



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



“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”.



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



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAG	Community Action Group
CAOOSC	Community Action for Out of School Children
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DRCC	District Resource Centre Coordinator
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELK	Early Learning Kiosk
EOI	Embassy of Ireland
ESO	Education Standards Officer
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HEI	Hei Verden
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDD	Innovation Development Directorate
MoE	Ministry of Education
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OOSC	Out of School Children
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PCSCs	Parents Community Schools Committees
SRI	School Readiness Initiative
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ZANEC	Zambia National Education Coalition



Dear Partners,

As we reflect on another year marked by resilience and resolve, we cannot ignore the ever-changing landscape of challenges that we continue to face. The cost-of-living crisis, increased inflation and continued climate change continue to threaten education for millions of children in different parts of the world. Despite these challenges, I am proud to report that this year has been one of significant achievements for Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS).

Our work in all the ten provinces of Zambia, have made substantial strides in protecting, educating, and creating lasting change for the Orphans and Vulnerable Children whom, because of circumstances beyond their control, could not enjoy their right to education.

From our different partnerships within and beyond our beautiful country, we have demonstrated our unwavering commitment to ensuring access to inclusive education and safe spaces for children in Zambia.

Our success in this year is a testament to the resilience and dedication of our team and the invaluable support of our partners and communities. We have not only weathered the storm but have also seen considerable growth in our impact.

This success put us firmly on track and we reached our ambitious goal of supporting 265 091 Orphans and Vulnerable Children in this year.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all our Trustees for maintaining such high standards of governance while playing a hands-on role in supporting many initiatives across the organisation.

I am also pleased to warmly welcome our incoming Trustees. Earlier in the year, we lost one of our trustee members Madam Edna Choongo. Her presence at the organisation is sorely missed.

I would also like to thank our Executive Director and the entire ZOCS Management who have shown exemplary leadership, commitment, and dedication, reinforcing the foundation of our purpose.

And to our donors, thank you so much for standing by us. With your support, we will continue to promote quality education access for the underprivileged children.

Victor Koyi

ZOCS Board Chairperson



Dear All,

AS we say good bye to another transformative year at ZOCS, I am filled with gratitude for the unwavering support and commitment of our community. The year 2023 has been marked by incredible achievements, impactful projects, and the strengthening of partnerships that propel our mission forward.

This year also marked the mid-end of our five-year strategic plan. We had the opportunity to come together and reflect on the incredible progress we have made so far as an organization.

In this period, ZOCS amidst some challenges that affect education within and beyond Zambia, continued to spur growth in the area of enrolling orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in school, increasing community structure formation to support education for the orphans and vulnerable children, maintained donor relations, and participated in working groups, and coalitions.

Together, we have supported thousands of OVC in education access, pioneered casework, advocacy, and research activities, and pushed the conversation around quality education access for the OVC onto the Government agenda.

We continue to help thousands each year, even as we document barriers to education and lead efforts to increase access, protection, build visibility, and empower communities/guardians to appreciate and support education.

Just this year, we made great strides towards our goal of ensuring there was infrastructure development in Community Schools. Our advocacy efforts, through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), yielded improved infrastructure in over 50 Community Schools

As we take a moment to reflect on how far we have come, we are determined to move forward by doing even more to increase education access, protection, and deliver impact.

It will not be easy, but the path to a better future never is. We recommit ourselves to supporting OVC education and will continue working towards ensuring that every orphan and vulnerable child in Zambia has access to quality education. And we will reach these new heights with the help of our incredible community of network members, partners, and donors.

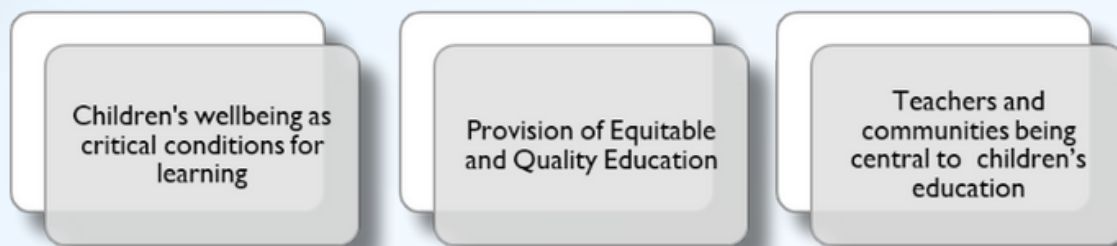
It is with the deepest gratitude that I share with you the summary of our collective accomplishments over this past year.

We could not do this without you, and I look forward to doing even more together in the years ahead.

In solidarity and with deep gratitude,

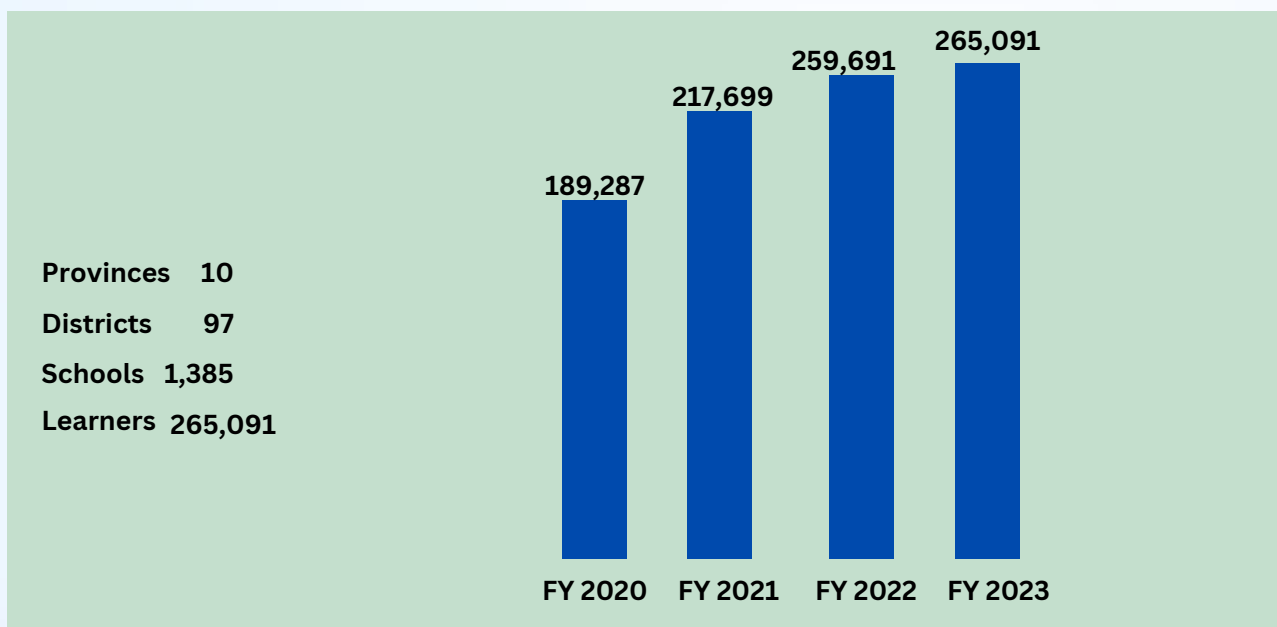
Mrs. Cleopatra Muma
ZOCS Executive Director

