



# HAND IN HAND ZIMBABWE

## Capacity Statement 2021

**Hand in Hand Zimbabwe (HiH Zim) has been active since 2015. We support poor, marginalised people in rural and peri-urban communities – particularly women and youth – to create better livelihoods for themselves and their families. The vehicle we use to achieve sustainable and inclusive rural development is grassroot entrepreneurship. Headquartered in Bulawayo and operating in seven districts, we have trained more than 18 000 people in entrepreneurship, starting up close to 14 000 profitable and sustainable enterprises.**

We currently operate in seven districts: Lupane, Nkayi, Chirumhanzu, Shurugwi, Chikomba, Bulilima, Gwanda, with our headquarters located in Bulawayo. With an annual budget of close to SEK 15 million/USD 1,7 million, HiH Zim currently employs 130 staff working together with women and youth to fight rural poverty, food insecurity, climate change and inequality. Zimbabwe faces several interrelated and complex challenges. With most rural livelihoods related to farming, local communities already experience the effects of climate change. Currently, millions of rural Zimbabweans face decreasing incomes and low levels of food security.

HiH recognises that agriculture and nature do not need to be opposing land-use schemes. Agroforestry and agro-ecological approaches are combined with the use of drought-resistant crops and water management to improve food security, increase climate change resilience, and improve the state of the environment.

Inequality is both the result of and a reason for poverty, and women and girls feel the brunt of its impact. Teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence, and transmission of diseases affect women's well-being and rights. Helping

women control their own economies benefits the entire household and provides social independence. Women's economic empowerment is therefore a core objective and women make up around 80 % of project participants.

In Zimbabwe, over 90% of people work within the informal sector, where their access to technical and knowledge input is limited. Considering that 60% of the country's population is under the age of 25, HiH also delivers specific programmes for youth, combining our entrepreneurship trainings with tailor-made marketing and vocational training with networking opportunities to assist them in gaining access to employment.

When family income is low, there are ripple effects on access to education and health but also on thoughts and attitudes about the future. Our entrepreneurship trainings for youth combine business acumen with health awareness training and referrals to health service providers, with a special focus to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Life skills like self-motivation, self-respect and grit are included in the trainings, and contribute both towards an entrepreneurial spirit as well as how to make choices for living a safe and productive life.





## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SELF-RELIANCE

Our systematic, integrated four-step method, or our grassroot MBA, equips project participants with the skills and knowledge they need to launch and grow profitable, market-based grassroot enterprises and improve the socio-economic condition of their families and communities.



### 1 Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Social mobilisation is the ground for all our projects in Zimbabwe. The establishment of SHGs aims to create social cohesion in the communities, foster mutual support and create a platform to deliver trainings. In addition, the SHGs are the structure where members approach the concept of saving and investments through internal savings and lending systems (ISALs).



### 2 Entrepreneurship Training

Once a structure is in place for learning and support, a wide variety of trainings is provided by HiH staff and partners. When training is complete, SHG members can launch their own microbusinesses. The focus is on enterprise expansion for those who are already economically active. Some 80 percent of enterprises are women-owned and operated. Training includes:

- i) financial management and basic accounting
- ii) business planning and marketing
- iii) individually adapted vocational skills training.

We deliver additional trainings on gender, democratic practices and knowledge on how to protect the local environment and adapt businesses to climate change.



### 3 Financial Inclusion and Access to Productive Resources

To overcome financial exclusion – limited, unaffordable or predatory credit – we support entrepreneurs to access microloans so they can make that vital first investment. HiH also builds valuable networks with other actors for additional inputs, like specific agricultural support from the local department of agriculture. We collaborate with local authorities and ministries to align with national priorities and create project sustainability. Such linkages also facilitate trust and sow the seeds for enterprises to find that larger supporting environment to scale up their businesses.



### 4 Market linkages

While a local buyer base is essential in the early stages, the real opportunity for the entrepreneurs to increase their client base and possibly hire employees is realised when connecting to larger value chains. Establishing such linkages is one of the more challenging aspects of the journey but ultimately makes a real difference for poverty alleviation in the community. Value chain development and market linkages are therefore the final step in our trainings. Participants are advised to form clusters that boost both the profitability and resilience of enterprises through entry to markets, economies of scale and improved negotiating power. This enables up- and downstream linkages with private sector actors and enhances economic sustainability.



