

ABOUT ZOCS

Zambia Open Community Schools is a vibrant and a flagship local organization of Community Schools since 1992, that empowers communities to provide quality basic education to learners across 97 districts in all the 10 provinces in Zambia. Premised on the principle that every child has a right to education, ZOCS is currently empowering about 240,000 learners (112,433 Boys and 112,414 Girls) in over 1,285 Community Schools. Through its three-pillar approach of Advocacy, Service Delivery and Capacity Building, ZOCS has accomplished much for the children and people of Zambia. The three pillars on which ZOCS builds its approach are those of enhanced educational opportunities for children, increased community capacity to provide such opportunities and advocating for Government commitment to the sustainability of ZOCS innovations in over 2000 Community Schools in Zambia. ZOCS work supplements Ministry of Education (MoE) in the provision of quality education in Zambia.

Vision

A Zambia where all Community School Learners, especially Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), girls and Learners with special education needs, obtain quality and equitable education that enables them to realize their fullest potential

Mission

ZOCS exists to brighten prospects of Community School Learners by empowering Community Schools, building partnerships, influencing policy, supporting learners and creating conducive learning environments.

SCOPE OF ZOCS' WORK

ZOCS' work primarily focuses on community-based approaches. This not only helps the organization achieve its mission, but also ensures that interventions are made to address the needs of the community. With that said, below are the areas in which ZOCS operates:

- Early Childhood Education
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- Child Protection
- Social Accountability
- Learning Support
- Integrated Community Development
- Economic Strengthening
- Organizational Capacity Development

Skills and Vocational Training for Youths

Further support in skills training is given to the student's young people who access and complete secondary education through the ZOCS scholarship support. This is through the skills and vocational training program for the youth. ZOCS recognizes the role that skills play in creating opportunities for youths operating in the informal sector. These youth could be facing financial challenges to go further into tertiary education or some of them have a true passion of obtaining real life skills for entrepreneurship purposes. ZOCS is keen to support these learners. Table 2 below gives a breakdown of the cost to sponsor a child to a skills training center.

Infrastructure Development

ZOCS constructed a total of 128 ECE low-cost Round Huts in 2022 with community participation. The completion of the ECE classrooms has positively contributed to the provision of suitable learning environment in Community Schools. This intervention benefited a total of 5852 (3017 girls, 2835 boys) learners in Central and Southern provinces. Additionally, ZOCS handed over a total of 37 teachers' houses and 62 classroom blocks.

WASH Investments in Community Schools

Understanding that water is life and adequate access to it, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in schools impacts health, educational outcomes, and gender disparities, ZOCS worked with different stakeholders through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), provided water to Schools in Chongwe, Kafue, and Choma. In an effort to maintain a safe and clean school environment for learners, ZOCS installed 7 boreholes in Chongwe, Kafue, Choma and Kalomo districts. Good hygiene practices were encouraged in schools through sensitization meeting with teachers and learners

Entrepreneurship Delivery in Schools

ZOCS seeks partnerships and innovative financing solutions in solving financial issues in education for the underserved children and youth. Partnerships especially ones involving the private sector can help provide funds to the most disadvantaged.

ZOCS provided entrepreneurship training to 879 (439 Male, 440 female) PCSC members and head teachers from 589 schools in 2022. The school managers were availed the knowledge to recognize profitable opportunities and generate income for school management and development. ZOCS invested a total of ZMW 1,458,000 to support school-based Income Generating Activities (IGA) benefiting 486 schools with startup capital of ZMW 3000 in Southern, Central and Western provinces

School Feeding Program

ZOCS supported 331 Community Schools in Lusaka, Central and Southern Provinces to ensure provision of school feeding for learners. For sustainability purposes, ZOCS provided farming inputs to 250 Community Schools to support school feeding. A breakdown of the school feeding costs is given below:

Bursary Program

As of 2022 ZOCS provided bursary support to 2078 (1304 girls; 773 boys) learners at Secondary School level with a completion rate of 99%. The support was towards the payment of school related fees and school requisites such as shoes, books, uniforms, school bags, calculators, solar study lamps and sanitary towels for girls. An internal observation by the monitoring and evaluation team revealed that it is often the case that children supported with text books in the bursary program perform better than those without text books.