Date	EVENTS
January	ZOCS makes a submission to the parliamentary committee on Education, Science & Technology on 'The Free Education Policy in Zambia: Opportunities and Challenges.'
February	Learning visits to project sites by Hei verden and the Roger Federer Foundation
March	ZOCS hosts a national symposium on the Situational Analysis on play-based learning in Zambia: - insights from selected provinces in Zambia.
April	ZOCS provides startup seed support to 128 schools in Monze, Pemba, Mazabuka and Chikankata districts. The school feeding benefited 5,905 children (3,050 boys: 2,855 girls) in the pre-primary and primary education sector.
May	A total of 488 learners supported with bursary packages in central, Lusaka, Southern, and Western province
June	Community School learners participate in a match during the commemoration of the Day of the African Child
July	Over 7500 exercise books donated to vulnerable learners in Mazabuka District
August	Ground-breaking ceremony marking the beginning of developing the Choma Centre of Excellence.
September	International Literacy Day
October	Ministry of Education embarks on hostel construction at Kalobolelwa Secondary School following an appeal by ZOCS through a Policy Brief submitted
November	ZOCS presents on the status of Community Schools in Zambia at Primary School Symposium organised by the Ministry of Education
December	Fifty (50) volunteer teachers report for their final residential sessions at Malcolm Moffat College of Education where they were pursuing a Primary School Diploma Course



OUR COVERAGE

NUMBER OF LEARNERS REACHED SINCE INCEPTION



1. Advocacy & influencing

In a context of profound impact of severe climate change and budgetary pressures nationally and world-wide, ZOCS continued to achieve results while shifting to new and ambitious ways of working with its different partners. From fostering policy discussions at national level through to sustained grant support to Community Schools, ZOCS worked with its partners to target the roadblocks to education access by Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Zambia

Nkeyema (left) and Itezhi-tezhi (far right) MPs during an engagement meeting in Lusaka



ZOCS ED (far right) engages NORAD Representative at a meeting in Lusaka



In 2023, ZOCS engaged law makers and raised awareness around the barriers to education amidst the implementation of the Free Education Policy (FEP). We further campaigned to increase the ambition of leaders for financing education and Community Schools in particular. Their voices helped increase support towards Community Schools, increased pledges of teaching and learning materials, infrastructure development and keeping education financing on the political agenda.

• Engagement meetings

Through engagements with the Ministry of Education at different levels (national, provincial and district), as well as Members of Parliament, ZOCS lobbied for infrastructure development for Community Schools. The organisation further pushed for grants, teaching and learning materials, and teacher deployment.

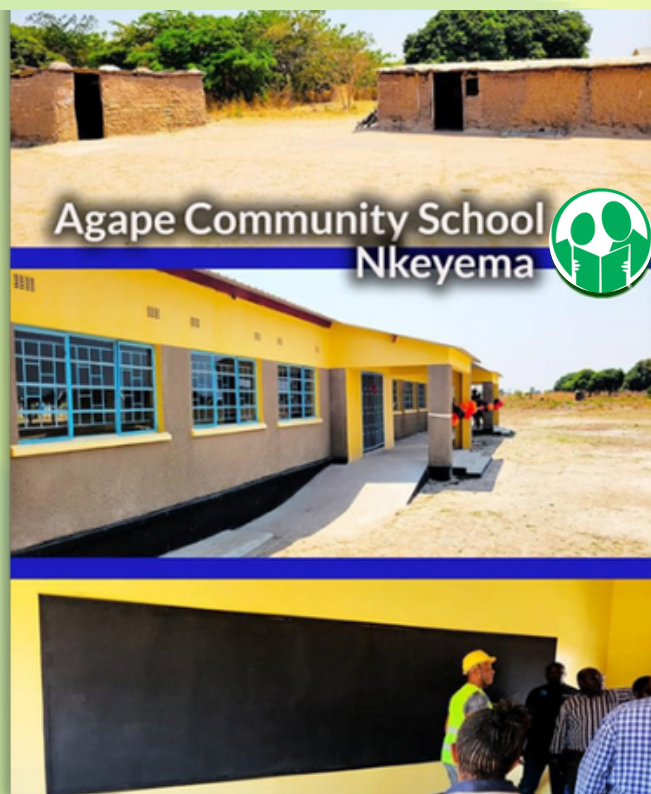
Such efforts yielded results at different levels for example, in Nkeyema district of Western province, Agape, Mukoshela, Kashambana, Ntuba, Kanatebe, Luambu and Katomwa received 1X3 classroom blocks and water boreholes while in Sesheke, Likanda, Mandila and Katete received similar support. The increase in classroom space responded well to the need for expansion of infrastructure in schools owing to the introduction of the Free Education Policy that led to an influx of out of school children enrolling in school.

• Incentives for volunteer teachers

Government has remained steadfast in allocating funds towards the payment of volunteer teacher incentives. However, ZOCS still advocated for a consideration by Government to increase the amount. If considered, an increased allocation will enable ZOCS to pay every volunteer teacher in Zambia once per year. As it is, the funds are limited and only allow for a once off payment for a selected group of teachers in a particular province in a year. It takes three years to complete the circle of payment before returning to the initial group.

