

The public library

Introduction

The year 2014 has come and gone, having presented its own set of challenges and opportunities. As ENMT we managed to achieve a substantial number of our set annual objectives and we feel as an organization that 2014 has been a year well spent. We managed to considerably increase our membership, continued expanding our book collection, automate our library management system and made great effort to ensure our clients managed to get the information they needed. Attracting a broad spectrum of clients with varied information needs, pursuing various educational and academic paths and from varying areas around Gwanda District and beyond the library continued to be a hive of activity through the year. This report will seek to highlight the strides made towards attainments of set objectives, programmes and activities the institution used to achieve these objectives, challenges and measures that will be put in place to address these short comings

Background

The ENMT public library aims at satisfying the information needs of the Gwanda town community estimated by the Municipality of Gwanda at 65 000, and its peripheral rural areas. This diverse clientele of varying ages, gender, religious orientation, academic background and political affiliation is the background against which ENML wishes to provide its service, guaranteeing every client to a right to information. It is against this same background and expectation that ENML has over the years built its collection of over 28,000 books. Being the only public library in Matabeleland South, ENMT has not limited its reach to the vicinities of its urban library catchment but through its outreach to rural community schools through the Book Box program, the Study Circle Groups and institutional support to rural secondary schools programs, has made available but limited resources to reach out to the rural folks who have over the years have been disadvantaged in terms of information access. Marketing of library services and success stories in communities where the Library service is provided; have further seen the library catchment continue to grow with some clients coming from as far as Beitbridge to the south and Insiza Districts to the North-East. Other institutions that have accessed our services include the Esigodini Agricultural Institute, Gwanda Prison Service, Zimbabwe Election Commission, Gwanda Multi-Disciplinary Training School of Nursing and the Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic. There are also four primary schools, two secondary and a distance learning university students make up the clientele base besides the general public drawn from this commercial centre and added to this growing list are the population at Gwanda District.

ENMT library programmes in Gwanda are anchored on the following objectives:

- To stimulate passion for reading
- To increase access to information
- To assist institutions in their developmental and educational efforts (Outreach programme to rural primary schools).
- To strive to continuously improve customer service.

Our activities include:

1. Book Loans to children and adults
2. Reader advisory service- through some latest published reference collection and reader service support
3. Institutional support through a selection of textbooks that are in short supply to primary and secondary schools.
4. Provision of two daily newspapers and three weekly newspapers
5. Children's and hospital programmed activities
6. Internet facility

Membership and usage of the Public Library

During the year under review a total of 1,228 took paid up subscription and this has its breakdown of 575 girls, 434 boys, 123 women, 81 men and 5 institutions. One of the objectives for ENMT was to increase library usage by the community. We are happy to state that we achieved this objective as the annual membership grew by a 58.5% increase compared to 2013 whose membership total stood at 775.

A number of activities that were carried out include visits and book talks to a number of schools that raised awareness on what the library could provide for personal growth in learning and education. The rich book collection that has been put together inspire and stimulate a reading culture besides a significant number of textbook related materials that the library provides.

Performance by the urban primary schools, at 2014 National Examination for Grade 7, particularly St Christopher's which had many members of the library was pleasing. The top 6 pupils who got 4 units each were members of the library all of whom started utilizing the library service at a tender age of 6 years. It is this performance of these children that ENMT felt proud a reading culture has had an impact schools performance and that a substantial number of teachers and parents now take initiative to have their pupils subscribe to the library service.

One objective, ENML has was to continue to build a book collection that has the capacity to meet the various information needs of its diverse clientele. This diversity and variety can also be credited for the increase in membership. The collection which stands at

28 000 which incorporates updated academic and scholarly books and other information materials, individual developmental and recreational, and informative and reference materials which ensures the library's relevance to everyone in the community. Jobseekers utilize the newspapers corner for job adverts, students put to use the assortment of textbooks in various subjects on the library shelves, recreational readers have novels and magazines at their disposal whilst non, new and young readers have a collection built specifically for them in the children's wing comprising of

picture books, story books, children's reference books, text books, novels and other informative books.

While ENMT has a membership subscription requirement for user to loan out books, access to the collection and utilization of the library premises is free. Both paid up members and no-paid up clients benefit from our user-friendly reference service this has gone a long way to extend the library readership as it improves user satisfaction. A total of 43,683 visits by people utilized the library services in 2014. This is a 31% increase compared to the 29, 888 who utilized the service in 2013. This readership comprised of both users who stay within the vicinities of Gwanda town and also periodic clients who utilized the service for short but frequent periods of time. The latter group includes students at boarding schools who came during the school holidays and long distance learning students who periodically come for their exams. Gwanda is the provincial capital and the headquarters for the southern region for institutions such as the Zimbabwe Open University, therefore students from across the region come for their exams, most of whom utilize the library service as they prepare for their exams.

ENML also through its Institutional support programme has seen schools dotted around Gwanda district benefit from the library's rich book collection. As earlier highlighted, a total of 5 institutions paid up as members in 2014. These included 3 secondary schools, one primary school and a college. This facility allows member institutions a borrowing power of up to 100 books at a time and in some cases access to a book box housing 300books. This facility has gone a long way to reduce the student to book ratios. Much gratitude goes to our donors for their continued support and in this instance more so to Weaver Press for their donations on literature in English set books.

Some schools also made effort to ferry their pupils to the library as institutions but encouraged them to join as individuals. Through an initiative to promote reading in children adopted by Collen Bawn primary school, pupils are bused 25km weekly to the library. Little Bunnies Nursery also subscribed to the ENMT "Catch-them-young" concept and liaised with parents to have their children join the library.

