



A project of the Churches in support of aspiring small entrepreneurs

The Projects Centre provides training and practical support to unemployed people who wish to engage in economic activities

### 2019 Annual Report



# Narrative Report

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In today's globalized world, hard and soft skills pave the way to success in the informal sector, by providing high quality skills training. It is worth noting that youths in Bulawayo are affected by the highest youth unemployment rates in Zimbabwe which the 2014 ZimStats Labour Force survey found to be 47.7%. Factors contributing to youth unemployment in Bulawayo include deindustrialization, reduced industrialization and the lack of job skills. Although there are a number of vocational training centres in Bulawayo, the youths lack a combination of "soft" and "hard" skills to make them work ready and compete meaningfully for the limited employment opportunities. Youths in Bulawayo also lack basic entrepreneurial training and preparation so that they may participate meaningfully in the mainstream economy. With BPC's proven experience in Vocational Skills Training, the Youth in Business Programme and the Micro MBA has created a conduit for opportunity for youths from all backgrounds. With the assistance of donors and local partners the organisation has been able to offer a wide range of opportunities that address the training needs of the youths. This report entails all the activities from the BPC's four centres that occurred during and between the months of January to December 2019.

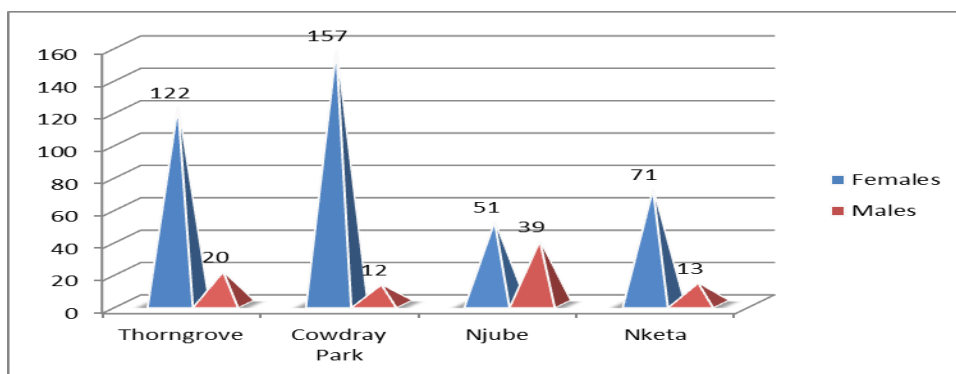
### **New Membership**

The Bulawayo Projects Centre operates on a membership basis, people who come in are either registered as internal members running small businesses, or as external members who come to BPC to undertake vocational and entrepreneurship development training but work outside the centre. A total of 485 members joined during the period under review 401 being females and 84 being males. These include those sponsored by our local partners such as Dot Youth and SOS. These organisations select disadvantaged children from the communities and then pay course fees for them. The fees paid by these organisations are much higher than those paid by individuals which are highly subsidized through funding raised by other partners.

*Table 1: Membership by Centre*

Centre	Females	Males	Total
Thorngrove	122	20	142
Cowdray Park	157	12	169
Njube	51	39	90
Nketa	71	13	84
Total	401	84	485

*Graph 1: Membership by Centre*

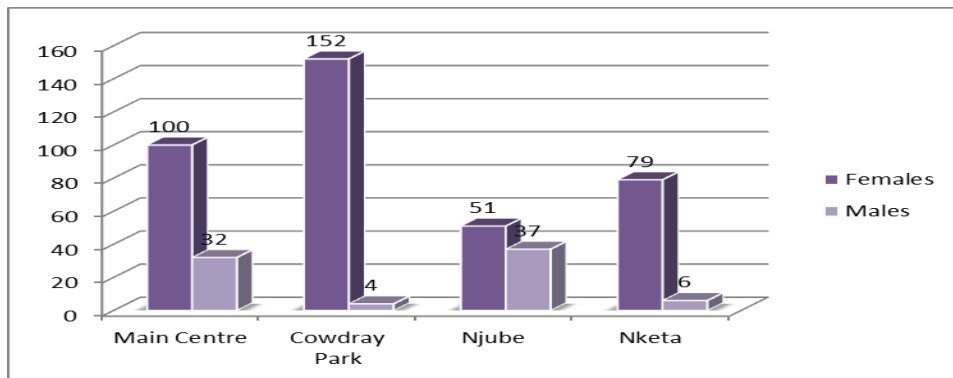


A total number of 485 students registered for various courses in the four centres combined during the year 2019. The organisation offers courses which people demand especially the youths who prefer doing hotel and catering and plumbing, hairdressing, beauty therapy, welding, carpentry and cutting and designing. This statement is supported by the number of members who were enrolled for the different courses throughout the year. Experience has shown that some courses are not even inquired about.

