

# Local Governance Structures and Their Role in Mobilising Community Action: A Case of Recreational Facilities in Mining Towns in the Copperbelt Province

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**Article history:** Article history: Received: 15 March 2023 Received in revised form: 8 September 2023  
Accepted: 7 October 2023 Published online: 31 December 2023

## Abstract

This paper explores the role of local governance structures at community level in mobilising community action in the redevelopment of recreational facilities in former mine townships in the Copperbelt Province. These facilities are experiencing a management quandary resulting from the privatisation of the mining conglomerate, ZCCM, in the late 1990s. This paper argues that every society has a way of reorganising itself when such vacuums in management occur. Growing literature places this research agenda within “self-organising”, “co-production”, “self-managing”, etc. Underpinning these self-organising processes are local governance structures devised by communities themselves, which include various actors being involved in the decision making and management processes for community development. In modern societies, the role of these structures is often underplayed and only realised when a vacuum appears in the management as is the case for formerly mine-owned recreational facilities in Copperbelt towns. A multi-case study approach was adopted in this mixed method research to determine the communities’ ability to regenerate the dilapidated recreation centres. The research found that the communities had the social capital required to drive the regeneration process, exhibited by the benevolence shown to each other, the willingness to participate in activities at the recreation centres and the availability of self-organising associations. Additionally, the local structures were able to self-organise and participate in decision making and management required for successful community development.

**Keywords:** Brownfields, Community-based governance, Recreational facilities

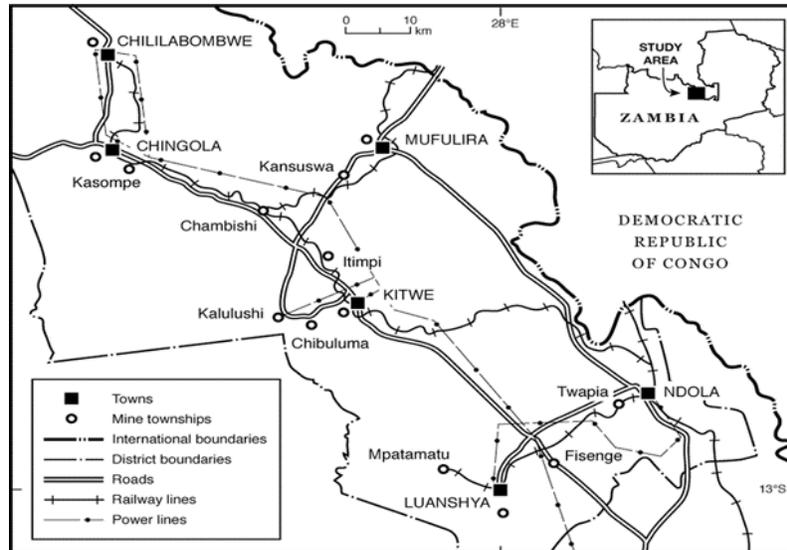
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Formal mining operations in Zambia began in the early 1920s in various towns of the Copperbelt Province. The different mine entities were managed by foreign investors who constructed numerous support social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and recreation centres in the mining townships. The mines also provided social services such as road maintenance and waste management. After independence from colonial rule in 1964, the Government embarked on a nationalisation program and gained 51% share in all the mines. The mines were therefore managed by the state-owned mining conglomerate, Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM) (Fraser and Lungu, 2005). Following the decision in the late 1990s to privatise the ZCCM, components of the firm were sold to different private investors who in many cases were more interested in the productive assets, smelters and copper ore bodies (ICMM, 2014). By the year 2000, the privatisation of ZCCM was virtually complete, with new owners appearing such as Binani Enterprise in Luanshya, Mopani in Kitwe and Mufulira and Konkola Copper Mines in Chingola (Rothchild and Sons Ltd, 1998; ZCCM-IH, 2007). The selection of productive assets and a few social facilities by the investors resulted in the rest of the support infrastructure being sold off to individuals, handed over to the government and being given off as trusts. The recreation facilities not adopted by the investors are experiencing a management quandary and have over the years become severely decayed and could rightly be termed as “brownfields”. Preliminary inspection of the facilities though found that a number of them are now being used by communities as places of worship and other civic functions. There is need therefore, to improve the management of these facilities in order to explore possible regeneration. Scholars suggest that in situations where public and private management models fail, community-based approaches are often the favourable alternative (Findlay-King et al., 2018; Forsberg and Iversen, 2019). This paper therefore set out to suggest solutions to the management quandary experienced by the recreation facilities. The questions being addressed are: what role can communities play in the regeneration of these facilities? Or more broadly, how do these local governance structures emerge and what role do they play in mobilising community action in the redevelopment of such facilities? The challenges experienced by the current governance structures in maintaining these facilities are also explored.

Governance structures are conceptualised in different frameworks. At an economic level, the distinction is often examined within traditional, command and market-oriented systems. In command-oriented economies, governments control the factors of production and consequently pricing of goods and services, while in market-oriented systems, goods and services are determined by supply and demand (Kramer, 2023). In the growing literature on institutions, a distinction is often made between markets, hierarchies, networks and other polycentric governance structures. Thus, literature has further grown to investigate this gap between command and market-oriented or hierarchies and markets; some of these research agendas fall under “self-organising”, “co-production”, “self-managing”, etc. (Bell and Pahl, 2018; Gheduzzi et al., 2021; Steiner et al., 2022). Underpinning these self-organising processes are local governance structures devised by communities themselves. Van Bussel et al. (2020) defines these local governance structures as the actors from varying background involved in the decision-making and management of development in communities.