In the year 2023, Government released **ZMW2,939,833.50** towards this programme and **ZMW2,093,555.52** was disbursed in Eastern and North-Western Provinces benefiting 1112 teachers (828 Eastern & 284 North-Western).

Since the year 201, Government in the yellow books allocates ZMW3million towards Community Schools for volunteer teacher incentives.



ZOCS lobbies for more support for Kapa Special Unit



Since ZOCS officially handed over the Kapa Special Unit in Nkeyema District in 2022, the organisation continued lobbying for more support to ensure the centre provided comprehensive education support services.

ZOCS built and handed over a special unit (a 1X2 classroom block and office) to the Ministry of Education. The unit was established after the realization that children with disabilities or special education needs had no access to quality education. A need was further identified to construct hostels that would accommodate the learners to avert the challenge of parents walking long distances to the centre.

With support from a catholic priest Fr. Ivan Kordic based in Nkeyema, the construction of hostels started and Water Aid committed to embark on putting up water closet toilets for the learners. All such efforts will add value to what ZOCS started and children with disabilities will finally access education like any other child should.

The classroom block has the capacity of 50 learners and the boarding facility will accommodate 30 learners.

Such efforts respond well to ZOCS' Strategic Objective three whose aim is to expand quality and access of ZOCS' services by the most underserved populations.

Child protection & participation



As a child focused organisation, ZOCS continued to safeguard the wellbeing of vulnerable children. Educational programs targeting parents, teachers, and children themselves were implemented to cultivate awareness and equip individuals with the tools necessary to identify and address potential risks in child protection and participation.

Community School learners participated in the Day of the African Child under the theme, 'The Rights of a Child in the Digital Environment'. The 40 children (22 girls and 18 were boys). The participation in the commemoration of the Day of the African Child allowed children to interact with their peers from different schools and backgrounds. During this event, children did different performances including poems and drama sketches on issues related to cyber bullying and how to be safe online.

Amidst the deployment of qualified teachers to Community Schools by Government, ZOCS still engaged the Ministry of Education to consider volunteer teachers with qualifications during the recruitment process. While almost over 2000 Community Schools in the country have had at least one trained teacher deployed, Volunteer teachers remain the heroes of Community School education provision as they have for years offered their services without remuneration but out of passion and dedication, have transformed thousands of lives of vulnerable children whom, because of circumstances beyond their control, would not have had a chance to go to school.

Considering already serving volunteer teachers comes with a bonus- there is no need to look for accommodation as they are already established in their areas of operation and have a special bond with the learners, key in classroom performance. In addition, volunteer teachers placed on Government pay roll will improve education quality by reducing the pupil-teacher ratio currently standing at a national average of 58:1 as at 2022. The 58:1 is not only beyond Zambia's national policy target of 40:1, but beyond global norms and best practices related to class sizes and learning conditions. In the year, Government targeted 4500 teachers to be recruited. The selection process is still ongoing and it remains our hope that Community School volunteer teachers will be considered.

'I ALSO FOUND MY NAME ON THE LIST' - CLIVE CHIKOPO



Mr. Clive Chikopo

My name is Clive Chikopo. I am based in Choma Southern Province. I completed grade twelve () in . Just after completion of grade the following year I started my volunteer work as a teacher at Chivuma Community School. I served for a year and moved to yet another Community School Amanda. As a volunteer teacher in a Community School I faced a lot of challenges ranging from lack of incentives/appreciation in terms of wages. In some cases the community could appreciate me by giving me limited wage in monetary or in-kind form this was not done always. In addition I was expected to teach multiple grades due to understaffing. This situation couldn't spare hours for me to do my own things which could have brought food on the table for my family.

While working as a volunteer teacher I had to think of ways to survive and focused on rearing chickens and small livestock that I purchased from the little money I would save up from some of the workshops ZOCS would invite us to such as the pedagogical skills training. I enrolled myself in college and through engaging in small projects and selling some of the chickens and goats I was able to cover college fees and I graduated with a Diploma in Primary School Education from Charles Lwanga College of Education.

I started applying to be recruited under the Ministry of Education but it was hard. During my attempts ZOCS advocated for volunteer teachers with qualifications in Community Schools to be considered during the recruitment.

Lucky enough during massive recruitment of teachers I also found my name on the list of those recruited. DEBS Office Choma and other individuals who were there with me when I struggled in my journey.

To my friends who are not yet recruited they just have to remain dedicated passionate and compassionate while serving-Community Schools are vulnerable hence needing our support. We should work not for money but because there is one out there who doesn't have what we have.

• Community Sensitization Meetings

ZOCS conducted Community sensitization meetings in 180 Community Schools reaching 8995 parents/guardians (5397 Female, 3598 Male) located in seven target districts under the SRI Cohort 4 project namely Mazabuka, Chikankata, Serenje, Mkushi, Masaiti, Mpongwe, and Lufwanyama. The sensitization meetings were aimed at enhancing school readiness for learners attending pre-primary education.

These meetings were strategically designed to raise awareness about the School Readiness Initiative project, stimulate community participation and promote sustainability through community ownership. The meetings focused on community engagement and awareness raising on how to support their children's learning at school and at home thereby creating a solid foundation for education.



2. Capacity building

In a bid to get key stakeholders up to speed with the ZOCS program, the organization employed different strategies to build the capacities of different structures. The aim was simple- to strengthen the skills, instincts, process, and resources at different levels.



coaching and mentoring support for teachers in Kabwe

MENTORSHIP AND COACHING ON THE EARLY LEARNING KIOSK (ELK)

ZOCS continued enhancing the expertise of 540 Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers through the introduction of an innovative "Early Learning Kiosk." This comprehensive tool encompassed various resources such as tools, templates, manuals, tutorials, and a specialized course. Designed to facilitate interactive and collaborative learning within groups, the Early Learning Kiosk focused on school readiness and the crucial transition phase in a child's development. The content emphasized fundamental knowledge of early childhood education, particularly emphasizing the methodology of learning through play. The tablet-based platform not only facilitated effective training but also allowed for the convenient uploading of an array of documents, including policy papers and curriculums that are typically not readily accessible to educators. This forward-thinking initiative not only elevated the competence of educators but also did so in a cost and time-efficient manner, contributing significantly to the overall improvement of the educational landscape in the targeted regions.



