MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVE LOPMENT

NKEYEMA TOWN COUNCIL CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

(With a Focus on Output Based
Budgeting and Project Implementation Management)

NTC/CES/2025

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Nkeyema Town Council Citizen Engagement Strategy

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List of Acronyms

CES	Citizen Engagement Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GC	Grievance Committee
GIZ	Germany Development Agency
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MoFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
PLGO	Provincial Local Government Officer
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
WB	World Bank
WDC	Ward Development Committee
ZDSP	Zambia Devolution Support Project

FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Citizen Engagement Strategy**,** a guiding framework that strengthens our commitment to inclusive, transparent, and people-centered governance. This strategy reflects our belief that meaningful development can only be achieved when citizens are active participants in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

As Council Chairperson, I recognize the invaluable role our residents play in identifying community priorities, offering local knowledge, and holding us accountable. Through this strategy, we seek to deepen collaboration, improve communication, and ensure that every voice—especially those often unheard—is welcomed and respected.

Together, let us build a more responsive, trusted, and participatory council that truly serves its people.

Rayford Chitoti (Mr.)
THE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nkeyema Town Council Citizen Engagement Strategy outlines a structured and inclusive approach to strengthening the relationship between the Council and the community it serves. It provides a roadmap for ensuring that citizens are meaningfully involved in local governance, decision-making, and development processes.

The strategy recognizes that effective service delivery and sustainable development can only be achieved when residents are empowered to participate, share their perspectives, and collaborate with their leaders. It therefore prioritizes openness, accountability, and consistent communication as the foundation of a responsive local authority.

Key focus areas of the strategy include:

- **Improving communication channels** through accessible platforms such as community meetings, digital tools, feedback mechanisms, and local information services.
- **Promoting inclusive participation** by ensuring that women, youth, persons with disabilities, traditional leaders, and vulnerable groups have opportunities to contribute.
- **Strengthening feedback and grievance systems** to enable citizens to voice concerns and monitor the Council's performance.
- **Enhancing transparency and accountability** through regular reporting, public disclosure of Council activities, and participatory monitoring.
- Through this strategy, Nkeyema Town Council reaffirms its commitment to people-centered governance. By placing citizens at the heart of planning, budgeting, and service delivery, the Council aims to build trust, deepen civic responsibility, and create a more inclusive, prosperous, and well-governed district.

Moffat Mwanza (Mr.)
THE COUNCIL SECRETARY

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The Citizen Engagement Strategy is designed to create pathways for citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes, contribute to community development, and hold public officials accountable for their actions.

Nkeyema Town Council continues to evolve and address the needs of its growing community, it is crucial to foster meaningful engagement between the local government authority and the community we serve. This strategy aims to promote transparency, enhance trust in local government, and empower the people of Nkeyema to play an active role in shaping the future of their town. By integrating diverse voices, from local leaders to youth and marginalized groups, we strive to build a more responsive, inclusive, and resilient community.

Effective governance is built on the foundation of active and inclusive citizen participation. At its core, the Nkeyema Town Council Citizen Engagement Strategy is a commitment to fostering a culture of collaboration, where every citizen's opinion matters and contributes to the sustainable growth and prosperity of Nkeyema District.

1.2 Current Citizen engagement efforts by the Council

Nkeyema Town Council is committed to fostering a transparent, accountable, and responsive local governance system. The town has implemented several initiatives aimed at engaging citizens in the decision-making process and ensuring that their voices are heard. The Council has dedicated significant effort and necessary resources to ensure this plan is all- inclusive. It is intended to act as a formal framework for including citizens in the project cycle and budgeting processes.

Below is a table for stakeholder mapping, methods of engagements, objectives and responsibility.

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Objectives	Engagement Methods	Frequency	Responsibility
Community Members	- Inform about project scope and benefits	- Community meetings	Once / As required	Project Management Team and Designated officers depending on issues being addressed
	- Address concerns about land acquisition and disruption	- Public consultations	Once / As required	
	- Ensure feedback is integrated into the project	- Printed notices and flyers, cohort meetings	Once / As required	
Local Government	- Obtain necessary permits and approvals	- Formal consultations	Before major milestones	Project Legal and Compliance Team
	- Ensure compliance with local laws and regulations	- Written submissions/reports		
Environmental Authorities	- Ensure environmental standards are met	- Site visits and inspections	During preparation and construction phases	Environmental Management Team
	- Monitor mitigation of environmental impacts	- Environmental reports	Quarterly	
Traditional Leaders (Councilors)	- Gain support for the project	- Direct meetings	Regularly	Community Liaison Officers / Public Relations Officer/ cultural Officer
	- Ensure cultural considerations are respected	- Cultural sensitization programs	Regularly	Project Management Team (Council Management)
Contractors & Suppliers	- Coordinate project implementation	- Project progress meetings	Weekly	Project Manager
	- Ensure delivery of materials and services	- Phone calls/emails	When need arise	Procurement / Project Manager
Civil Society Organizations	participatory meetings	Review meetings	Quarterly/ as required	Social Safeguard Specialist