This paper used formerly mine-owned recreational facilities in Kitwe and Mufulira (both towns of the Copperbelt Province, shown in Figure 1) as case studies to explore the role of local governance structures in mobilising community action in the redevelopment of these facilities. It asserts that recreational facilities play an important role in communities, which has a bearing on health, social cohesion and wellness (Lee et al., 2013; Mokras-Graowska, 2018). Furthermore, in the light of the sustainability debate, these facilities contribute to the improvement of the quality of life through the concepts of futurity, environment and community participation (Xia et al., 2016).



**Figure 1** The Copperbelt Province of Zambia.  
Source: Carmody and Hampway, 2009.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Community-Based Governance and Action

The problem of urban decay is not unique to former mining townships. In fact, literature on brownfields shows that this is even a bigger problem in the older cities of Europe. For instance, Germany has an estimated 120,000 hectares of brownfields, 100,000 hectares in France, between 9,000 and 11,000 hectares in the Netherlands, 9,000 hectares in Belgium and 28,000 hectares in the United Kingdom (Antucheviciene and Zavadskas, 2008; Environment and Energy Management Agency, 2014; Greenland, 2018). Brownfields have been reported to be responsible for a number of vices such as environmental degradation (Pahlen and Glockner, 2004; Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 2008; Elrahman, 2016), unsightly appearance (Tang, 2013), hazardous to humans (Hollander et al., 2010), havens of crime (Friedman, 2003; Hollander et al., 2010) and economic decline (Simons and Saginor, 2006; Wilson, 2012). A number of these vices can easily be associated with former mine-owned recreation facilities in Copperbelt towns.

Despite the negative attributes associated with brownfields, they can be valuable to a community because they are often in prime areas and located near resources (Pippin, 2009; Morar et al., 2021). Hence scholars suggest innovative solutions such as brownfield regeneration, redevelopment and remediation to restore a community’s attractiveness (Elrahman, 2016; Goosen and Fitchett, 2020). Apart from the beauty and improvement of the quality of life brought about by regenerating brownfields, their redevelopment is a necessity because of the limited supply of land for development. It is thus important that communities consider regeneration of the derelict facilities within their locale for the provision of recreation services.

This paper suggests that communities take up the responsibility of restoring the derelict recreation facilities as the current owners, that is, government, individuals and trusts; do not seem to have the capacity to manage them effectively, as reflected by the physical state. Although seemingly obvious, the terms “community” has been a subject of debate for many years due to its complex multi-dimensional nature (Day, 2006; Somerville, 2011). It may be defined by geographical or locational parameters (Gusfield, 1975; Bos and Brown, 2015) or by social groupings (Amundsen, 1982; Gilchrist, 2004; Somerville, 2011). McMillan and Chavis (1986) defined a “community” based on four elements: membership, influence, integration and fulfilment of needs and emotional connection. The definition alludes to the

feelings of belonging and benefits from associating with a group of people sharing experiences, beliefs and space. In the case of the recreational facilities in the Copperbelt towns, this includes communities surrounding these, who at one point worked together in ZCCM or its divisions and management who were responsible for the upkeep of the facilities.

A progressive community is characterised by the level of social capital it possesses. This social capital defines the networks and social interactions of the people within a society. One of the determinants of social capital is the sense of belonging that the people feel which influences their participation in the community (Twell et al., 2018; Communities Reinvented, 2021). Sense of belonging is also related to one's stay in a neighbourhood (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Social factors such as trust and cohesiveness are thus often linked to familiarity of members in the community. Another key factor of social capital is the willingness of people within the community to cooperate and participate in community development (Nkansa and Chapman, 2006; Ho et al., 2018). Terraneo et al. (2022) suggested that social capital grows from people being willing to participate in something important to them. Therefore, this research posits that if the community regard the recreation centres as important, they would be willing to participate in regenerating as well as managing them. These factors of social capital are a vital component of self-organising communities and thus must be identified for the communities where the recreation centres are located.

Proponents of community development define it as the collaborative actions by community members when government fails to gratify community needs (Gilchrist, 2004), therefore, the community can take up the role of meeting their needs in the absence of satisfactory government action. Through the community development approach, policies and programs can be devised that will boost social capital and lead to enhanced community cohesion and collective action. Collective action, also referred to as community participation results in more established projects, better service delivery, sustained community resources and a more knowledgeable and involved community (Khwaja, 2004; Mahanani and Chotib, 2018). This is because community participation gives the community control and influence in matters concerning them and they have a stronger voice in decision making (Khwaja, 2004; Nkansa and Chapman, 2006). This is supported by arguments for co-production as its objective is to ensure users of public services are involved in the definition and implementation of relevant projects in communities (Bell and Pahl, 2018; Gheduzzi et al., 2021; Steiner et al., 2022).

Community governance refers to the management of communities and the effectiveness of community leaders. It also refers to the decision-making processes targeted at service delivery and solving community problems (Diamond and Weiss, 2009; McKinlay et al., 2011; Bussu et al., 2022). Ricciardelli (2018) added that it is the processes and mechanisms that guide participation in local activities that result in proactive responses to community challenges. Community-based governance approaches are a form of participatory governance relying on features such as networks, willingness, trust, etc. (Kearney et al, 2007; Brydon-Miller and Coghlan, 2014). Participatory governance is then seen as a "form of governance in which citizens and non-state actors are empowered to influence and share control in the processes of public decision making" (Brydon-Miller and Coghlan, 2014). Therefore, community-based approaches are adopted to help communities assume responsibility for the challenges they encounter instead of waiting for external assistance (UNHCR, 2008); as the case is for formerly mine-owned recreational facilities. Bvirindi (2019) also adds that the rationale for community-based approaches is that by managing the resources themselves, they have a greater chance of success.