PROMOTING SCHOOL GOVERNANCE



Building the capacities of school managers including community structures remains key in the management and smooth running of Community Schools in the country. Critical areas remain those of ensuring that children understand their rights and are able to demand for them, ensuring that there is a conducive learning environment for these children and that community members understand how best to cater for the children for education.

In this year, 180 Community School volunteer teachers received training in school governance, child protection, Early Childhood Development (ECD) management, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH).

Equally, the exercise was extended to Parent Community School Committee Chairpersons in targeted regions namely; Mazabuka, Chikankata in southern province and Serenje, Mkushi, Masaiti, Mpongwe, and Lufwanyama.

In a bid to improve teaching and learning in Community Schools, the fifty (50) volunteer teachers attended their final year studies at Malcolm Moffat College of Education. The 50 teachers from different parts of the country embarked on this journey in the year 2021 and completed their studies in December, 2023. Their graduation is scheduled in the following year when they will walk away with a Primary School Diploma.

Teaching in Community School has always been done by volunteer teachers who may have qualified to go to university/college but due to various reasons, mainly financial, may not pursue their studies. ZOCS in its efforts secured resources to allow these 50 to obtain a qualification thereafter continue rendering services at their respective stations. Once the qualification is obtained, these teachers can then apply for recruitment but remain in their current schools.

My name is Saboi Namitondo. I am a Volunteer Teacher at Chainda Open Community School. I completed my grade twelve (12) in 2014, but unfortunately I could not afford to go to college or university due to financial problems. Because of the passion I have for Education I decided to join a community school at Chainda Open and started offering my services.

Being at community school as a volunteer teacher have been not an easy for me because there is no pay. At the same time you need to survive. At some other time I used to do some piece works just to make sure that I have also something to eat and put on, at the same time I would go school to make sure that the children are taught as required.

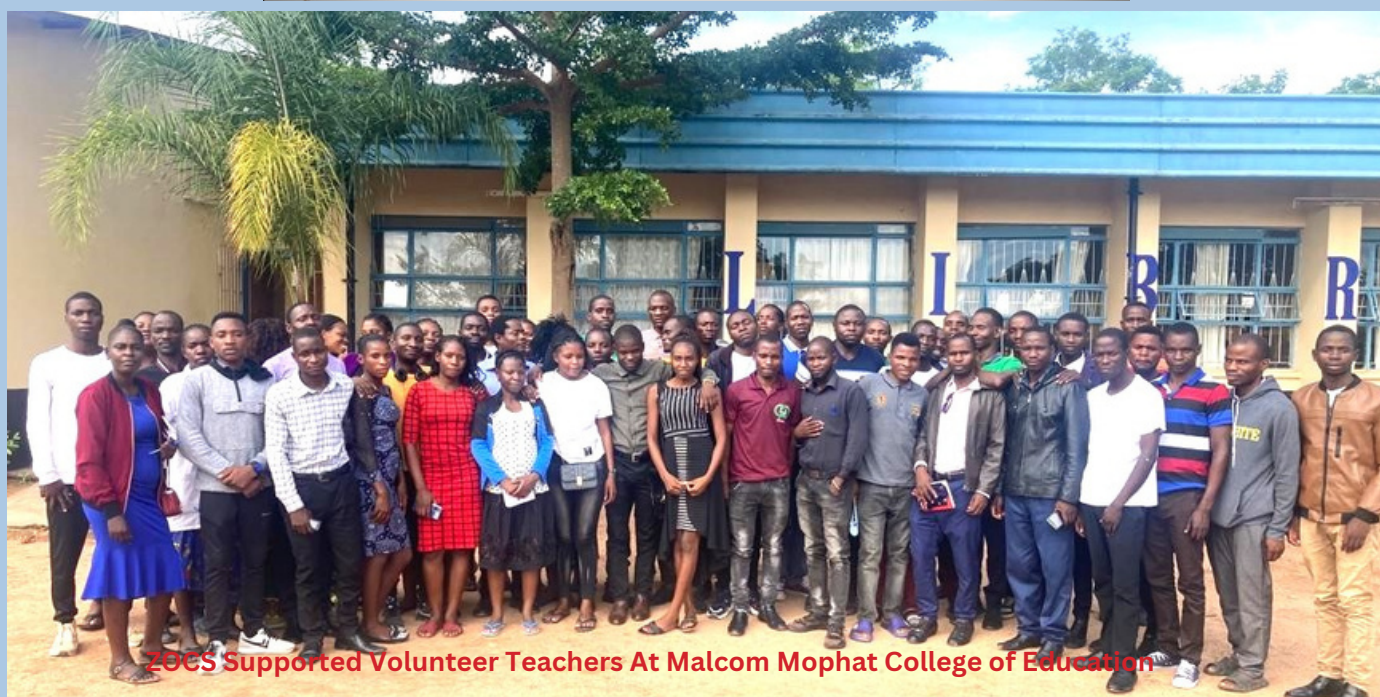
When I was selected to be with among those who would go and study at Malcolm Moffat College of Education, I was excited that even motivated me to work more extra hard and now more than ever and such that we are done with our schools/studies I am positive that I am going to make it and according to my own observations, my teaching skills has improved as compared to some days back before trained as a teacher. And for that I stand openly ready to continue offering quality services in the school and making sure that the vulnerable children they get the best education.

Further more, I just want to thank ZOCS and Donor Hei Verden for all the support. We never lacked your support in terms of transport, smart phones, accommodation, and the school fees were paid in full since the year we started the programme. And also I want to thank the college for really doing their best. They went on extra miles just to making sure that we grab everything that we needed so that as we go back to our respective schools, we could go and offer nothing but quality services to the vulnerable children.

Lastly, we just want to appeal to our government that during the recruitment they consider us on the government pay role because already we have the qualifications and we are always ~~are~~ dedicated to our work.

Thank you,

From SABOI NAMITONDO
A Volunteer Teacher at Chainda Open Community schools.
(Signature)



ZOCS Supported Volunteer Teachers At Malcom Mophat College of Education

Empowering PCSC members with skills in managing the school, as well as how best to mobilise resources for sustenance remains key in the operations of Community Schools. To that effect, 32 PCSC members (26 male, 6 female) from the 20 project schools in Sesheke district were trained in School Management, Governance and entrepreneurship skills.