Collection development

ENML collected materials in a variety of popular subjects which support its function as the major information source for the demanding needs of the population. The collection supported study at all educational levels as well as catered for popular and recreational needs of the general public. This it achieved without discrimination as the materials sought to provide a holistic approach to readership. Materials for children and teenagers complemented by the children library programmes are intended to broaden their vision, support recreation, encourage and facilitate reading skills, stimulate and widen their interest in reading and supplement their educational needs. It is against this background that ENMT has over the years built its over 28,000 book collection.

The library services and its collection were built to cut across ages and educational levels supporting child educational development from a tender age right up to advanced levels. The shelves hold a rich assortment of books that aim at stimulating interest in reading in young children, supplement prescribed schools textbooks and support research in various levels.

ENML in 2014 received 4,220 books, a majority of which were received from BAI (UK) who single handedly provided 3,661 books, while 61 were from other well-wishers and 497 mostly Ndebele books were purchased. These materials were in assorted subjects covering both academic and recreational reading. Incorporated in these acquisitions were study guides in various subjects for both primary and secondary levels. The subjects included, mathematics, English, Information Technology, Sociology, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, French, Business studies, Geography, History, Literature and Integrated Science. These study packs have gained popularity with both primary and secondary school students because of their colorfulness and comprehensiveness. BAI also availed material which responded to our request as ENMT as had been submitted in the requisition form.

Further weeding of materials from our collection, to create space for new books and new materials was undertaken. Targeted were titles with multi copies, torn or missing pages and those that users have not loaned out in the past three years. A total of 973 books were weeded out of which 433 were adults' and 540 were children's books. Contrasted to the 2002 new books added to the collection, the collection grew by 1029 over the period in review meaning our challenge of self-space persisted as we continue to expand our collection in response to our swelling client base.

Over the same period ENML donated 841 books. These were a mixture of new and weeded materials. Beneficiaries included partner schools in Gwanda North and south, the Gwanda School of Nursing and Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic College. Most of the new books donated were mostly multiple copies.

The growth in membership has also presented us with challenges. There was an increase in the number of defaulters in 2014. A total of 287 clients had not returned their books by the end of the year. This was an increase in comparison to previous years. However this was to be expected as our membership was way large compared to those previous years. As a measure we served all defaulters with reminders in December and they have since trickled into either to return their late books or to make replacement arrangements for those lost.

Also of challenge to our collection development endeavors was the difficulty to build a library collect that has balance between indigenous and foreign language and content. ENMT relies to greater extent on donations from European donors and purchases makeup a smaller contribution to the library collection. African perspective and context in various subject areas such as History, commerce, business studies and politics thus are still limited. Therefore a need that funds be mobilizes so that more local publications be acquired to beef onto the growing library collection

Infrastructure

In December through the help of our donors, we managed to give the library premises a minor-facelift. We were able to repaint all the interior walls for the main library wings, the offices and the reception area. 3 shelves with a total carrying capacity of 2000 books were also constructed. We had as part of the annual objectives for 2014 continued development of a book collection that will meet the needs of all our clients. A space to store those materials and mechanism to ease their retrieval by clients thus were of priority. The new shelves will assist in easing pressure on the available shelves as shelving space had been a major hindrance in our collection development endeavors

Apart from the fresh new look in the inside we also maintained our evergreen gardens which continue to accommodate library overflows and also act as venues for activities in the library's children programmes. Our gardens are characterized by carpet-like lawns decorated by an assortment of shrubs and colorful flowers.

The library has a combined sitting capacity of 240 for both the adult and children's wings a capacity which has grown too small for the ever increasing number of users. Peak period particularly in in the children wing can have up to 200 children whilst the wing has a sitting capacity of 120. This usually results with some of the young patrons using the floors. During the April and August school holidays the same challenge was witnessed with the adult's wing and some had to resort to using the lawn outside.

Internet and automation of library services

ENMT in 2014 changed ship in terms of internet provision. We previously had been using small local provider who charged per workstation connected. We recently managed to secure the services of TelOne, Zimbabwe's sole provider of landline telephones. Their services has so far proven more liable and cheaper compared to the previous service provider as they charge a flat fee for an unlimited number of workstations. Much appreciation went to our donors OSISA and AGS for their unwavering support. Though we continued to charge users one dollar to use the internet for forty minutes we are hoping that in 2015 we could offer it for free as part of the package for our joined up members. This however will require some editing of our network so that the library has a hotspot for those who want to use their personal laptop.

Automation of library processes was also completed with 15,200 books added into the Small Library Organizer Pro software. All the paid up member were also captured and a trial period was run. This new facility allows for the loaning in and out of books electronically, calculates and notifies the user of overdue fines and also supports an online public access catalogue facility. Instead of the user having to depend on the memory of the reference librarian, the user can now search for their materials using authors, titles of subjects as search terms. It is our sheer hope that

we will soon have a link on our website through which users can access the catalogue over the internet.

Income generating activities

ENMT continued to engage in various income generating projects aimed at funding its activities. The major contributor was the user subscriptions, whose charges remained unchanged from 2013. Adults continued to pay US\$10, Secondary students US\$5, primary level pupils and infants US\$4 per annum. These however will be reviewed upwards for the year beginning January 2015 as the charges have proven unsustainable. We also continued running a photocopying facility though its dwindling returns persisted. Charges remained static with a standard A4 page pegged at 50 South African Cents, A3 page at R2 and an National Identity Card attracting ZAR1 (South African Rand).

We also let out the children's library for workshops in a bid to increase the income and mitigate recorded income losses in photocopying. A total of 8 meetings / events did take place at the Library at a modest charge of US\$90 per meeting.

