overall strategy chosen to bring together the different parts of a research in a comprehensible and coherent manner guaranteeing that the research problem is dealt with effectively (Randolph, 2007). In simple terms a research design is a logical plot used for the study of a scientific or social problem. As claimed by Servaes (2001), a celebrated researcher in the development communication field, usually qualitative approaches may be the perfect option to use for the examination of meaningful phenomena communication for development. Above that qualitative methods are also suitable for exploratory research. The theoretical undertones of the topic as well as the practical implications of the PDC process make a qualitative design most ideal for this research.

According to Mercer (2006) the majority of researches on NGO practices employ qualitative approaches. Yin (1994) additionally contributes that research questions

that are process-oriented and that deal with operating systems should be explored qualitatively. This further supports the selection of a design that is qualitative. Ultimately the research design for the current study can be described as a descriptive and exploratory case study that is analysed through qualitative methods.

According to Yin (1994), a case study research entails an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of a single object or phenomena such as a system, a person, a course, a group or an organization. Although, the object under examination is not completely controlled by the researchers, the case study research has the ability to provide relevant information and understanding about a complex phenomenon within its real life context (Baxter and Jack, 2008). For this study the main aim is to examine Participatory Development Communication in theory and in practice. An International NGO called Malilangwe Trust which implements development projects that show evidence of the adoption of such an approach has been selected as the case study. The purposes of a case study research are to obtain a detailed knowledge and understanding of a case as well as the relationship between the phenomenon and the case (Randolph, 2007). Several sources of data, such as observations, interviews and documents, are used in a case study research to get a deep understanding of the case. Three projects have been selected for investigation based on their integration of PDC elements.

The research focus entails exploring the use of the Participatory Development Communication model, in the framework of development programs implemented by an international development NGO in Zimbabwe in order to draw challenges and prospects of the concept is process-oriented and context-specific. In studies that are qualitative the primary instrument for collecting and analysing data is always considered to be the researcher. Subsequently, as Merriam (1998) perceived, the researcher of this study was solely obliged to explore the process of how Malilangwe Trust applies PDC and also how the interviewees identify the factors that influence the application of the PDC model. By gaining this information and understanding the researcher's intention has been to draw up possible factors influencing the implementation of PDC in Malilangwe Trust and possibly amongst the NGO community in Zimbabwe.

Thus in qualitative research the researcher engrosses the situation, establishes logic and meaning from various interpretations, since there are multiple truths in any particular context as the participants and researcher establish their own realities. The researcher endeavoured to gather information in an objective non-intrusive way, hence making an effort to explore real-life circumstances as they unfold naturally without pre-set restrictions or situations which disturb or influence the research or its results. As Merriam (1998) suggests, the researcher without an observation timetable often engages the situation, and has the active obligation of building an understanding of the research environment using personal interpretation of what occurs. Accordingly, qualitative research yields the researcher's filtered interpretation of other's views as an outcome.

The strengths and advantages of the selected qualitative design also mainly lie in the underlying methodological assumptions. Since a range of research methods are applied in qualitative research (Collis & Hussey, 2003), the complexity of views can be captured, and acquiring only the perception of a researcher can be avoided at least to a certain extent. Consequently the design of qualitative approaches brings extra advantages to this proposed research. For this research project the core methods of research were interviews and document analysis. The qualitative methods employed for this study provided both the research subjects and the researcher the chance to clarify issues and ask questions whenever they arose.

The investigation of how Participatory Development Communication is conceived and employed in the projects selected for the study was considered as the unit of analysis. This was further divided into the six project cycle phases (Identifying the area of intervention, assessing the needs, formulating the project, planning and designing the strategy, implementing and monitoring and evaluating the project). Participation and participatory communication was examined and evaluated within each of these phases.

3.3 Sampling

As defined by Sandelowski (1995), sampling is the process of choosing study elements (for example people or organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample one may fairly generalize the results back to the population from which they were selected. The focus of this study is development NGOs in Zimbabwe. The researcher chose a single organisation Malilangwe Trust as a representative unit of analysis due to the likelihood that most of its projects employ PDC. Through this research the goal was to obtain insights into the phenomenon of PDC, how it has been employed among the NGO community in Zimbabwe, the challenges encountered and prospects. Given such a goal the researcher therefore had to purposefully select the case study, projects to investigate as well as individuals groups to interview based on their potential to provide understanding of the phenomena. Ultimately the sampling method which was deemed most suited for the research is non-probability and a combination of purposive and convenience sampling.

Nonprobability sampling is a popular method in qualitative research where researchers use their own judgment in selecting a sample. Participants chosen through the nonprobability sampling method are selected for the reason that they meet pre-established criteria. Thus as mentioned above, this method has been used for the selection of the case study. Malilangwe Trust was also considered as a perfect case study also because of its convenience. The Organization is located in Chiredzi which is the researcher's home town in Zimbabwe. This made the case study easily accessible and this gave greater chance for the researcher to work with a few people she is acquainted with. Above all, this ensured quick establishment rapport and trust with some informants making access to organization information and documents equally stress-free. The 'convenience' element was applied in that the case study organisation was only chosen for the study because the researcher was convinced that sufficient and appropriate annual reports and case studies would be available and easily sourced. The sample size for this study is three projects from the selected development organisation (Malilangwe Trust) to allow an in-depth study of each project within the timeframe available. As Bryman (2012) describes,

purposive sampling entails the strategic selection of subjects because of their significance and applicability to the research question. Thus the researcher used her own discretion and purposefully selected those projects that present evidence of the use of PDC.

With snowball sampling, new participants to the study were engaged when the initial participants referred other potential participants to the researcher. Thus for next interviews, the researcher considered nominees that were put forward by first point of contact interviewees. Through convenience sampling, some participants such as beneficiaries and project officers were also chosen. This criteria entailed choosing participants on the basis of their availability and accessibility.

3.4 Data collection methods

The most popular data collection sources in qualitative research have been found to be interviews, observations, and review of documents (Marshall & Rossman, 1999 Creswell, 2009; Locke, Silverman, & Spirduso, 2010). Mercer (2006) further states that in order to carry out investigations on the practices of NGOs, the following methods are helpful: document analysis of NGO reports and baseline surveys, surveys in the project location, interviews with key informants, interviews or focus groups with project beneficiaries and participatory appraisal with project beneficiaries. For this research document analysis (e.g. books, articles and publications) and interviews with key informants and project beneficiaries form the main sources of data.

3.4.1 Documents analysis

Existing documents such as Malilangwe Trust proposals of the development projects as well as the progress reports in the development programmes assisted as additional source of primary data. These documents were used to compare with the information gained from other sources, as suggested by Chilisa and Preece (2005).Studying literature was helpful in providing profound theoretical information on the concept of PDC as well as figuring the extent to which NGOs in Zimbabwe

are employing Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an agenda of people centred development. On the other hand while studying Malilangwe Trust documentation specific attention was paid to two central issues: how participatory communication has been conceived; and in which specific phases the principles and practices of participatory communication have been included, and in what way, or neglected.

In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Randolph, 2007). Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) further describe an in-depth interview as a one-to-one data collection method involving an interviewer and an interviewee carrying out a discussion on specific topics in depth. For instance, participants, staff, and others associated with a program were asked about their experiences and expectations related to the program and adoption of PDC. They were also asked about their personal thoughts concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes as far as participatory communication and stakeholder involvement is concerned. In-depth interviews were also found ideal for inquiring from randomly selected beneficiaries about any changes they perceive in themselves as a result of their involvement through the use of PDC in the programs. Interviews are often used to provide context to other data (such as outcome data), offering a more complete picture of what happened in the program and why. Thus in-depth interviews carried out face to face and through emails were the major data collection methods selected especially because of the various advantages embodied in the methods.

In-depth interviews were carried out with eleven workers and specialists of Malilangwe Trust, together with senior management employees, project managers, as well as field workers running selected development programs (See table below). The interview participants were selected based on to their significance and relevance as informants on the process of employing PDC and also based on whether or not they were willing to cooperate.

As Mercer (2006) suggests the project beneficiaries as well as crucial informers, such as NGO staff and program leaders, donor staff, village leaders, local government leaders, and business and religious institutes are generally the most valuable interview participants for research projects in NGO practices in developing countries. However, Willis (2006) cautions that sometimes senior level staff such as the President of the NGO may not be the best informers for the main reason that they may not be aware of the everyday activities that the researcher could be interested in. The researcher employed the snow ball method in determining the most suitable candidates to interview. This entailed considering references from the first few interviews and also following initial correspondences.

