
ZIMBABWE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



ZNCWC PVO: 385/68

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Vision	A Zimbabwe where the best interests of the child are upheld.
Mission	To coordinate the Child Rights sector in Zimbabwe through advocacy, research and innovative membership driven approaches for effective child development and programming.
Values	<p>Inclusiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will strive to leave no child behind and design our programs and activities in a way that ensures the effective inclusion of all children regardless of gender, disability, Rural urban divide, vulnerability, etc. <p>Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We endeavour to act and behave with honesty, transparency and accountability towards our children, members, partners and authorities in order to develop and sustain trustworthy and respectful relationships. <p>Responsiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We promote systems and procedures that ensure that we react swiftly and proactively in an engaging, empathetic, and pragmatic way. <p>Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will ensure that the participation of the Child and our memberships is our primary way of working as well as promoting engagement of all stakeholders.

❖ GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

all activities, projects, and initiatives to be carried out by the organization and its membership have to be in the best interests of the child.

MENTORSHIP

we believe in skills and knowledge sharing amongst the membership to realize best practices in organizational management and programming.

CHILD PARTICIPATION

children have to participate meaningfully in decision making processes on issues that affect them, which include policy formulation and programming.

NEC & STAFF APPRECIATED

❖ NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S NOTE.

The Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC) continues to spearhead the child rights civil society sector in Zimbabwe. The organization remains steadfast in achieving its mandate in ensuring that best interests of every child in Zimbabwe are met. In realizing this goal in 2023, ZNCWC continued to cooperate with all relevant stakeholders, policy makers, children, community members, the media, and ZNCWC's membership, strengthening old and new partnerships along the way.

ZNCWC applauds the new Children's Amendment Act Number 8 of 2023, which was passed in the year under review, amongst other key instruments. The legal and policy framework for children to enjoy their rights remains a priority of Government of Zimbabwe as they align laws to the 2013 Constitution. Successes have been registered in keeping the role of coordinating and networking the sector as meetings called registered 100% attendance both at National and regional chapter levels. This shows that our engagement brought members to prioritize issues affecting children, developing action plans, and complementing GoZ child rights initiatives. One key achievement that ZNCWC scored in the year was leading the Child Rights Coalition delegation to the African Committee of Experts of the Rights and Welfare of the Child, to present the CSO and Children's Complementary Reports for the Committee to consider in its 42nd Ordinary Session, in Addis Ababa.

We believe that the organisation continues to touch on pertinent issues affecting child rights programming at all levels and will continue to do so in 2024 and beyond.

As the National Director, I want to appreciate our National Executive Committee for the continuous leadership in steering the ship in a very challenging environment in terms of limited resources. I also want to thank our funding partners who were able to consider supporting us throughout 2023, despite the socio and economic challenges that were experienced. We also want to acknowledge the support and good relations that continue to thrive with our government and development partners, and the Child Rights Coalition network. I would also like to take a moment to appreciate ZNCWC staff members in the tireless work and commitment they are doing towards achieving the organization's goals.

❖ 2023 SUCCESSES

Here is a synopsis of successes achieved by ZNCWC in 2023:

1. EVENTS AND COMMEMORATIONS.

- ✓ Child rights Coalition meeting and SDG capacitation of the Child Rights Coalition members on the 30th of March 2023 at Bronte Hotel in Harare.
- ✓ Commemorated Day of the African Child 2023 on the 16th of June, together with the Zimbabwe Youth Council as they were inaugurating new junior parliamentarians and councillors.
- ✓ Commemorated International Day of the Girl Child 2023 together with REPSI and the Ministry of Youth. In commemorating the day, community sensitization was done together with ZRP- VFU in Hatcliffe, Communities were encouraged to respect the rights of the girl child and protect them from all forms of harm.
- ✓ Successfully held the 2023 Annual Child Rights Coalition Conference which ran under the theme “**Progress on policy and practise since COVID 19 for a Zimbabwe fit for children**” on Thursday 19 October 2023, at the Rainbow Tower Hotel in Harare.

2. RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION.

- ✓ Commissioned Zimbabwe’s first research study on children and elections and development of 2023 Children and Election Report.
- ✓ Developed the non-violence resolution and Peace Promotion toolkit to facilitate child and youth engagement for peace building in communities.

3. AWARDS AND GRANTS.

- ✓ ZNCWC being awarded a \$USD55, 000 grant from Save the Children under the Humanitarian Fund.
- ✓ Securing the European Union Stop Child Labour grant together with Save the Children, CACLAZ and ZELA.