Notable events

- ENMT this year came to an agreement with Simbumbumbi Primary and secondary school to pilot the setting up of a school/ community library in the area. The library is to be located at Simbumbumbi Primary school and will be in incubation for 5 years (2014-2019) before ENML exists. According to the agreement, for every consignment received from Book Aid International (UK) Simbumbumbi will have the privilege to select a full box to be added to its collection. ENMT's commitment to the agreement will be to aid in collection development and training of the librarian yet Simbumbumbi will provide a safe location, market resources and ensure their adherence to library rules to prolong life of the books.
- E'pap Zimbabwe in collaboration with Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust held a launch and marketing of E'pap instant porridge aimed at raising income for the library. The porridge would be sold at the library for a commission.
- ENMT on the 26th of March 2014 hosted a staff development workshop ON Results Based Management. The workshop lasted 2days and was organized by Afrikagrupperna facilitated by Mrs. N. Ndlovu the AGS country representative. The major thrust of the workshop was on planning and execution of programmes and report writing with emphasis on results.
- On the 27th of June a systems analysis was carried out under AGS initiation. A thorough evaluation of all library processes and procedures in all departments were looked into

It can thus be concluded that, though the year 2014 presented its own set of challenges, ENMT to a larger extent managed to achieve its set objectives which were to continue to build a library collection that meets the needs of its target clientele, improve their reading culture and extend the library usage by the community of Gwanda Town. It is our sincere hope that 2015 will present even more opportunities to continue to serve and contribute to sustainable education, social and economic development.

OUTREACH TO RURAL SCHOOLS END OF YEAR REPORT 2014

The Outreach to Rural Community Schools was initiated in 1996 with 26 schools participating in the programme. In this programme Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust's (ENMT) objective is to promote a reading culture, provide supplementary reading material and to contribute to the improvement of school performances. In the year under review ENMT reached out to 27 schools' enrolment of 8,381 of which 6,760 pupils and teachers utilised the library service. This was an 81% reach to the schools' population.

ENMT expanded the programme and as of 2014, it successfully reached out to 27 rural community schools distributing 30 Book Boxes. Each book box holds 300 books and is delivered to each of the 27 schools, at the beginning of each school term. The books were sourced mainly through donations and purchases. Through this library service provision, ENMT increased the number of book boxes to schools to 30, as some of the schools requested more than one box. Since ENMT started this library service provision, schools, communities and other agencies have access to books and reading materials that the ENMT has managed to put together.

OBJECTIVES:

- To promote a reading culture among pupils, teachers and community members
- To improve performances of schools and pupils.

BOOK BOXES

In 1996 the Outreach to Rural community schools programme was developed. A survey on 27 schools was carried out on what library service was available to pupils, teachers and the community and the findings led to the design of a library service in the form of Book Boxes that could be delivered in these schools. It has been strengthened through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the schools and ENMT whereby ENMT's role would be to provide a Book Box with 250 – 300 books, delivered at initially at 10 rural primary schools but later expanded to cover 27 schools in Gwanda District. In the District there are 109 primary schools and most of these have no library service. The objective is to promote a reading culture through the provision of books and other non- book material that should contribute to improvement in the performance of schools.

At the beginning of each school term 13 000 books must be processed to make up 30 Book Boxes.

The books are mostly in English. ENMT depends to a greater extent to book donations from Book Aid International, that on average make available over four thousand books per annum. We also

bought books worth US\$11,000 mostly in IsiNdebele readers. These were mainly short story titles, and textbooks. We also invite teacher librarians to be involved in book selection, where we combine books requested with what is available through donations and purchases. This process allows for the input of teacher librarians, creating an inspiring collection that gets delivered to schools. The contents of the Book Box provided access to many books, on different subjects that appealed to pupils and teachers. However local published material like novels in IsiNdebele account for 15% and in each book box 45 IsiNdebele readers were included. The rest were in English.

During the period under review a regular schedule of deliveries was achieved as all the twenty seven schools received the book boxes on the third week of January and in second term book deliveries were on the fourth week of May and in third term deliveries were done in the fourth week of September.

Our book reserve for the Outreach programme dwindled, as a result of wear and tear, missing from the book list; as 3,000 books needed to be replaced. This presented itself as a big challenge on stocking for the third term. Book donations from Book aid International also delayed and were received in October to replenish our book stock in English.

The life span of most books published local (IsiNdebele) has tended to be two school terms, due to handling and demand pressure on them by increased use by many pupils who now take reading as a habit.

Three rural community primary schools, Colleen Bawn, Sabiwa and Makwe have joined the library service as institutions. Pupils and teachers at these schools accessed books on their own volition. Colleen Bawn Primary ferried two groups of children twice a week to the main library. Sabiwa and Makwe schools came to collect the book box at their own expense and in some cases carried Book boxes in their small cars.

ENMT is excited by this development whereby some schools outside partnership with 27 schools where book boxes are delivered, the above schools have seen value addition in participating in the library service as offered by it.

ENMT observed with excitement changes in attitude among schools management and the general acceptance by community in embracing the establishment of dedicated buildings as school libraries.

A notable increase in children reading in the following schools, for example Buvuma Primary with an enrolment of 520 pupils issued out 3,215 books to its users as compared to 3,069 in 2013 an increase of 4,5%. Paye Primary with 260 pupils issued out 1,276 books against 1,142 in 2013 an increase of 10.5%.

Performance in schools in the National Examinations also indicated that among the 27 schools that ENMT provides support for reading and learning, all with the exception of one school that scored a ZERO pass rate did much better in 2014 compared to 2013. Of the 27 schools that are partnering with ENMT, 14 were in the top 50 out of 109 schools in the District. St Christopher's School with

over 80% pupils' members of the library maintained its poll position in the District with 97% pass rate.