Table 2: In-depth interview participants' composition

Staff Description	Total number	Male	Female
Senior Management	2	1	1
Project Managers	3	2	1
Field Officers	6	4	2
Total	11	7	4

Fig1

STAFF COMPOSITION

Senior Management 18%
Project Managers 27%
Field Officers 55%
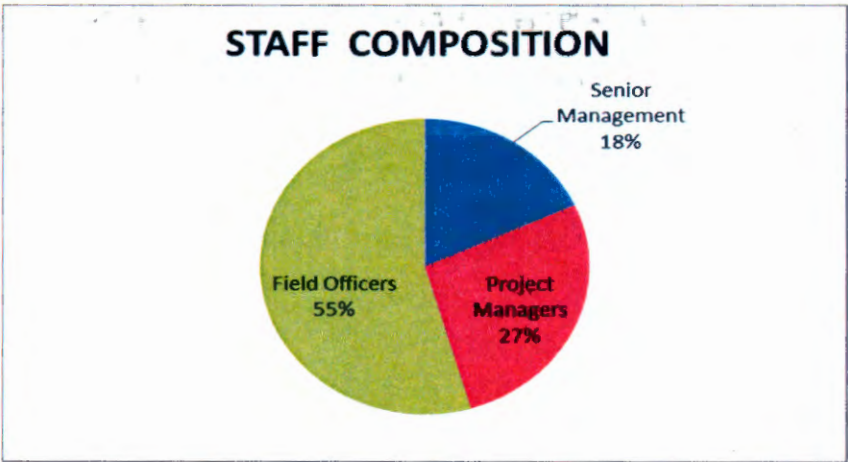
In cases where participants felt uncomfortable talking openly in a focus group, the researcher employed face to face in-depth interviews with those selected individuals. These face to face types of interviews were useful in providing distinguished individual (as opposed to group) views about the project and PDC concept.

Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews are moderated group discussions (with 8-12 people) on a particular topic/issue (Randolph, 2007). Thirteen people from the local community were mobilised into a focus group for in order to discuss their views regarding the use of PDC in development intiatives particularly in Malilangwe Trust projects. Focus group discussions were useful for gathering information from a group of respondents at one time especially a team of project officers or beneficiaries. The focus group interview sessions were aimed at creating an environment that can encourages contributors to speak and interact naturally as they give information on the research topic. However the researcher was not ignorant of the fact that, some participants would likely dominate the conversation or others would feel uncomfortable in being open in a group situation. On such instances individual interviews were employed as useful remedy. Just as was done with individual interviews, the focus group interviews were recorded through the researcher making notes during the focus group interview session.

E-mail interviews

E-mail interviews were employed in the research since they cost significantly less to conduct as compared to telephone or face-to-face interviews. For this reason the researcher found the method valuable for this study especially since the research was carried out in Zimbabwe yet the researcher spends most time in South Africa. Three senior level staff were unavailable during the time face to face indepth interviews were carried out.The researcher therefore targeted these three for email interviews. Through e-mail interviews the researcher enjoyed the flexibility and ability to invite participation of geographically distributed samples of people by sending them e-mail messages. All the these three targeted interview participants responded. This was economic in terms of time and resources as compared to making long-distance telephone calls, using regular mail, or traveling to the location of participants. The use of e-mail in this research also decreased the cost of recording. Information gathered from e-mail interviews is produced in electronic format which requires little editing or formatting before it can be processed for analysis. E-mail also reduced the need for synchronous interview times allowing the researcher to carry out multiple interviews at a time. This is possible since a standard list of questions can be sent separately to multiple participants at once, regardless of their

geographical location or time zone. Moreover, some studies revealed that participants experienced some level of affirmation for their participation when on- line communication was stretched over a long period of time, (Bowker & Tuffin, 2004; Walther, 1996).

3.5 Measurement map

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that qualitative research analysis entails an interpretation of the social world of interviewees by concentrating on their experiences, perspectives and histories and thus honours their constructed realities when reporting social science research findings. This section therefore provides insight on the relevant measurement tools/research questions while giving reasons behind the choice of such measurement tools.

This research entails an in depth and comprehensive analysis of selected Malilangwe Trust projects to gain familiarity with the PDC phenomenon and to acquire new insight into its implementation in order to formulate recommendations which may be useful advice to other NGOs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Three projects that show evidence of the adoption or integration of the PDC were targeted for investigation.

In investigating how participatory communication has been conceived and applied in the selected projects, each project was considered as the unit of analysis. This was further subdivided into six phases of the project cycle . Participation and participatory communication was investigated and analysed within each phase through the chosen qualitative methods of documents analysis (eg. proposals and reports) and interviews with relevant informants. Participatory communication issues were therefore investigated and discussed for each of the various phases being considered. Other related sub-questions were also investigated.

The meanings of the text and how it might relate to other issues was taken note of throughout the study. The researcher accordingly and flexibly adjusted the data collection process when she identified additional concepts and the need to

investigate any emanating new relationships, a process that Parlett and Hamilton (1976) refer to as progressive focussing. Fig 1 attached below as appendixes shows the measurement map that was used as guide during data collection. Fig 4 of the appendices entails a questionnaire consisting of a comprehensive list of possible questions that was also used to collect the required data for analysis.

3.6 Data analysis

The data analysis process started during the data collection, as suggested by several authors Chilisa and Preece (2005) and Corbetta (2003). In qualitative research, the analysis is tied to the data collection and has to be done throughout the data collection stage, as well as at the end of the study Chilisa and Preece (2005). Raw data from interview protocols and even that from documents was transcribed, edited and synthesised. A sorting and categorising system using colours and codes was established and employed to manage the information for analysis.

The current research is not an explanatory case study, but a descriptive and exploratory one. Therefore, my investigative strategy follows a two-fold path. In the descriptive part, the analysis involves a case description following the sequence of the project cycle. The exploratory part investigates the basic theoretical proposition, i.e. the adoption of participatory communication, originally presented. Data concerning how this approach has been defined, conceived and applied are discussed, compared and contrasted in the final section.

The analytical description of the project cycle is meant to shed light on the various stages of the whole process, thus highlighting crucial steps and bottlenecks. The descriptive strategy also provides the organizing framework for the analysis by providing the logical and chronological framework for the case study. In addition, adopting a descriptive strategy does not necessarily rule out the possibility of identifying causal links leading to the explanation of certain phenomena (Yin, 1994). The exploration of participatory communication in the Malilangwe Trust projects uses the project cycle sequence as its organizer but the analysis relies also on theoretical considerations, interpretations given by informants and textual analysis.

3.7 Research ethics

When carrying out research in an organisation and community it is crucial for the researcher to bear in mind that they are a guest. How they relate to individuals and groups during their fieldwork most likely affects the responses they receive and can ultimately determine the success of the whole research project Binns (2006). It is therefore imperative as Apentiik and Parpart (2006) and Binns (2006) accentuate, that researchers honour the systems and regulations of the organisations they work with as well as the local community customs. Researchers ought to also make an unwavering effort to be polite, unassuming, discreet, and deferential. They also have to keep in mind the common identities that are normally assigned to researchers on the grounds of world view, lifestyle, and personality. It was therefore ideal for the researcher to thoroughly review the literature about the Malilangwe Trust and the case study as well the main project areas as recommended by Apentiik and Parpart (2006). Thus in planning the research, the researcher was set to seek advice and familiarise before doing the actual research.

Before embarking on the research project, the researcher sought approval to carry out the research which was granted by the University Of The Free State. For all data that was gathered, informed consent was acquired first. According to Brydon (2006) acquiring informed consent when carrying out a development research is also crucial. This process includes explaining to the people participating in the study or the community the purpose of the research as well as the intended outcomes, both for researcher and for them (Wiles, 2013). The researcher therefore constructed a consent document with all the necessary and important information about the research such as research methods, objectives and outcomes. Participants were then required to sign the consent document.

Indigenous research methods observe cultural protocols, values, beliefs, and customs of communities in an ethical and respectful manner and incorporate reporting back and sharing knowledge as integral principles of reciprocity and feedback (Smith 1999). As such the current researcher also acknowledges the importance of reporting back in development research as suggest by development

scholars (Binns, 2006; Mercer, 2006; Smith, 1999). As a way of adopting these guidelines, the researcher was obligated to submit a copy of the findings and recommendations to Malilangwe Trust and also to liaise with the organisation for a way of sharing such information with the few participating beneficiaries.

As promoted by Binns (2006) and Mercer (2006), the researcher was also prepared and willing to account for the conclusions of the research. One of the research objectives as mentioned earlier is to advise other Malilangwe Trust projects with the hope also that the results might have an impact on other NGOs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. It is hoped that through this sharing of knowledge, current as well as future development initiatives can be improved, which will ultimately benefit the community members.