Literature (cf. Yalagama et al., 2016; Wachira and James, 2018; Bvirindi, 2019; Lee et al., 2020) point to a number of factors as being responsible for the success of community-based approaches, namely: safeguards of facilities; level of community involvement; sustainability, etc. For instance, Bvirindi (2019) found that vandalism, overuse, negligence, and lack of spare parts for fixing broken facilities were key setbacks in a community managed borehole project in Zimbabwe. It thus argues that putting "systems" in place to prevent destruction and speedy maintenance of the facilities ensured continued and efficient operations. The level of communal involvement also greatly influences the application of community-based approaches (Arnold, 1990; Wachira and James, 2018). If ownership of the project is debatable, and no one claims responsibility, it often leads to lack of care (Bvirindi, 2019); in what can be termed a Hobbesian state of nature (Kharkongor, 2019; Sheikh et al., 2020). This view was also expressed in Kaonga and Nguvulu (2015) who noticed that without the community being included in projects as equal partners, the result was mismanagement of facilities leading to unsustainable use. Wachira and James (2018) further argued that those who own projects are interested in benefits and would therefore ensure speedy completion. Therefore, promoting community ownership is vital to the success of projects.

Sustainability considerations are also important success factors for community-based approaches. For instance, Balint and Mashinya (2006) concluded that some projects fail after the withdrawal of external organisations where local institutions are weak. Studies though show that many communities lack the capacity to survive beyond the support of external organisations as they do not have sufficient supplies of finances, skills, manpower and institutional structures (Arnold, 1990; Slaymaker et al., 2005; Nkansa and Chapman, 2006; Ceptureanu et al., 2018; Bvirindi, 2019). This is specifically important as the lack of support from the current owners of the mines has contributed to the poor state of the recreation centres. Without the support from external organisations, the recreation centres have struggled to effectively provide recreation services.

Effective legal and regulatory frameworks to manage local and external structures are other factors for community-based approaches (Slaymaker et al., 2005; Wachira and James, 2018). For instance, Slaymaker et al. (2005) argued that community-based approaches may be inhibited by the prevailing public institutions and policy frameworks. However, Watts and Faasen (2009) contended that the existence of good quality legal and institutional frameworks do not always yield the intended outcomes in practice. This was supported by Nkansa and Chapman (2006) who stated that idealistic expectations of "governance" and "community involvement, though theoretically ideal, may not apply in reality. Grootaert and van Bastelaar (2002) also suggested that where the institutional framework is neglected, individuals cannot be persuaded to cooperate or respect each other. Bhattacharya et al. (2019) added that a robust policy and institutional framework ensures high quality projects. Therefore, the legal and institutional framework should encourage local participation by creating a conducive environment for communities to manage community facilities.

This literature broadly shows the important role community-based actions play in the accumulation of social capital. Its facets of community participation and community-based governance, provide a framework in which to investigate the management challenges currently being experienced in former mined-owned recreational facilities in the Copperbelt Province towns.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This paper is an extract from a larger research project that used the multi-case study strategy. Four recreational centres were selected to form a Quintain, which represents former mine-owned recreational facilities providing a variety of sports and recreational activities at the same premises. Two of the recreation centres were selected because they were the main recreation centre of the town and the other two were selected from a low-cost township; were in a child friendly location and had space for expansion. The communities where the recreational facilities are located were examined in order to determine their ability to successfully manage the regeneration and management of the recreational facilities of interest. The research included the Nkana Main Recreation Centre and Chamboli Football Grounds in Kitwe and the Mufulira Main Recreation Centre and Bufuke Club in Mufulira, both towns in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia.

The exploratory sequential mixed method approach was adopted with the results obtained in the qualitative component being used to develop the instrument for the collection of quantitative data. In exploratory sequential mixed method research, qualitative data is collected and analysed, then the results are used to develop the instrument for quantitative data collection before integration to make conclusions (Berman, 2017). This approach is useful for managing diversity and divergence of data collected, as the use of both the qualitative and quantitative methods create complementary results and consequently greater certainty of conclusions (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Dawadi et al., 2021). 18 interviews were conducted with various key stakeholders, and four Focus Group Discussions were held, one at each of the four selected recreation centres. The participants in the Focus Group Discussions and the stakeholders interviewed were from varying sectors including academia, government, as well as managers of recreation centres constructed before and after the privatisation process. The stakeholders were selected based on the categories and types suggested by Mathur et al. (2007). The Interviewees and the Focus Group Discussion participants were asked their opinions about the performance of the sports and recreation industry, the current state of the recreation facilities and whether they would be willing to play a role in the regeneration and management of the recreation facilities.

Additionally, 386 questionnaires were administered using the stratified sampling technique. The questionnaires were distributed according to the household proportion of the communities, as presented in Table 1 below. The communities were asked about the services provided at the recreation centres, whether they would be willing to participate in the regeneration process and the functions of the various leaders to determine governance at community level. The qualitative data was analysed using content and thematic analysis while the quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Version 23). The Kruskal-Wallis H-Test was used to analyse the data from the four recreation centres as independent data sets.