The training was provided by DEBS office (DRCC), the office of the District Agricultural Coordinator (DACO) and ZOCS.



Participants during the PCSC training in Sesheke

TRAINING OF PCSC MEMBERS IN RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

In order to enhance sustainability and retention of volunteer ECE teachers in Cohort 4 Schools, PCSC Committees on the Copperbelt (Lufwanyama, Masaiti, Mpongwe), Southern province (Mazabuka and Chikankata) and Central province (Serenje and Mkushi) were trained in entrepreneurship, mindset change, financial management and income generation activities (IGAs) and record keeping.

The skills and competencies to which the PCSC members were exposed to would help them mobilize resources required to actualize activities on the ECE development plans thereby making their schools self-sustaining. The training targeted PCSC chairpersons and head teachers.

Category	Male	Female	Total
Head Teacher	114	66	180
PCSC Chairpersons	108	72	180
Total	222	138	360



LAUNCHING OF THE SRI ON THE COPPERBELT



The School Readiness Initiative (SRI) entered its Cohort four of implementation spreading its wings to the Copperbelt province. This comes after years of implementation in Southern and central provinces ensuring that children aged three to six received the much-needed learning as part of the preparation to enroll formally in Grade one.

An engagement meeting was held in Ndola aimed at orienting stakeholders on how the launched School Readiness Initiative project was going to work on the Copperbelt region. The Provincial Stakeholder Engagement Meeting was convened successfully with the presence of all the invited officials, demonstrating a high level of commitment from the stakeholders involved.

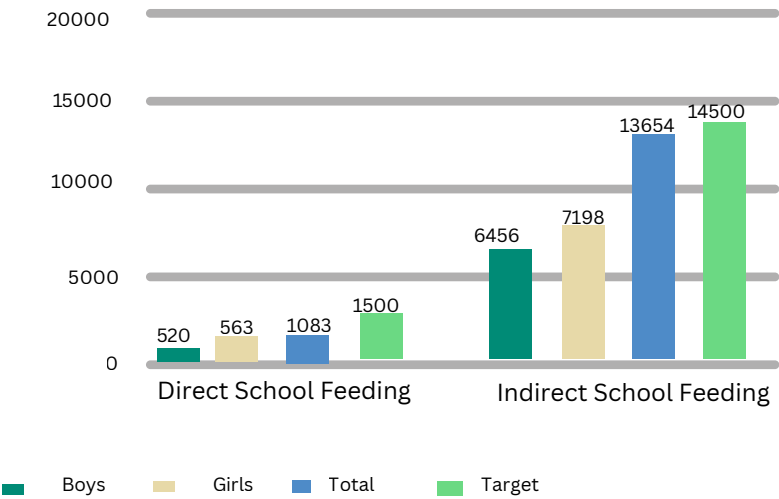
The project focus remained the construction of round huts for ECE, training for teachers using digital platforms (tablets), community engagement on early childhood education etc.

ZOCS emphasized the significance of building strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education, especially at the initial stage of the project. This emphasis on collaboration and synergy between ZOCS and the Ministry of Education is expected to pave the way for the project's success.

SCHOOL FEEDING

The School Feeding Programme in schools has shown to have a positive impact on education outcomes. Having higher rates of zero absenteeism than schools without the programme being implemented is one of the observations our team made.

Home-grown vs Direct School Feeding



PROMOTING EDUCATION THROUGH BURSARY PROVISION

Education is a fundamental aspect of human development and has been recognized as a critical tool for overcoming socioeconomic disparities. However, learners from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds need help accessing quality education due to financial constraints.

Bursaries have become an essential means of providing financial assistance to these learners, enabling them to access secondary school education.

Our bursary programme is designed to provide boarding school fees, school requisites (study materials, shoes, uniforms, sanitary towels for girls as well as academic and psychosocial counselling) to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have the resources to pay for their education.

Bursary support- investing in human capital

In order to have a holistic way to support girls on our bursary scheme, we focus on four dimensions which are (i) the girl as an individual (ii) the home (iii) the community and (iv) the school.

(i) Girls need to show interest in their own education and pledge to work hard in school. The ZOCS engagement with girls helps them realize that personal development was anchored on the willing by an individual to change their current circumstances.

(ii) The household where the learner comes from is an important factor to consider. ZOCS engages the parents and guardians on the need to support the girls to attend school and also check how they are progressing. A supportive home environment empowers girls / learners and motivates them to stay and focus on their education.

(iii) The community is critical as a hub for traditions and norms that shape the life of learners especially girls. ZOCS thrives on the willingness and mindset shift of communities to deal with tightly neat gender inequality that keep learners especially girls out of school. Through our continuous community engagement interventions, we try to fix a broken system that systematically disadvantages and disempowers girls and women. The Community Action Groups (CAGs) have been the real heroes focusing on changing the gender inequality and ensure girls are supported and enjoy their right to education.



(iv) ZOCS works at strengthening school capacity to guide, mentor and coach girls on the importance of education. While working with the Ministry of Education, ZOCS ensure that schools are made into centers of care and support. Deliberate focus has been on encouraging girls to undertake STEM seriously.

ZOCS COMMEMORATES INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 2023

ZOCS participated in the International Literacy Day commemoration 2023 held in Mongu district, Western province. Held under the theme 'Promoting Literacy for a World in Transition: Building the foundation for sustainable and peaceful societies.'

Ministry of Education Permanent Secretary Mr. Joel Kamoko represented by Dr. Beatrice Botha had the following points to share on the day.

- Zambia being a signatory to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), joins the rest of the global community to celebrate this important day
- Gathered here to demonstrate our commitment to the attainment of universal human rights. As we may know, education is a right which upholds human dignity. This day, therefore, signifies the resolve by Government under the UPND leadership working through the Ministry of Education, on the importance of literacy for the citizens.
- Education is a catalyst for personal and national development which ultimately contributes to the well-being of everyone. It is with this in mind that, we must all work together in order to achieve the set standards and desired goals on education.
- Historically, Zambia has made great strides in improving literacy levels among the youth and adults in the country. Currently, there are more than 2,355 literacy centres in the country, while enrolment figures are 58,645 of which, 16,016 are male and 42,629 are female.
- The statistics reveal that a bigger proportion of learners are women. The gender disparity could be attributed to various factors which are being handled at implementation and policy levels.
- The theme states the need to build the education foundation which responds to the world in transition. Literacy remains the bedrock for sustainable and peaceful societies as it inculcates values and principles which promote harmony and national development. The world is truly in transition as witnessed through climate change; technological proliferation; smart agriculture, health education, among many issues. The theme resonates well with government's efforts in the education sector.