3.8 Limitations

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the application or interpretation of the results of the study. They are the constraints on generalizability and utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which one chooses to design the study and/or the method used to establish internal and external validity.

This research is the first time that the researcher has undertaken an academic case study and also the first time that she has organized, conducted, and analysed focus groups. Therefore from the onset mistakes were likely but also some useful insights associated with the resultant learning curves. This research was scheduled to occur within a period of a year, this made the longitudinal effect a primary limitation as well. Thus unlike in the case of a professor, who can practically dedicate years or even a lifetime to investigating a single study problem, the time available to investigate my research problem and to determine the outcome is constrained by the due date of my final research assignment. To manage this limitation the researcher made an effort to choose a topic that may not require an excessive amount of time to complete the literature review, apply the methodology, and gather and interpret the results.

In this study the researcher gathered data and reported herself and the methodology for this study was primarily limited to only a few personal expert interviews with Malilangwe Trust staff and a few selected beneficiaries. For this reason the researcher was conscious that self-reporting bias could emanate as a serious limitation because self-collected and self-reported data is compromised by the fact that it rarely can be independently verified. Thus self-collected and self-reported data has numerous possible sources of bias that ought to be noted as limitations. These include decorating own perspective and report, accrediting positive events and results to one's own agency and attributing negative events and outcomes to external forces or even exaggerating outcomes. This exaggerating can entail representing events as more significant than is actually suggested from other data. Aware of such limitations the researcher throughout the study endeavoured to be professionally ethical and also take what people say, whether in interviews, focus groups, or on questionnaires, at face value to ensure a dependable research report.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave a layout of the research design and the methods of sampling necessary for the selection of target populations participating in the study. A description of the data collection methods as well as the qualitative data analysis methods were also has been given in the chapter. The chapter has gone further to provide a discussion of the research ethics which require consideration in this study. The chapter is brought to an end by a discussion of the study limitations as well as ways of mitigating some of them. The next chapter will be focused on the actual field research as well as the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Presentation of field study Data

Data was collected from Malilangwe Trust staff and a few local community members. A mix of focus group discussions, face to face In-depth interviews as well as email interviews was employed to collect information. This section of the research consolidates the collected information and presents it in narrative, pictures, graphs and tables.

4.1.1 Response Rate

Out of the 11 Malilangwe Trust staff members identified through purposive sampling, 11 were interviewed, representing 100% response rate. Two focus group discussions were planned with community members but only one was conducted and 13 community members managed to participate. The second focus group discussion could not be carried out as participants especially women wanted to carry on with their day to day business and felt the focus group discussion would take their time. Email interviews were conducted with three senior level staff that could not be accessed for the face to face in depth interviews.

Fig 4: Composition of interview participants
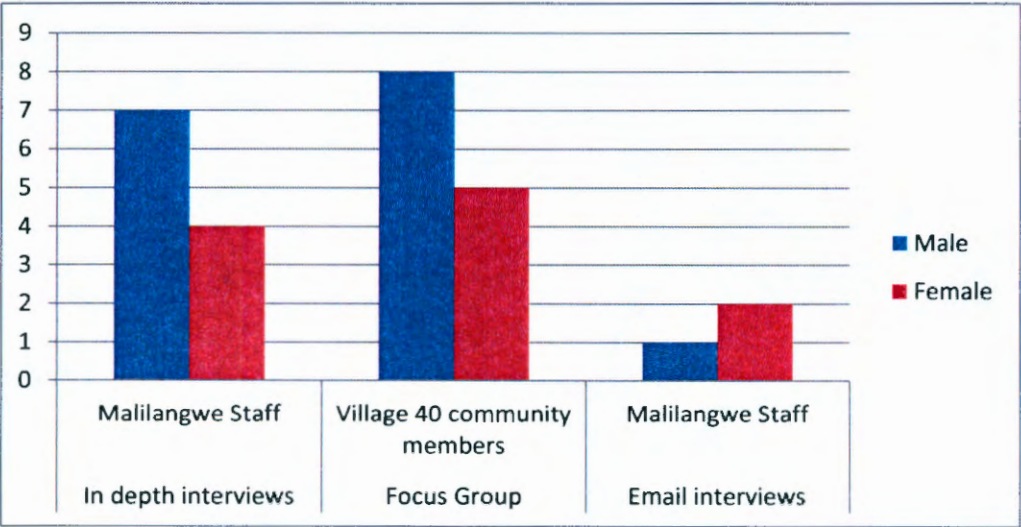
The research analysis is based on the themes below that were deduced from the research objectives and data.

Table 3: Broad Thematic Areas and Research Questions

Broad Thematic Area	Specific Theme Question
Theme 1: Methods of Participatory development Communication	Q2. How do you conceive the concept Development Communication? Q3 Are you aware of the concept of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) and how do you understand it? Q4.How has the PDC model been employed in the development initiatives by Malilangwe Trust?
Theme 2: Effectiveness of using PDC	Q1. What do you perceive to be the benefits of employing PDC in development initiatives? Q2. What do you perceive to be the risks of not employing PDC? Q3. Can you share any past good practices in development initiatives that sort to incorporate PDC?
Theme 3: Ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives?	Q1.What are the issues and factors impacting the PDC implementation process? Q.2 What do you think are the main reasons that make the systematic adoption of PDC in development projects difficulty? Q3. What would you recommend NGOS, government, and civil society to do to make for a realistic use and success of PDC?

4.2 Interview Findings

4.2.1 Ways in which Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe employs Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an agenda of people-centred development.

When asked to share views regarding the ways in which Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe employs Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an

agenda of people-centred development, the respondents indicated that it was necessary to start by establishing what participation is including advantages and disadvantages. Most respondents demonstrated knowledge of what participation entails as well as the possible benefits of participation in projects as indicated by the following recorded comments:

Mr Mazuru (Human resources manager) sees participation as: *"A social practice involving impartial engagement of relevant stakeholders in the designing through to the implementation of projects with the aim of realizing a mutual understanding amongst all members and then having them take action upon the reached consensus."*

In an attempt to elaborate the above view as linked to Malilangwe Trust, Mazuru gave the following comment: *"Nowadays wildlife conservation organisations like Malilangwe Trust are moving away from the top-down approaches in the creation of protected areas. This is because such approaches segregate people residing within or on the peripheries of the newly created protected areas".*

Furthermore, Mr Shiri (programmes manager) defined participation as: *"When control of projects is shared through the involvement of the community which has the potential to yield project ownership, team effort and positive results in the implementation of projects. However believe me as a component in development work participation can be strenuous, time consuming and expensive."*

In support of the above remarks, Edmore (Project manager) said: *"Participation entails the engagement of a number of individuals in circumstances, actions or processes that improve their lives". Experience has taught me that projects that lack participation of local community have slim chances of success. When you enter the community with a full-fledged program plan ready for implementation without consulting with community members especially in problem identification and solving be ready for resentment and failure."*

Drawing from the above interviewees' responses it is evident that the following themes seem to emerge with regards to the characteristics of participatory behaviors: shared ownership, consultation, stewardess, total involvement and teamwork. In other words, participation was regarded by participants as a term representing a process of creating what the researcher calls 'collegial ownership' where stakeholders have shared owenership of initiatives. Respondents agreed that most of the people who get involved in the consultation process demonstrate a robust sense of stewardship or, recreational or financial interest and are highly motivated to contribute to the future management direction of the organization's developmental initiatives and efforts through teamwork.

With special reference to participatory development practices of Malilangwe Trust, the above comments clearly indicate that the traditional top-down communication mechanisms are condemned for unproductivity in terms of community development. Hierarchical structures are criticised for lack of teamwork, cooperation, total involvement, democracy among organisational and community members. These negative attributes are linked with retarding development amongst individuals and the community at large. This is the reason why the Malilangwe has adopted Participatory Development Communication strategies because of attributes associated with collegial, empowering and self-driven approaches to achievement of objectives as a result of teamwork and democracy in decision sharing.

Respondents further unfolded on one hand the negative impact of traditional methods to communication and another hand, highlighted the progressive influence of Participatory Development Communication in the creation of wildlife reserves and also in project development and implementation as indicated by the following selected comments from the focus group and email interviews. Francis, one of the project officers gave the next comment: *"I understand that there are reasons why organisations especially NGOs are now so much into new participatory methods of running projects"*. This statement stirred the noteworthy comments listed below."