Grace Nkomo | Job Creation Project



## SOME OF OUR LARGER PROGRAMMES

### **Job Creation Project**

The project is currently being implemented in all HiH Zimbabwe districts, with the overall goal of improving sustainable household economies and build socio-economic resilience. This is achieved by focusing on the Hand in Hand core entrepreneurship method. Gender, as well as knowledge on how to protect the local environment and adapt to climate change, are core themes that are integrated into the project. Through social mobilisation into SHGs and by having 80% of project participants being women, it is estimated that 7 000 people will benefit from the business and value chains created.

### **Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY phase 2)**

Through a combination of training and networking activities, youth aged 18–35 are provided both with marketing and business knowledge and the courage to be change-makers in their own communities. Youth 13–18, who are still in school, are invited to join Junior Star Clubs where the focus lies on motivation, exploring the entrepreneurship method and health. SRHR initiatives are mainstreamed into the project to combat diseases and improve women's rights.

### **WE CARE Gwanda – Women and young Entrepreneurs for Climate Resilient Eco-business in Gwanda**

Women and Youth in the Gwanda District are mobilised into SHGs, supported and trained into income-generating activities, from beekeeping to market gardening. Through agroforestry practices, the project contributes to the environmental status in the area. Food security, livelihood creation and gender empowerment are further strengthened through collaboration with related government ministries.

### **Market Linkages Project: Promoting Zimbabwe Value Chains**

To facilitate value addition, increase customer outreach and enable the scaling up of enterprises, a strong focus is put on linking new and growing grassroots enterprises to selected value chains. Strengthening businesses is done by utilising a cluster approach. Project participants are granted access to technical input to raise product quality. By creating larger production capacity and supply, economies of scale are made possible, allowing for more formal and sustainable contractual arrangements with buyers.

### **Community Upliftment Programme**

Our Community Uplift Programme attacks poverty on a community-wide scale, bringing our job creation model to hundreds of grassroots entrepreneurs within a village community at once. By combining the HiH entrepreneurship training with support in terms of materials and/or infrastructure to targeted communities, the programme adopts a holistic approach to poverty reduction by supporting communities to better resist socio-economic and climate change-related shocks.

**Alvina Chiwanika | MEY**







## Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

HiH Zimbabwe has a robust monitoring system in which quantitative and qualitative data is collected weekly as part of programme delivery. Data is analysed following input from programme participants, ensuring that women's voices are heard and stories are told. The data and learning in Zimbabwe is also absorbed into Hand in Hand's international data collection and evidence gathering.

## Inclusion and safeguarding

HiH Zimbabwe promotes locally-driven processes that build on communities' experiences and seek to empower target groups to participate in processes of change. All projects address gender discrimination directly and work with both women and men to improve inclusion and change patriarchal power hierarchies. At the same time, we work with men (who make up about 20 per cent of our members) to provide livelihoods and gender training that reduces barriers to women's entrepreneurship. Robust accountability mechanisms are in place and safeguarding training is given to all staff and participants.

## Additional Reading and Resources

Read more about Hand in Hand Zimbabwe:  
[www.handinhand.co.zw](http://www.handinhand.co.zw)

HiH Zimbabwe is supported by Hand in Hand Sweden, through its Programmes and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning departments, as well as by other technical advisors.

## MEET RUJEKO STAR CLUB

### Rujeko Star Club | Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth 2



Their hope of a bright future had dimmed – as the seven young women from Chirumanzu district did not have any source of income – when they heard about the Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) Project.

***“We struggled to cater to the needs of our families. We ventured into different enterprises hoping to generate income but, it was all in vain as we lacked knowledge on business management,”*** says 23-year-old Ruvarashe Mhondi, a member of the self-help group Rujeko Star Club.

In February 2020, the group went through Hand in Hand Zimbabwe's training and got inspired to venture into detergent making. To date, the Rujeko Star Club is running a successful business and the sales have enabled each member to receive an income of USD 75 each per month.

***“The business training was so helpful. We are now working towards a better future for ourselves and our families as we can now run a profitable business,”*** says Ruvarashe. When the group got linked to a market through a 2-day market fair, they supplied a locally based supermarket with 48 bottles of liquid soap. They now feel optimistic about penetrating even larger markets!



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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