Zambia's Educational Bedrock: A Focus on Foundational Learning

In the vast expanse of Africa, where diversity thrives, lies a shared aspiration: Education for all. Zambia, nestled in the heart of southern Africa, grapples with the dual challenge of illiteracy and limited access to quality education. But within this challenge lies immense potential—the potential to transform lives and communities through crafting a New Africa by Rethinking Foundational Learning.

In Lusaka, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) convened its annual High-Level Policy Dialogue Forum (HLPDF) on Foundational Learning. The 2023 ADEA conference, symbolised by the dawn breaking through a baobab tree brought together educators, policymakers, and visionaries to reimagine education's very roots.

ZOCS promotion of Foundational learning in Community schools

In the heart of vulnerable communities, community schools serve as beacons of hope. These schools not only impart knowledge but also provide holistic support to learners and their families. Over the years, ZOCS has collaborated with Community Schools by remaining a catalyst for change and amplifying the impact of foundational learning. Below are some of the ways through which the organisation uplifts vulnerable communities.

- Accelerated learning through the SPARK manual
- Active Parental and community engagement.
 - Home Visits.
 - After-School Programs through the Bridge to School Cards.
- Library Resources: Collaborate with libraries to provide access to books, e-resources, and reading programs. A curious mind thrives in a well-stocked library.
- Capacity Building: Provide training to school staff on evidence-based practices. Strengthen leadership skills and strategic planning.
- Advocacy and policy alignment
- Technology integration
- Teacher training and Support
- Assessment and Adaptation

Foundational learning isn't merely a stepping stone; it's the compass guiding learners toward a brighter future. As educators, policymakers, and advocates, let us continue to champion foundational learning, ensuring that every child receives the essential tools to build their educational journey. Together, we can construct a world where knowledge knows no bounds and opportunities abound.



Reaching the vulnerable by working from the heart A case of John & Jenny Preston

2023



John and Jenny Preston are a loving couple from Australia. They work hard to support Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Zambia through Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS). John and Jenny Preston are a loving couple from Australia. They work hard to support Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Zambia through Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS).

Zambia Inc.(KZ) have for 28 years shared in the provision of practical and financial support for the projects in Zambia.

The focus has always been on developing Community Schools in Zambia including Schools of Excellence at Mungule, Gamela, Kalumbila, the UCZ Bissell Farm School, and Kalalasaka located in Choma through the provision of infrastructure (classrooms and teacher's housing), water provision, solar power, provision of clothing, school books, library books, carpentry tools, sewing machines, dressmaking materials and computers and hammermills. Also initiating and funding the goat program for disadvantaged families in the southern province.

In addition, the couple working with UCZ Chodort Training Centre in Choma-Southern province trained youths in skills and continue to provide bursaries for students to the Zambian learners with a Community School background needing support to complete their secondary school education. Teacher training for volunteer teachers is another area KZ has taken care of with the targeted teachers getting a qualification of a Diploma in Primary Education.

This charity has always had a special interest in children with disabilities providing second hand spectacles to ZOCS and hundreds of second hand and new solar powered hearing aids for students through the Zambia National Association of the Hearing Impaired.

Kondanani Zambia was chosen as the name for the Australian Charity by Rev Deacon Jenny and Mr John Preston to represent their commitment to the children who are Disabled, Orphaned and Vulnerable in Zambia, and to honour John's parents, the late Margery and Norman Preston.

In 1992, the late ZOCS Executive Director Mrs. Harriet Sianjibu-Miyato, then Program Co-ordinator, met the Prestons in Melbourne where she had gone to pursue her Masters Course in Health Education at Deakin University, Burwood Campus, where she graduated in 1994. Settling in to Melbourne, Mrs Miyato met the Prestons at the Uniting Church. Harriet became their inspiration and mentor to support orphaned and vulnerable children in Zambia.

'When Harriet was appointed as program Co-ordinator and later the CEO of ZOCS we agreed to help ZOCS to implement Harriet's vision for Community Schools. When Solar Aid in the UK was considering providing solar power to community schools, we went to London to lobby for them to provide solar systems to ZOCS Community Schools, this proved to be helpful to ZOCS to receive solar systems at a number of schools and numerous solar lamps for students with our funding support', narrated John.

He added, "We were able to send four shipping containers of donated goods for ZOCS to distribute and we funded the conversion of two containers by Chodort Training Centre, one as a library and the other a health centre which were sent to Kalalasaka".

Jenny and John were able to visit Zambia on a number of occasions and through the visits, Harriet arranged, we were able to help fund a number of schools with buildings, houses and income generating projects like providing a hammermill. Our son Mark raised the idea that we setup and fund the goat project starting at Kalalasaka which proved to be a great success. Then followed several pig projects and even a fish project.

The couple says they have made many friends in Zambia and they remain committed to support Harriet's vision. They added, "We were regular visitors to meet with Michael Kelly SJ in Lusaka and he agreed that we could use his words to form Kondanani Zambia's Mission Statement: - "To ensure that every child, especially those disadvantaged in any way, can actualize their right and experience what it means to be a human being fully alive".

Kondanani Zambia is committed to continue to support projects and programs in Zambia.

“We are indeed grateful to our all-weather friends the Prestons for their faithfulness, dedication and consistency in supporting our cause”- ZOCS Executive Director Mrs. Cleopatra Muma.

WATER IS LIFE- ZOCS SINKS BOREHOLES

Access to clean, and sustainable source of clean water remains priority for ZOCS and Community Schools across Zambia. Now more than ever when the country experienced COVID 19, sanitation and clean water is cardinal in preventing any waterborne diseases.

Four Community Schools in Sesheke and Nkeyema were some of the 2023 beneficiaries of water provision through the sinking of boreholes. The aim was to ensure a conducive learning environment in schools grappling with poor infrastructure, including a lack of clean drinking water.