Samlodi Primary wrote to us at the beginning of 2015 about their Grade 7 National Examination results, Quote: *“Your partners Samlodi is happy to inform you of their 2014 results. They hiked from 23% to 60%. It was through your support as partners. Thank you for your tireless support.”*

Reading inspires development. Schools reported improved relations with their local communities. One community in Garanyemba initiated an old students association to assist with book donation for the school. Twelve schools have converted unused classrooms to be libraries. Five schools are in the process of constructing library buildings in partnership with other stakeholders. All the 27 schools cite furnishing/shelving the library as a major challenge.

Whilst ENMT has provided a form of library service to be emulated by schools, ENMT's advocacy work has been grounded on four activities:

Workshops

Visits

Attending Speech and Prize days

Library Days

One workshop was done instead of two. It was decided at the workshop that ENMT make visits to schools to encourage teachers to accept the role of libraries in learning. It was also agreed that visits to schools would be more effective to capacitate the teacher –librarian explain and encourage library usage.

Three visits were made to schools at cluster level to advocate for a library time in the school's learning schedules.

Four attendances were made to Speech and Prize giving days where again schools and parents were encouraged to use the library as part of learning.

Nextworking

The Schools Coordinator attended a five day next working workshop in Sweden.

Children`s Activities in the main library

Activities

- Story telling
- Reading together
- Act and do art
- Home work

Children were drawn mostly from the four urban primary schools namely St Christopher`s, Mount Cazalet, Jahunda and Senondo. They came three times a week in the afternoons for reading

activities. This became a popular program where on some days over 150 children thronged the library facility for reading and listening, art work or homework. Story telling was most popular with all the children. They acted, and did art, retold stories and recited poetry and danced and played games. The highlights of the visits were the story telling, drawing, drama and dance. The following were some of the titles:

- The book “Kolobeja a folktales from a Ndebele past” by Pathisa Nyathi, where the story-teller and children read together about “Simemelwana” a magic baby born in a polygamous family hidden in the bush and final the father discovered something was amiss. After listening to the story being read children acted on it, drew and colored, weaved mats out of paper and created stick dolls to show comprehension.
- “The House that Jack Built”, poetry book was acted upon and to show the children’s understanding they came up with competitions songs.
- Children were given a task to search on dinosaurs, the Big Five, the Salamander lizard. It was exciting see almost children’s drawing these animals as an indication that the search among books in the library were a success.
- Listening skills also were catered for through listening to book talks and DVDs on Harry Potter that was brought to the library by one of the children.

Grade 5 and 6s regularly came to do their homework and were guided on how to find the best sources that would provide key to information they were looking for. In the library we placed within their reach dictionaries, children encyclopaedias, yearbooks, atlas and fact-books.

In preparation for the Grade 7 National examinations, ENMT assisted children from the four urban schools with the provision with IsiNdebele and English revision materials. In some cases children brought questions on which ENMT discussed and guided the children on how to approach examination questions as provided for in the revision books that we kept in the library.

Workshops

ENMT continued to work with partner schools by arranging workshops that stimulated and motivated teachers to embrace the concept of a library being an integral part of learning and teaching. At that meeting the following topics were discussed:

Value of partnership – advocating for the acceptance of the book box at schools as a bridging between few textbooks and learning for quality education.

Importance of handling books as more and more books got torn thereby posing a threat to continued supply of both relevant and adequate books to meet the schools population.

Benefits of reading – where we discussed that a child able to read would be able to learn.

After the workshop we were happy that teacher librarians were empowered to manage school libraries and the Book Box. Further discussions were deferred to practical applications of lessons learnt at schools and at cluster level where ENMT continued to monitor the activities associated with the book box.

Hospital outreach activities

Every Wednesday from January to December is dedicated to visits to the local hospital. Two major activities, pregnant mothers and visits to the children's Ward were accomplished. A total of 675 mothers were reached and encouraged to read for themselves and their babies. The learned practice received from hospital reading activities has been escalated to family reading activities whose effect was the growing numbers of children that joined and used the library in Gwanda town. "A Parent's Guide to Early Years by T. Cooper." was distributed to the mothers and they liked it as it is relevant to the development of the child before and after birth.

An interesting feature of the visit to the hospital was a contact in 2013 with a school drop-out who still had to write her Ordinary Level subjects. After giving birth, the young mother later joined the library and in 2014, she had embarked on reading for her Advanced Level reading every day in the Library.

The staff members at the hospital were also eager to borrow books too especially "The Parent's Guide to Early Years" as it complimented their work delivery.

In the 27 rural schools ENMT reached out to 6614 out of an enrolment of 8147 pupils. 146 out of 234 teachers, 37 community members and 87 out of 193 SDCs read from the Book Box.

It can thus be concluded that, though the period under review presented a few challenges, ENMT to a larger extent managed to achieve its set objectives of providing adequate, relevant, up-to-date information and a conducive environment for study, research, retrospection and recreation to the Gwanda community. It is also hoped that the second half of the year will present even more opportunities to continue to serve and contribute to sustainable education, social and economic development.

ENMT STUDY CIRCLES

Study Circle Program Summary

Study Circle Program, a simple participatory method of learning, ended the year with 29 groups. The Study Circle activities are centred on creating sustainable community development projects that aim at improving livelihood. Several stakeholders have been mapped out and the program is being requested in other areas. Scope of program activities has great potential especially amongst the women folk.

Objectives

- To promote a reading culture among communities in Gwanda District.

- To support community members facing developmental challenges through initiating and facilitating various community activities or projects

Study Circles

Study Circles programme was started in 2008 as an alternative intervention to subsistent farming the communities in Gwanda District had been practising for decades. The country by 2009 had witnessed a virtual collapse of social service delivery, disease outbreaks and deepening economic crisis which created some vulnerability in the community members who were willing to take any assistance availed to them.