**Table 1** Distribution of questionnaires

Location	Community	No of Households	Sample Size	Percent (%)
Kitwe	Nkana West	646	21	5.4
	Chamboli	3,000	96	24.9
Mufulira	Mufulira High Cost	6,700	213	55.2
	Butondo	1,773	56	14.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,119</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The respondents were randomly selected, and the majority fell in the age distribution range 26 to 45 years (55%), representing a very productive age group economically. The study went further to examine the employment status of these respondents and discovered that only 42% are formally employed with the others studying (19%), unemployed (33%) and retired (7%). It can thus be argued that with almost 40% (unemployed and retired) and the majority falling within the economically productive age of between 26 and 45 years, these communities have sufficient social capital for self-organising.

Building Condition Assessments were also undertaken to establish the state of the buildings. This was done to establish what regenerative strategies could be adopted for the recreation centres. An empirical method of rating the structures was adopted based on the visual appearance and according to the performance in terms of safety and serviceability (see Table 2).

**Table 2** Condition assessment rating criteria

Rating Criteria	Condition rating	Performance
1 - Critical		Unsafe, high risk of injury or critical system failure
2 - Poor		Does not meet requirements, has significant deficiencies. May have high operating/maintenance costs
3 - Marginal		Meets minimum requirements, has significant deficiencies. May have above average operating maintenance costs.
4 - Acceptable		Meets present requirements, minor deficiencies. Average operating/maintenance costs
5 - Good		Meets all present requirements. No deficiencies
6 - Excellent		As new/state of the art, meets present and foreseeable requirement

## ■4.0 RESULTS

Data for this paper is presented as follows: a brief on the physical state of the four case studies; qualitative data collected through focus group discussions and interviews with key informants; and quantitative data from household surveys.

### 4.1 Assessment of physical conditions

Physical inspection of the premises in Kitwe and Mufulira revealed deterioration of the recreational facilities as shown in photos in the Figures below. This was confirmed by the condition assessment survey carried out by a structural engineer<sup>1</sup>.

#### Nkana Main Recreation Centre, Kitwe

The Nkana Main Recreation Centre in Nkana West, Kitwe, comprises various club buildings according to sporting disciplines. The different sections have different management structures and additionally, their deterioration levels vary. According to the Condition Assessment Report (Ngoma, 2021), the main recreation centre building is generally structurally stable and has a Rating of 3 – Marginal. This means the building meets the minimum requirements but has significant deficiencies and may have above average operating maintenance costs. The bowling club was severely vandalised and in acute neglect; thus, the building was Rated 2 – Poor. The Rugby Club received a Rating of 5-Good, meaning that it met all present requirements and has no structural deficiencies.



**Figure 2** Selected photos of parts of Nkana Main Recreation Centre, Kitwe.

#### Chamboli Football Ground (Kitwe)

Chamboli Football Ground is located in Chamboli Township, a low-cost area in Kitwe. The Condition Assessment Report (Ngoma, 2021) revealed that Chamboli Football Grounds has a Rating of 2 because it does not meet the minimum requirements and has significant deficiencies. The Figure 2 below shows the premises of Chamboli Football Ground.

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<sup>1</sup>The Structural Engineer was hired specifically to assist in the condition assessment.



**Figure 3** Chamboli Football Ground Club House/Police Post, change rooms, football pitch, and volleyball court.

#### Mufulira Main Recreation Centre

The Mufulira Main Recreation Centre also has various club buildings according to sporting disciplines and therefore varying levels of deterioration as shown in the pictures below.



**Figure 4** Selected photos of parts of Mufulira Main Recreation Centre.

According to the Condition Assessment Report, the Cricket Club and Squash Club were rated 3 (Marginal), Swimming Pool buildings were rated 4 (Acceptable) while the Rugby Club was rated 5 (Good).

### Bufuke Club House, Mufulira

Bufuke Club House is located in Bufuke Township, a low-cost area of Mufulira Town. The Condition Assessment Report (Ngoma, 2021) revealed that the main buildings of Bufuke Club House are structurally stable; however, the roof requires major rehabilitation. The deterioration in the roof has caused the collapsing ceiling due to the leakages of moisture. The ablution block and change house are also structurally solid, but the roof and sanitary fittings need replacement. Bufuke Club House is therefore given a Rating of 3 - Marginal, meaning it meets minimum requirements but has significant deficiencies. Figure 4 shows Bufuke Club House entrance, camp house, collapsing ceiling and damaged roof.



Figure 5 Aspects of the Bufuke Club House.

#### 4.2 Existence of local governance structures: focus group and interviews

A number of themes emerged to enable the exploration of the role of local structures in mobilising community action in the regeneration of former mine-owned recreation facilities, these include: establishment of current local governance structures; identification of stakeholders at community level; understanding the mindset at the local level; institutional and policy framework to support community mobilisation; community governance structures and challenges experienced by current governance structures in maintaining the recreation centres.

##### 4.2.1 Establishment of current local governance structures

The interviews and focus group discussions revealed the varying local governance structures that exist at each of the four recreation centres. As mentioned in Section 4.1 above, the two main recreation centres have various buildings according to sporting disciplines. Therefore, the local governance structures vary.