(CSOs) and Central Government	- Ensure transparency and accountability	- Reports and documentation	As required	Procurement / Project Manager and Public Relations Officer
Funding Agencies	- Ensure project aligns with funding requirements	- Progress reports	Quarterly	Finance and Project Manager
	- Update on project implementation	- Review meetings	Quarterly or As required	Project Manager
Media	Projects updates	- Press releases and media briefings	As required	Public Relations Officer
	- Manage public perception	- Interviews, social media and website updates		

2. Vision, Aim and Objectives of the Nkeyema Town Council Citizen Engagement Strategy

2.1. Vision

To create an inclusive, transparent, participatory and accountable budgeting process that empowers the citizen of Nkeyema District to actively shape the development of their community by 2028.

2.2. Aim

To enhance the relationship between Nkeyema Town Council and its citizens by creating more opportunities for residents to participate in the governance process.

2.3 Objectives

i. To promote transparency in local government processes by providing clear, accessible information about council activities on all communication platforms, decisions, and budgets, ensuring that citizens are well-informed and able to hold local authorities accountable for their actions.

ii. To create accessible and diverse channels for residents to actively participate in decision-making processes, particularly in areas that directly impact their lives, such as local infrastructure, community development, and public services.

iii. To foster trust and mutual respect between the Town Council and the citizens of Nkeyema by ensuring that engagement efforts are sincere, responsive, and reflective of the community's needs, concerns, and values.

iv. To ensure that all segments of the community, including marginalized groups, youth, women, and persons with disabilities, are represented and included in the citizen engagement process. The strategy will actively seek to remove barriers to participation and encourage the involvement of traditionally underrepresented groups.

3. Approaches and Methods of Engagement

Nkeyema Town Council Citizen Engagement strategy lays out a comprehensive approach that combines traditional and modern day methods of engagement that it shall endeavor to use, such as,

- Public forums and town hall meetings – To discuss the budget formulation, and performance of the budget of the initial year. This shall encourage public participation and create a sense of ownership for the community.
- Consultative public meetings- working hand in hand with the ward development committees in ensuring that they perform their duties effectively and efficiently.
- Innovative digital platforms to reach a broader audience such as Radio station, Nkeyema Town Council website and Nkeyema Council Facebook page.

These methods of engagements intend to create a dynamic, two-way communication flow between Nkeyema Town Council and its citizens, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the planning and execution of local policies, projects, and services.

4. Implementation Plan

The implementation of the citizen engagement will be guided by the following plan:

a. Evaluate the current level of citizen participation in the budgetary process and other pertinent council matters
b. Determine particular engagement opportunities and create a comprehensive framework outlining related deadlines and responsibilities, as shown in the table below.
c. Map Key Stakeholders, indicating their respective levels and necessary frequency of council engagement.

The stakeholders identified for engagement encompass a broad spectrum of the community including:

i. Citizens at large
ii. Ward development committees
iii. Community based organizations
iv. Traditional leaders
v. Religious leaders
vi. Community leaders
vii. Business representatives
viii. Civil society groups
ix. Media outlets

Any other cluster within the community potentially affected by council activities

Table 1: Proposed Stakeholders Engagement Plan Summary Table

BUDGET STAGE	KEY FEATURES/ACTIVITIES		STAKEHOLDER CATEGORY INVOLVED	TIMELINE
Preparation for budget formulation	i.	LAs provide communities with SEP giving proposed dates for consultation	Citizens / Media / WDCs	3rd Quarter
	ii.	LAs provide WDCs with a list of proposed projects for consideration in this budget cycle as well as a list of ongoing projects and completed projects for the past 2 years.	WDCs, LA	3rd Quarter
	iii.	Using the project lists provided, communities may accept or reject project proposals and make their own proposals for development projects and activities for their Wards to be included in the budget based on their priorities	Communities, WDCs, Councilors and Traditional leaders	3rd Quarter
	iv.	LAs produce a summarized stakeholder report from all Wards and submit report to MLGRD.	Councilors, WDCs, Traditional leaders, Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	4th Quarter
	v.	Conduct budget hearings & Town Hall meetings.	Councilors, WDCs, Traditional leaders, Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	4th Quarter
	vi.	Council Secretary shall present the reports to the full council.	All the stakeholders	4th Quarter
	vii.	Feedback meetings to WDCs on what projects and activities have been included in the budget	Councilors, WDCs, Traditional leaders, Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	4th Quarter
	iii.	Reports including minutes must be submitted to the PLGOs office for review and consolidation for onward submission to MLGRD.	Budget team	4th Quarter