Clean water access further promotes learners and community health thus boreholes were drilled at these schools. To ensure sustainability of the boreholes, two members of the community (PCSCs) were entrusted to take full responsibilities of the borehole management. Other PCSC members were also trained in undertaking basic repairs.

Little hands, big heart

Meet Addie. She is a fifth-grade girl who has taught us the important lesson about “you are never too small to make a difference in another person’s life.”

Her story impacted many including ZOCS staff who have worked with Orphans and Vulnerable Children for a considerable number of years.

It all started when young Addie’s class read the book "A Long Walk to Water" based on the journey of one of the lost boys of Sudan. It's an excellent book that concludes with a project that supplies boreholes to South Sudan.

After reading the book, little Addie wondered if there was a need for a borehole at any of the Community Schools in Zambia. That being the case, she immediately lobbied for support from her teacher, classmates and family to embark on a fundraising venture whose proceeds would be channelled towards drilling a borehole at Chikanza Community School located 47 kilometres east of Choma district-Zambia. Addie’s grandparents whose philanthropic work with ZOCS dates as far back as 2006, had an opportunity to visit Chikanza in mid-2023.

As of December 2023, Addie managed to raise K75 000 for the project and the 257 learners of Chikanza Community School no longer have to cover over 10 kilometres to the nearest safe water source.

For years, learners at Chikanza were subjected to carrying their own water (in small bottles) to school and for those who did not, they had to drink from the shallow wells which were usually far, not clean and served as water holes for cattle in the area.

Be like Addie, do something for the Vulnerable Children in Community Schools. Their needs include among others, infrastructure development, safe water provision, textbooks and pens/pencils, shoes, and clothes.

You may reach us at +260253841 and +260253843 or email address infor@zocs.org.zm





This is the structure that is currently being used as a boys' boarding facility at Kalobolelwa Secondary School



This is the structure that is currently being used as a girls' boarding facility at Kalobolelwa Secondary School

Children of remote and rural areas have benefited from education in boarding schools. Boarding schools have enhanced children's educational foundation and in the case of Zambia, boarding facilities are a long school tradition at the secondary level.

The distance from village communities to secondary schools continues to make secondary education inaccessible to many children. As a result, many children drop out of school after the primary level. In this context, boarding schools play a key role in providing secondary education especially for the vulnerable children.

In the case of Western Province where ZOCS is implementing the Education Action for Marginalised Children project that supports 400 vulnerable children with bursary, the majority of learners build pole and mud structures for shelter and prepare meals for themselves using food stuffs collected during weekend home visits. The accommodation conditions were not conducive. Looking at the project implementation districts, Mulobezi and Nkeyema had no boarding schools while Sesheke had one and Mongu had four. According to the Education Statistics Bulletin 2022, Western province had the lowest number (79) of Secondary Schools in Zambia compared to other provinces.

The above situation demands that an urgent response be in place especially that Government last year introduced the Free Education Policy. Once established, well managed and operated, like elsewhere, boarding schools, can/will yield benefits for learners, parents and educators. Furthermore, hostels will most likely allow girls from remote and rural areas of the country, where opportunity for obtaining secondary education does not exist, a chance to get an education. The facilities will equally allow for learners to have decent meals (a comparable diet than at home).

Given the aforementioned, there is an urgent need to do the following.

- Through CDF, construct boarding facilities to promote access to schooling. The primary goal of boarding schools is to increase access to learning opportunities of children from underserved and disadvantaged communities.
- Boarding facilities will complement and enhance Government's Free Education Policy by allowing children access education where distance is a barrier.

After



After ZOCS presented the policy brief to the Ministry of Education highlighting the urgent need for hostels for both girls and boys, construction began two months later. The hostels will be commissioned early next year!

Community Engagement

Community Sensitization and Mobilization meetings were held aimed at enhancing school readiness for young children. The initiative focused on community engagement and awareness-building efforts in seven target areas: Mazabuka, Chikankata, Serenje, Mkushi, Masaiti, Mpongwe, and Lufwanyama. By fostering community involvement and raising awareness, the project sought to create a foundation for sustainable support and active participation in the initiative.

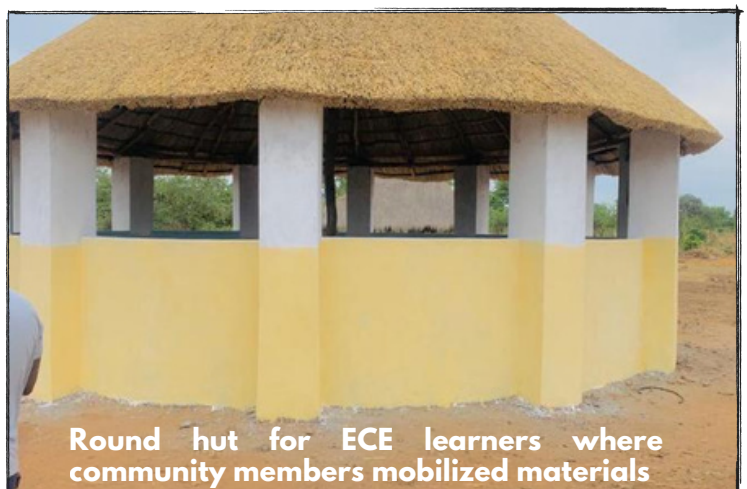
The primary objective of the project was to conduct Community Sensitization and Mobilization meetings in 180 cohort 4 community schools.

These meetings were strategically designed to raise awareness about the School Readiness Initiative, stimulate community participation, and promote sustainability through community ownership.