- **Nkana Main Recreation Centre** – following the privatisation of the mines, this has been divided into four sections.
  - a. The Nkana Mine Recreation Centre: This is now owned by former mine employees under a registered company. The company owns a third of the main recreation centre building, which includes the beer garden, three bars and three halls (which are currently leased to churches). Part of the facilities, used for the sale of mealie meal on credit to miners employed by Konkola Copper Mines and Mopani Copper Mines is run by the Board of the National Union of Miners and Allied Workers (NUMAW).
  - b. Nkana Business Ventures: This comprises the second section of the main recreation building now owned by Nkana Business Ventures that supports the Nkana Football Club.
  - c. Antioch Bible Church: The final third of the main recreation building is owned and used by the Antioch Bible Church through its Executive.
  - d. Diggers Rugby Club: This is currently managed by Mopani Copper Mines (MCM), the investor that bought the mine in Kitwe. An Executive Committee manages the daily operations of the club.

It is worth noting that from a governance and funding point of view, only Diggers Rugby Club has proper structures with the rest lacking in a number of ways. However, from an institutional perspective, local organisation structures have emerged over time,

though ineffective in a number of ways. These have taken on either purely private approaches (Nkana Business Ventures), community (churches) or associations (National Union of Miners and Allied Workers).

- **Chamboli Football Ground:** According to the community members of Chamboli who took part in FGD2, Europeans or mine investors constructed the Chamboli Football Ground as just the football pitch, and concrete terraces for seating. Years later, an area Member of Parliament constructed more seating to encourage volleyball and tennis within the premises. Any football group that organises themselves uses the facility, locally called ‘Mogadishu.’ The football ground does not belong to any specific owner but is currently managed by Chamboli Central Sports, a local organisation. In order to increase security and deter vandalism, the community ensured that a Police Post was established at the facility.
- **Mufulira Main Recreation Centre:** has the following components:
  - a. Cricket club: This section is currently abandoned. This means the club is locked up with no one being responsible for operations and maintenance.
  - b. Squash club: Currently managed by a group of volunteers who have formed a Board. Some players pay subscriptions, which contribute to the cash flow for operations.
  - c. Swimming Pool: Mopani Copper Mines has continued to manage the pool through Mopani Primary School. The mining firm provides funding for equipment, operations and remunerations.
  - d. Rugby Club: Currently runs as a rugby club and includes the hockey grounds used mainly for training by Mopani Mine Police Football Team.

Again, a combination of governance structures from voluntary to private can be seen in the case of Mufulira Main Recreation Centre, although the general condition is that of physical decay.

- **Bufuke Club House:** this is located in Bufuke Township, a low-cost area of Mufulira Town, and is home of the Butondo Western Tigers Football Club. Volunteers who have formed a committee to take care and prevent vandalism manage the Club. The Club House consists of a Clubhouse, Hall, offices, bar/restaurant, ablution block, change house, warm-up area, outdoor chalets for seating, camp house and outdoor tuck-shop. The outdoor tuck-shop is being used to distribute mealie meal (Zambian staple coarse flour made of milled maize) to the community. The Camp House and hall are being leased out to churches, while one of the offices is being used as a Councillor’s Office. The Club does not receive any funding and so relies on sales from the bar/restaurant, rent from churches and donations by well-wishers to cover operating costs.

#### 4.2.2 Identification of stakeholders

After the privatisation process, the immediate problem was who should be responsible for these social facilities, new private mine owners, local government or community? The interview Respondents and Focus Group Discussions were asked who they thought were the key stakeholders to drive the regeneration process and manage the recreation centres. The stakeholders that needed to be identified were those people who had the potential to influence and affect the management of the recreation centres as well as encourage participatory governance in the general community. Different views were heard during focus group discussions and interviews with regards to stakeholders and their roles, such as:

*“There is need for sensitisation by Ward Councillors. They can bring about positive change in the communities. Also, Neighbourhood Watch Committees existed – volunteers joined hands to keep the neighbourhood safe”* – Interviewee A (Former ZCCM Employee responsible for Social Services, Kitwe, 07/10/2019).

*“Foreign investors, e.g., the First National Bank sponsors rugby in South Africa but they do not have a team in Zambia”* – Interviewee I (Grounds Manager, Leopards Cage Rugby Club Mufulira, 23/12/2020).

*“Government provides the policy and legal framework for the industry to thrive. Also, us citizens, especially on the Copperbelt, we are responsible and willing to contribute”* – Interviewee J (Provincial Youth Development Coordinator- Ministry of Youth Sport and Arts, Ndola, 07/04/2021).

*“We are currently engaging the owners of the recreation centres to rehabilitate them. Further, government has plans to see how the owners of these facilities can surrender them to government/local councils”* – Interviewee K (Provincial Sports Coordinator- Ministry of Youth Sport and Arts, Ndola, 19/04/2021).

*“Government, sports associations and institutions must come together and encourage participation in sports. This will ensure facilities are being used”* – Interviewee O (Club Manager, Bank of Zambia Sports Recreation Centre, Lusaka, 04/05/2021).

*“Local Authorities work with the Ministry of Youths, Sports and Arts to coordinate sport in the district”* – Interviewee Q (Assistant Director, Department of Housing and Social Services, Kitwe City Council, Kitwe, 22/09/2021)

From the verbatim, a number of stakeholders were identified, that is, local ward councillors, neighbourhood watch committees, government (central and local), sports associations, firms (local and foreign) and communities. Respondents also recognised that a policy and legal framework is needed to bring these actors together.

#### 4.2.3 Mindset

Within the “attributes of community”, a positive mindset towards participation is another important aspect. This is important because the mindset, or the inherent beliefs and personal worldviews of the community affect their actions and perspectives. The success of community-based approaches depends on the self-driven willingness of the community to participate in development. From the verbatim responses discussed above, some interviewees still think it is the government's responsibility to ensure that these recreational facilities are functional. The study found that one of the greatest hindrances in the effective management of recreation centres was the mindset of the communities. The unanimous view of respondents was that people in the communities have low responsibility pride and little regard for the facilities within their localities. This perspective meant that the community cannot be relied upon to make decisions regarding the facilities as they absolve themselves of this responsibility.