ENMT uses provision of information to inspire people through the Study Circle developmental concept, which facilitates development through sharing experiences and working as groups in trying to mitigate poverty and the state of destitution. The Study Circle methodology has become the basis for cultivating democratic values, stimulating positive thoughts in learning, be it social or voluntary. The tool promotes equality, dialogue, respect and tolerance.

Currently the programme has 29 such groups which meet regularly to discuss set themes, alongside provided guidelines. The 2014 theme has been “Rights, Food, Natural Resources and Trade” to which the groups were provided with relevant study material that supported their thematic discussions. The outcome of these discussions informed their activities that resulted in income generating projects. The total membership is 210 comprising 41 men and 191 women. Six groups are engaged in nutrition gardens where they grow a variety of vegetables, fourteen groups are in poultry keeping ; six in small livestock (goat rearing) two in craft work , one in piggery, one in soap making using an indigenous plant, jatropha and the arts group of young boys.

Activities

- Sourced from the Public Library relevant books that were included in book boxes
- Monitoring and evaluation was undertaken through visit and meetings with Community officers and the Study Circles Coordinator
- Conducted educative meetings/trainings
- Created open discussions leading to productivity
- Promoted a culture of reading and sharing experiences at meetings
- Field visits

Provision of Relevant Materials

Study circles is a tool used by ENMT to educate rural community members so as to bring about positive change in their lives. These education engagements stimulated and motivated discussion. Problems and their root causes were identified and solutions were agreed on. The majority of members were happy to discuss issues that pertained to right to property if a male spouse died. They also sought clarification on the right to property, land and inheritance. Most women members

discussed their experience to education that favoured the boy child and resolved to send their girl child to school instead. These educational discussions had a constant switch between theory and practice.

In as far as issues relating to household food security almost all Study Circle groups resolved to move away from subsistent farming that dependent on seasonal rains to a more sustainable food production like nutrition gardens, small livestock keeping and incoming generating projects like poultry.

The provision of book boxes housed at community schools, helped people get information, on which they revived their literacy levels, develop new skills and made informed agricultural and health decisions. They also gained insights into environmental issues, where discussions centred on preventing veld fires, the indiscriminate cutting down of trees and over grazing. Future plans are that Study Circle group members would be involved in tree planting, conservation farming for small livestock through limiting overgrazing or controlled roaming through paddocking the pastures. Through reading together in groups from materials in the book boxes, community members have had the opportunity to raise their thinking and injury. In the Bethel area a group of five Study Circle members after discussing issues relating to environment and health, they decided to construct Blair toilets and wash rooms. "They no longer go behind bushes for their toilet needs nor wait for the sun to go down to bath behind their huts."

A book list of the following titles were sourced:

'Indlela zokulima imibhida' by Swedish Cooperative Centre,

'Ukulinywa kwemihlobo etshiyeneyo yemibhida egoqela ikhabitshi, irepu, iKayili, amamatamatisi lehanyanisi' by Phibeon Chigumira Ngwerume

'Ukuhlanyela izihlahla ngamahlumela' by Swedish Cooperative Centre.

'Goat keeping for small scale farmers' by Swedish Cooperative Centre

'Speak Out', 'Ukuqhutshwa kwemihlangano' a book that became popular with a number of community leaders,

The Legal Resources Centre availed books

The titles included on Women's Rights, Child Rights and Child Abuse, Umthetho we Legal Age Majority, Making a Will, Isondlo, Birth -certificates, Summons, Maintenance.

These books added brought knowledge and understanding of legal issues to the Study Circle members.

Out of this collection of booklets members were learnt that fruit trees planted are usually affected by termites and that there were biological methods of pest control such as the use of wood ash or putting sand in the dug holes for planting. They also learnt that trees do well when planted during the rainy season.

The Study Circles Coordinator translated to isiNdebele the book 'Understanding Study Circles' which gave a basic understanding of the Study Circles concept. This came about after a request by some members who did not understand English.

Implementation and Outputs

ENMT would want to report that the Study Circles groups have adopted, understand and use the concept to interact between themselves and the general community members. The establishment of school libraries have greatly benefited them and most organic projects which they have been actively engaged in were directly influenced by what they read, shared and agreed on as groups.

Due to information gained through discussions and reading diverse materials there has been improvement in the quality of discussions, variety of crops that included vegetables and small stock animals were indicative of the usage of information supplied through books.

Women who have been traditionally marginalised by the patriarchal status, they now participate in household and community decision making process, as gender barriers fall off. Women find themselves owning property and holding leadership positions in the community. In the Study Circle groups, women are no longer afraid to speak out as they have built up confidence in their talk and defence of their rights. Two women Study Circle members one in Gwanda North and the other Gwanda South are chairperson of School Development Committees. In Ward 14 in a male dominated area a woman chairs the committee of the Legal Resource Foundation outreach programme.

Poultry

This is the most popular income generating project amongst the ENMT Study Circles. Primarily the groups bred indigenous chickens but owing to length time of maturity and slow turnover they have since adopted keeping broilers which grow faster and have better markets. ENMT helped with the construction of fowl runs through group members accessing the Revolving Loan Fund and undertook studies of various means of breeding different types of chickens. ENMT introduced a 6m by 2,5m (15m²) standard fowl run with 2 separate sections which can house 180 birds.

In Gwanda North, Ndonsakusa poultry group comprising of six female members, has over the past two years embarked on building fowl runs in every individual member's homestead in a bid to increase output and maintain a constant supply to a restaurant in Gwanda Town.