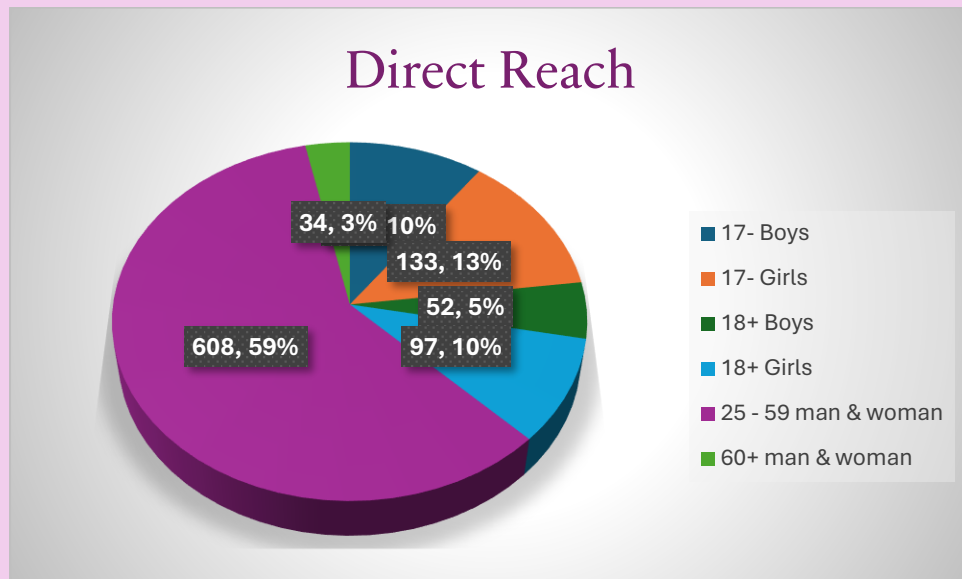
4. COMPLEMENTARY REPORTING TO CHILD RIGHTS TREATY BODIES.

- ✓ Submitted the CSOs and Childrens Complementary reports to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) on the 4th of July 2023 and the ACERWC secretariat acknowledge receipt of the report on the 5th of July 2023.
- ✓ Coordinated the CSO and child delegates to present the CSOs and Childrens Complementary reports to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) in Addis Ababa during the 42nd Session on the 14th of November 2023. Support was received from UNICEF, ECOZI, World Vision Zimbabwe and RNCYPT.

❖ OPERATIONAL AREAS FOR 2023.

For the year 2023 ZNCWC implemented a terre des hommes- Germany (tdh-G) funded project named Child and Youth Driven Peace Initiative phase II. The tdh project was implemented in

Harare North and South Metropolitan Province (Hatcliffe and Hopley). The project targeted children from 13 – 17 years of age and youth from 18 – 25 years of age. Project targeted teachers, policy makers, duty bearers and community stakeholders. The organisation also implemented the Save the Children International supported project named Humanitarian Fund Election Response which covered the following areas: Bindura, Marondera, Goromonzi, Kadoma, Chiredzi, Mwenezi, Bikita, Lupane, Mutare urban, Penalonga, Birchenough, Masvingo urban, Gweru urban, Chiundura, Gokwe central, Filabusi, Bulawayo urban, Hwange, Tsholotsho, and Matobo.



25 persons with disabilities reached.

DIRECT REACH:1052



Approximately 10,000 participants were reached through ZNCWC engagements with radio and tv, ZNCWC social media pages including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and website.

❖ ADVOCACY

ZNCWC conducted robust community awareness campaigns on promoting and protecting children's rights in the nation. These campaigns were specifically on the child rights legal framework, child rights and responsibilities, positive parenting- abolishment of corporal punishment, ending Violence Against Children (VAC) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention. Three (3) sessions were conducted on radio and national television in raising awareness on child protection laws and policies. Media Houses like the Heart and Soul online TV, ZIFM Stereo and ZBC TV were used. A ZBC TV recording in observing the Global Action Month was conducted on the 17th of November 2023. The activity was done together with RNCYPT and supported the participation of two young people.

The Global Action Month reached out to communities in promoting environmental children's rights (ECR) and to raise awareness on General Comment number 26. During The Global Action Month ZNCWC conducted activities to strengthen school environmental clubs. Activities done include a quiz and debate show, radio sessions and a tree planting event. This year with the visible effects of climate change and the anticipated El Nino weather phenomenon which will most likely cause a drought in the 2023-2024 agricultural season, the message of preserving the environment made an impact.