Martin (Field officer) said: *"Undeniably Malilangwe Trust appreciates and employs participatory approaches because they inspire a spirit of working together, self-driven*

attitude and action to achievement of objectives as well as democracy in decision making".

Ben (Field officer) said: *"That is true; where such approaches have been employed the outcome has been evident community acceptance and ownership of the projects with people willing to support the initiatives"*

Ben also went on to say:

> "I take it as when a stranger comes to me and tells me how badly I am running my life, presents a 'how to do it best manual' and also intends to run it for me. That is imposing, demeaning and clearly means I have no capacity to improve my own situation. How can an outsider know and have all the best answers to my problems more so have the best strategies too. "

He further explained:*"...So to me participation is the process through which communities, families or even individuals, take up responsibility for their own well-being and develop a capability to play a part in their own development or the development of the community."*

The implications of the above comments indicate that traditional approaches to communicating organizational and community development objectives are perceived to have a negative impact on the organizational effectiveness. Findings indicate that imposing, instructing, demanding and commanding are terms associated with demotivating, demoralizing and discouraging any form of human development. On another hand, any form of development that is community –centered which includes active participation and decision sharing in nature inspires motivation and enthusiasm to contribute constructively.

When asked regarding the types of PDC medium employed in Malilangwe interview participants gave the following responses below:

Martin (Field Officer): *You can clearly see the effort to involve the relevant stakeholders in Community Outreach projects through the meetings and workshops that are facilitated by Malilangwe Trust with such parties as the different ministries, the local community leaders to reach common consensus with regards project design and especially implementation.*

Peter (Field Officer) also said: *"Theatre is also one such participatory medium of communication that we have found it quite helpful especially for community awareness on the organisation's developmental plans. The community is quite receptive of messages delivered through our Tunza Edutainment Theatre group".*

From Peter's statement it is clear that Malilangwe employs theatre as a participatory medium to communicate with the community and to create awareness regarding wildlife conservation and other social issues.

Peter went on to say: *"The fact that most productions end up with in depth and burning discussions makes theatre most useful for needs assessment and problem solving as this allows for community members to comfortably air their concerns and ideas".*

Further Emphasising the role of theatre as a participatory instrument for communication Edmore (Project manager) said: *"Theatre has actually become our strongest community mobilisation and awareness tool especially in communicating the benefits of wildlife conservation which entail job creation and several other new livelihood opportunities. This has earned the organisation some level of trust and support from local communities".*

Videos as well as Pamphlets also emerged as other inclusive ways the organisation employs to communicate with relevant stakeholders as drawn from the comments below.

Raymond (Field officer):*"In communicating wildlife conservation messages wildlife videos are used and these are played at tourist centres within Malilangwe and*

visiting students from local schools are also allowed educational sessions using videos".
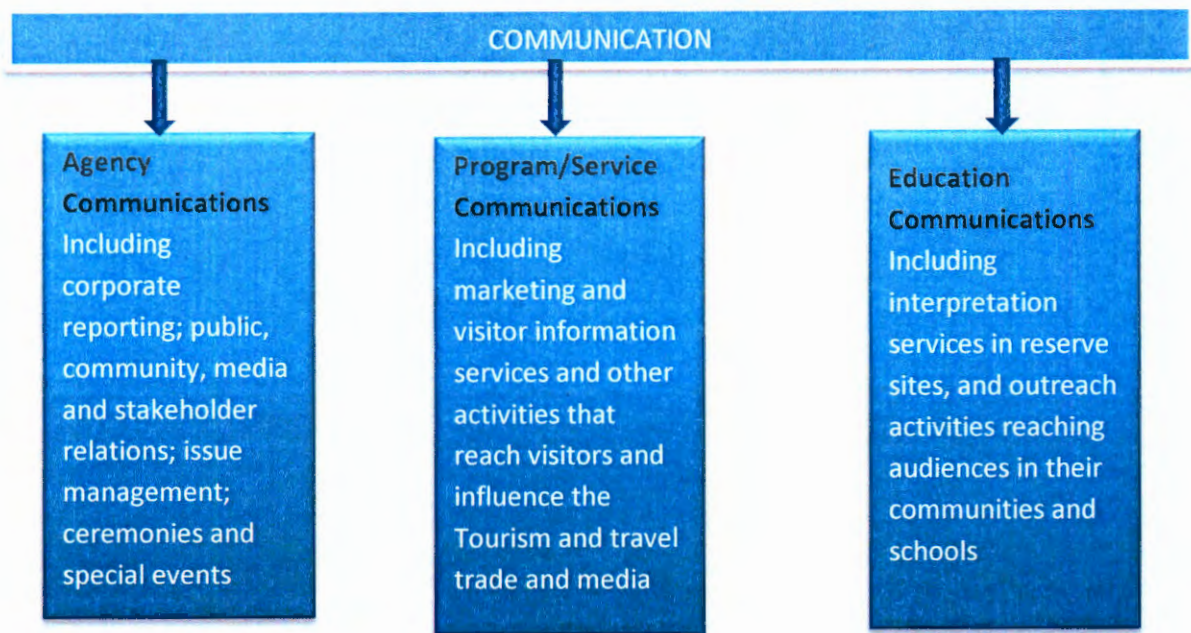
He further said: *"Children from local schools find video learning more appealing and sessions often lead into critical discussions especially on the importance of conservation and ways employed by Malilangwe to restore and maintain the bio-diversity to its former pristine condition".*

In summary, with specific reference to Malilamgwe Trust, the above given answers indicate the following types of Participatory Development Communication medium as commonly applied:

- Theatre performances- to communicate various community development agendas and messages. It is also used in needs assessment and solution finding in development project planning.
- Workshops and meetings are held with stakeholders in project planning and implementation and in project monitoring evaluation.
- Participatory Video- eg wildlife video shown for educational purposes on the importance of wildlife conservation.
- Pamphlets – to share project success stories, and for community awareness on different project themes and agendas especially the importance of wildlife conservation.
- Internet-making use of Malilangwe Trust website and Facebook pages to share success stories and good practice. This medium is also use for awareness on wildlife conservation.

Drawing from the interview findings and Malilangwe Trust document analysis below is Fig 5 illustrating the uses of Participatory Development Communication in Malilangwe Trust:

Fig 5: Participatory Development Communication uses in Malilangwe Trust

COMMUNICATION		
Agency Communications Including corporate reporting; public, community, media and stakeholder relations; issue management; ceremonies and special events	Program/Service Communications Including marketing and visitor information services and other activities that reach visitors and influence the Tourism and travel trade and media	Education Communications Including interpretation services in reserve sites, and outreach activities reaching audiences in their communities and schools

4.2.2 How PDC is employed through the project cycle in Malilangwe

Further shading light on the ways in which Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe employs Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an agenda of people-centred development interviewees gave the following views on how PDC is employed through the project cycle.

Stephen (Project Manager) said: "*I perceive that communication is not used to its full potential. There is limited political support for the value of communication in wildlife conservation management and communication is generally marginalized, and comes into play at the end of decision-making processes*".

Stephen also said "*There is no adequate assignment of economic and human resources to the objectives pursued by participatory development communication*".

Respondents indicated that the potential of PDC was underutilised in the management of projects and that there was no proper communication. Assignment of economic and human resources towards satisfactory and appropriate use of PDC was cited as in-adequate and that not much involvement of locals regarding project

designs was done. Findings therefore indicate that there are challenges encountered in the way the PDC cycle is employed in Malilangwe as evidenced by the following comments:

Susan (Field Officer):

"When it comes to conservation, locals are usually not involved at the stage of project design. Rather Malilangwe Trust usually carries out a variety educational and awareness initiatives through workshops meeting and Theatre performances with the community to ensure locals understand the importance of wildlife conservation and the immediate and future benefits to the community".

Thus short term outcomes from Participatory Development Communication have been sought and these short term outcomes have not been forthcoming. Furthermore, in Malilangwe like several other natural protected areas the predominant thinking is of natural sciences; and communication not considered much important and effective. Consequently professional and systematic integration of Participatory Development Communication into conservation efforts and community outreach programmes working groups has been difficult.

According to the comments above and information collected in the project evaluation reports, in the project concept design phase the decision-making process that takes place is usually a result of the interactions between particular players. These players include the Malilangwe Trust programs staff experts, professionals from national ministries for the particular projects and the local community leaders such as the headmen or chiefs. There is marginal involvement of the general community population where the projects are intended to take place as these are normally consulted in selection and design of the actual project. This was emphasised in the comments below made by some interview participants.