Group members meet to check on individual runs and share markets. Their chickens have two weeks interval, meaning that when one starts selling chickens to a restaurant in two weeks the other one continues and the next until all six have all sold and the rotation starts again.

As part of improving their household property, Ndonsakusa group members in Gwanda North bought each member size 20 three legged pot, 2 blankets and paid fees for their dependents. Project members in this group had benefits of eggs, chicken meat and manure.

ENMT hopes that all groups in poultry project would emulate Ndosakusa by setting up each member a fowl run in their respective homes and thus empowering each one to work at meeting personal household needs.

Another Poultry group in Gwanda South that started in 2013 with 25 chicks at a time using a small hut that they turned into fowl-run, during the period under review they managed to construct a proper fowl run with a carrying capacity of 125 chicks. The chicken sold for \$8 each, and the group managed to generate an average of \$1 000 from sales after an expenditure of \$600. These did six runs during the period under review.

Major challenge is the constant rise in the price of chicken feed, transport and finding good markets where the chickens can be purchased at once. Due to excessive heat in Gwanda District keeping the slaughtered chickens' freshness is another challenge and risk to losses to poor preservation.

The marketing strategy used by the poultry project members was mainly by word of mouth or use of cell phones to people that lived within the vicinity.

The winter season was a challenge as the chicks were more prone to attacks from diseases. A group in Gwanda North ended up postponing purchase of chicks during that time.

Nutrition gardens

Gwanda district experienced good rains the past rainy season. This had a positive bearing on the nutritional garden projects, except for the frost during May – July that devastated the leavy vegetables. In the later part of the year (October to November) boreholes used by the Zenzele Nutrition garden in Samlodi and Sibambene garden in Tshanyaugwe experienced mechanical breakdown which slowed down their vegetables cropping. ENMT sought assistance to rehabilitate the boreholes and the Soroptimist Women Club of Bulawayo came to our aid. Two thousand dollars (US\$2,000.00) was donated towards this rehabilitation. New parts for the repair of pipes, casings rods, foot valves, complete cylinders, bolts, nutsets, M24 bolts and nuts, Perkins and wooden block were purchased. The Sibambene garden borehole in Tshanyaugwe was repaired first and it is working again. The Study Circle members provided manual labour.

Statistics in the Study Circle groups' record books showed that yields increased by 60% compared to the last half of 2013. The value addition to the activities included improvements in household incomes as the group members pooled their income gains and bought household necessities and paid school levies for their dependents.

Goat rearing

These started as three groups in 2009 and are now five groups. Members were used to the traditional way of keeping goats where they are released to roam the forest. Discussions and reading/studies increased the Groups' knowledge of rearing these small livestock animals. They learnt to pen the goats, constructed roofed pens that have diamond wire to secure the goats. Members have learnt to collect feed and store it in trenches/pits for use when goats are in pens.

In 2009 three groups had 16 goats and over the past five years 158 goats have passed through the members. Under the period being review 4 groups keep goats 53 goats. The difference is what they managed to sell or eat.

ENMT has continued its support the goat rearing groups providing them with materials, trainings /workshops and organizing field visits. Through these activities the groups received better management skills and good practices of culling unproductive goats and ensuring successful mating.

International Crop Research Institute for Semi- Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) assisted these groups by giving them fodder seeds which were harvested and fed to goats.

Craft

The Craft groups have added to their activities decorative art in their homes. A field visit to a homestead in Paye introduced members to a new form of craft which is decorating kitchens. This skill afforded individuals to be hired, thereby increasing their household income. ENMT applauded the five Study Circle members who took up this craft and improved their kitchens. One member went further and decorated her yard by planting shrubs and flowers, a good thing as this will reduce dust and bring in fresh air.

Soap making

This group has an additional male to its membership, 5 women and 1 man. Members continue making the bath and laundry soaps from jatropha oil, by products of herbal and non-herbal body jell. Production was low this year as compared to 2009 - 2011. ENMT intends working with this group and help it generate income to meet their needs and be able to pay back what they loaned from the revolving loan fund. There is need for members to be show commitment by having a 100% turnout at their manufacturing days and also other activities.

Arts

Although the four member group is in the process of recruiting more members following the departure of two members to urban areas, none has been added and these four are also in search of employment. Hence chances of them relocating are quite high. They performed at two local schools at their speech and prize-giving.

Cattle management

This is a male dominated group of 20 members with the aim of improving the breed in Dambashoko village. Discussions were held on pen fattening which brought about a need for a feedlot. Project members requested for an area to construct a feedlot that would house 25 beasts. ENMT conducted educative meetings on using Study Circle methodology as a means of communication and reaching democratic decisions. ENMT also advised the group to seek expert advice from Agricultural Extension offices in Gwanda Town. ENMT beginning of 2015 will engage the group on the way forward.

Micro-Finance

ENMT started assisting the S/C groups in 2011, with micro credit lines through the set-up revolving loan facility. This account is run jointly by the Library Committee and the Study Circle members.

Payments to this facility have been improved. In 2014 US\$ 3,339.34 was banked in the Account compared US\$2,659.33 in 2013. To be paid back by members into the Revolving Fund is \$3 620, 66 which is outstanding. Two groups are struggling to pay, Thuthuka poultry in Gwanda North owing \$524, 92 and Sokunjalo soap making in Gwanda South East owed US\$2 496, 88. Most of the loans were used to put up structure where the members could work or keep chickens. The organization will continue to assist these groups work towards managing payments as long as they remain in Study Circles.

Although this facility is available, Study Circle project members are encouraged to reinvest some of the money generated into the project as a way of developing sustainability of the project.