**Table 3: Vocational Skills Training**

Centre	Females	Males	Total
Main Centre	100	32	132
Cowdray Park	152	4	156
Njube	51	37	88
Nketa	79	6	85
Total			461

**Chart 2: Vocational skills training by Centre**



The above chart shows that Cowdray Park had the highest number in vocational skills training. It is likely because it is a young suburb with the highest population. It is followed by Thorngrove which usually does trainings for institutions. For the period under review Njube has a higher number because it conducted training for SOS. Nketa has a strong connection with the churches and usually trains a higher number.

*Table 4: Vocational Skills training by course*

Course	C/park	Nketa	Njube	Thorngrove	Total
Catering & Baking	7	14	46	73	140
Beadwork				9	9
Hairdressing	100	59			159
Beauty Therapy	13	5			18
Cutting and Designing	28	6	3	19	38
Plumbing			4		4
Computers					
Leather craft				10	
Computerized Till	2	1	16		19
Welding	2		2	1	5
Carpentry			1	1	1
Moto mechanic			16	19	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>417</b>



## Training

All of BPC's training programs are targeted at the underprivileged in the society with special consideration for the young women among them, aged between 15 to 35 years as well as unemployed adults who have a passion in running an enterprise. In particular, BPC targets young people who:

- academically are not qualified to attend a formal technical training programme.
- are financially unable to pay for tertiary education.
- would be unable to attend training, unless they also have a place to stay while in training (orphans, street children, youths from rural areas).
- show passion and drive to make their enterprise financially viable, but lack adequate skills, knowledge and facilities.

Training is delivered in three different models which are centre-based, mobile outreach and on the job industry-attached. The picture on the left shows a young person being trained in welding by one of the internal members housed at Cowdray Park Centre. This is on the job training where the course content is made up of 70% practical and 30% theory. This is more effective especially to those who did not managed to receive good academic education due to several reasons. Those on the job training are attached for 6 months and above. They are tested by producing specific items, they also get graduated after completing the course. All the centres have members who are mentoring young people.



*A young person under mentorship by Mr Mariba an internal member*

BPC also conducts training for other institutions and this year managed to train youths for SOS and Dot Youth in vocational skills. They did mechanics, cutting and design, hotel and catering, welding and till operation. Bulawayo Projects Centre (BPC) was engaged by CARE International to provide facilitation of a-four-day Youth Master Training of Trainers for 24 youths drawn from Chiredzi and Mwenzi districts in Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. This was a task which was very well accomplished. Monitoring of the trainees will be done in the following year.

## **Graduation**

BPC held its annual graduation on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November. 214 students graduated in different disciplines which included hairdressing, beauty therapy, Hotel and catering, cutting and design, till operation, mechanics, welding, carpentry and for the first time Renewable energy. The guest of honor for this grand occasion was Mr Aleck Ncube from the University of Science and Technology.



*Table:5 Incubated members turnovers by centre*

Centre	Amount
Main Centre	25 378
Cowdray Park	20 243.25
Njube	23 884
Nketa	14 364.45
Total	83 869.7

A total of \$83 869.70 sales were made by the internal members inclusive of all centres. The amount is a bit on the low side either because of the economic challenges faced by the country. Prices sky rocketed the past months and this resulted in many businesses losing a lot and not being able to sustain themselves and resulting in low sales. The situation has not changed much as prices are still going up and customers are failing to buy.

### **Projects Income by Centre**

#### **Table of income by Centre**

We get our projects income from the membership fees paid by internal members, the rentals, registration fees and course fees. That is the money we use for the operations of the Centres. In the period under review the Centres managed to raise a total of (USD \$ 2,621.00 and RTGS \$263,692 ) collectively with Cowdray Park having the highest income and Njube having the least. Cowdray Park is a fast-growing suburb with a very high population, it therefore generates more income. Njube being the smallest centre in terms of space and infrastructure generated the least income. It is therefore notable that all the centres are able to pay their monthly expenses as well as submit the remaining money to the main account. The centres have done very well in terms of raising income. Thorngrove and

Njube have also been contracted by our local partners which are World Education and SOS and these organisations pay their training fees through BPC's main account and this money has enabled Njube Centre to renovate one of the sheds which is now used as a class for motor mechanics, sewing and hairdressing. This will enable Njube to generate more income as well when completed.

### **Financial Sustainability**

BPC ensures financial sustainability through renting out workshops to local entrepreneurs as internal members. Some internal members train our youths and act as mentors and role models while running their businesses on-site. The rent coupled with the percentage of student fees that BPC receives should cover the running costs of the training centres.

### **Impact of BPC Centers**

#### **Cowdray Park**



Future Moyo was trained in Hairdressing and Beauty therapy course at BPC and has done very well. She did 4 months classroom training and went for 6 months on the job training in December 2018. After completing her attachment, she graduated and then was employed by the same salon where she was attached. She got her first salary for January 2019 and was very happy and appreciated the skills and knowledge she got from BPC. Now she is able to sustain herself and contributes to the family's basic needs. There are numerous BPC members who are doing very well just like Future. All this is evidence of the entrepreneurship spirit

being cultivated by Bulawayo Projects Centre.

## *Njube Activities*

### *Computerized till operation conducted at Mtshede Primary School under Njube Centre*



Njube is the smallest of our satellite centers in terms of space and infrastructure, due to this, the centre has partnered with Mtshede Primary School where they offered BPC Njube a Home Economics room where the Hotel and Catering classes as well as the till operation classes are conducted. 50% of the students who graduated from the till operation class and hotel and catering are now employed. We have students who have been offered contracts of employment at Choppies, Pick and Pay and in some restaurants like Chef Jeff in town.

### **Meet BPC outstanding entrepreneurs**



D.Kadira does upholstery at Njube Centre, he supplies some furniture shops around the CBD. He also rents space where he displays his sofas. He has two young people who he is mentoring in the same trade.

### **Reduce - Recycle – Reuse**



Getrude Dube is a vendor at Nketa Centre, she sells jiggies to school children and passerbys . With her creativity, she makes door and car mats out of plastics that contain jiggies and sells to the community. Her main target customers are car owners and house wives.

This is another way of keeping the environment clean at the same time making an income out of the waste paper.

### **School furniture manufacturers at Thorngrove Centre**



Calvazia Chuma has been doing carpentry for the past 10 years at Thorngrove Centre. He has managed to increase his company’s visibility through the furniture that he makes. The client base that he deals with want furniture for homes, offices and schools. The competition has been

stiff and that has slowed down his business but the constant focus on serving the community with high quality goods and affordable prices has made him sail through the difficult times. He recently ventured into a higher level of operation which has turned out to be a learning curve, as he has had to manage a tender. His company was granted a tender by the Constituency Development Fund of Zimbabwe in the month of August. He was tasked to make and repair class room furniture which included 700 student chairs and 200 desks and office furniture which was numbering, 50 chairs and 20 desks. Through this tender he managed to provide employment to six young men. This has also made him be able to provide for his family in this failing economy

Challenges. The biggest challenge is that of inflation and the inconsistent monetary framework. One day transactions are done in a particular way and before it has been fully grasped and adapted to, it is changed making it very difficult to plan for the future.

## **Renewable energy**



### **Renewable Energy Training conducted in Cowdray Park and Nketa Centres**

BPC was engaged in a renewable energy programme which was sponsored by the Bulawayo South Rotary Club. The Bulawayo South Rotary Club donated US\$15 000 to Bulawayo Project Centre (Cowdry Park) for this programme. It started in October 2018 to mid-June 2019. The programme targeted members of BPC who are already in electricity, tubing, who deal with electrical appliances and those who aspired to get knowledge. This programme aimed at equipping these individuals with in-depth skills on harnessing renewable energy, constructing appliances and how to make them in a cost-effective way. The training included theory and also practicals where they

made a solar geyser, solar dryer and solar cooker. The trainers were Mr. Blessed Sarema from National University of Science and Technology and Mr. Moyo manufacturer of solar cookers.

### **Solar Thermal Training Course**

The program began with 13 participants in Cowdray Park. The participants came from diverse backgrounds and diverse occupations. The group comprised of both males and females, incorporating gender balance. Some of the participants were already involved in engineering whilst others were unfamiliar with Solar Technology. The course took five days though one day was dedicated to theory and four days practical. The facilitator however assured all participants that they were going to complete the program with relevant skills and knowledge concerning Solar Technology acquired. He also gave a brief lesson on Photovoltaic Technology (harnessing of solar energy for lighting and electronics purposes) but his course focused much on the aspect of Solar Thermal Technology (harnessing of Solar Energy For Heating purposes).

#### *Geysers In Different Stages*



The picture above shows the solar geyser being made by the students with the guidance of the facilitator, which is mostly used heat

water for bathing. This is a simple and cost-effective gadget that can be bought by any ordinary person for heating water for bathing which is less costly. Most newly built suburbs do not have electricity therefore this could be an alternative gadget that they can use.