Raymond (Field officer):

"From an administrative perspective the technical logic of projects is usually not ideally meant for participation. As such project ideas will always be crafted in offices and project managers will always have to advance their skills in crafting nice ways of get the community to welcome their initiative. As a result we have situations where stakeholders such as a local community are engaged yet passively just to decorate' the initiatives as participatory".

He further explained saying: *"As far as solid action is concerned, most policymakers and decision-makers still remain unconvinced of how communication is extremely fundamental in the development process."*
Susan (Field officer) also said:

"The problem is in most cases development agencies have to act according to the directive and standards of the funders in terms of problem identification and analysis, potential ideas and answers discussion and proposal, and lastly putting solution into practice. This normally disregards contribution from beneficiaries which, in turn gives development agencies power to solely determine which social conditions and groups are problematic".

The above comments suggest that due to the relative complexity and uniqueness of most of the projects implemented in Malilangwe especially in conservation, it would a huge challenge and almost impossible to have local communities envisioning such projects let alone seek assistance. As supported by the following comment from project officer Edmore, it could then be derived that, almost by necessity the projects in some way emanate through a "mediated" participatory approach.

Edmore (Project officer):
"In the community outreach projects we have come to learn that community involvement is crucial especial in the early stages of project design through to the completion. We have developed a participatory system of introducing our ideas to relevant community leaders who then allow us discussion meetings with key community member for the prioritisation of needs and to inclusively design suitable solutions to the identified problems".

From the research findings it was also evident that the levels of people involvement differed with high levels occurring mostly at the project implementation stage and the least levels in administration processes. Fig 6 below summaries this ranking of people participation.

Fig 6: Ranking of People Involvement in Malilangwe projects, (From least to highest) according to perceptions drawn from interviews.
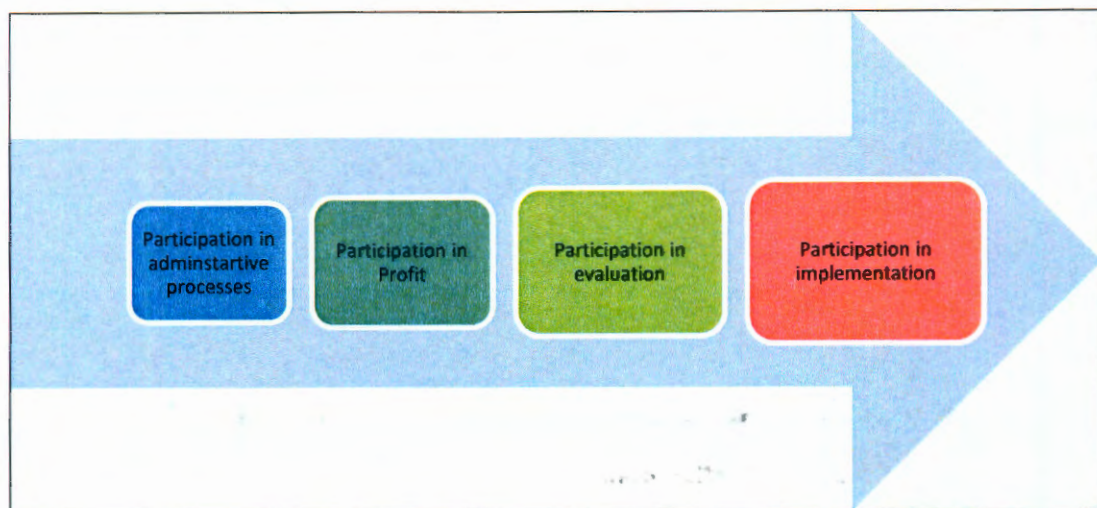
a) When people participate in implementation i.e. actively motivating and mobilising people to be involved in the execution of projects. Thus, either people are allocated particular duties and tasks. Or they are obligated and expected to donate specific identified resources.

b) When there is participation in the evaluation: People are requested to participate in the evaluation of the challenges, failure or success of a project during implementation and upon completing it.

c) Participation in profit: People benefit from the outcomes of a project, this could be agriculture produce from market garden, medical care by a mobile doctor or a vehicle to transport the harvested produce to the market.

d) Participation in administrative processes: People are responsible for identifying problems and starting discussions on problem solving, as well as planning activities which they will jointly carry out as a community.

e) participation in the conceptual and planning phases

The table below identifies the level of people participation in Malilangwe Trust initiatives throughout the 6 stages of the project cycle. Thus although it is not through a full people-based participatory method, data from interviews indicated that the way Malilangwe trust employs PDC through the project cycle is still in many ways, a step forward. This have been found quite unlike what typically transpires in several other development organisations where aims and objectives are exclusively established by a small selected number of external individuals with minimal input by other stakeholders such as the community members at large.

Table:6 The six typical Project Cycle Phases and levels of Participation in Malilangwe Trust

Phase 1: Identifying the sector or area of intervention. The phase is usually originated by Malilangwe and relevant parties with interest in stakes. Local Community not involved	Phase 2: Needs assessment to provide information crucial for project formulation. **Local community is highly involved**	Phase 3: Definition of goals, objectives and resources and determining duration of the project. This phase is usually done at headquarters &participation of the local community is seldom significant.	Phase 4: The planning or strategy design. Here project management takes a shift from the headquarters back to the field but with **partial community involvement**	Phase 5: The implementation of the activities needed to achieve the designated objectives. **Highest Local community involvement**	Phase 6: Monitoring of the on-going process assessing the impact and results of the project. **Local community involvement is also high**

4.2.3 Assessing the effectiveness of using PDC, identifying both good practises if any, and challenges.

When asked to assess effectiveness of using PDC, identifying both best practises and challenges, some of the managers indicated that participation was not necessary in all instances; however, decision making sometimes is done by the office bearers who have the skills and expertise. This is evidenced again by the following comment given by Raymond (Field officer) where he said:

"From an administrative perspective the technical logic of projects is usually not ideally meant for participation. As such project ideas will always be crafted in offices and project managers will always have to advance their skills in crafting nice ways of getting the community to welcome their initiative. As a result we have situations where stakeholders such as local community are engaged yet passively just to decorate' the initiatives as participatory".

In an attempt to elaborate on the above comment, Raymond (Field officer) said:

"When we approach the community leaders normally we will be having an idea of the sector of intervention for example education or health sector depending on the requirements of the funders. The community contributes in deciding the type of project necessary to curb the problem within the given sector".

Thus Raymond identified a problem with the agencies with regards to channels and methods of communication. He also seemed concerned with policy makers who neglect decision making and involvement of the community members when he said:

"In the community outreach projects we have come to learn that community involvement is crucial especially in the primary phases of project design through to the completion. We have developed a participatory system of introducing our ideas to relevant community leaders who then allow us discussion meetings with key community members for the prioritisation of needs and to inclusively design suitable solutions to the identified problems".

Beneficiaries of the three case study projects also gave comments that summarised some of the common views and the discussion was helpful mostly in pointing out the challenges associated with people involvement and PDC implementation and from a beneficiary perspective.

"The professional project managers and field officers often do not know how to communicate using our indigenous communication methods instead of their teacher to student methods"

"With proper communication NGOs will realise that community members are not impoverished as they appear at face value. In fact they can drive the process of development themselves through identification and mobilisation of existing of existing yet unrecognised assets and gifts."

The above comments revealed that poor communication methods and strategies employed by development practioners also affects people participation.Interview participants pointed out that the teacher to student method often employed by project officers undermines the potential of the locals and hinders necessary opportunity for the local community to contribute what they have in the development process.

4.2.4 What do you consider as the ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives?

When asked to give views on ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives, the following themes emerged from the interviewees: ownership of the project, free will to participate, total involvement and willingness to contribute. This is evidenced by the following comments:

Edmore (Project manager):

"The community has owned that Supplementary Feeding Project because it is their brain child. There is free will to participate, community leaders selected

feeding points and recruited community members responsible for providing space at their homesteads for cooking, preparing porridge and selecting the beneficiary kids for the program. Because of the involvement resources such as labour, firewood are also provided by the community. Malilangwe provides the special porridge ingredients and takes care of the administrative business".

Mr Mazuru (HR manager):"*It is participatory communication that has allowed for the extensive acceptance of Malilangwe's conservation and community development projects. All the communication and awareness efforts have yielded reasonable involvement of local people and they now have some sense of ownership of the programs*".

In support of the above comments, Edmore (project manager) adds by saying: *"Due to PDC there is general increase in the local people's willingness to contribute in projects when they are involved at early stages and development agencies are not seen as intruders"*.

He went on to say that: *"At the creation of Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve some local communities especially the Tshvuka community felt there being forced without adequate consultation. They were unsure of the potential benefits to them and felt marginalised from the planning process. Some members of the Tshvuka community feared that they were merely going to be evicted from their ancestral lands"*.