	ix.	MLGRD will submit the consolidated reports to MoFNP.	MLRGD	4th Quarter
Budget approval (public awareness of budget details)	i.	Review the proposed budget and assess whether input from community, especially vulnerable groups i.e. women, PWDs and children has been incorporated.	LA, NGOs, Councilors Traditional and Religious Leaders	4th Quarter
	ii.	Feedback to WDCs and other stakeholders of the final approved budget	LA	31st January
Budget execution and monitoring (for transparency in budget implementation)	i.	Track the effective utilization of funds in line with planned activities.	LA	Quarterly
	ii.	Report back on a regular basis to WDCs on implementation of activities and projects	LA	Quarterly
Budget evaluation and Review	i.	Evaluate the impact of allocated funds, focusing on agreed upon programmes with a bias towards gender, persons with disabilities, child-related and climate change outcomes.	LA, NGOs, Councilors Traditional and Religious Leaders	Quarterly

5. Communication Plan

Table 2: Proposed Communication Plan summary

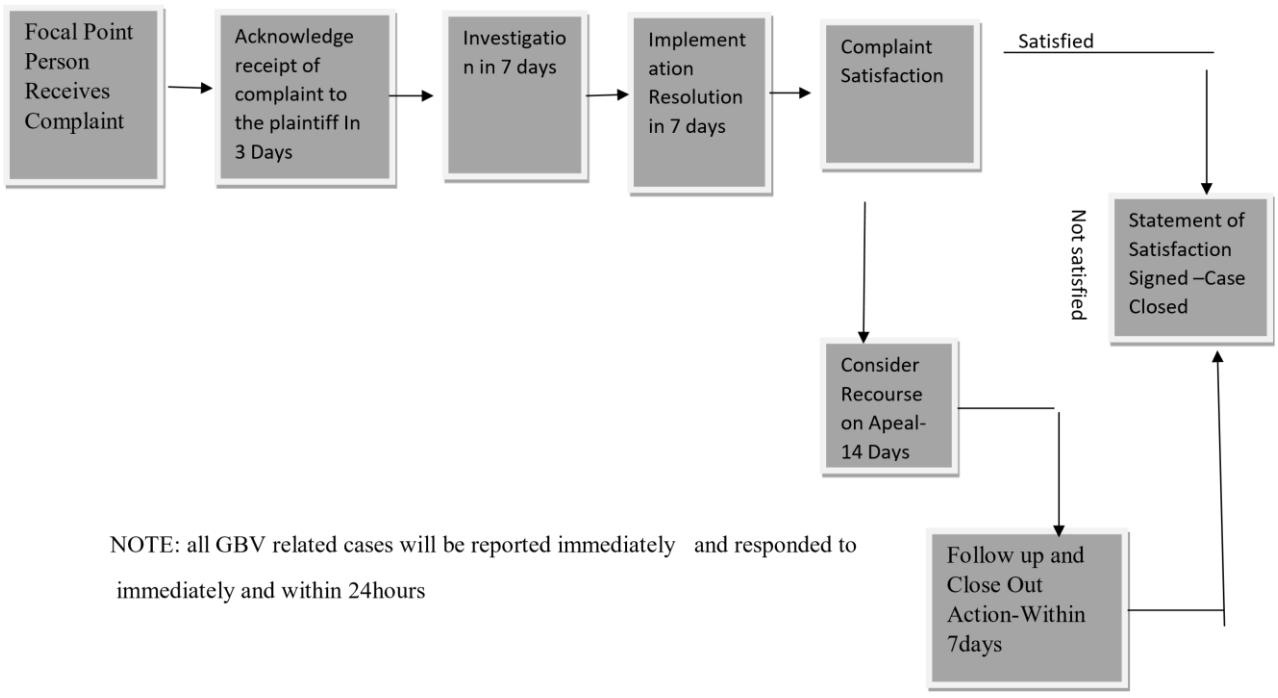
DELIVERABLE/ ACTIVITY	TARGET STAKEHOLDERS	FREQUENCY	PROPOSED TIMELINE/ DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNICATION METHOD	COMMENTS
Budget consultations	Local Community	Once / As required	By end of 3rd Quarter	Director Finance	Community meetings	
Presentation of the budget	Local Government	Quarterly	By end of 4rd Quarter	Principal officer	Written submissions/ reports	
Environmental and social Management risks	Environmental Authorities	Quarterly	As required	Director Planning Director Engineering	Written submissions/ reports	
Budget/project/policies/compliance consultations	Traditional Leaders (Councilors)	Regularly	As required	Public Relations Officer and Cultural Officer	Courtesy calls Notices/ circulars Letters	
Budget/ project/ policies consultations	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Central Government	Quarterly	As required	Director Finance	Written submissions, meetings	
Budget / project/ policies	WDC	Quarterly	As required	Director of Planning	Written submissions, meetings	