Workshops and Training

The following 5 workshops were carried out and attended by 77 women and 34 men in total:

- ❖ A workshop on sack potato growing was carried out. Study Circle groups and other farmers in the communities tried it out and yields were not good. The Study Circle members and programme staff will engage the potato sack facilitator and carry out a post-mortem and also see which works best for the groups, the sack growing or the ground planting. Also a research on the type of soil used will be carried out to determine the cause for the death of the plants.
- ❖ Goat management trainings were carried out and the locally based veterinary officers facilitated. This has assisted project members learn to engage the local experts in the project activities. The Vet officers helped in the design of goat pens and feed storages. Practical dosing and medication has been done at project sites with the experts enforcing the correct way of doing it. These officers have also helped train in the growing of fodder.
- ❖ Broiler production so as to equip members with knowledge and ability of a broiler chicken to reach its potential body mass. Gwanda South East had its chickens affected by Newcastle disease and members were trained and medication for vaccination was also provided.

- ❖ A Review on the Study Circle concept was also done as a way of empowering the members for their own needs and a method of achieving new knowledge to improve their lives.
- ❖ A review of workshop on record keeping was carried out to remind and equip new members on what to record and how. They appreciated the fact that records reflect progress or productivity of a project and also helped them know special dates for stock, for dosing or medication.

Field Visit

A field day was carried out in two of the three areas of operation. In Gwanda South, at PAYE village, the visit was to see a water harvesting technique undertaken by one villager. Members felt challenged and were rearing to go and put that in practice.

The third project of interest to the members was the art work done at this homestead's kitchen. It was breath-taking. Imagine having food in such an environment. Study Circle members especially those in craft intend trying out what they saw. As commented above under craft work this craft/art is spreading like wildfire.

Discussions

As earlier highlighted, the study circles hold discussions on an average of twice a month as agreed by the study circle group members. The areas discussed are those that are pertinent to their everyday lives and they make use of this platform to collectively come up with locally brewed solutions. The discussion themes covered in 2014 were: Legal documents; marriage and the Law; rights; trade; environmental awareness; destruction of natural resources and conservation farming. The effectiveness of the study circles is based on the premise that no one answer is right but rather active participation of all the member has the potential to bring about the most plausible solutions to some of the problems. This facilitates collective learning which is achieved through building upon life experiences and knowledge of group members. The most common area of discussion has been on finding solutions to household food security, a challenge to a majority of households in the Gwanda District. ENMT facilitated these dialogue platforms to a number of stakeholders that included groups interested in poultry keeping, small livestock rearing, nutrition gardens, cattle management, craft work, music and drama (Arts) and soap making. Apart from encouraging the setting up of income generating projects ENMT further initiated discussions on gender mainstreaming, and saw many women involved in activities that were prior; male dominated such as keeping of livestock.

Gender mainstreaming addressed issues relating to marriages and the law, child rights and the girl-child and education.

An initiative by ENMT in conjunction with Legal Resource Centre made efforts to encourage and also offer assistance to the project beneficiaries in obtaining these legal documents like birth certificates and passports. During the period under review a total of 9 people directly involved in the Study Circle programme exclusive managed to get birth certificates and identity cards.

The thrust for 2015 will target death certificates which happened to be an area most communities had overlooked.

Another theme covered in the discussions was on the environment. Environmental awareness has over the past few years taken centre stage in the international arena with conservationists and government departments such as EMA making effort to conscientise and police communities on being environmentally protective. To avoid repetition of the case of Selonga gardens which were disbanded by the EMA for being too close to water bodies, ENMT took initiative to facilitate an evaluation of all the Study Circle projects to ensure that none of posed a threat to the environment. Furthermore the communities addressed the issue of pollution. This was more conspicuous with the contamination of water holes as a result of open defecation as most household did not have latrines. Apart from being an eye sore this posed a health hazard as pollutants are washed into rivers and dams by surface runoff. These discussions have seen Bambanani group members in Bethel Gwanda South each constructing a household toilet and further more influencing 20 more households in the area to have toilets in their homesteads. Also causes of destruction of natural resources were discussed with the local leadership and the Study Circle members where causes were identified and solutions suggested. Deforestation takes the lead and consultations with EMA brought a legal way of stopping this. Since most villagers use firewood as fuel for cooking, it was agreed that a wheelbarrow is the maximum amount one is allowed to get and if found with more than that one is liable to a charge.

Study Circle project members have gained some measure of social entrepreneurship, an attempt at drawing upon the members' activities to find solutions to social problems, but mostly at creation of community based agency for obtaining asserts in individual lives. As alluded to Gwanda District has no job creation capacity, incomes are very low or Zero, hence the notion of trade become a flash word igniting debate. Most discussions on Rights, Food and Natural resources were well received. Members still felt they had no capacity to engage meaningful in trade and bargain issues as the market was very thin. Discussions revealed that many community members got cheated when they sold products or animals by unscrupulous buyers who reduce prices for their benefit. When schools open especially in January after the festive season, most parents are out of cash for school fees, uniforms and stationary. They end up selling their animals at a loss which will only cover the immediate need and no excess for other things. The Field Officer for Gwanda South East attended a cattle sale to observe any anomaly and also inquire from the responsible officers on rights of traders. Observations were that the old rural folk did not go near the scale to verify the animal weight called out by the auctioneer and hence wrong weights were used. Some animals were disqualified purposely and sent out to allow organised buyers to follow and negotiate with the owners for a miserable amount of money. An animal worth \$600 would be taken for \$200 or less depending on how desperate the owner is. These discussions revealed that rearing livestock is a business that should be conducted likewise. Further discussions will be arranged in 2015 for the locally based Vet officer and Dip committee to additionally inform community members on this.