From the two comments participants showed their understanding of how participatory communication works as an introductory vehicle for interaction to allow the establishment of mutual consent regarding development initiatives goals and strategies. Participatory Development Communication creates common understanding between parties and removes the sense of alienation on the part of the beneficiaries.

Edmore (Project manager) also gave a different view by exposing the negative impact of lack of involving the community when he states that:

"When the local people are not involved that is a recipe for failure. I have learnt that in conservation when locals are displaced from an area for the creation of reserves their way of life is seriously disturbed resulting in a negative attitude towards all conservation initiatives and even the agency itself. If Malalingwe had used that strategy such problems as poaching or cutting down of trees could still be prevalent and uncontrollable."

In the comment below, two community members from the focus group discussion shared views that further supports the positive impact of participatory communication has had with regards to wildlife conservation in Malilangwe.

"Concerning Wildlife Conservation Malilangwe has been mostly in touch with the community for awareness and education so that people appreciate the importance of conserving wildlife.

"With constant intense communication and education people have come to understand the objective and long term benefits of conservation. And we seeing some proceeds for the Malilangwe Wildlife conservation and tourism are being invested back into the local community through such initiatives as Feeding programs and scholarships and even employment creation".

In addition to the above comments, other community members in the focus group shared similar sentiments regarding the importance of people involvement in projects and the following were some of the comments given.

"I agree communication is important before anything happens, we do not want surprise development attacks. We have brains and eyes and also we have gifts and resources. It is respectful to consult with us because the community always has something to give. But you can never know until there is communication".

"We need to be involved when these projects start. NGOs must talk to us first so that we know what they are planning and also so that we share with them what is important to us and we want to see happening".

Drawing from the above assertions, it is clear that there was a general agreement to the fact that communication is crucial in facilitating participation development projects. Through PDC the capacity, assets and talents of local community members can be realised and meaningfully made use of and this creates a sense of project ownership. Projects work successfully when their design and implementation are participatory.

One community member in the focus group discussion further said:

"With the Feeding project, we were asked first what we need and there was hunger, food assistance was important and the porridge project for our kids was our idea as a community. Community People built the cooking sheds and we are making the porridge at our homes".

This and the other comments above reveal the understanding that genuine participation abhors the impression that local community members are not passive beneficiaries of pre-planned development strategies and initiatives. Rather, through the use of participatory communication local people can be understood as active participants who are capable of creating or finding solutions for the problems affecting them.

"Sometimes I am confused what participation really means. Sometimes these NGOs they bring us together for planning but only their ideas will be used. And they consult with us when it suits and benefit them when instead they should communicate all the times".

A synthesis of the comments above also reveals that, firstly, Participation calls for having an accommodative and open approach. It also demands being prepared to listen and learn. The comments also disclosed that the meaning of participation is often vague. Community members are often confused when they attempt to draw the meaning from how the so called 'participatory' projects are often implemented. It seems developments agents can interpret or define participation any how to suit their agendas and this threatens the legitimacy and effectiveness the process.

An interesting set of comments below was also extracted from the focus group discussion:

"Initially it was hard for the traditional Tshuvuka community members to welcome the establishment of the Malilangwe Reserve in their land and poaching was a problem for long time. It was as if outsiders were invading and displacing them to benefit from their ancestral land resources while they suffer".

"That is true, it is very difficult to accept and commit time and resources to an initiative whose objectives are not mutual explained and benefits are unclear or will come in the long run. Communication was mandatory for the Conservation initiative to work as it is evidently doing to date".

The comments above also revealed a common participation problem associated Reserves, protected areas or Wildlife Conservation areas like Malilangwe. Participants revealed that there is often marginalisation of the local population in the management of wildlife or the natural resources mainly because the knowledge and capacity of locals is underestimated, or doubted. As a result the administrative and initial program design and planning is carried out by the professionals. This result in conflict and local people being reluctant to accept, support or participate in the new unpopular conservation ideas and measures "imposed" by outside development agencies even when there is positive motive. The comments also indicated why Malilangwe Trust had to evade past methods of wildlife reserves and project development and management for participatory ones as participants indicate that they are associated with strict control, force, intimidation, marginalisation and conflict.

Interesting insights were also drawn from the focus group regarding how Participatory Development Communication facilitates for the involvement of crucial stakeholders such as community members thereby empowering then to drive development initiatives. Communication has the ability to bring power shifts reinstating the sense of independency on local community members rather that

believing in sole emancipation from development problems by outside experts. Such opinions were drawn from the comments given below:

"In the past when a person needed something they would ask the neighbour for help. This has changed today to the belief that we can only get all help from a professional or organisation".

"PDC helps NGOs to realise and concentrate on assets that communities have for development rather than the needs".

Through the above comments it is evident that the participants agree that Participatory Development Communication also entails being strongly committed to work together with all stakeholders; especially those regarded as the most underprivileged and marginalized. It also involves understanding and accepting the fact that empowering such people will mean outsiders losing control or power. Only when such an understanding exists will the specific skills in participatory communication become noteworthy. These skills would be helpful in assisting the local people to explore and make a diagnosis their priorities, needs and problems and also assist the community people in selecting and designing suitable approaches or strategies to solving their problems.

Participants in the focus group discussion also shared their common view that if development initiatives are to be genuinely participatory they need not to come with stringent schedules, outlined specific outcomes and set deadlines. Locals considered that as an obvious red flag indicating that participation in such project will mostly be partial if not merely decorative. Set deadlines and strict schedules limit the degree of involvement of local community members. Below are some of the comments shared:

"NGOs are usually not flexible in their approaches to participatory development. In most cases the projects are too short to allow full participation of community members. Projects are introduced with fixed durations and deadlines".

"For me fixed project deadlines and durations hinder genuine participation. Participation is a process which requires time and should never be applied speedily or rashly due to the governing funding cycles which control the execution of development initiatives that are sponsored"

"That is true; many times we are invited to take part in projects, but just when we start to be actively involved, the project shuts down".

Ultimately, despite being costly in time and finance, the information from research interviews and discussions unveiled the following four themes associated with the application of participation and Participatory Development Communication in projects to: (1) collaboration (2) sharing of information, (2) consultation, (4) empowerment and attitude changing

4.2.5 Advices that can be given to other Malilangwe Trust and other NGOs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

Regarding advices on the application of Participatory Development Communication in. NGOs development work, the following recommendations were put forward especially from the focus group:

Edmore (project manager) gave the following recommendation: *"Participatory Development Communication should be integrated into the processes of planning for the management of projects right from their conception and all the way through the whole cycle of projects, programmes and policies.*

In the statement below he further emphasised the need for institutions to give sufficient chance for PDC in-order for its effectiveness to be tangibly experienced and realised.

"Within the decision-making as well as technical structures of organizations, adequate room should be given for participatory communication to work to its fullest potential at all stages".

Mazuru (HR Manager) said:" *If the agenda of PDC is allocated adequate administrative support and financial resources its implementation becomes a success.*"

He further added saying:" *There must be continual effort put to develop research initiatives and explore support for the management of and training in Participatory Development Communication strategies*".

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and summarised the data collected from the questionnaires that were distributed among the Malilangwe Trust staff members, as well as some project beneficiaries. Preliminary assessment indicated the significance of People involvement and Participatory Development Communication in community development programs. Nevertheless, the findings revealed some weaknesses in the conceptualization and implementation. The next chapter analyses and synthesizes the findings such that conclusions can be drawn from the study and relevant recommendations be made.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This section provides discussion and conclusions established from the presentation and analysis of findings in the chapter above. The research aimed to assess and present the degree of feasibility and efficiency of employing Participatory Development Communication in development initiatives, identifying both good practises if any, and challenges and to ultimately ascertain ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives. In framing the conclusions, attention will be devoted to these objectives, as well as the theoretical framework of the study.

5.2 Conclusions

The conclusions below can be extracted from the findings of this current research that are presented in Chapter 4.

Firstly, the concept of Participatory Development Communication constantly falls victim of being defined and conceived vaguely and inconsistently. This is even evident in the answers and views given in the interviews and focus group discussion. Resultantly the use of Participatory Development Communication is unlikely to be consistent in the different stages of the project cycle. Instead, it is likely to be applied through different methods, in the different phases and for varied purposes. It can even be manipulated and be directed to achieve a specially selected end or be non-directed and open-ended. The vagueness is also a problematic matter, as it can be made use of by those genuinely committed to participation, facilitating flexibility that results in more practical people oriented strategies and planning. However, the indistinctness of this concept can have negative effects when manipulated by those more concerned with project budgets and measureable outcomes compared to the empowerment of people. Thus, the vagueness can provide a comfortable disguise that is capable of legitimizing nearly all sorts of approaches as participatory, even those that are mostly vertically guided.