6. Budget (for the Implementation of the CE Process)

The Implementation of the Citizen engagement process for Nkeyema district will be funded under the approved budget.

Grievance Redress Mechanism

This Grievance Redress Mechanism is for the construction of all projects within Nkeyema district. This mechanism will help to address all issues, problems or claims which might arise as a result of implementing this project. In order to ensure stakeholder participation, the grievance redress mechanism will be easily accessible, confidential, transparent and culturally acceptable. A focal point person will be appointed with a responsibility of receiving complaints from clients, individuals and communities. This complaint will be escalated to the right person or department to investigate and handle within the stipulated days as highlighted on the diagram below.



7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Nkeyema Town Council will implement a structured monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to ensure that citizen engagement processes remain transparent, inclusive, and results-oriented. Monitoring will be conducted continuously throughout the implementation cycle, focusing on participation levels, quality of engagement activities, responsiveness of departments, and timely feedback to communities. Regular field visits, activity tracking, and documentation of engagements will form the basis for assessing progress against planned outputs.

Evaluation will be carried out periodically to determine the effectiveness and impact of engagement initiatives. This will include assessing whether citizen contributions have influenced decisions, the degree to which marginalized groups (women, youths, persons with disabilities, and the elderly) have been involved, and how well engagement outcomes align with development priorities. Lessons learned will guide improvements to future engagement processes and institutional capacity.

Reporting will be done in a coordinated and timely manner. Ward Development Committees, community facilitators, and responsible council departments will submit periodic reports summarizing activities conducted, issues raised, actions taken, and recommendations for follow-up. These reports will be consolidated into quarterly and annual citizen engagement reports to be shared with stakeholders, including community members, councilors, civil society organizations, and relevant government ministries. This reporting approach reinforces accountability, strengthens trust, and ensures that the Council remains responsive to community needs

Monitoring and Reporting Roles

Monitoring Event	Who	Frequency	Methodology	Reporting format
Activity monitoring in the field	Ward Development Committee (WDC)	Monthly	Visits, consultation, reports	Written and photos
Activity monitoring in the field	Technocrats Pemba Town Council (SocioEconomic Planner, Director Planning, Director Finance, Director Engineering, Environmental specialist)	Quarterly	Visits, reflection, consultation, reports	Written and photos
Update of financial records	Director Finance Finance supervisor District Accountant	Monthly	Updates based on expenses and purchases made	Written to the Council Secretary

Progress report to Donor	Council secretary	Monthly Quarterly Bi-annual Annual	Report against project documents based on monitoring and reports from the field as compiled by the Project Coordinator	Written (Financial and narrative)
Evaluation	Donor	End of project	Engage an external consultant to conduct an end of project evaluation	Evaluation report

8. Conclusion

A successful citizen engagement strategy fosters meaningful participation, ensuring that citizens have a voice in the decisions that impact their lives. By employing a mix of approaches ranging from consultation and deliberation to co-creation and direct action governments and organizations can build trust, improve transparency, and develop policies that truly reflect the needs and values of the community. Ultimately, effective citizen engagement strengthens democracy, enhances public services, and contributes to more inclusive and sustainable decision-making.

Moffat Mwanza
COUNCIL SECRETARY

Annex I: Attendance List Template –Disaggregated

Meeting Title:

Date: **Venue:**

	Name	Designation	Gender		Age(Years)			Person With Disability PWD	Mobile Number	Signature
			M	F	Below 35	Between 35-59	Over 60			
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
Totals	Number attended		M	F						

Annex II: Budget Consultation- Projects Submission Form Templates

Sample 1: Zonal Priorities Project Submission Template

Ward Name:.....

Zone Name: ..... **Financial Year:**.....

Certified by:
WDC Zonal

S/N	Priority	Name of Project	Status [New or Old]	Village/ Community
01	Quality Education	1 by 3 School Blocks	New	-

Representative:..... **Date:** .....**Signature:**.....

Traditional Leader:..... **Date:** .....**Signature:**.....

Witness:..... **Date:** .....**Signature:**.....