Harare Citizen Journalist Training Bootcamp Report

Venue   **: Anglican Cathedral Hall,**

Date   **: 4 February 2020**

Facilitators   **: Dr Wellington Gadzikwa**
                                        : Mr. Precious Shumba

Theme   **: Telling our own stories for community development through citizen journalism**

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Introduction

Introductory remarks were given by the two facilitators and Media Centre representatives on the objectives of the bootcamp training. Participants were informed that this was apolitical gathering. Citizen journalism is meant to ensure that issues that are not being covered by mainstream media are discussed at alternative spaces. It was also noted on the onset that the training was the beginning to a long term engagement that will ensure a relationship between Media Centre, Harare Residence Trust, Election resource centre and the Epworth community.

Brief about Citizen journalism

Citizens in rural areas have adopted the internet to create alternative space for multiple viewpoints. In many occasions, rural development received limited coverage from the mainstream media. The issue limited access to mainstream media has force rural communities seek alternative platforms showcasing rural communities and development. The information and communication technology (ICT) and digitalization innovation is providing more platforms and empower people opportunity to voice out and engage actions to issues that they felt worth advocating for and long been neglected by the mainstream media by utilizing mew media platforms including among rural communities and their sustainability. Citizen journalism is making an attempt to address this problem by enabling rural communities to obtain and report news, and, to facilitate coverage of their concerns and interest, by connecting those communities and a virtual news outlets prospects to ensure their voice is also heard to initiate actions and mobilization towards a more sustainable rural community.

Objective of the Bootcamp

The purpose of the bootcamp was to train citizen journalists in on what is citizen journalism, reporting news as citizen journalists, ethics, safety and security of citizen journalists, dealing with fake news in citizen journalism and photography, video and reporting using mobile phones. The bootcamp sought to further impart useful skills to citizen journalists on writing a news story using 5W and an H for diverse platforms.

Intended learning outcomes

At the conclusion of the citizen journalism training, attendees would be expected to demonstrate the following abilities:

- Appreciate the role of citizen journalism in ensuring transparency and accountability in a democratic society
- Adhere to ethics in the conduct of their work
- Write a basic news intro
- Know where to publish their news output
- Establish security and safety procedures in the conduct of their work

First Presentation: Dr Gadzikwa.

Citizen Journalism **(definitions, roles, history, relationship with mainstream journalism, motivations, characteristics and platforms)** ***Citizen Journalism practices*** **(ethics, news writing and class/individual assignments)**

What is Citizen journalism?

➢ **Definition 1:** The gathering and reporting of news by people who are not trained as professional journalists;
➢ **Definition 2:** The act in which a citizen, or group of citizens play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information with the intention of providing independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that is required for democracy and development.
➢ **Definition 3**; An alternative and activist form of newsgathering and reporting that functions outside mainstream media institutions, often as a response to shortcomings in the professional journalistic field

Dr Gadzikwa making a presentation

Historical development of Citizen Journalism (CJ)

CJ has been practiced even before the advent of professional journalism. There is no formal training for CJ. CJ had other jobs e.g. postmaster, printers but gave themselves a mandate to capture news for everyday needs for every sector. Founders of newspapers were individuals

with no professional background in journalism who provided the public with an alternate source of news using a variety of resources

Citizen journalism vs professional journalism

Similarities of citizen journalism and professional journalism
- **Driving factors:** truth telling and spread of accurate information
- **Common values:** use accepted good values such as objectivity, truthfulness and fairness
- **Common mission:** promote transparency and accountability by informing in a truthful manner.
- **What is at stake:** free flow of information, unhindered by laws, economic conditions or failing systems

Transparency and accountability

Participants defined transparency and accountability which were consolidated as follows.
- **Accountable**: expected to give an explanation for what you have done, responsible
- **Transparency**: allowing light to pass through so that objects behind can be seen clearly understood, clear or obvious

Characteristics of citizen journalism
- **CJ is participatory** interactive and involving decentralised, bottom up structure and process. It uses different technologies news by the community from the community.
- **Not profit driven**. Its main purpose is to ensure that there is transparency and good governance
- **Diversity of viewpoints** (many voices and perspectives)
- **Emphasis on publishing as opposed to gatekeeping** (freedom from editorial control)
- **Conversational** (two-way communication between citizens and communities/professional journalists)
- **Immediacy** (quick news dissemination)
- **Emphasis on details** (provides all details without an articulated point of view and gives full/complete explanations)