In Malilangwe Trust, PDC has produced a bulk of valuable experiences confirmed at different project management stages, from conception through to the implementation of management programmes. Some areas where it has been usefully applied include: interpretation of nature; planning the management of the protected area; promoting participation of local communities; generation of skills for biodiversity management; public policy design and management; conflict resolution; financial management. In all these areas, communication facilitates for the consolidation of values and also helps to establish multi-sectorial and multicultural dialogue regarding community development in general.

Drawing from the responses given in the focus group discussion, it is clear that communication serves a couple of fundamental purposes which include the following: promoting and consolidating people's consent on aims and objectives; reinforcing and maintaining the social order; supporting national plans and goals as defined from up above administrative hierarchies.The research findings further reveal that from another view,communication especially when it is participatory takes up a new meaning. It becomes a means for the voices of people to be acknowledged and considered and also a way of empowering them to actively take part in decisions making on issues that concern their personal lives, at both the local community level and in the long run within their societies. To be more precise, the main expected outcomes of communication as evident in the findings of this study are: to foster learning and education through media; facilitating as well as promoting people involvement in the process of development ; to encourage the involvement of people in institutional activities; to promote and create avenues for both vertical and horizontal networking for the exchanging of relevant information as well as providing policymakers with necessary information regarding local people's priorities and needs.

The study also uncovers that as much as Participatory Development Communication remarkably evades many of the inadequacies of dominant approaches, it is still muddled with contradictions and residual flaws which challenge its capability to provide a completely new approach the development process. If participation is the core of the development process, then there need to be a shift in whole way of

thinking about communication (from a process that is vertical uni-linear, to one that is horizontal and multi-linear), since the involvement of people likely results in shifts in the patterns of power. This is why most institutions, NGOs like Malilangwe Trust or governments with a stronger authoritarian orientation are not much interested with the idea of participation. Power is an essential aspect of the communication process; if participation genuinely entails empowering people and allowing them to define and determine their own realities, persuasive and hierarchical undertones should be stripped off the process of communication for development.

According to the literature reviewed in chapter 2, there is a gap that has been left between the actual application and the theory of Participatory Development Communication. This is especially because most of the proponents of communication in the development field are academic educators and researchers with only a few amongst them having ever had either the chance, the knowledge, or experience of applying the theoretic hypotheses in real settings. As such it is necessary for Participatory Development Communication to merge both the theoretic information and practical experiences in order to come up with an approach that is unified and balanced. Participatory Development Communication is both a hypothesis and a practice that has unlimited· potential, only if employed within systems that are sincerely all-inclusive or democratic.

Based on examination of the outcome of the Malilangwe Trust case study projects as shared by interviewees, there are a couple of advantages of employing approaches that are participatory in development initiatives. To begin with, the use of participation facilitates for the utilization of the knowledge and wisdom of local people. This is useful since in most cases the locals are aware of most issues concerning their surroundings and lives. When such factors are considered in project development and implementation and supported with outside expertise and resources the most likely outcome is projects with a much more manageable scope and projects that are not unduly hinged on imported ideologies and expertise. Instead, the study revealed that projects that are participatory in nature often have minimal recurring expenses and beneficiaries themselves tend to voluntarily maintain the transformation or development even after projects have been completed.

Just like participation, Participatory Development Communication is an empowering tool while at the same time it provides a range of alternatives upon which appropriate strategies can be built. Thus until "the intended beneficiaries" are actively involved in all the processes of planning and making decisions in projects, the probability of projects succeeding is significantly narrow. Although notably the aim of many development initiatives is to bring innovations, most development practitioners and staff agree that this can only be achieved if the assessment of these innovations is carried out by sponsoring agencies and if practitioners follow both traditional approaches and established institutional routines. The value of local community contribution is still underrated and that of developmental professionals is overestimated. This overlooks more creative paths, such as the involvement of people from the initial phases of the projects cycles. Often projects staff attempt to readmit participatory communication and participation at later stages and this results in partial, fictitious and often confusing ways of involving people.

Furthermore as drawn from some of the project manager views shared, there are slim chances of using Participatory Development Communication from the beginning as the capacity for locals to give meaningful contribution is questioned at this stage. As such communication still falls victim of being considered last resort or a mere support that comes only after project objectives have been well-defined. As pointed out in the focus group discussion with some local community members, this greatly impairs its effectiveness as it is applied to prearranged situations, which in most cases will already be compromised. Thus ideally, in the project cycle it is possible and also mandatory to use communication from the beginning in order to allow for the required communication and the lateral exchanging of information necessary to guarantee the suitability, applicability and effectiveness of development initiatives. Thus as explained earlier, data from interviews indicated that although it is not through a full people-based participatory method, the way Malilangwe Trust employs PDC through the project cycle is still in many ways a step forward towards genuine people involvement in the different phases of the project cycle. However, this is not yet happening as often as necessary and usually communication ends up being an afterthought element that is merely added on by NGOs to creatively buy local interest or address problems arising during the implementation phase.

It can therefore be concluded that one of the chief functions of communications practitioners is the creation or generation of spaces for interaction in which mutual understanding on developmental issues can be established. Objectives of sustainable development can surely be achieved when this function is recognized and reinforced. Communication and education are processes which generate knowledge. They have to be duly granted their strategic significance, and it should be recognized that they are two-way processes, which are of fundamental importance in supporting the social processes which allow appropriate management of development initiatives such as management of protected areas like the Malilangwe Trust Wildlife Reserve. Participatory Development Communication should be accepted as a cross-cutting process aimed at achieving the objectives of sustainable development, and contributing to ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and social groups. In order for this to be achieved, it is crucial for Participatory Development Communication to respect the capabilities, cultures, rhythms, time frames, spaces and languages of the various stakeholders.

5.3 Recommendations

Consequently, drawing from the research findings, the researcher recommends the following regarding the use of Participatory Development Communication:

It is crucial that Participatory Development Communication be integrated into planning processes for the management of development institutes from their conception and throughout the entire cycle of policies, programmes and projects. Necessary technical training for development staff should be included for understanding of the concept and also to eliminate bias meaning or interpretation of people participation. This recommendation is drawn from the findings in the discussion above that suggest that both Participatory Development Communication and the concept of participation are often vaguely defined. Because of this vagueness there is also no systematic use of PDC. Below is a breakdown of recommendations on how the quality of Participatory Development Communication application can be improved.

Strategic Positioning: It is crucial that institutions provide room for Participatory Development Communication in their technical as well administrative structures in-

order for it to work to its fullest potential at all stages. Communication must be established at the appropriate place within management decision making processes and also throughout project cycles.

Strategic Planning: It is necessary that development agencies carry out strategic planning exercises in their programming to which Participatory Development communication responds. The quality and quantity of the planning also has to be improved. A clear policy on the use of PDC in the management of development initiatives must be defined and put in place. Establishment of specific communication offices or departments that support and promote the integration of Participatory Development Communication in programming within development organisations is recommended.

Ethics: There is need for the ethical factors that influence the application of PDC to be considered seriously when PDC is being applied. The information transmitted including media and program reports content must be guided by democratic principles and respond to sustainable development rather than the interests of individuals.

Financing: There is need for sufficient administrative support as well as financial resources to be assigned to the implementation of Participatory Development Communication as well as education and training. In order for participatory communication programming objectives to be realised, a sufficient fraction of financial support ought to be allocated to the specific communication components in every project. New and creative ways of financing Participatory Development Communication should be established or stimulated without however compromising or risking the purposes as well as credibility of development projects. Project managers ought to carefully evaluate the association of programs goals and activities implementation with Participatory Development Communication.

Training: Program workers must be provided with specific training thereby enabling them to improve and specialize in their application of participatory development communication approaches. All personnel involved in the management of development initiatives should be provided with solid basic understanding of

participatory communication concepts and even training in the basic aspects and principles on the subject of communication in general

Research: Continual effort should be put towards developing research initiatives and exploring support for the management of participatory communication strategies and education. This is critical in development initiatives programming in order to enhance levels of certainty regarding local community multicultural aspects, ideologies, perceptions, resistance or understanding and also regarding choice of the appropriate activities and implementation strategies such as languages or media.

Evaluation: Projects have to be constantly and systematically evaluated to specifically identify the impact of Participatory Development Communication whenever it is applied. This serves to verify contribution that would have been really made and also provide a record of learning curves and areas of improvement for better use of PDC in future. A work group for monitoring and evaluation as well as recording of PDC implementation practices and experience should be set up.