Conservation farming started in 2013 rainy season is on-going and improvements in yields are being recorded. Discussions revealed that this type of farming is not popular as it is labour

intensive. Study Circle members and the community at large object to planting of small grain because they do not like the idea of going to the fields early and staying late to scare the birds that descend on the grain. To add to that pounding the grain takes long hours just to come up with a few kilogrammes of Mealie meal, seen as not worth the effort. Older community members told us that the problem is worse as small grain fields are now few. If ENMT had funds it would purchase a dehuller so as to assist Study Circle members in the processing of the grain. Masunga garden members in Gwanda North used it when they planted a type of water melon sourced from Botswana and they had a 100% harvest. A lady from Zenzele nutrition garden in Gwanda South East scooped the best prize at a locally organized seed fair for those that engaged in conservation farming. Another lady in Gwanda South who is a member of Sokuseka nutrition garden was nominated lead conservation farmer and all demonstrations are carried out at her field. Harvests of small grain in Gwanda South East, Tshanyaugwe, had minimum 18-20bags (50kg bags) the highest yield was 61 bags and above. In Gwanda South an area of 25m x 25m planted with sorghum realised 130 bags which were harvested 3 times as this was a type that continues after one slashes off the. Cowpeas' highest harvests was 3 x 50kg bags.

The health of community members is held with high esteem hence discussions on prevention of diseases like malaria were held. Some community members were refusing to have their homesteads sprayed and after these discussions changed their minds. Mosquitoes in ward 15 cause malaria. Members in this community appreciated the information gained during the discussions.

These have been on conservation farming, local environmental situation and impact of projects done by Study Circle members on the environment. Local leadership has been involved in the discussions in a bid to spread the awareness. Conservation farming has been carried out by Study Circle project members and is paying dividends as members are raking in bumper harvests in small grains. Community members had forgotten about granaries and as they deteriorated were not repaired nor were they part of a new homestead. It is of interest that after the good harvests these have started appearing in most homesteads and are full to the brim. This has definitely been a successful farming season.

Research

In Ward 15 the Field Officer made a research on what people especially women and the young understood by Rights. The outcome was quite interesting as the majority said Rights had something to do with women. This then became an area to be tackled with the experts. During discussions men developed a great interest on Rights and wanted further discussions which were deferred to 2015. Traditional men owned everything with the family. The local leadership has indicated that they will invite the Field Officer for further discussions as the issue of Rights had become very sensitive. These discussions were carried out in two villages, village 2 Selonga and village 3 Zwabagwamba.

Networking

- ❖ ICRISAT gave four goat groups in Bethel and Ntepe fodder seeds of sun hemp, cowpeas and sorghum to grow fodder. Each member harvested 160 kgs of fodder. After harvesting the fodder crops, this reduce the goat's time out of the pen, resulting in less attacks by predators. Fodder seeds were planted by each project member on a portion in their field.
- ❖ AMALIMA (ORAP) involved in cooperative action in rural communities held conservation farming trainings which Study Circle members. Some of the Study Circle members were selected to be lead farmers.
- ❖ Moriti woa Sechaba a community based organization involved with water and sanitation provided Study Circle members with cement with which they constructed Blair toilets.
- ❖ SAFIRE an organization involved with Natural Resources rewarded two female Study Circle members in Ward 14 with maize seeds, wheelbarrows and hoes, as the members had excelled in conservation farming. ENMT takes pride in that the overall best farmer is a member of Study Circles from Zenzele nutrition garden in Samlodi, Gwanda South East.

ENMT embraced the principle of gender mainstreaming, applying it to all ages and levels in the communities of operation as evident in the report.

Contribution to Afrikagrupperna's Thematic Objectives

ENMT, has contributed to 4 objectives as indicated below

- ❖ Objective A.1.1 on capacity building. Five workshops held on goat and poultry management, reviewed purpose of record keeping and the Study Circle method as a way of empowering members with information for use in their lives and ability to grow on a large scale potatoes.
- ❖ Objective A.1.2 on increased knowledge and enhanced production and number of marketing strategies used and 77 women and 34 men trained
- ❖ Objective A.1.3 on number of women and men actively involved in producer associations. Two Study Circle groups comprising 9 women and 1 men joined a more organized group of small livestock keeping called Manama Livestock Association which is affiliated to the Zimbabwe Farmers Union. It was hoped that the members would access a better market reach.
- ❖ Objective A.1.4 on number of information sources available by partners. ENMT made available information for community development through book box placed at the community school libraries.

The market status

These were mostly the local community members who include teachers and government extension officers. Some groups have established markets in Gwanda town at restaurants and with vendors. However the chickens and vegetables was flooded making the growing of vegetables very

unprofitable. ENMT encouraged the Study Circle groups to produce quality and well packaged products.

Sustainability plan

- S/C members were encouraged to take full ownership of their projects and make democratic decisions within their groups.
- The Study Circles were encouraged to develop close relationship with other service providers like the Rural District Council officials, Agricultural Extension Officers, Veterinary Services and other agencies including Non-Governmental Organizations working within in the communities.
 - ENMTs continued support.

Emerging and Potential Problems

- Relevant study material in the Ndebele language continued to be in short supply.
- There is need for alternative mode of transport for Community officers as the areas they covered, continued to stretch out. The two community officers cover a distance of 40 – 50 kms to the furthest community project, which cycling in sand soils was very difficult.

Conclusion

Not only are these S/C group members becoming involved in income generating projects but they have become informed members of the community through reading widely, holding discussions and attending workshops. They have also found profitable occupation by being self-employed.

It can thus be concluded that, though the period under review presented its set of challenges, ENMT to a larger extent managed to achieve its set objectives of providing adequate, relevant, up-to-date information and a conducive environment.