Why citizen journalism?
He stressed that CJ emanated from the desire of the:
- Need to inform the public
- Advancing policy issues
- Agenda setting
- Promoting transparency and accountability
- Participating in the creation of news

Your role as a citizen journalist
- CJ have the mandate to gather, process, research, report, analyse and publish news about what is happening in your communities.
- PUBLISH the information using any available platform which makes sure that the news reaches everyone.

o SUGGEST solutions to problems and debate

Platforms to publicize the information
- o Writing letters to the editor
- o Writing opinions in newspapers/magazines
- o Participating in phone in programmes (radio and television stations)
- o Commenting on websites of mainstream media
- o using social media platforms (including those of media organisations and other organisations

Making use of participatory media

- o **Social media** – interpersonal communication that takes place through e-mail, chat, message boards and forums
- o **Collaborative media** –hybrid forms of news emanating from discussions and networking at community level

Types of participatory media
- o Discussion groups at interpersonal level
- o Discussion groups based on social media
- o User generated content
- o Weblogs

- o Collaborative publishing platforms such as Wikipedia etc
- o People to people communication e.g. Instant Messaging. Short Message Services (SMS) WhatsApp
- o Open and closed conversations forums etc

How Citizen journalists can promote transparency and accountability?
- o By Spreading and sharing information through various means at community level
- o Through social media platforms
- o Writing weblogs
- o Commenting on important issues through social media
- o Using social media and other platforms to send messages to opinion leaders, policy makers and other people who you want to influence.

Forms of expression used by Citizen journalists

Written word	Photos	Interviews	Observation	Debates
Graphics	Videos	Inquiries	Discussions	

What you must do to perform your role
- o Write about, photograph, record and videotape what you see happening, serving as eye witnesses that verify facts.
- o Clarify, analyse and amplify events
- o Authenticate statements, documents and details
- o share expertise with other members of the community
- o Seek answers to questions with boldness and respect
- o Get interested in affairs that interest you most
- o Cover events in your community. Do not wait for mainstream media
- o Use appropriate technologies and platforms to get news to communities

Get practising now (Steps)
- o Pick an area of speciality or beats (what you like most in your community)
- o Know your rights (access, expression information, assembly, Constitutional)
- o Be responsible (will be elaborated)
- o Start writing (will be elaborated)
- o Getting published
- o Sticking to citizen journalism
- o Getting social and expanding your contacts
- o Being responsible (elaboration); Like in any other journalism practice, citizen journalism is guided by four cardinal ethical principles: Seek truth and report it; Minimise harm; Act independently; Be accountable; report Objectivity; Accuracy (check facts before publishing); Honesty and truthful (do not fabricate reports); Respect for privacy; Being sensitive " comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable and give the voice to the voiceless, Avoid plagiarism and acknowledge sources and Separate facts from opinion
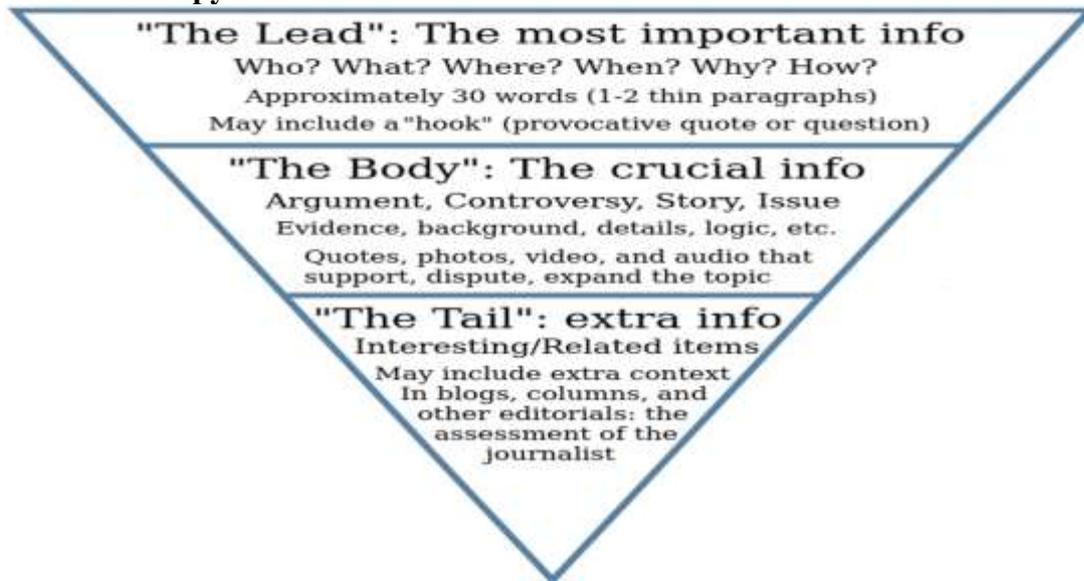
What is news?
Five W's and H

o Who (is involved, person, entity, initiator of news)
o What (what happened, what happened to who)
o When (the time it happened, date)
o Where (the place/setting where the story happened)
o Why (explanation- why the issue or event being reported happened.
o How (how an event happened including all the details

The Inverted pyramid

"The Lead": The most important info
Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
Approximately 30 words (1-2 thin paragraphs)
May include a "hook" (provocative quote or question)

"The Body": The crucial info
Argument, Controversy, Story, Issue
Evidence, background, details, logic, etc.
Quotes, photos, video, and audio that
support, dispute, expand the topic

"The Tail": extra info
Interesting/Related items
May include extra context
In blogs, columns, and
other editorials: the
assessment of the
journalist

Short assignments

Identifying the 5 W's and H in an intro
o A traditional cleansing ceremony has enabled the completion of essential work on a planned dam reservoir in Gokwe that had stalled ostensibly because mermaids were hounding construction workers away. Source: Daily News June 16, 2012
o A 35-year-old Epworth man will rue the day he laid his hands on his 12-year-old daughter after he was slapped with 18 years in jail by a Harare magistrate yesterday. Source: Newsday June 16, 2012
o ZANU PF negotiator in the inclusive government Patrick Chinamasa has predicted war in Zimbabwe ahead of elections, saying clashes reminiscent of what happened in North Africa last year cannot be ruled out Source: News Day June 09, 2012
o A distraught Gokwe teacher from Nembudziya took his own life after allegedly catching his wife, a temporary teacher, red-handed in a compromising position at a local lodge last week. Source: News Day June 09 ,2012

Individual exercise
o Write a news intro based on the following facts in a single sentence without the word AND but with a comma to replace AND; Farmers in Domboshava have lost all their cattle. They have lost the cattle to tick-borne diseases. They have now turned to zero tillage (planting without ploughing). Others have reported to donkeys for draught power (ploughing)

Getting published

- o Letters to the editor
- o Opinion articles
- o establishing community newsletters that publicise content from citizen journalists
- o Community radio initiatives
- o Distribution through CD's DVD's documentaries and other initiatives
- o Using online platforms that use citizen journalism content YouTube, The Zimbabwe Sentinel
- o Using WhatsApp and other social media platforms
- o Forming WhatsApp groups for spreading the information (form discussion groups)
- o Setting up community based social media platforms for distribution of generated information
- o Start own blogs (WordPress. Blogger,com)
- o Start own websites at community or individual level

Safety and security matters

- o No story worth dying for
- o Know your rights so that you can be able to exercise them
- o Know your area well (conflicts, escape routes)
- o Observe local protocols (cultures, sensitivities, who to talk to etc)
- o Dress appropriately (respect traditions, loud clothing, do not raise suspicion)
- o Avoid unnecessary trouble (Do not push hard! No weapons, know where to get help
- o Ensure digital security (passwords, sensitive information)

Second Presentation: Mr Precious Shumba

Community Issues for Citizen Journalism

Who is the community?

- o To be an effective CJ you should have knowledge of your community and that you have to cultivate trust within that community.
- o You should be well connected i.e. social capital within your community. This network will feed you with news as and when it happens.
- o You should be a conduit of knowledge transfer in your community and be aware of all issues affecting communities.
- o You have to have knowledge of the community you service in terms of important conducts as:
    1. police Station numbers
    2. Hospital number/ ambulance numbers
    3. Service providers numbers like local councillors

- o Know what is happening around you. Illustration was given of the cholera outbreak in which people not yet affected by Cholera did not know that they was cholera outbreak in their area until it was announced on national platforms.

Developing interaction skills

- o to help you acquire news, talk to your neighbours, the vendors, the religious leaders and the unemployed youth who spend much time within communities.
- o Understand the governance systems e.g. who sits in council committees for service delivery, when do council meetings take place? If you have knowledge of this it will be easy to target policy makers who will react to your claims.
- o Be professional in reporting

- o Have a support team that helps in news gathering. If issues are identified ensure that you have a team investigating in different locations
- o Remember that news is timely/perishable, it has to be closer to the communities, it has to be bizarre

Monitoring and evaluation

Attendance

The meeting was attended by 69 participants. Of the attendance 28 were male while 41 were female. As the table below illustrates one participant was in the age category of 15-19years, 8 were in the age category of 20-24 year, 10 were in the category of 25 -29 years, 16 were in the category of 30-35years, while 6 where in the category of 36-40 years. 16 participants were in the category of 41-50 years while 12 where 50+

Participants age groups
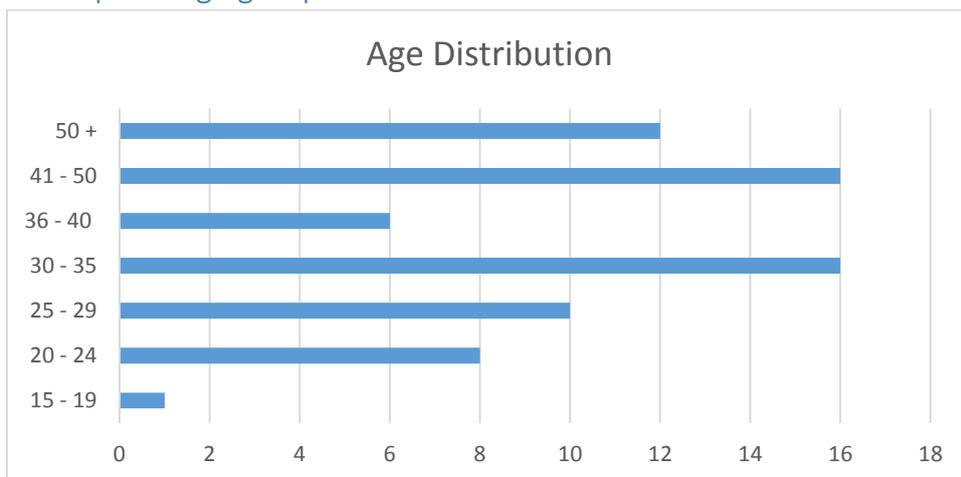
Impact assessment