*“...even people joining as members don't care about it. Previously, people were proud to be members. Now they just want to come and drink and not subscribe” – FGD1.*

The negative perception worsens regarding the situation where community members deliberately vandalise the facilities.

*“...our attitude is bad as locals. We do not have community and responsibility pride. We leave taps open and do not flush toilets all because there is a worker who will come and clean after us” – Interviewee I.*

*“...communities were spoilt because the mines took care of everything ... some people cannot even cut their own grass unless the Government comes in” – Interviewee B (Lecturer – Copperbelt University, Kitwe, 17/02/2020).*

*“Churches using the Halls think they own them but do not do anything to fix them. Some have been here for almost 10 years, but they are not contributing anything” – FGD1*

*“The youth have the attitude of things being brought to where they are instead of working for it” – FGD2*

#### 4.2.4 Policy and Institutional Framework

Poor policy implementation was identified as a challenge that needed to be addressed if sustainable regeneration is to be achieved at the recreation centres.

*“...government provides the policy and legal framework for the sports and recreation industry, to survive...” – Interviewee K (Provincial Sports Coordinator - Ministry of Youth Sport and Arts, Ndola, 19/04/2021).*

*“There are no policies to compel the mines to look at social infrastructure. If it is requested from a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) point of view, investors reserve the right to accept or reject the request. Thus, they cannot be compelled to act” – Interviewee A (Former ZCCM Employee responsible for Social Services, Kitwe, 07/10/2019).*

*“...if I own the building, who are you to tell me what to do?” – Interviewee A (Former ZCCM Employee responsible for Social Services, Kitwe, 07/10/2019).*

The respondents were making the point that policy and legislation at the national level often finds implementation challenges at micro-level as in the case of these recreation facilities.

#### 4.2.5 Community Governance

During the focus group discussions, participants were asked to identify people with strong influence and how effectively they operate within the community. Leaders identified included those from small Christian communities, politicians, some from the sports sector, businessmen and a few without money or titles.

*“... there are a few businessmen that have influence. When they spearhead something, progress is seen” – FGD 4*

*“...implementation is supposed to come from leaders” – FGD 1.*

*“...those in power will always want to champion things” – FGD 3*

*“...many community members had little confidence and trust because the leaders had let them down too often” – FGD 1*

For community governance to be effective, Bussu et al. (2022) suggested that permanent or formal policy and informal temporal institutions merge to foster an embedded and sustainable participatory society. They are of the view that policy institutions and community or grassroots actors can both facilitate and transform the provision of community services. Thus, the Focus Group Discussions correctly identified those with influence within their communities.

Additionally, the communities presented examples of activities that showed how community action was mobilised.

*“...actually, two days ago we were unblocking drainages with money from the Ward Development Committee. Such activities are starting to appear in the community” – FGD 3.*

*“...another example of how the community can work together and do well is the Malela School Ground. It was a dumping ground, but we organised ourselves and cleaned it. Now it is being used for sports” – FGD2.*

These responses show that the communities took matters into their own hands and decided to solve their problems without waiting for external assistance. Therefore, with the identified local leaders and those with influence, the communities are adequately equipped to self-govern and manage their resources successfully.

#### **4.2.6 Willingness of Community to Participate**

Abowen-Dake and Nelson (2013) found that the lack of willingness of the community to engage in decision-making proved to be a challenge regarding management of community facilities. Participation in decision-making results in the provision of services that meet the community’s needs and provides a sense of ownership. Although made in response to sources of conflict in the community during FGD4, the statement - ‘people normally mind their own business and keep to themselves. They are often indoors,’ suggests that there is little participation in activities concerning the community.

Participants of the focus group discussions were however asked if they were willing to do something about the state of the recreation centres in their community. They all agreed that they were willing, and some proved this because they were already doing something. Participants were also asked what they would do, and some responses are presented below:

*“Asking us to pay to use the facility would be a challenge because already what we do is from our pockets. What can work is maintenance for instance each group is given a day to clean up” – FGD2.*

*“Yes, by engaging Mopani Copper Mines and any other corporate organisation to come on board. We want people to come and use this place” – FGD3.*

*“Definitely – we have radio stations that we can use to communicate to schools to attract them to say a sports day. Schools can pay something so that we raise funds for the club” – FGD4.*

*“It is easy to say yes but it helps when you have support from friends and others willing to help you with the project. It is not just helping to polish up the place, it is inviting people who would be interested in the sports and spare the time to be at the club to do something” – FGD4.*

The responses show that the community was willing to come together to do something for their recreation centres. Mainly because some had used the facilities when they were being managed by the mines and so they had that first-hand experience of the benefits of the facilities. One participant at FGD4 said,

*“...looking at how I grew up, we had all those centres and it kept us out of trouble. But now our teenagers are just in bad vices so it can help if we can remove even half of them. There are a lot of talented young people, they just need a chance”.*

This chance for young people to prove themselves can only be provided by the community coming together and everyone playing a role.

#### **4.2.7 Challenges of Current Governance Structures in Maintaining the Recreation Centres**

As has been mentioned earlier, the current governance structures are experiencing challenges in maintaining the recreation centres, hence their poor state of repair. Some challenges were identified as follows:

*“...assets do not have title deeds. For example, if they had title, the Trust owning the club can use the asset to raise capital to maintain the facility” - Interviewee B (Lecturer – Copperbelt University, Kitwe, 17/02/2020).*

*“...due to poor finances, we only do general fixing” – FGD 1.*

“...I used to use Mogadishu Football Ground in Chamboli. Anyone can go and play there but there is no one to maintain it because there is no one responsible – FGD 1.

“...I haven’t seen the leadership of the community coming in as responsible for the grounds. Someone needs to be identified as responsible for the place, picked from the community. It was given to the hands of the Ward Development Committee with Chamboli Central Sports as the main users. It is entirely for the community” - FGD2.

“...lack of resources has contributed to the poor state. One major factor is maintenance, and it cannot happen without finances. We need human resources also to improve the facility” – FGD 3.

“...one of the challenges is sponsorship. There are a lot of clubs here, but three-quarters of the sponsorship is for soccer. Not every recreation centre has soccer so those without it won’t have access to sponsorship” – FGD4.

The lack of finances was identified as the major challenge experienced by the current governance structures in maintaining the recreation centres. With limited funds, it was difficult for them to adequately meet the maintenance requirements beyond general cleaning. The human resources required to carry out the maintenance activities was also a challenge. For instance, the Chamboli Football Ground (affectionately called Mogadishu) was severely dilapidated because it did not have any governance structure in place and thus no one was responsible for making decisions including those related to maintenance.

### 4.3 Household survey findings

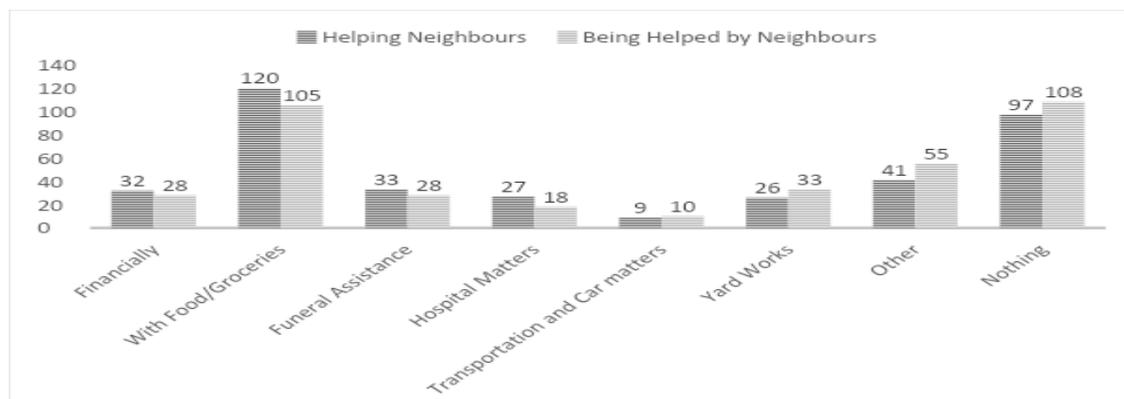
Besides the focus group discussions and interviews with key informants, it was also important to get the perspectives of communities currently living around these facilities. The study examined the communities’ cohesion and collective action by exploring the existing social capital dimensions. The dimensions explored included the sense of belonging, and the communities’ willingness to cooperate and participate in managing the recreation centres.

The study examined the period of stay of respondents to determine whether familiarity with neighbours existed in the communities. Table 3 below shows that at least 61% of respondents had lived in their respective areas for over 10 years, a considerably long period to develop a sense of belonging.

**Table 3** Length of stay in the community

Length of stay	Frequency	Percent (%)
Less than one year	36	9.3
2 - 5 years	64	16.6
5 - 10 years	50	13.0
Above 10 years	236	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study further explored the neighbourliness existing in the communities, a characteristic often expressed through mutual assistance and care (Hothi and Cordes, 2010; Ruonavaara, 2021). Figure 5 below shows the type of assistance provided to and obtained from neighbours. When asked further what other assistance was given or received, the responses included ‘I employed their child’, ‘my neighbour helped me with my research project’, ‘they gave me words of advice’, ‘when there was no water in the community, I went with my neighbour to fetch water from my place of work’ and ‘they let us use their fridge’. The responses show that there is concern for neighbours in the community and this neighbourliness can be harnessed to ensure community development.



**Figure 6** Assistance received and given to neighbours

The study also examined the existence of community organisations within the research areas, particularly the voluntary societies. This was on the understanding that communities which are already self-organising would be amenable to cooperating to revive the former recreational facilities. A number of self-organising associations exist such as religious groups (74%), cooperatives (67%), Women groups (49%), and sports groups (56%) among others (see Table 4).

**Table 4** Organisation in the communities and which ones belong to respondents

Organisation	Exist in the community		Belong to Respondents	
	Count	%	Count	%
Cooperatives	260	67.4	46	11.9
Parent Teachers Associations	136	35.2	2	0.5
Youth Groups	139	36.0	25	6.5
Women Groups	188	48.7	28	7.3
Men Groups	82	21.2	3	0.8
Sports Groups	215	55.7	38	9.8
Cultural Groups	17	4.4	2	0.5
Religious Groups	285	73.8	106	27.5
Community Development Committee	75	19.4	3	0.8

Finally, the paper examined the interaction or use of the recreational facilities by the communities. While many agreed that these facilities were beneficial to communities and they were willing to participate in decision-making positions, interaction analysis in Table 5 surprisingly showed that few were willing to contribute financially to revive them (as shown by H-statistic of 5.092; p-value = 0.193); this could be as a result of their poor financial status discussed earlier. This poses a challenge or threat to any resource mobilisation process that may be proposed before proper funding can be sourced. Furthermore, few were willing to volunteer at the recreation centre without payment (H-statistic = 0.590; p-value = 0.763).

