

# Assisting partners to monitor and track results

**Tags:** data collection, partners

*This is one of a series of stories that complement the [BEAM Monitoring Guidance](#). It offers a practical example of how a market development programme has solved a typical monitoring or evaluation challenge.*

**Zimbisa** is a DFID-funded business enabling environment programme in Zimbabwe. Zimbisa's assistance comprises of a range of tools that bring a lasting change to the way business membership organisations (BMOs) deliver services to their members, and ultimately improve the value proposition of membership. When working with BMOs, the aim of Zimbisa's work is to improve the BMO capacity to influence policies, represent their members, and increase members' satisfaction, recruitment and retention.

## The challenge

Zimbisa faced the following challenges in working with partner BMOs to monitor and track their progress in delivering services for its members:

- BMO partners did not see the value of conducting member consultations, and considered it expensive. Zimbisa required these consultations to gather feedback on member expectations from the BMO, and identify and prioritise members' advocacy issues.
- BMOs did not collect data showing which of their members have benefited from their successful advocacy actions.
- BMOs did not see the value of segregating their membership by company size, from large companies to micro enterprises, in order to realise their impact on the

various business sizes.

The above challenges meant that Zimbisa would interview and ask the BMOs to do extra work to find the information during reporting, and most partners were not happy to interrupt their own scheduled work. Additionally, some BMOs would take a long time to provide the information, which resulted in Zimbisa missing their reporting deadlines.

## The solution: focusing on how data collection is useful for the BMOs

To address these challenges, Zimbisa initiated the following:

- Supported BMOs to institutionalise the gathering of member feedback and perceptions using cost effective techniques like mobile platforms, online surveys, and evaluation questionnaires at the end of member gatherings
- Zimbisa has also supported the BMOs to track the number of members that benefit from any of their successful advocacy actions, as well as segregating them and publicising the reports to gain more membership and increase revenue. A number of partner BMOs have now included this in the duty descriptions of some of their own staff.
- Zimbisa has assisted some partner BMOs to segregate their membership in terms of company size in order to serve the needs of the varying membership. This is work in progress and BMOs are quickly noting that large companies keep closing down and being replaced by the micro/small and medium enterprises, hence the need to attract these by offering services relevant to them.

These strategies have become useful to both the partner BMOs and Zimbisa. The BMOs are now able to use their results to attract more members and offer more relevant services, hence increasing revenue and sustainability. Zimbisa is now able to receive and review (together with the BMOs) timely data on the impact of Zimbisa – BMO partnerships.

***Do you have anything to add, or a question? Please comment below or [contact the author](#).***

**To learn more, see the BEAM Monitoring Guidance on [collecting information](#) with market actors.**