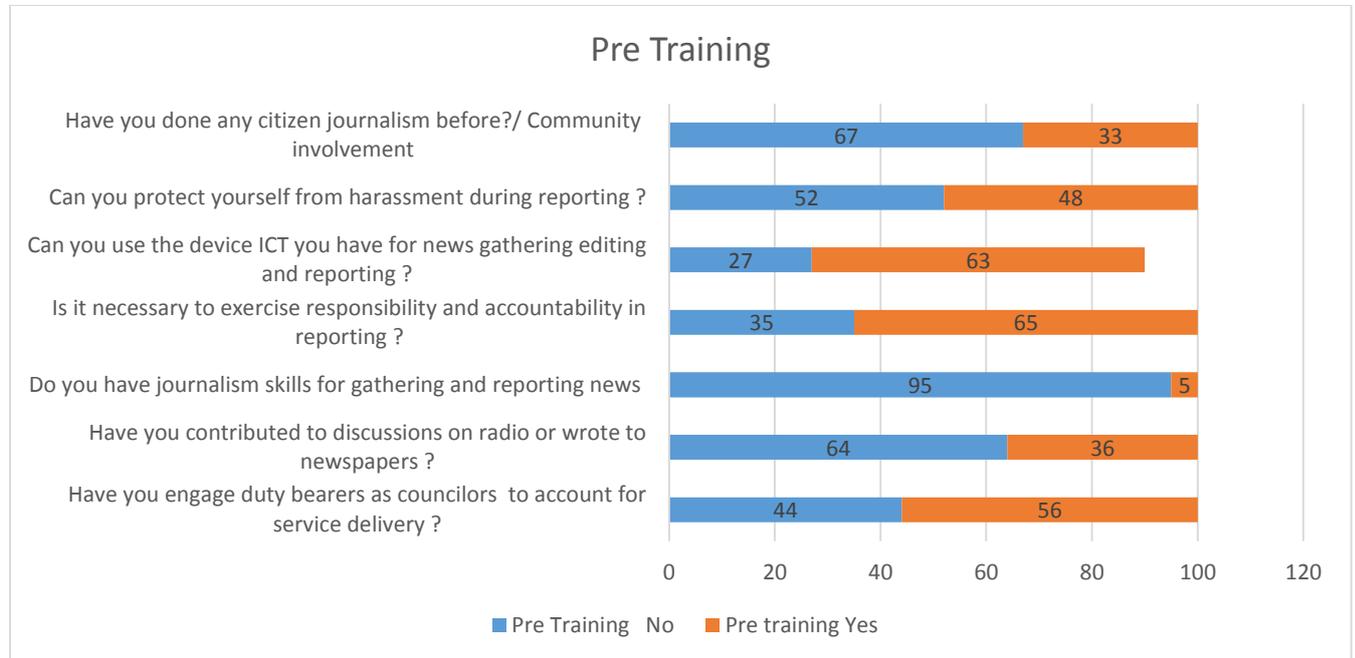**Pre Training**

Question	Pre Training No	Pre training Yes
Have you done any citizen journalism before?/ Community involvement	67	33
Can you protect yourself from harassment during reporting ?	52	48
Can you use the device ICT you have for news gathering editing and reporting ?	27	63
Is it necessary to exercise responsibility and accountability in reporting ?	35	65
Do you have journalism skills for gathering and reporting news	95	5
Have you contributed to discussions on radio or wrote to newspapers ?	64	36
Have you engage duty bearers as councilors to account for service delivery ?	44	56

Assessment forms distributed before the commencement of the bootcamp revealed the level of understanding of the participants on citizen journalism issues. Only 44% of the participants noted that they engaged with duty bearers as the counsellors and the Member of parliament while 56% of the participants noted that they did not engage the duty bearers on issues affecting them. About 5% of participant noted that they had understanding of the skills of gathering and reporting news. 95% however noted that they did not have the journalist skills. In the same vein 35% of the participants noted that it was not important to practice accountability when reporting will 65% understood that it was important to have responsibility and accountability in reporting.
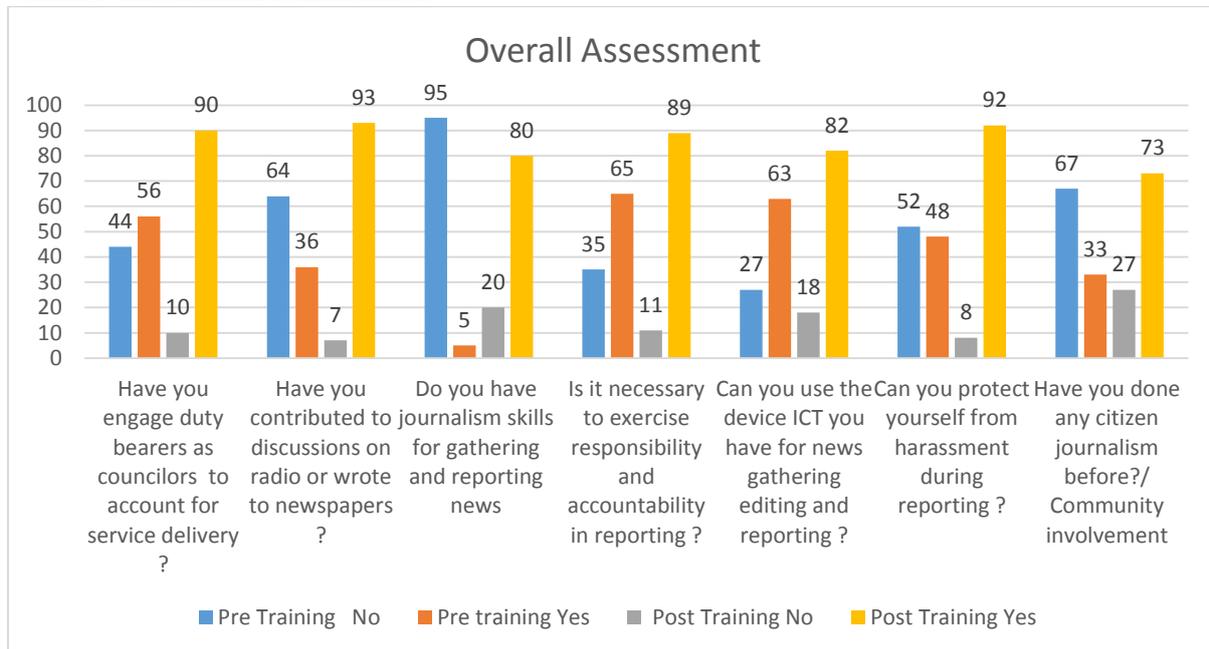
Most participants (63%) noted that they could use their mobile phones and other ICT gadgets to gather and report on news. 27% noted that they had no knowledge to use ICT in news gathering. On knowledge to protect themselves from harassment 52% noted that they were aware of protecting themselves while 48% noted that they didn't have that knowledge. 64% had not made any contribution to local newspapers and to radio stations while 36% demonstrated that they had some form of discussions on radio and contributed to news. In reporting 67% noted that they had not done any citizen reporting while 33 said they had somewhat idea about citizen journalism.