**Table 5** Interaction of the community with the recreation centres

Question	H-statistic	p-value	Number of successes	Sample size	Proportion of successes	p-value	Direction of the responses
The Recreational Centre is of benefit to the community	21.420	.000	270	384	0.703	0.000	Agreement
The services being offered at the Recreational Centre are affordable?	20.847	.000	245	383	0.64	0.000	Agreement
You would contribute financially to the Recreational Centre if asked.	5.092	.165	201	384	0.523	0.193	Disagreement
You would be willing to volunteer at the Recreational Centre without being paid	.590	.899	185	383	0.483	0.763	Disagreement
You would be willing to be part of a decision-making committee to manage the Recreational Centre is asked	2.137	.544	269	386	0.697	0.000	Agreement

## ■ 5.0 DISCUSSION

Former mined-owned recreational facilities in the Copperbelt Towns of Kitwe and Mufulira have fallen in disrepair after the privatisation of the parent conglomerate Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM) in the late 1990s. Because the new mining firms were more interested in productive assets such as the shelter and the copper ore body, social assets (including recreational facilities) were neglected. This left most recreational facilities in a management quandary as those not adopted by the new investors were either given off as trusts, sold to individuals or given to government. However, the current owners do not seem to have the capacity to manage the facilities and thus they have fallen into disrepair. This paper argues that every society has a way of reorganising itself when such vacuums in management occur, hence the aim to examine the role of local governance structures in such situations.

Beckett et al. (2022) suggested that sense of belonging results in one feeling important to others in a community. This was visible in the communities under review as the willingness to help and receive help from neighbours was a reflection of how neighbours perceived each other. Toikko (2018) added that this sense of belonging causes one to feel ‘an integral part of the system’. This was also shown when the community members of Chamboli organised themselves to clean up the Malela football ground after it had been turned into a dumping site. People can only be brought together to achieve a common goal if they feel it is important to them and if they feel part of the system driving the development.

Although availability of finances has proved to be challenging for most of the recreation centres, locals have come together to provide their own resources as and when needed, to ensure the continued provision of services. Members of the communities have continued to step up and make decisions necessary for managing the recreation centres. Oino et al. (2015) were of the view that donor or external funding was a temporal pioneer for social change and thus it was the community’s responsibility to promote sustainability. Mubita

et al. (2017) therefore cautioned that the mode of engagement used to attract community participation was key to achieve empowerment of the communities. This was because using incentives in return for participation resulted in communities becoming dependent on the project and sustainability being compromised.

Stakeholders and leaders from the business, political, religious and other backgrounds were identified as key to the management of community facilities. The respondents of the Focus Group Discussions were of the view that these stakeholders had the potential to influence other community members to achieve development. Thus, they were the ones who should spearhead developmental projects because the society would follow their guidance. This is supported by Tinner et al. (2021) who advocated that community mobilisation is the collaborative effort of diverse stakeholders. Some respondents however opined that several leaders had disappointed the community many times by not fulfilling promises and thus had lost the trust of the society. It was therefore the leaders' responsibility to regain trust in those communities where it had been lost.

Communities with self-organising structures are often progressive and sustainable (Mallik, 2013; Bell and Pahl, 2018). The communities under review had a number of organisations in existence, including faith-based, women's groups, sports groups, cooperatives and many more. This provides the opportunity to use already existing structures to drive development. Additionally, Islam (2018) was of the view that faith-based organisations (FBOs) are very active in many countries and have contributed to education, women empowerment, peace building and many more social services. With 74% of the respondents attesting to the fact that there are FBOs in their communities and 27% of them actually belonging to these groups, it can be assumed that these organisations can be engaged to champion regeneration of the recreation centres as well as manage the facilities for sustainability.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The entry point for this study was that in a situation of management quandary, local governance structures often emerge to fill the spaces, usually based on the community. The term community refers to the feeling of belonging and associating with a group of people with a common goal. Communities can also have members who are not active and who do not participate in any activities. Nevertheless, the success of community-based management approaches often depends on a number of factors, including nature of the community, mindset, policy and institutional framework, community governance, willingness to volunteer and generally social capital of the community. Additionally, social capital in the community is conceptualized in this paper to include social networks, community governance, and resource endowment.

This social capital is demonstrated in the existence of benevolence between neighbours and the local informal organisations that can be engaged to participate in decision making and pooling of resources to benefit the whole community. Using four recreation centres in Kitwe and Mufulira, both towns in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia, the research showed that despite the absence of formal organisations to support recreation centres, community governance can succeed in ensuring sustainable management of community infrastructure. The communities where the recreation centres are located have stakeholders that can ensure regeneration and effective management through the self-organising approach. Although poorly funded in most cases, these recreation centres have continued to offer some services to the communities because of the influence of various stakeholders. The self-organising structures have stepped in the fill the void in management of social infrastructure created by the sale of the mining conglomerate ZCCM.

This research therefore provides for communities to further the aim of development and local governance in situations where quandaries are created. It shows that the communities have the ability to rely on internal resources to drive community development and effectively manage community infrastructure.

## Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank the Copperbelt University and the University of Witwatersrand for permitting and supporting the research.

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