The researcher concludes by recommending that NGOs combine efforts in identifying and supporting existing international co-operations or initiatives that pursue the agenda of people-centred development to increase intervention of communication approaches that are genuinely participatory in the running of development projects.

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Appendices
Appendix 1: Measurement Map

OBJECTIVE/QUESTION	DATA SOURCE	DATA/QUESTIONS	RESPONSES WILL BE SORTED INTO
Objective 1: To survey the ways Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe is employing Participatory Development Communication in pursuit of an agenda of people centred development.	Interviews with Malilangwe Trust Director and/ Programme Manager	-What is or how do you conceive the concept of Participatory Development Communication?	-Types of PDC medium used i.e.-Theatre performances -Workshops and meetings -Participatory Video -Mass Media
		-How has the PDC model been employed in the development initiatives by Malilangwe Trust?	-Level of participation (passive participation, participation by consultation, functional participation and empowered participation).
	Interviews with programme officer, Project coordinator, field officers	- In the development initiatives under investigation, how is PDC addressed through the process of project conception and implementation?	- Participation in administrative processes -Participation in implementation. -Participation in evaluation -Participation in profit
		-What are the issues and factors impacting the PDC implementation process?	-Contextual Factors -Project related factors -People-related factors
Objective 2: To assess the effectiveness of using PDC, Identifying both best practises if any, and challenges	- Interviews with programme officer, Project coordinator, field officers -Focus group interviews with selected beneficiaries -Monitoring and evaluation reports(Impact Assessments)	-What do you perceive to be the benefits of employing PDC in development initiatives?	Benefit to Organisation Benefit to community Benefit to the Nation
		- What do you perceive to be the risks of not employing PDC?	Risk to Organisation Risk to community Risk to the Nation
Objective3: To ascertain ways of making a more realistic use of PDC in development initiatives	- Interviews with programme officer, Project coordinator, field officers -Focus group interviews with selected beneficiaries	Can you share any past best practices in development initiative that sort to incorporate PDC?	-PDC Best practice report
		What would you recommend NGOS, government, and civil society to do to make for a realistic use and success of PDC?	-Legislation -Policy -Social/Cultural -Economic

Appendix 2: Consent Letter 1

Researcher:
Linia Ruzive

Research Supervisor:
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Date: 8 August 2015

INFORMED CONSENT:

Dear Participant

This letter serves to invite you to participate in this research project:

Participatory Development Communication among community development NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Case of Malilangwe Trust

Generally my research topic looks at the use of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) by NGOs and I am intending to use Malilangwe Trust as the case study.

Project Aim: I would like to find out how Malilangwe Trust understands Participatory Development Communication (PDC) and how Malilangwe plan for the applicaticatin of PDC i and how it is actually applied in the community development projects. Your participation in this research project will be helpful in providing understanding of the factors influencing the implementation as well as the challenges and prospects of Participatory Development Communication in Malilangwe Trust development initiatives as well as amongst NGOs in Zimbabwe. The whole research project is entirely for academic purposes.

There are minimal possible risks projected regarding your participation in this research. The most probable risk may be loss of your productive time and to prevent this, the interview guide will be sent to you in advance so that you familiarize with the questions and less time will be spent on the interview. Interviews are intended to take about 30 minutes at most and they will be held at the interviewees' convenience.

While your contribution in this study is highly valuable, your participation is entirely on volunteer bases and you are not obligated to take part . In the case that you choose to take part and there be any arising matters of concern making you uncomfortable, please be aware that you are free to stop your participation at any time with no further repercussions.

Please do not hesitate to also contact me directly for discussion in the event that you experience any unhappiness or discomfort with the way the research is being conducted, and you are also free to contact my research supervisor whose details are given above.

Yours sincerely,

_____

Linia Ruzive

_____

Please fill in and return this page. Keep the letter above for future reference.

Research: **Participatory Development Communication among community development NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Case of Malilangwe Trust**

Researcher: Linia Ruzive

Name and Surname: _____

(Designation): _____

Contact number: _____

- .I hereby give free and informed consent to participate in the above mentioned research study.
- I understand what the study is about, why I am participating and what the risks and benefits are.
- I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from my participation, subject to the stipulations he/she has indicated in the above letter.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3: Consent Letter 2

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

My name is Linia Ruzive and I am a student at the University of Free State in South Africa (Student number 2013121476).I am currently studying Masters in Development Studies. I am required to carry out a research project and write a mini dissertation in order to complete the degree.

Topic: Participatory Development Communication among community development NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Case of Malilangwe Trust

Project Aim: I intend to find out how Malilangwe Trust conceives the concept of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) and how PDC is intended to be applied and how it is really employed in the community empowerment initiatives. Your participation in this research project will be helpful in providing understanding of the factors influencing the implementation as well as the challenges and prospects of Participatory Development Communication in Malilangwe Trust development initiatives as well as amongst NGOs in Zimbabwe. The whole research project is entirely for academic purposes.

Your participation is requested in the following way: I would like to interview some of your organisation staff and discuss the following: **1.** The participatory development communication strategies and tools that are applied in the Malilangwe Trust projects and what are their aims and objectives. **2.** How communication activities are applied and how you participate in them. **3.** what problems and issues arise when applying participatory communication in the projects. The researcher hopes to interview recommended programme managers or directors, project coordinators, field officers and if possible some selected beneficiaries. Projects reports for the selected three case study projects will be valuable as detailed secondary source for my data collection.

Interviews are intended to take about 30 minutes at most and they will be held at the interviewees' convenience. Interviews will be recorded and the conversations will be typed out later. The organisation or interviewees can ask to go through their interview record before the analiysis of thei interviews takes place. A copy of the research findings can also be issued to Malilangwe Trust. All information collected will be confidentially stored and used only for the purpose of this proposed research project. In case of any other relevant concerns or for further enquiry on the project please contact me via email (leeruzive00@gmail.com) or phone (+27 84 479 3803).You may also contact my supervisor Prof L .Botes at (PO Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, Republic of South Africa) or 051 4012240 / 27833552476.

Thank you

Linia Ruzive

Appendix 4: interview Guide for Malilangwe Trust Staff

Gender: Position:

How long have you been working in the Organization

What are your functions in the organisation?

Can you briefly describe what Malilangwe Trust focuses on as an organisation?

Do you have any particular experiences in the field of Development communication and/or Participatory Development Communication?

Based on your experience what are the most common uses of communication in development?

What do you think are the main advantages of using COMMUNICATION? And what are the weaknesses or limitations?

Based on your experience how do you define PARTICIPATION as currently used in development?

What do you think are the main advantages of participation and what are the limitations?

Are you aware of the concept of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) and how do you conceive it?

Which Participatory Development Communication tools and strategies are applied in the Malilangwe Trust projects?

What do you perceive to be the benefits and limitations of employing PDC in development initiatives?

What are the issues and factors impacting the PDC implementation process?

What do you think are the main reasons that make the systematic adoption of PDC in development projects difficulty?

Can you share any past best practices in development initiatives that sought to incorporate PDC?

In your opinion, should PDC be used in every development project or where it is appropriate? Give reasons.

What would you recommend NGOS, government, and civil society to do to make for a realistic use and success of PDC?

Lastly, do you have any documents that you recommend for review as well as individuals who could be relevant to my research?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix 5: interview Guide for Local community members.

Topic: Participatory Development Communication among community development NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Case of Malilangwe Trust.

1. In your own understanding what is Development Communication?

2. What do you think are the main advantages of using COMMUNICATION?

3. And what are the weaknesses or limitations of using Communication?

4. Based on your knowledge or experience what are the most common uses of communication in Malilangwe Trust conservation tourism and community development programmes?

5. Based on your experience how do you define PARTICIPATION as currently used in Malilangwe Trust programs or initiatives?

6. What do you think are the main advantages of participation and what are the limitations?

7. How do you understand the concept of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) as used in Malilangwe Trust?

8. Which Participatory Development Communication **tools and strategies** are applied in the Malilangwe projects?

9. What do you perceive to be the benefits and limitations of employing PDC in development initiatives?

10. What are the issues and factors impacting the PDC implementation process?

11. What do you think are the main reasons that make the systematic adoption of PDC in development projects difficulty?

12. Can you share any past best practices in development initiatives that sought to incorporate PDC?

13. In your opinion, should PDC be used in every development project or where it is appropriate? Give reasons.

14. What would you recommend NGOS, government, or civil society to do to make for a realistic use and success of PDC?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME