

Case Study No. 3: The Mumwa Crafts Association Community Development through Craft Production

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Introduction

The Mumwa Crafts Association is a social enterprise working in the field of craft production, marketing and sale. It is based in Zambia's Western Province and active in all seven of its districts, with its headquarters in the provincial capital of Mongu. Mumwa has over 3500 members many of them craft producers in rural areas. The name Mumwa is derived from a type of tree which is an important source of material and dyes for the craft production process. The Mumwa tree is also known as initially quite difficult to plant, but hardy and strong once it takes root. This is suggested to be analogous with the Mumwa Crafts Association which was established under difficult conditions in 1994, but has now been in operation

almost 20 years overcoming various adversities.

Mumwa gains the majority of its income from trading both domestic and international. It also receives more ad hoc support from donors. Surpluses are used for developmental purposes, for example the construction of water wells in rural areas. Mumwa works in partnership with a variety of organisations at local and national levels, and is linked into to a number of international networks for example the Global Natural Fibres Forum. Mumwa's stated mission is "*to enable communities to generate income through crafts, to provide high quality traditional crafts and to uphold traditional values in support of community development*".

History

The Mumwa Crafts Association was founded in 1994 under the leadership of Mr Kekelwa Mundia. Prior to Mumwa's establishment there had been a history of craft projects in Western Zambia set up and supported by international donors and led by expatriates. Unfortunately these projects had frequently failed to become self sufficient and had ceased either at the end of donor funding or upon the loss of expatriate staff. The failure of these previous projects generated scepticism on the part of international donors about the feasibility of any large scale craft project in Western Zambia. Various consultancy studies commissioned by the European Union and Irish Government amongst others in the early 1990s reinforced this perception, concluding that while such a project might be possible it would require substantial

start-up capital and ongoing support from donors. This situation and the difficulties Mumwa faced are described in the following interview quotation:

“Then it was like study after study, study after study and then that is why in 1994 we said no I think we are wasting time. Otherwise we would have been established in 1992 when all this research was taking place. Then we said these people are wasting our time because at the end of the day it is us to benefit not the donors, they are just there to help but it appears that they are not even taking this action very seriously. That is why in 1994 we formed the Mumwa Crafts Association. If you looked at the budget by the European Union, how they were thinking this could be formed. For a period of 3 years you look at that budget it is really actually a gross sum of money, but ours we said no even if we will not actually get that line then let’s start it with a mere capital of 9 US dollars. But we aspired to get all the zeal from the producers” (Interview Chairman Mumwa Crafts Association)

It was with this backdrop and in contrast to previous craft projects in Western Zambia, that the Mumwa Craft Association was founded with limited capital and donor support by committed local people with the aim of using crafts as a vehicle for community development and poverty alleviation. Mumwa developed organically from the bottom-up building on the commitment and ‘zeal’ of its members. From its inception member participation and ownership of the organisation has been central to the way

it operates, and as will be discussed has played a key role in its longevity and success. The first years after Mumwa’s establishment were undoubtedly a struggle for all involved. The organisation was heavily reliant on volunteer labour and the own funding of members who often made considerable personal sacrifices in their efforts to progress it. Considerable work was also required. For example production processes needed to be consolidated, markets and customers identified and internal organisation structures and governance mechanisms established and entrenched. In 1997, in a key moment for the organisation’s evolution, the present director Mr Kekelwa Mundia resigned from paid employment and began working for Mumwa full time.

While Mumwa was founded and remains driven by its members, it would be disingenuous to suggest that donor funding and support has not played a significant role in the organisation’s growth and development. A 4-year grant by the Dutch organisation Hivos was important in Mumwa’s early expansion and consolidation. This grant provided funding for organisation capacity building including the recruitment of dedicated staff in areas like sales, marketing, purchasing and accounts. It also supported producer training and allowed for the purchase and stockpiling of crafts for later sale. Mumwa also received training and capacity building support from the European Union as part of its Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP), and has been exposed to export

markets through NOROPOD of Norway and its Export Integration Programme. As part of this latter programme Mumwa representatives attended trade fairs in Europe gaining access to export customers. Most recently the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation assisted Mumwa in adding value to its products, provided training in more sustainable natural resource use, and facilitated the establishment of the Global Natural Fibres Forum a network for organisations producing natural fibre products. Furthermore Mumwa has and in some instances continues to receive financial assistance from a range of organisations including Tradecraft, American Embassy, Danish Embassy, Private Sector Development Programme, HIVOS, A and the Canadian High Commission, various governments, the Africa Development Foundation and the Zambian government which worked with Mumwa on the construction of rural water wells. In recent times Mumwa has begun exporting internationally including to Europe. It is also negotiating supply contracts with local large scale retail outlets, developing and adding value to its products, and seeking to increase its marketing capacity and public profile. These measures are all part of Mumwa's drive to upscale its sustainable development impacts.

Organisation Structure

As an organisation Mumwa has evolved to comprise three principal components:

(1) **The Board** - A 10 member board The board works to formulate policy, and

monitors, supervises and advises on the activities of the association, it also performs any other duties assigned to it at the association's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

(2) **The Management** - The management team implements policies initiated by the board and have responsibilities for the day to day running of the Association. On the management team are dedicated staff, who work in a number of areas including sales, marketing, purchasing and accounts. The management team is accountable to the board.

(3) **The Members** - Mumwa's membership has expanded over time and currently stands at over 3500. There is presently a majority of female members with 2,001 female compared to 1,499 male. Mumwa members do not necessarily engage in crafting activities, amongst them are local business people and professionals including teachers, nurses and accountants. Many of Mumwa's members are attached to community centres which act as vehicles for the association's activities. The association has community centres throughout Western Province, with the centres forming around a number of villages in a particular locality. The community centres are groups of usually around 20 association members, although they can be substantially larger. Very large centres are divided into sub-centres. Community centre groups meet regularly at a particular house or even just under a designated tree where they may work together on crafts. In other instances members work at home. The term community centre refers more to a

group of members rather than a physical building or place. The extent of Mumwa's involvement in the formation of community centres varies between cases. In some cases Mumwa has brought together various individual craft producers and members in a given area to form a centre from scratch. In other instances pre-existing craft groups have been invited to join the association with Mumwa helping to develop their capacity. Community centres have executive committees who are elected for a period of 4 years, their main duty is to coordinate the centre's craft activities, assess and grade the quality of products produced by members, provide support to members, and coordinate with Mumwa's wider management team. They also attend the Mumwa AGM and vote for board members. They do not receive additional income. The community centres are a diverse mix of people, for example they are not just all female or all elderly groups.

Activities

Craft Production, Marketing and Sale - Mumwa's primary area of activity is craft production, marketing and sale. Association members produce a variety of craft products but particularly those made from natural fibres. Products include: natural fibre baskets, bags, trays, mats and dishes; leather products like key rings, shoes, wallets and belts; integrated natural fibre products for example bible covers, document holders and conference folders; wood carving products including dishes, walking sticks and ornaments; pottery for both domestic and commercial

use; and various kinds of jewellery and trinkets.



A selection of natural fibre bowls

Craft production is centred on Mumwa's community centres. When Mumwa receives an order the management team liaises and coordinates with committee members for the different community centres to ensure that it is fulfilled. Individual community centre members also produce crafts on a more ongoing basis. These products are assessed by local committee members who give them a quality grading. Mumwa then purchases these products for sale, with specific dates each month established for purchasing and collection. In some instances when Mumwa is short on capital, craft products may be purchased without up-front payment. When the product is sold producers then receive their money. Non-members also sometimes contribute to craft production at some community craft centres.



Members from the Toy Project Craft Centre



Members from the Mweke Craft Centre



Members from the Kavula Craft Centre



Members from the Makapila Craft Centre



Members from the Lububa Craft Centre

If Mumwa receives a large order with a rapid turnaround, or an order for export requiring stricter quality control monitoring, it may require members to

travel to the Mumwa Craft Association premises in Mongu where crafters will work intensively for several days until the order is complete. Members who participate are provided with transport, food, and a place to sleep for the duration of the work.



Mumwa Craft Association store Mongu

Mumwa sells its products nationally and internationally. Nationally Mumwa's products are sold in the Association's craft store in Mongu, at its outlet in the town of Kaoma which is also in Western Zambia, and in various craft stores in Lusaka and wider Zambia. It has supplied products for conferences and is also working to negotiate supplier contracts with larger retail chains in Zambia. Internationally Mumwa has successfully exported to Europe particularly Italy, with these contracts facilitated by the attendance of Mumwa representatives at international trade fairs.

Craft Training and Capacity Building -

Mumwa provides various types of training and capacity building for its members in craft production. This training is often facilitated by international donors. As illustrated by the following interview quotation there is considerable variation

in skill levels amongst those who join the Association. Some join with a strong background and knowledge of craft production, others join with little or no experience in this area:

“There are those who have mastered skills already and they make their products very well. Those are the ones who are fine these are the people who are already skilled. Then there are those who are beginners, when we start a training we do not just put them together with those who are starting and those who are skilled. It is just like in school you have those from Grade 1 and those from Grade 7. You would not mix them and those who are at university” (Focus Group with Trainers)

Mumwa trains beginners in the basics of craft production including theory before moving onto areas like quality control, product design and innovation, packaging, and how to produce marketable products, these latter skills are perhaps more useful for experienced crafters. Mumwa is also working to widen the skills of its members and increase the number of materials they can use in craft production. For example in the past a craft group may have solely used palm or makenge roots in production, increasingly this is no longer the case. The skill of Mumwa trainers also means that they have been paid by external organisations to provide craft training services. A recent example of this is work undertaken training young people in crafting funded by the international NGO World Vision. Mumwa receives a percentage of the payment for this work. In addition to training in craft production Mumwa has also at times provided

training for its members and wider communities in entrepreneurship and business skills.

Partnerships with local craft enterprises –

Mumwa works in partnership with some local craft enterprises helping them to market and sell their products. Products from these affiliated businesses are also sold in the Mumwa craft store in Mongu. An example of this is Mooka Leather Crafts a separate business run by a member of the Mumwa Crafts Association. Mooka Leather Crafts is a small business employing approximately 8 workers. It produces a variety of leather products including shoes, belts and key rings; it also makes natural fibre bible covers and document holders. Approximately 75% of Mooka’s products are sold through the Mumwa Craft Association. Mumwa also purchases crafts from other groups in Western Zambia on a more ad hoc basis.



Mooka Leather Crafts workshop



Mooka leather products on display in the Mumwa Craft Store

Constructing Rural Water Wells - Access to safe drinking water is a major problem for many of the communities Mumwa works with. In the rainy season water may be polluted, in the dry season water is often scarce. The Mumwa Crafts Association has constructed over 26 wells in local communities, including some funded as part of a Zambian government programme. This has helped to address the aforementioned problems and also assists already overburdened women saving them time and reducing distances travelled to collect water. The creation of these wells has also helped reduce instances of water borne diseases and those associated with poor sanitary conditions.



Type 1 well constructed by Mumwa and the Zambian Government



Type 2 pump well constructed by Mumwa

Afforestation and training in sustainable natural resource use - Zambia's Western Province is rich in natural resources and

the raw materials required for craft production. However there is a danger of these natural resources being degraded or even exhausted if they are not managed sustainably. The Mumwa Crafts Association recognises that with proper sustainable management these natural resources can be an asset not just for current but also future generations. Access to natural resources and the sustainable management of those resources is a key part of having a successful craft industry. To this end the Mumwa Craft Association has engaged in tree planting schemes and has also undertaken educational awareness campaigns on sustainable natural resource management running workshops and holding meetings with local communities. Through these campaigns over 6000 people have been reached and over 11 hectares of indigenous tree species have been planted. These trees have become an additional source of income and livelihood for communities, who now use them for carving and to extract nuts and oil.



Makenge Tree Afforestation

Biomass Energy Project - In collaboration with GTZ Mumwa has established a biomass energy project. This project is operational in a number of villages and involves the use of improved clay stoves that consume less firewood and which can use other renewable fuels which are less environmentally damaging.



Biomass energy stove

Fish stocking - Mumwa recognises that fishing has the potential to provide additional income and alternative livelihoods for many of its members and their households. To encourage the development of these livelihood activities Mumwa has begun to stock existing lagoons and lakes across the region with fish, and in some instances has sought to develop fishing ponds.



A Lake stocked with fish by Mumwa

HIV/AIDS and Health Interventions - The Mumwa Crafts Association is undertaking interventions aimed at supporting those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Support is provided to both Association

members and wider communities. The Association also supports HIV/AIDS education and awareness campaigns. Mumwa regards HIV/AIDS as a key cross cutting issue which should be addressed as part of its approach towards community development and poverty alleviation. From an operational perspective HIV/AIDS has the potential to seriously impact on its activities. Mumwa has sought to mainstream HIV/AIDS within the organisation. It has been involved in training peer educators, has supported community drama groups, has helped establish Anti-AIDs Clubs, and has undertaken community sensitisation and education. Mumwa also works with partner organisations and local service providers to tackle wider health issues across Western Province. An example of this is its interventions in Mabumbu village where it has funded the construction of a dedicated space for mother and child health services increasing the capacity of the local health centre. The Mabumbu Youth Group an affiliate organisation is also based at the centre and undertakes health related drama performances and interventions in local communities engaging with issues of HIV/AIDS but also talking about subjects like malaria, sanitation, and wider social issues.



Drama performance by the Mabumbu Youth Group

Table 1: Economic Outputs and Impacts

		OUTPUTS		POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS		
				Economies	Markets	Institutions/Services
ECONOMIC IMPACTS	Employment/Livelihoods	Direct	Management staff (approx 8-10), may increase depending on funding; Members +/-3500 across Western Zambia, not all but a substantial number of members are craft producers.	+ local and national economies through wage spend by permanent staff; + local, regional and national economies through money spent by craft producers	+ Reduce unemployment; + Create livelihood opportunities pay others to work farms; + Develop craft goods market nationally/ internationally; + Develop raw materials market; + Crafts product innovation; - saturate craft market	+ Taxation from employees spent on public services; + Increased income in communities spent on education, health services and community infrastructure i.e. support for community schools
		Indirect	Local craft producer partner enterprises and their staff; Craft organisations Mumwa purchases from; staff employed by businesses selling Mumwa craft products; Suppliers of natural fibre raw materials.	+ local and national economies through spending by staff at partner enterprises, businesses selling Mumwa products, and raw material suppliers	+Reduce unemployment create livelihood opportunities; + Develop craft goods market; + Creates and develops market for raw materials for crafting	+ Taxation from employees spent on public services; +Increased income in communities spent on education, health services etc.
		Programme Related	Craft trainers paid for by Mumwa and other funding organisations; Fishing livelihood activities; livelihoods from afforestation nuts and oils	+ local and national economies through spending by trainers, fishermen and afforestation related livelihood activities	+ Creates market opportunities selling fish; Creates market opportunities nuts, fruits and oils	+ Increased income in communities for public services
	Payments	Government	Taxation paid by businesses selling Mumwa products.	+/-	+/-	+ Taxation revenues spent on public services
		Purchasing	Local	Purchasing from craft centres and members; Purchasing from other craft projects; Purchasing of raw materials for production.	+ local, regional and national economies through money spent by craft producers, raw material suppliers and staff at other projects	+ Demand for raw materials for craft production; + Increased demand for craft products; - overexpansion of craft production
	Investment		National	Some national purchasing	+ National economy	+/-
		Infrastructure and Resources	Infrastructure upgrading for rural health centres; construction of water wells in rural communities; Production facilities in Mongu; Craft store in Mongu and Kaoma; Meeting halls and small business workspace in Mongu; Biomass stoves; Meeting places for community centres	+ Local economies through construction of water wells. Community members spend less time collecting water and more time on economic activities	+ Increased ability to supply national and international markets. Link in to international markets	+ Water supply to rural areas; + Health provision through infrastructure investments in clinics; + Community infrastructure i.e. halls and meeting spaces
		Capacity	Skills training, upgrading and diversification for craft producers (quality control, product design, innovation; how to make products marketable); Business and entrepreneurship training; Capacity building for community centre leaders.	+ Local, regional and national economies through small business and entrepreneurship training, craft business start-up and expansion.	+ Increasingly skills and capacity in labour market; + Health interventions have positive impact mitigating for negative effects of HIV/AIDS, Malaria etc for example loss of skills, reduced productivity and sick leave.	+ Leadership and capacity in communities

Table 2: Social and Poverty Alleviation Impacts

Social and Poverty Alleviation Impacts	Impact Areas	Stakeholders ¹					
		Employees		Sellers/ Distributers	Communities		
		Management	Craft Producers		Afforestation	Fishing	Water Wells
Assets, Income and Livelihoods	+ Income and assets from employment; + Support Extended families	+ Income and assets from sale of craft products; + Support extended families; + Savings and ability to save; + Income and livelihoods diversification; + Economic inclusion	+ Income for owners and employees from selling Mumwa craft products	+ Livelihoods created selling nuts and oil, increased income and assets; + Secure source of income for craft producers; + Soil fertility	+ Fishing livelihood creation and diversification; + Additional income often for young people	+ Community members and crafters save time collecting water which can be used for income generation i.e. craft work	
		- Overreliance on Mumwa					
Mental and Physical Wellbeing	+ Ability to pay medical bills; + food security; + Support extended families health; + Mental wellbeing nature of work helping communities	+ Ability to pay medical bills for them and their families; + Support extended families; +Food security; + Support from other members reduce vulnerability;	+ Ability to spend on health	+ Craft producers and raw materials suppliers increased ability to pay medical bills for them and their families	+ Income for medical bills; + Food security and additional food source	+ Clean and reliable water supply improved health outcomes for community	
Opportunity and Choice	+ Gain ability to pay for education and families education; + Skills upgrading and capacity building; + Broaden horizons visiting other countries	+ Ability to pay for education for them, their families and extended families; + Skills development and capacity building; + Opportunities i.e. micro enterprise start up; + Female empowerment	+Ability to spend on education	+ Craft producers and raw materials suppliers increased ability to pay education bills for them and families	+ Extra income for education bills particularly as often young people fishing		
Networks and Relationships	+ Better able to support extended families; + Networking opportunities; + Standing within households, communities and nationally	+ Increased standing in households and communities particularly gender relations; +Ability to support extended family			+ Standing within household		
Implications of Environmental Practices				+ Mitigates for natural materials used in crafting secure income			

¹ Stakeholders are understood to be groups that are impacted by the activities of a social and or environmental enterprise. We identify 10 potential stakeholder groupings, these are: Employees; Distributers; Customers; Shareholders; Partners; Communities; Service Users; Suppliers; Donors, Funders and Investors; and Others (i.e. the state, advocacy groups).

Social and Poverty Alleviation Impacts	Impact Areas	Stakeholders				
		Communities		Partners		Suppliers (Natural resources)
		Health Interventions	Biomass Energy	NGO Partners	Enterprise partners	
Assets, Income and Livelihoods	+ Reduction in time lost due to illness i.e. Malaria, HIV/AIDS can be used for income generation; + Reduce medical bills; + Increase productivity	+ Income from reduced energy bills/ money spent on charcoal	- Impact on charcoal sellers fall in demand	+ Income generating opportunities for NGOs, their staff and the communities they work with	+ Income and assets for business owners and their staff; + Increased ability to support families	+ Income and assets for suppliers of natural resources; + Additional livelihood
		+ Reduced exposure to particulates in cooking; + Income for health expenditure			- Dependency and overreliance on Mumwa may develop	- Only occasional not consistent or regular; - Small amounts in many cases
Mental and Physical Wellbeing	+ Reduction in illness prevention; + Better care available at local health centre; + Quality of life for those affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS	+ Health related interventions have benefits for communities	+ Owners and staff at enterprise partners have increased ability to pay for health care and food security	+ Additional income for health care and food		
Opportunity and Choice		+ Disposable income	+ Education related interventions have benefits for communities; + Capacity building of NGO staff	+ Owners and staff at enterprise partners have increased ability to pay for education	+ Additional income for education and opportunities; + Knowledge in sustainable use of natural resources	
Networks and Relationships	+ Better understanding of HIV/AIDS issues in communities reduce stigma; + Support for infected and affected by HIV/AIDS		+ Organisational development through mentoring; + Exposure to networks and opportunities through association	+ Access to markets and opportunities through relationship with Mumwa	+ Develop relationships with craft producers	
Implications of Environmental Practices		See above	+ Social impacts stemming from NGO activities and partnership with Mumwa	+/- Social implications of environmental practices of partner enterprise	+ Livelihood opportunities gained from sustainable use of resources in craft production	

Table 3: Environmental Impacts

	NATURAL CAPITAL	IMPACT CHANNELS		
		PRODUCTION/ OPERATIONS	PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	PROGRAMMES
ENVIRONMENTAL	AIR AND CLIMATE	+/- Some tree cutting in production with implication for climate change, however mitigated by sustainable natural resource use and afforestation;	+/-	+ Afforestation for climate change mitigation; + Biomass project reduces tree cutting and charcoal burning
		- Some localised air quality impacts from burning waste materials. Efforts made to reduce waste and burning		
	WATER	+/-	+/-	+/-
	LAND (MINERALS, SOIL, LANDSCAPE)	+ Some tree cutting in production with implications for soil fertility and degradation however arrested by tree planting and sustainable use of natural resources	+/-	+ Afforestation and biomass projects help to arrest soil degradation
	HABITATS (FLORA AND FAUNA)	+/- Some tree cutting in production, however mitigated by sustainable natural resource use and afforestation.	+/-	+ Afforestation and tree planting; + Biomass project aims to reduce tree cutting and charcoal burning

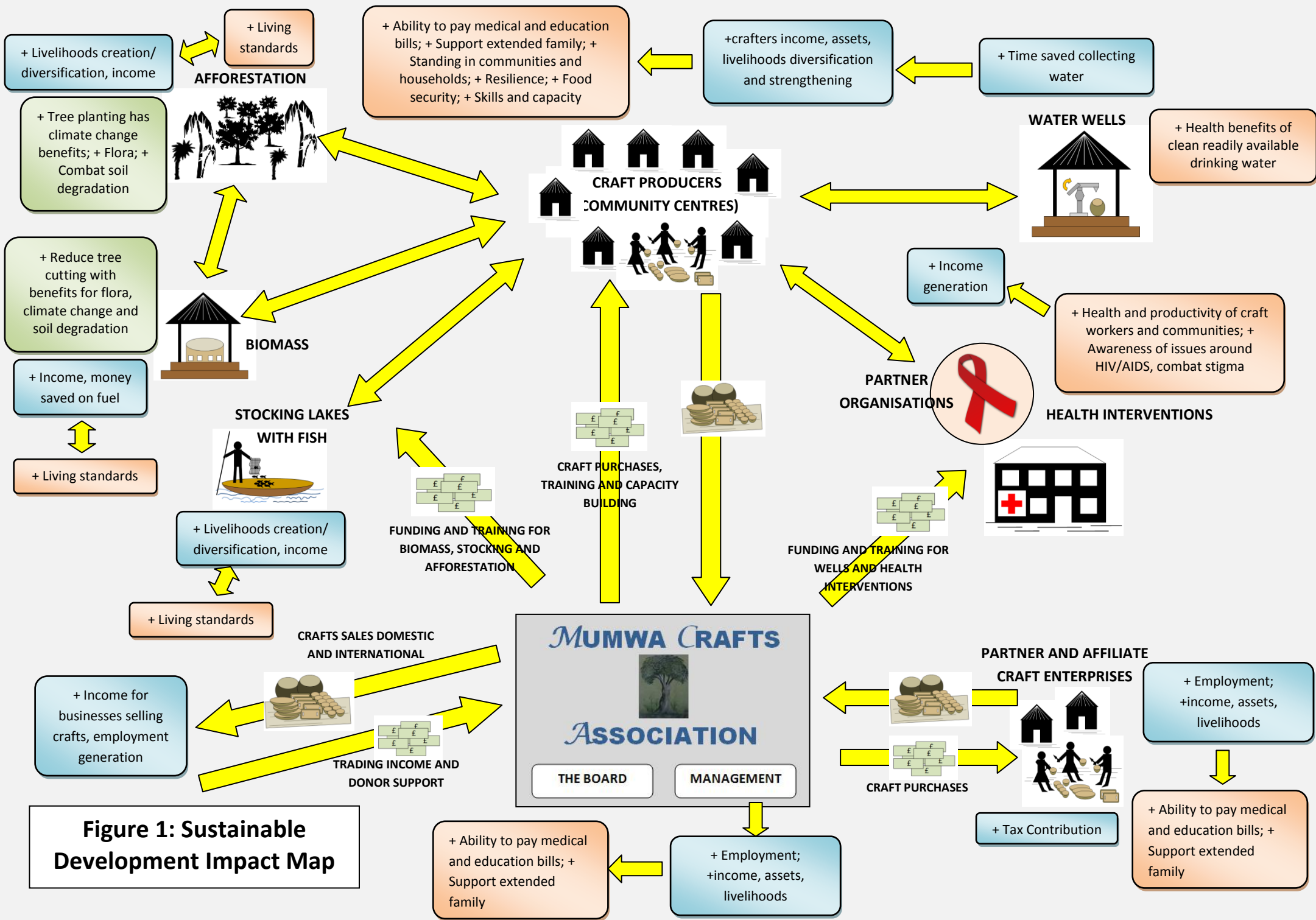


Figure 1: Sustainable Development Impact Map

Sustainable Development Impacts

Economic Impacts

A variety of economic outputs and related impacts are identified stemming from the activities of the Mumwa Craft Association. These are shown in Table 1, with some key impacts and their interaction with more social and environmental dimensions also mapped in Figure 1. Mumwa's primary area of activity is the production, marketing and sale of crafts. Mumwa purchases crafts produced by its members who live in predominantly rural areas across Zambia's Western Province. This buying represents a substantial source of income for craft producers and their households, many of whom are subsistence type farmers, who would otherwise only engage in small amounts of trading or non monetary exchange of surplus crop production. For these households the income received from the sale of crafts also often represents an important source of working financial capital which can be used to pay for things like health and education costs, purchasing clothes and basic necessities, or even used for business start up or investing in equipment to improve agricultural production. It facilitates the participation of these households in monetary economies both formal and informal. The intersection of farming, craft production and other income generating activities in producer households is illustrated in the following focus group quotations, as is the overall

significance of craft production to household income:

"We do farm because without farming there is nothing to eat. But crops alone cannot fully sustain us and our families... we do both the crafts and other extra works and that earns us a living. From farming we gain a bit of money and from the crafts we get a bit of money and we put it together" (Member Toy Project Craft Centre)

"There has been an improvement in our livelihoods. At least something is happening. Mumwa has helped us a lot because on our own we could have done anything. There was no market for the products. If we had not been taught these skills then we would not have been able to take care of the children, take care of the orphaned boys and girls we are keeping at our places. We could not have even made it to take them to school, buy them food, buy them uniforms, and give them all of the things they require" (Member Kabula Craft Centre)

"Yes we do farm, we have farms, and from the money we gain from the craft sales we have been able to buy a plough, and some of the members maybe buy cattle to use in their fields yes" (Member Lububa Craft Centre)

Craft production represents an alternative livelihood activity for member households. This livelihood diversification has benefits in terms of financial resilience and reducing vulnerability. The fact that Mumwa purchases crafts on a fairly consistent monthly basis, with producers paid either immediately or

after sale depending on Mumwa's available funds is also significant, as it allows producer households to plan and save. The benefits of this regular income and cash transfer are illustrated in the following interview quotation:

"There is an improvement compared to the old time when we were not involved with Mumwa. At least one is assured of getting something at the month end because you know that for sure at the month end Mumwa will come and buy your products, at least. It used to be a problem maybe for one to buy even a pair of trousers but now that is the story of the past. Each and everyone who works hard and produces and then at the end of the month Mumwa will come and buy. It is even like working for a company or organisation, because you know at the end of the month you will get something" (Member Lububa Craft Centre)

Mumwa provides its members with a route to market for their craft products. This had previously been a particular difficulty, especially for those craft producers residing in very remote parts of Western province. These producers would have to either sell or exchange their goods locally, or invest considerable time and resources travelling to larger centres where they might move from compound to compound selling products. Regular purchasing by Mumwa and the fact that it comes to collect products directly from craft centres, saves producers time which they can then use to produce more crafts, or engage in other income generating activities. Mumwa also purchases many more crafts than producers were

previously able to sell on an individual basis. These benefits are illustrated in the following quotations:

"We used to carry our products up to Mongu and then we would go around on the streets and into the compounds selling ... before Mumwa came on board we used to spend much of our time walking long distances to be able to sell our products. At least when Mumwa came we have been able to save time now" (Member Kabula Craft Centre)

"Before Mumwa we used to make products and then put them by the roadside and as passersby were going past those who were interested could take the products. But after Mumwa came then we found it easier, because Mumwa was coming here to buy... when we were first just selling by the roadside sales were very very slow, ever so slow. Maybe someone could just pass and per day maybe one customer could buy something. But after Mumwa came and after we joined the organisation we have found that all the time the things we are making are being bought in bulk. So at least we do sell a lot through Mumwa." (Member Toy Project Craft Centre)

Mumwa's purchasing of crafts from its members has a positive impact on individual and household incomes. However Mumwa not only buys from its members. On a more ad hoc basis it also purchases from non-member craft producers and even other craft organisations in the region. Thus the positive impacts described above similarly accrue for these non-member producers,

and additional income is generated for other organisations which they may then use for developmental purposes.

Mumwa's craft purchasing has a positive impact on local economies, injecting capital into poor and marginalised households and communities, leading to further economic activity. In such communities on a smaller scale Mumwa is also implicated in livelihood generation through harvesting raw materials for craft production. Frequently craft producers have sufficient time to harvest their own materials or this is undertaken by family members, however in some instances where large orders are placed and a quick turnaround is required, other community members may receive an income from harvesting materials. During these periods craft producers may also pay non-members to undertake piece work on their farms. These additional livelihoods are illustrated in the following quotation:

"Yes we do have some other people to help us and then we pay them because sometimes the work is just too demanding. We would not find time for the fields, so at least we have to engage someone and in fact even the product that we use, the material that we use to make these is quite difficult to harvest so at least sometimes we opt to buy rather than going into the bush to dig the same stuff. Most especially when we have got big orders, maybe we have been ordered to produce even two hundred of these, so we are not doing anything but giving out some money for the materials". (Member Lububa Craft Centre)

Economic outputs and impacts are also identified stemming from Mumwa's more programmatic interventions. Mumwa's biomass energy interventions have a positive economic impact saving households money on their fuel bills, although there may be a trade off for this programme with reduced demand for charcoal and thus income for charcoal sellers. Mumwa's programme of constructing water wells in rural communities meanwhile has benefits in terms of time saved for community members, which they can then use for other livelihood activities. This is illustrated by the following interview quotation:

"Before this well was built here we used to walk across the road and going in the bush for about three hours coming to fetch the water. Then there is another source of water this side where we used to walk about two hours going and two hours coming back. So the coming of this water well has really helped us. It has really relieved us from all these stretches we used to walk." (Member Toy Craft Centre)

Mumwa's afforestation and fish stocking programmes also have benefits in terms of livelihood creation and diversification, the latter particularly useful as an additional source of income for young people.

Through its operations Mumwa directly employs a number of permanent staff providing an income for them and their families. Employment is also generated in businesses selling Mumwa products and

in partner enterprises which sell products through Mumwa, like Mooka Leather Crafts. These businesses if located in the formal economy will also contribute tax revenues to Zambia's government. Mumwa's outputs also include infrastructure investments like the previously discussed water wells but also support for local health facilities, as well as production facilities, SME business premises and workspaces which provide Mumwa with an additional source of income, and halls which Mumwa uses for production but also rents out for public meetings and events.

Mumwa's economic impacts can furthermore be identified in relation to local skills training and capacity building. There is substantial variation in the base level of knowledge of craft production between different Mumwa members. Some are already skilled and for them Mumwa's training may focus on areas like adding value to products, improving marketability, quality control and wider business skills. Others may have business skills but little if any knowledge of craft production. Mumwa trains members to produce crafts of sufficient quality for sale and international export. It also provides training in how to make crafts using multiple materials increasing producer versatility. Mumwa trainers are furthermore working in other parts of Zambia when hired by other development organisations i.e. World Vision, African Park, Lumwana Mine, IUCN, CBNRM etc. to provide crafts training. This activity is an additional source of income for Mumwa. Mumwa is playing a significant

role in skills upgrading across Western Province and wider Zambia. Mumwa members also often pass on their craft and wider business skills to family members as illustrated by the following focus group quotation:

"Even the children are learning bit by bit because they are always there and there are periods when they are doing the work, even the children are being trained."
(Member Mweeke Craft Centre)

Finally Mumwa is playing a significant role in the overall development of the craft sector in Zambia and even globally, for instance through its involvement with networks like the Global Natural Fibres Forum and its recent collaboration with the Commonwealth which resulted in a workshop and trade fair for Zambian natural fibre producers in Lusaka.

Environmental Impacts

Mumwa has sought to fully integrate environmental sustainability into its operations, and as a key dimension of its programme activities. Mumwa's craft production relies on the harvesting of natural resources like Makenge roots and palm. It is therefore imperative that these resources are sourced in a way that is sustainable in the long term. Mumwa's recognition of this fact and the risks of ignoring it are illustrated in the following interview quotation:

"It will be like this programme in Zimbabwe which would have run for 5 years. But they have only just done 2 years because it was centred on bamboo, so it means they were cutting the bamboos"

anyhow. Within two years they didn't have materials to produce baskets. They have exhausted the whole thing, but the project was for 5 years, but within 2 years everything was winded up. They had all the money they had all the vehicles all the resources and equipment but within 2 years no material for them to continue making baskets. So it was closed down. So we are very careful that whilst we are doing the production of handicrafts we have to be very careful with the environment how we are harvesting our resources. We have to make sure we have adequate resources for the upcoming generations". (Interview Director Mumwa Crafts Association)

Mumwa trains its members in the sustainable utilisation of natural resources in craft production. However it often also extends this training to wider communities. Only a small proportion of community members may be part of Mumwa, and if the majority of a community still engage in environmentally damaging activities then this will affect craft production and undermine the positive environmental behaviours of Mumwa members. This approach is highlighted in the following quotation:

"The members are very few but the whole society, the population is large. Even if you just train or maybe talk to your members you are not doing anything because the impact will not be felt. That is why we have a deliberate programme that under the afforestation programme it has to cover the whole society in that catchment area." (Interview Director Mumwa Crafts Association)

Mumwa's afforestation programmes have benefits in terms of tree planting, mitigating for climate change. Tree planting can also have positive affects in relation to retaining soil fertility and arresting soil degradation. Mumwa's biomass energy project also has positive impacts in this area reducing charcoal use and attendant tree cutting.

Social Impacts

A variety of positive social and poverty alleviation impacts can be identified stemming from Mumwa's activities, both for its members and in the wider communities it works with across Western Zambia. Mumwa's role in livelihood creation and diversification through craft production, but also activities like afforestation and fishing has been previously outlined. These activities increase individual and household incomes, with this increase linked to improved outcomes in a variety of areas including education and choice, health and wellbeing, assets, and network and relationships.

The additional income craft producers receive from the sale of their products to Mumwa is used for a variety of purposes. It may be used for day to day expenses, or put towards larger purchases as illustrated by the following quotation:

"Out of the work I have done for Mumwa I have been able to build this house. I have built this house and all of the belongings that are in it. These are the benefits that I find from Mumwa" (Member Makapaela Craft Centre)

In relation to education and choice, the added income craft producers receive from Mumwa may be invested in business start-up. It may also be spent on costs associated with education particularly for member's children and dependents, for example buying school uniforms and paying school fees. This payment of school fees can include education at a tertiary level, with craft production implicated in wider skills and education upgrading in Western Province and Zambia as a whole. This situation is illustrated in the following interview quotation:

"Their families are the people who are sponsoring them there and those are the people who we are targeting in the rural areas. At the end of the day it is an achievement if those people to whom we are providing support in the villages are able to send their children to school and to college ... there should have also been a lady who was able to send, because the husband died, so her children through handicrafts she was able to really send her children to school and to university. Of course it was supplemented by the government, but the tough road she passed through was from education secondary school and then a bit more. I am saying university he has received some bursary from the government of course she still needs to send food and clothing and everything, and he graduated. That son of hers is a manager in one of the biggest companies here, all from handicrafts." (Interview Director Mumwa Crafts Association)

Mumwa also provides training and livelihood opportunities for young people, both its members and wider groups across Zambia when its trainers are outsourced.

Producers may also use additional income from craft work to pay for health related costs, and to supplement food grown on farms improving nutrition and food security. HIV/AIDS poses a significant threat to households and for development in Zambia's Western Province. In 2007 the province's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 15.2% (Zambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2007), which is above the national average (14.3%). The additional income craft producers receive can be used to pay for antiretroviral therapy (ART), and the food integral to it. It is also common for craft producers to support large numbers of dependents, and in many instances this will include orphan children whose parents have often died as a result of HIV/AIDS. These may be grandchildren, or the children of brothers and sisters. The importance of craft work in enabling producers to support such children is illustrated in the following quotations:

"There are so many orphans that we are taking care of. There are too many people who cannot fend for themselves, there are old people and there are small children who have been left by their parents, resulting from this killer disease HIV/AIDS. So Mumwa has come to our aid and also these other organisations. Mumwa by providing a market at least we are able to feed our families" (Member Toy Project Craft Centre)

"I am looking after five orphans and I am also able to sustain them out of the life saving skills I have learned" (Member Kabula Craft Centre)

"I am looking after my family. Amongst them are my grandchildren they are orphaned, their parents passed away some time back so I am taking care of them. I am the one who provides for their food, for their school requirements for everything out of the sales of the crafts". (Member Kabula Craft Centre)

Positive impacts stemming from Mumwa's work with craft producers can also be conceived of in terms of relationships and networks. Mumwa encourages the formation and development of community craft centre groups. Through these groups supportive relationships develop between members, reducing household and individual vulnerability, increasing resilience to shocks, and fostering the creation of social capital. In some instances this has led to organic group saving schemes, with money provided to members as grants during periods of particular need. This arrangement and its positive effects are illustrated in the following quotation:

"I have a child who was in labour and in fact she has twins now but she is still at the hospital in Mongu. One of the twins was delivered just as they were taking her to the nearby health centre. Then the second child it was through a caesarean, and it was through the help of this group, the funds that we save because the husband is not around, we were the ones who got that hundred thousand kwacha

from our savings and assisted. We booked a bus from Limulunga and it came and picked her for the clinic to Mongu". (Member Makapaela Craft Centre)

The standing of individual craft producers may also be enhanced in households and wider communities. In households women may become the principal breadwinners, challenging traditional gender roles and power dynamics. At a community level, each craft centre has an executive committee upon which both men and women sit. Women sitting on such committees may gain a greater voice and influence in community affairs. Some of these affects as well as benefits for individuals in terms of self confidence and status in communities are illustrated in the following quotation:

"We have no problem with the community and they have no problem with the work we do. People here just in fact commend us that we have a talent in doing this. They even refer to us as the basket makers, when someone is looking for me, when someone asks 'is Mundia around? Which Mundia? Mundia the lady who makes baskets, yes, yes she is around'. So we are recognised out of the work that we do, so many people do in fact envy us" (Member Kabula Craft Centre).

The social and poverty alleviation impacts of Mumwa's programme interventions also need to be highlighted. Mumwa's investment in health infrastructure can be linked to improved outcomes in recipient communities. Also commended is its work with partner organisations like the Mabumbu Youth Group and the Youth in

Action Group tackling health issues. Mentorship assistance is provided by Mumwa staff to these groups. Mumwa's biomass energy interventions can also be linked to positive health outcomes in terms of reduced exposure to particulates from cooking, especially for women. As can its construction of rural water wells. Its fish stocking programme also creates livelihoods and additional income for families which can be used to meet basic needs.

Conclusions

- The history of the Mumwa Crafts Association and wider craft making activity in Zambia's Western Province, illustrates the importance of local buy in and ownership of development interventions if they are to be sustainable in the long term. Mumwa was founded by local people, and while at certain stages it has been assisted by international support its growth can still be conceived of as a largely bottom up and organic process. Prior to Mumwa's establishment there was a history of failed craft projects in Western Province, with these projects often collapsing upon the withdrawal of donor support or loss of expatriate staff. Mumwa was founded without donor support or expatriate staff giving it an extra layer of organisational resilience, and related to that community embeddedness.
- Mumwa has a strong participatory governance structure, with the board accountable to members and

management in turn accountable to the board. In focus groups with members it was frequently stated that they had a voice in the way Mumwa was run, with concerns listened to and where possible acted upon. This is illustrated in the following quotations:

"All that which we take to the AGM the board listens, they will say just give us time and we will do it, we will do this and we will do this and we will do this, we are heard". (Mweeke Craft Centre)

"Our problems or suggestions are always accepted yes, they do listen to us. Whenever we complain, or whenever we contribute, maybe we need something, and then the board listens yes". (Toy Project Craft Centre)

"Yes the annual general meeting takes place and we are the representatives from this centre who attend and all our problems are listened to though not everything has a solution due to financial constraints, and it is not possible for each and every concern to be tackled but our grievances are heard" (Kabula Craft Centre)

This sense of ownership is a significant asset for Mumwa. Members recognise their vested interest in the success and good functioning of the business. They are also willing to invest extra time and resources towards this, for example by volunteering to act as members of community craft centre committees. They are also more likely to hold senior figures to account in the event of failure.

- Mumwa works in partnership with state, NGO and private sector actors in its development activities and interventions at local, regional and national levels. The formation of these kinds of complementary partnerships, leveraging the resources, experience and competencies of different organisations and individuals, enables more innovative, effective and sustained development interventions.
- Mumwa is a significant agent in regional sustainable development and poverty alleviation. According to numerous social and development indicators Western Province is Zambia's poorest region. This status has been confirmed and remained unchanged in the six national surveys conducted by Zambia's Central Statistical Office since 1991, the year multi-party politics resumed to the country. Foreign or domestic investment in the region is low. Mumwa's 3500+ strong membership, and the numerous family members and dependents supported through craft production must be viewed within this wider regional context. Mumwa illustrates the up scaling potential of social entrepreneurship, particularly for marginalised and often remote regions that struggle to attract traditional forms of business investment and may receive limited assistance from the state. Mumwa's work at a national level to advocate for and develop the wider craft sector in Zambia must also be recognised. This work has the potential to have significant wider positive impacts in communities across the country.
- Mumwa recognises the importance of operating in a way that is environmentally sustainable for its long term viability as an organisation. It recognises environmental concerns alongside imperatives of economic and social and value creation. It seeks to operate in a way that minimises and mitigates for its negative environmental impacts and where possible have a positive impact on the various dimensions of natural capital (Air and climate, water, land and habitats). A holistic approach is adopted in its engagements with environmental issues going beyond Mumwa members and reaching out to wider communities and stakeholders.
- Mumwa's overall approach to community development is holistic. While Mumwa's work particularly focuses on craft production, increasing individual and household incomes by upgrading members skills and improving access to market, it also recognises and where possible engages with the multiple deprivations faced by low income households, and the wider development challenges faced by communities. This approach informs its engagement with issues like rural water supply, where water wells are constructed reducing time spent collecting water and instances of water borne disease which can also affect craft making productivity. This is similarly the case in relation to Mumwa's health engagements, both

its donations to local health clinics but also its HIV/AIDS and wider wellness outreach work amongst members and in communities, collaborating with partner organisations. Mumwa has sought to mainstream HIV/AIDS in its programme activities. It has also tried to fully integrate environmental sustainability into its operations.

- Mumwa's regular purchasing of crafts from producers, and the positive impacts stemming from this, illustrate the potential of relatively modest cash transfers as a mechanism for poverty alleviation. The regularity with which Mumwa purchases crafts is an important dimension as it allows for financial planning amongst producers. Mumwa's community craft centres are also acting as vehicles for group saving which can help to insulate members from shocks and increase social protection.

Suggestions

- Currently a number of community craft centres save collectively. In other instances during focus groups members asked about gaining access to low interest loans and grants. Given the already existing craft centre structures in place, support could be provided to help groups either begin saving together or to maximise the potential of existing saving. While Mumwa may have limited knowledge and capacity in this respect other development organisations could be approached to facilitate such activity. If such an approach is taken, care and

attention should be given in partner selection, to ensure that organisations are credible with a proven track record of success and work in Zambia, avoiding those seeking to exploit low income groups. This is doubly the case if a more private sector actor is approached. Saving should be accompanied by wider support and capacity building for craft groups. Mumwa staff should also receive training. It may be prudent to begin with a small pilot programme. Some examples of NGOs working in the field of microfinance in Zambia that might be approached include: the Baynards Zambia Trust (BZT) and the Microloan Foundation. Group saving does not have to be restricted to Mumwa members and can be used as a means to pay for community assets, for example the construction of a well.

- Marketing was identified as an area that Mumwa might look to improve. At a broad level it might be considered whether an international or domestic volunteer facilitated by an organisation like Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), the Peace Corps or other European volunteer agencies might be a low cost way of improving capacity in this area. Target areas for such a volunteer or existing staff within Mumwa might include the development of a specific website showcasing Mumwa's products, providing information about development work undertaken and where Mumwa products can be purchased or ordered, and contact details. Basic websites are now cheap

and easy to set up and maintain, and may not even require volunteer support on the ground, although it would be beneficial if Mumwa staff also received training in web content management. A social networking presence could also be established for example a Mumwa Craft Association Facebook page informing and updating Mumwa supporters. These kinds of opportunities may be best explored by younger Mumwa members who may have greater technological knowhow.