❖ RESEARCH

The Humanitarian Fund Election response project supported the "Children and Harmonized Election Observer Report" which became a baseline for the lived experiences of children in the election period. The report was developed through observations reports and consultations with children. The findings show that though children are not legally eligible to vote, election processes affect their lives. They are the most vulnerable of the population when politically related violence erupts, even though they do not participate. The study focused on a number of issues, which included children's participation in the electoral process, safeguarding and protection of children during electoral processes and activities, and their recommendations on how children can be safer in the election's environment. Children indicated that whilst they do not vote, their voices should be heard in the election process, as the decisions made by political leaders affect their lives directly. In terms of children's safety during elections, all the respondents indicated that the 2023 elections were free from violence. However, the respondents highlighted that the songs/slogans used during election campaigns are capable of stirring up emotions and violent behaviour and is harmful to children. They were of the opinion that some of the language in political songs/slogans can promote a culture of violent behaviour among youth, and that children can pick up the vulgar language in songs/slogans and think its normal/acceptable language. The delays in the commencement of voting at some polling stations in Harare and Bulawayo resulted in voters becoming impatient.

Some recommendations given by children to ensure their safety in electoral processes:

- ✓ creating safe spaces for children during the elections
- ✓ enforce the code of conduct for political parties and stakeholders to ensure children's safety.
- ✓ ensure that voters who are who have disabilities, elderly, pregnant, or with young children, be given first preference at polling stations.

❖ CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT OF KEY CHILD RIGHTS ACTORS

1. COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT LEVEL CHILD RIGHTS ACTOR.

Through the tdh supported project ZNCWC managed to support District Child Protection Committee Meetings which are held on quarterly basis in Hopley and Hatcliffe. The aim of the DCPC meetings is for relevant stakeholders to meet and discuss milestones and challenges regarding child protection in the districts. These coordinated stakeholders' platforms strengthen efforts made by individual organisations towards eradicating the infringement of children's rights in the community and effective district case management system.

2. NATIONAL LEVEL CHILD RIGHTS ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES.

The Child Rights Coalition Capacity strengthening on SDGs with specific focus on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) reporting processes and SDGs related advocacy in the child rights sector. Some of the issues discussed are SDGs implementation tracking, SDGs advocacy and programming, current child rights laws and issues. Of Interest is the lack of coordination for the SDG technical committee in the implementation of SDGs in Zimbabwe and that progress reports are rarely available to check SDGs implementation progress in Zimbabwe. Challenges that were identified in the spotlight report on SDGs included limitations in citizen participation (in the form of alliance and networks that deal with specific issues such as child rights, and social development, limited coordination between government and CSOs, and the exclusion of special interest groups, such as persons with disabilities. It was recommended that the child rights sector address these challenges by working closely with the Parliament of Zimbabwe in advocating for the realisation of SDGs in budget allocations and facilitate platforms for marginalized groups in dialogue around SDGs.

3. CHILD RIGHTS COALITION ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023.

The Zimbabwe Child Rights Coalition Conference for 2023 was a one-day event that was held under the theme: "Progress on Policy and Practice since COVID 19 for a Safer Zimbabwe for Children" at the Rainbow Towers Hotel in Harare, on the 19th of October 2023. The conference was attended by 136 participants, including Members of Junior Parliament, government ministry representatives, media personnel and Coalition members. The conference was privileged to host the Executive Director of the Civil Protection Department, Mr N Nkomo, as the Guest of Honour. The Department, which is under the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, is the integral

government office at the centre of disaster planning and emergency response. The Civil Protection Department housed the COVID 19 response planning and implementation mechanisms.

The main objective of the conference was to bring together key actors in the child rights sector to discuss the progress on policy and practice since COVID 19 for a safer Zimbabwe for children going forward and proffer recommendations for promoting child protection in emergency situations. Presentations were made by CSO partners with reference to child protection law and policy, and children's rights and environmental issues, girls' access to sexual reproductive health, second chance education concept, reintegration of children in conflict with the law, and children in the care of the elderly in emergencies. There was a panel discussion where children shared their experiences in emergency situations, and their recommendations on how disaster preparedness can better remedy child protection needs in emergencies. CSO partners had an opportunity to share how they have been complementing government efforts since the enactment of new child protection laws so that every Zimbabwean child enjoys his/her rights fully without any limitation.

Some key recommendations that emerged from the conference included the following:

- ✓ Increasing platforms for consultations involving children in emergency response planning, disaster risk management and reduction (DRM/DRR) district, provincial and national structures, including review of the Disaster Risk Management Bill
- ✓ Following up on the Bill Tracker and progress on the alignment of child rights laws to the 2013 Constitution.
- ✓ The Coalition is to pick specific sector leaders in advocacy issues and assign tasks for accountability and tracking of advocacy initiatives.

4. PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENTS.

ZNCWC with the financial support from Save the Children, SAPST and World Vision Zimbabwe conducted the Child Rights Parliamentary Caucus capacity enhancement workshop. The workshop was done over two days in Kadoma. The objectives of the workshop were to enhance the capacity of the new Child Rights Parliamentary Caucus members on key child rights issues; including the Caucus roles and responsibilities, review the 2024 National Budget from a child rights perspective for a comprehensive analysis and to identify child rights advocacy priority issues for the development of the Caucus' 2024 Work Plan. Major outcomes of the meeting were development of the Caucus 2024 workplan and the Prioritization of child rights issues for 2024 and beyond – Child Rights Caucus which included:

- ✓ Advocate for the establishment of a child rights standalone ministry — follow up on the motion moved in the 9th Parliament, reviewing best practices regionally and internationally.
- ✓ Birth registration – advocate for decentralization of services, empowerment of local leaders to improve access to right to identity
- ✓ Capacity strengthening of Child Rights Caucus on Budget analysis, Cycle and Public Financing, – interrogating the Budget from a child right perspective.

- ✓ Capacity strengthening of Child Rights Caucus on child rights international and regional conventions, key ministry administering the convention, policy gap analysis and recommendations. Other capacity enhancement workshops on gender, disability, and social inclusion, how to pass motions in Parliament etc.
- ✓ Follow up on outstanding child rights laws- lobby and advocacy on the outstanding child rights bills– courtesy call on the sponsoring ministries/Ministry of Justice
- ✓ High level engagement with key line ministries on critical child rights issues e.g. social development, health, education, women’s affairs, justice, etc.
- ✓ Increasing/strengthening the participation of junior assemblies (Junior Parliament and Council) in national development issues, through engagements, establishing a systematic structure for the junior assemblies, offices for junior assemblies in the New Parliament building, etc
- ✓ Strengthening drugs and substance abuse prevention and response mechanisms through awareness, dialogue on Mental health access with key stakeholders
- ✓ Commemorations of key child rights events e.g. International Day of the Girl Child, Day of the African Child, World Children’s Day etc
- ✓ State party reporting to international treaty bodies (UNCRC, ACERWC etc) – capacity strengthening and engagements with key ministries.
- ✓ Capacity enhancement for journalists on child friendly reporting.

❖ REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS - COMPLEMENTARY REPORTING TO THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD

The Child Rights Coalition of Zimbabwe was invited by the Committee to present the CSO and Children’s Complementary Reports for the Committee's consideration, during its 42nd Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa between the 2nd and the 17th of November 2023. The Coalition’s delegation, led by the ZNCWC National Director, Rev Taylor Nyanhete, presented the report to the Committee on the 14th of November. The delegation consisted of child representatives, and CSO/development partner representatives i.e. ECOZI, Save the Children, SOS Children’s Villages Zimbabwe, RNCYPT, and UNICEF. The reports detailed progress that the Government of Zimbabwe has taken to implement the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the processes undertaken to prepare the complementary reports and brief highlights of the CSO report. These highlights included gaps in implementation of the African Charter, children’s and CSOs recommendations to the State Party to improve the status of children in Zimbabwe. Some key recommendations given included:

- ✓ The setting up of a separate ministry dedicated to children’s issues in Zimbabwe – to resolve issues of fragmented coordination systems.

- ✓ The speeding up and completion of the realignment process for child rights laws to the Constitution
- ✓ Child friendly budgeting/increased budgetary allocations to health, education, and social services that directly impact children's lives, in line with international guidelines/benchmarks such as the Dakar Declaration (education) the Abuja Declaration (health) etc.
- ✓ Localised resource mobilization/Increased support to social protection systems/safety nets with less reliance on development partners
- ✓ Increased commitment and support to disability inclusion in all aspects of child rights; education, health, and social systems
- ✓ Disaster preparedness, mitigation and response strategies that include cross cutting issues, children, disability, gender, among others.

Following the presentation of the children's and CSO reports, the State Party's report will be considered by the Committee, which will culminate in the development of the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations. These will be shared once available.

❖ FUNDING PORTFOLIO 2023.

The table below summarizes the funding that ZNCWC received in the year 2023:

Resource partner	Funds received	Comments
tdh Germany	EUR 28,621.00	Project continuing to August 2024
Save the Children	US\$59,983.00	Project ended in October 2023
Subscriptions and memberships	US\$420.00 ZW\$17512.24	Ongoing
Coordination fees	US\$1800	Ongoing

ZNCWC FUNDING PARTNERS FOR 2023.

ZNCWC would like to acknowledge the support of the following funding partners in 2023:

