
Advocacy case studies

BUDGET MONITORING IN ZAMBIA

COUNTRY:	Zambia
THEMES:	Corruption; governance
ADVOCACY APPROACHES:	Demonstrating good practice; educating community members; government budget tracking; government officials: lobbying; government officials: meeting with; research and analysis; using the media; working in alliances and coalitions

In Zambia, the national government allocates funds for local development to each regional constituency through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). However, this money is not always used locally for its intended purpose.

Tearfund and its partners, Micah Challenge and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), conducted research on the use of CDF funds and jointly published a report on the subject, inviting members of parliament, civil society organisations, government officials and church leaders to its launch. The report highlighted a lack of transparency about the way money was spent and the absence of community participation, as well as undue political influence on CDF processes. It also offered recommendations for ways to reform the CDF to address these issues. The meeting received good media coverage on national and regional television and radio, and in the press.

Subsequently, Tearfund, Micah Challenge and EFZ held meetings in different constituencies to train local church leaders in how to monitor the CDF. These pastors then mobilised their churches and communities to hold the CDF accountable by scrutinising the use of funds in their local constituency using a specially designed tracking tool. One local council has since asked the community to monitor other government funds as well, recognising the importance of this budget monitoring work.

Tearfund, Micah Challenge and EFZ also distributed their report on the CDF to various councils where research had been carried out, as well as to members of parliament. The report was also sent to the two main government ministries involved in administering the CDF: the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. This led to Tearfund, Micah Challenge and EFZ being invited to participate in discussions held by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing to reform the government's CDF policy. Subsequently, parliament has approved reforms to this policy.