- Branding is another area Mumwa might look to develop. The name Mumwa is derived from a tree which is both particularly useful in the craft production process, and known for its resilience. Reflecting this connection, an illustrated Mumwa tree sometimes appears as a kind of logo for the association. However it is unclear whether this is the association's formal logo, with its appearances sporadic and ad hoc. Furthermore if it is to be Mumwa's logo then additional design work on its appearance, and the interplay between the tree, Mumwa's name, and any other aspects to be included would be beneficial. To varying extents products could be branded with this logo, particularly as Mumwa enters into export markets and starts to produce higher end more expensive items. Where appropriate the logo and branding of Mumwa could be linked to the wider story of where and how Mumwa operates and the benefits accrued by communities if items are

purchased. It is increasingly common for products made by NGOs, social enterprises, and fair trade producers operating in both developing and developed world environments, to include supporting information in the form of a card or a few sentences on a tag outlining the social, poverty alleviation and environmental benefits of purchasing particular products. While not always necessary for lower value items, although in some instances still beneficial, for higher priced ones in particular this could be considered. Such approaches invest items with a particular story linked to their production, which can create a social premium and lead to a higher selling price or greater number of purchases.

- Certification with the World Fair Trade Organisation may be an avenue Mumwa could consider, weighting up the costs (particularly financial) and potential benefits associated with status including improved access to fair trade markets, networking opportunities, business support and capacity building. The Fair Trade Federation in the USA provides similar opportunities.
- At present Mumwa works with a number of partner organisations throughout Western Zambia as well as businesses and the state. However it is suggested that opportunities may exist to further collaborate with other local and regional development actors. It is unclear whether links exist, or attempts have been made to create links, with the following organisations.

However there would appear to be common areas of interest: The Zambia Project and Hope Art Zambia; Village Water; Keepers Zambia Foundation; and Maboshe Memorial Centre (MMC).

- Mumwa recognises that its products must stay up to date with current trends and fashions if they are to retain customer appeal. In recent times with the assistance of international supporters it has also developed its capacity to produce higher end products, often integrating natural fibre and non natural fibre materials. However in addition to developing its integrated products Mumwa might also look at examples across the region and internationally for ideas about how it can further develop its products or expand its product range. One area that might be enhanced is product colour. Mumwa's products tend to have quite an earthy colour range reflecting the natural dyes used in production. However as the following examples illustrate competitors are using a wide range of brighter colours:



Ghanaian Bolga Basket from Baskets of Africa.com



Swazi Lutindzi Basket from Baskets of Africa.com

- The process and feasibility of working with additional colours would need to be investigated. It may be that the materials Mumwa uses to produce products are not conducive to taking these kinds of dyes. Availability of dyes may also be a problem. The production of these kinds of items may have to be limited to a smaller number of members with more centralised production. However these kinds of products have a higher retail value than traditional baskets, and their production would tie in with developing a social premium and cache for Mumwa products. They may also be distinguishable from other natural fibre products available in Zambia attracting greater domestic as well as international customers.
- Currently Mumwa sells its products domestically through a number of craft stores in Lusaka and its own retail outlets in Mongu and Kaoma. In terms of how it displays its products in its own stores it may be worth visiting retailers like Jackal and Hide and the Design House near Lusaka as an example of high quality product presentation. Mumwa also has a market stand selling products at the Arcades Shopping Mall. While at present it may not be financially viable

for Mumwa to rent and operate a permanent retail space on its own in Lusaka or the tourist hotspot town of Livingstone, examples from neighbouring countries may be drawn upon to potentially provide solutions. In Namibia, the Namibia Craft Centre located in Windhoek, which was established and for many years managed by the social enterprise The Omba Arts Trust, acts as a central space for individuals and craft producer groups from across the country to display and sell their wares. The accumulation of many different kinds of craft products in one central location, coupled with the presence of a well regarded cafe on site is a significant attraction for tourists. While setting up such a centre would not be feasible for Mumwa alone, through its connections with other craft producers nationally such a development may be more viable.

- To increase sales another avenue Mumwa could explore are potential link ups with safari lodges in the nearby Kafue national park and further afield. Products could either be sold to lodges as customers or via them to tourists. However Mumwa does need to be aware of the risk of spreading itself too thin and the potential for product loss and even theft if items are sold through too many outlets.
- At present purchasing of Mumwa's products by national government is relatively limited. However there are opportunities in this respect if sufficient government buy-in can be

achieved, particularly in areas like natural fibre folders, bags, and items for events. Corporate purchasers in procurement and also the corporate gift market might furthermore be considered, while through CSR and corporate philanthropy such businesses may also be a useful source of donated funds.

- Access to electricity is a major development challenge for rural communities in Western Zambia. However in recent years the cost of solar products has drastically reduced. Such products may provide a context appropriate solution to at least some of these problems. For craft producers solar lights may enable them to continue production after dark, as well as having wider benefits for their families. Development interventions are also being undertaken whereby individuals in low income communities receive business training and a number of solar lights on credit which they then rent out or sell to wider community members. Over time the donor organisation receives money back for the lights given on credit which allows it to then work with entrepreneurs in other communities. Such self sustaining enterprise models might be utilised by Mumwa and may be particularly useful given the often remote rural communities it works with and its holistic approach to community development.
- At present the community craft centres perform a vital role in how Mumwa operates and also contribute to social protection amongst

members. However it is felt that more could be made of these structures i.e. as groups for saving and wider cooperative development activities. Strengthening and developing capacity in these groups would be particularly beneficial in the event that Mumwa ceases to exist or shifts the focus of its activities. For some craft centre groups it may be worth investigating whether registration as a discrete entity separate from Mumwa is worthwhile. At present many craft centre groups are acutely reliant on Mumwa. Avenues could be explored for reducing this dependency.

- Mumwa has recently begun exporting, and has also started looking to establish links with larger domestic retailers. To fulfil large orders Mumwa often brings in members from rural areas to work intensively for extended periods. While Mumwa's focus on assisting low income rural producers and communities must remain core to the way it operates, as the size of orders increases and products become more complex it may require investment in and the setting up of more centralised production facilities for at least some products. Members working on such production may still be drawn from low income and disadvantaged groups however perhaps from more urban and semi urban settings.
- Finally for Mumwa's partner organisation Youth in Action it is suggested that they may have skills in areas like information technology that

can add to capacity within Mumwa, particularly if it looks to improve its online marketing. Small self-sustaining and income generating interventions like solar light entrepreneurship might also offer opportunities as does craft production. Potential partnerships with other development actors in the area should also be explored.

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