Post Training Assessment

The table above depicts changed attitude by the participants as the results above depict. 90% noted that they now could engage with duty bearers after the bootcamp due to the skills sets they had learned. However, 10% still where not confident to engage duty bearers. In terms of citizens journalist skills 80% felt they had been capacitated to become citizens journalists and had knowledge of the 5Ws and H of reporting (who, what, when, where, why, how). 89% felt that they had been capacitated with the knowledge on accountability and reporting. 73% felt they could engage communities in citizen journalism. However, 7% of the participants still felt that they could not engage in radio discussions or respond to editors in the newspapers.

Overall Assessment

Question	Pre Training No	Pre training Yes	Post Training No	Post Training Yes
Have you engage duty bearers as councilors to account for service delivery?	44	56	10	90
Have you contributed to discussions on radio or wrote to newspapers?	64	36	7	93
Do you have journalism skills for gathering and reporting news	95	5	20	80
Is it necessary to exercise responsibility and accountability in reporting?	35	65	11	89
Can you use the device ICT you have for news gathering editing and reporting?	27	63	18	82
Can you protect yourself from harassment during reporting?	52	48	8	92
Have you done any citizen journalism before?/ Community involvement	67	33	27	73

Based on the responses form the participants the uptake to engage duty bearers in issues that affect citizens as service delivery increased by 34%. Journalist skills increased by 75% for gathering and reporting news. Also, practising accountability and reporting also increased by 24%. Participants better understood how to utilise their mobile phones to capture news and this was reflected by19% increase in this indicator. The knowledge by citizens journalist to protect themselves from harassment during reporting also increased by 44%. The need to report on stories that has community involvement also increased by 40%. The bootcamp greatest impact was on ensuring that more citizen journalists would engage in discussions in newspapers and in radios. There was a 57% uptake in this regard.

Success stories
- o Some of the participants showed interest to involve other members of the community that did not take part in the training demonstrating the value they picked from the training. They noted that they would utilise WhatsApp groups in this regard.
- o Media Centre staff to be included into the already existing Harare Residence Trust groups and Epworth residence groups for continued engagement with the citizen journalists.

Annex 1 Program

COMMUNITY BASED CITIZEN JOURNALISM TRAINING WORKSHOP

DATE: 04 February 2020

Venue: TBA Harare

Facilitator: Dr. Wellington Gadzikwa/ Mr P shumba

TIME	ACTIVITY	PRESENTER
8:00-8:30	Registration of participants	Media Centre
8:30-8:35	Opening Prayer	Volunteer
8:35-8:40	Welcome Remarks and Objectives of Workshop	Media Centre/ Dr Gadzikwa
8:40-10:30	Citizen Journalism in perspective (including interactive sessions) (definitions, roles, history, relationship with mainstream journalism, motivations, characteristics and platforms)	Dr Gadzikwa
10:30- 1:45	Tea Break	Media Centre
10.45 – 12:00	Community Issues for Citizen Journalism	Mr Precious Shumba
12:00 - 13:00	Citizen Journalism practices (ethics, news writing and class/individual assignments)	Dr Gadzikwa
13:00- 13:10	Getting published	Dr Gadzikwa
13:20 - 13:30	Safety and security matters	Dr Gadzikwa
13:30-13:35	Vote of thanks	Media Centre
13:35:14:00	Housekeeping and lunch	Media Centre

Participants List

Names	Cell number
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Linda Fundisi	077w395437
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Ennie Mtunzi	0783 431 791
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Willie Pandukani	0717555548
Adrettar Kasungenge	0779259108
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Photo gallery