The picture on the left was taken at NUST where the students were taken for more practical lessons. Above is one of the students explaining how the heat is trapped from the sun.

### *Participants Constructing Solar Cooker Frame And Painting It as well as using it to cook*



The solar cooker can be used for many purpose such as cooking dishes such as rice, maize, meat, groundnuts, eggs, boiling water, vegetables and many other.

### **Solar Drier**

The students managed to do two types of solar dryers, one was made out of wood and the other made of steel. The reason why two types were made was to compare the efficiency between the two dryers. During our experiment we discovered that the steel dryer is more durable than the one made out of wood and also it is more efficient. Below are the pictures of students constructing the solar driers.

*Participant explaining how the solar drier works that dries fruits and vegetables*



Students fitting in the chimney for a solar drier. The heat comes out through the chimney as it dries the product.



There are so many fruits, vegetables and meat that can be dried in the open but we discovered that drying them in the open is a health hazard. Long ago our grandparents used to dry vegetables and fruits or meat in the open but the solar dryer is a gadget that can be used to dry a lot of products but in a safe way. Solar driers can be used to dry mangoes, vegetables, guavers, green vegetables, cabbage and meat.

### **What Members Benefited**

- Those who were already in the industry of tubing and electrical engineering now have an added skill. They are now able to do the tubing of the solar gadgets in households.
- When they are installing solar geysers they now know better the correct position which the solar panels must face so as to trap maximum heat.
- They are able to construct a solar geyser for home use or for sale, some members now have made their own solar cookers and geysers which they use at their households.
- Members are able to market their products without fear and now have better credibility to their customers
- Most of the male students who have been in the industry have been recognised by so many community members and pre-schools. Now that they have certificates they have better chances of getting opportunities such as tenders.
- They attained knowledge which is useful and no one can take that away from them .

### **Challenges after the training**

**Most students are struggling to get these kind of equipment and materials.**

1. Equipment for the construction of the products i.e soldering equipment for the Solar Geysers.
2. Material for the construction of the product i.e Aluminium/copper plates, copper pipes for effective thermo-syphoning.

3. Equipment for solar cookers. i.e benders and drills.
4. Material for solar cookers. The greatest challenge being the aluminum plates which can only be obtained in Germany.
5. Despite all these challenges some members are able to manufacture solar geysers, solar cooker frame.
6. Solar aluminium reflectors are not available locally but some are sourced from Mr Moyo the trainer who is willing to share what he has to be replaced in future..

### **Renewable Energy Shed at Cowdry Park**



Cowdray Park already has trained members who are using the shed running their businesses especially those ladies drying the vegetables and fruits in a safer way.

### **Renewable Energy at Nketa.**

A course in renewable energy, similar to the one done at Cowdray Park was also done at Nketa. 26 participants attended the course. The course suffered a number of set-backs and chief among them is the lack of reflectors. Mr Moyo the trainer seems not to want to share the knowledge which he has with others. He then uses the reflectors whose supply he has monopoly over to restrict the number of people who not only acquire the skill but also can get into business of supplying the finished solar cookers to communities which require them. Efforts have been made by Piet to contact the institution which produces the pannels and the progress made to date to

get a supply is very encouraging. While this is commendable, it is our desire as BPC to secure a local substitute of these pannels as relying on importing is not very sustainable. Meanwhile Mr Moyo the solar cooker trainer will be assisting the students who require the reflectors which will then be re embursed to him once the organisation gets them.

Finally we look forward to the completion of the Shed and having renewable energy skills gained put to good use.

### **Pastors Committee'**

Two Centres which are Nketa and Cowdray Park now have pastors committees which were formerlised in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Their main function is to participate in centre activities, render moral support and also through resource mobilisation, student referals and course advertisement.

### **Challenges**

The organisation has this year struggled to carry out its programs due to lack of funding. Staff salaries have been extremely hard to raise. Efforts have been made to meet with potential funders with some promising to support but without any specific time lines.

Disappointingly Agape Missions which was housing Nketa Centre has given us notice to vacate their premises with effect from January 2020 and the main challenge is that there is no proper place to carry out training activities at the new site ,worse considering that it's the rainy season. Two temporary structures are being constructed using the Nketa projects income to accommodate the affected members. We are hopeful that well-wishers will come to our rescue.

Conclusion

We look forward to a better and fruitful 2020. We are hoping to partner a number of organisations in our programs in order to fulfill our mission to empower the disadvantaged members of our society through entrepreneurship development. The most promising partners are SOS children's Village, World Education, Welt Hunger Hilfe, Dan Church Aid, Care International, Stichting Bulawayo and LED Foundation.

God bless BPC