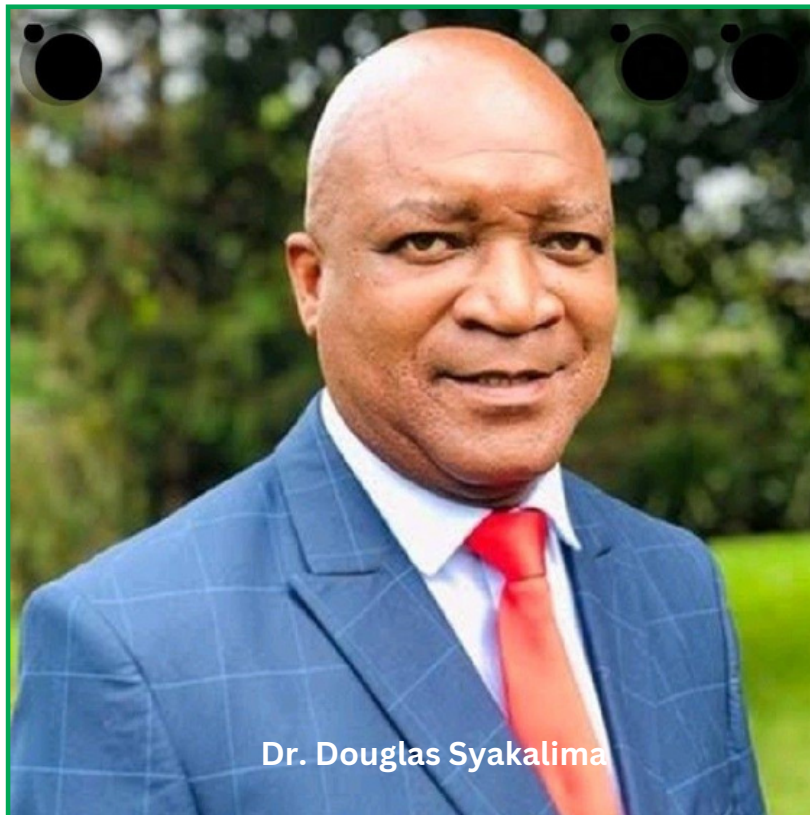


Community members in construction

In the year 2023, the project successfully completed the construction of 150 round huts. These structures serve as essential spaces for fostering early childhood education, embodying the project's commitment to providing an inclusive and conducive learning environment for young learners. The establishment of these low-cost round huts reflects the project's proactive approach in addressing the infrastructural needs of Early Childhood Education, thereby contributing to the overall enhancement of educational accessibility and quality.



MINISTER DRUMS UP SUPPORT FOR TEN THOUSAND-BOOK CAMPAIGN



Dr. Douglas Syakalima

Education Minister Dr. Douglas Syakalima this year backed the ZOCS 'Donate A Book' campaign and through a video made an appeal to Zambians to support the noble cause.

'Education policy has attracted so many children into school and we want to add value to what ZOCS is doing. We call upon all Zambians and well-wishers to support ZOCS in this campaign,' appealed the minister.

In support of Government's Free Education Policy, ZOCS embarked on 'Donate A Book' campaign aimed at collecting exercise books for vulnerable children understanding that while education is free, school requisites are not.

In 2022, ZOCS collected 30, 000 exercise books that were donated to vulnerable children in Community Schools. This year, the Donate A Book drive is targeting 100 000 exercise books however, any other school requisites can equally be donated.

This campaign is aimed at addressing some of the gaps that have been noted since the introduction of the Free Education Policy where many learners attend classes but do not have school supplies.

Corporate partners in book campaign

Pick n Pay



Pearson

DIFFERENT CONSTRUCTION WORKS

Twalubuka Community School in Ndola District. Thank you Airtel Zambia for your support



Agape Community School in Nkeyema.
Thank you CDF



Makabi Community School in Serenje that you to
community members



RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- **Donate A Book to that child**



Following the success of the 2022 Donate a Book Campaign, ZOCS relaunched this activity and dubbed it under the name 'Mpo ya Bupilo' (a gift for life). The aim was to ensure that every child had the needed school requisites to be successful on their education journey.

Working with Pick n Pay as collection points for donations, the target for book collection in 2023 was 100,000, 20,000 pens and pencils, 2,000 textbooks, and 2,000 reading books (fun books). Collection is still ongoing and will close in August, 2024.

The 'Donate A Book' Campaign, which was initiated in 2022 in support of the Government's Free Education Policy, aimed at collecting exercise books for vulnerable children premised on the fact that while education was free, school requisites were not. Through the Donate a Book Campaign, ZOCS mobilized 30,000 exercise books in 2022 with support from the private sector and individuals. The books were donated to vulnerable children in Community Schools.

- **Text Book Distribution to Wusakile Secondary School**

ZOCS, in partnership with Cummins, submitted a proposal to Global Giving aimed at enhancing the teaching and learning environment at Wusakile Secondary School in Kitwe. With a total budget of \$10,000, the proposal focused on building capacity of teachers of science and providing teaching and learning materials to improve the quality of education for the students. With this funding, ZOCS provide 855 books for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects for senior secondary school learners at Wusakile Secondary School.



- **Partnership with CUMMINS**

Following the finalization of their partnership with ZOCS, Cummins and Global Givings supported the completion of the renovation of five (5) toilets at the girls' dormitory ablution block at St. Charles in Solwezi, North Western Province. The renovation of the toilets into modern flushable toilets improved sanitation and hygiene for girls in the school. ZOCS embarked on rehabilitating the bed-spaces once funding was made available by Global giving. ZOCS embarked on resource mobilization strategies focused on diversifying funding sources and expanding partnerships aimed at increasing the resource envelope for the organization.

- **Global Community Day in Partnership with Citi Bank:**



ZOCS ED and staff during the tree planting exercise at Chartonel at commemoration of Citi Global Community Day

ZOCS joined Citi Bank in the commemoration of the annual Citi Global Community Day which falls under June, 17. The event focused on food security and Chartonel Community School was used to demonstrate what was expected on such a day - a school garden was initiated at the school. Volunteers came together and revitalized an existing garden in the school. They planted new crops, assisted with garden maintenance, taught the school staff and PCSC members about sustainable farming practices, and engaged all attendees in learning activities related to food production and environmental stewardship. The initiative targeted to benefit over 1,000 children across all grades at the school. The surplus harvest was earmarked for sale and proceeds used to purchase needed school materials. Fruit trees and vegetables were planted on a one-hectare piece of land.

- **So Green: For Girls' Education**

ZOCS engaged with SoGreen, a startup with a big heart and an even bigger ambition: provide access to education to the girl child especially in vulnerable communities where the girl child is at risk of missing out on education due to factors such as early child marriages, and child labor.

The pilot project is expected to start in January 2024 where 100 Out of School girls will be targeted and enrolled in school. The project cycle is five years.

AUDITED BOOKS OF ACCOUNTS

ZAMBIA OPEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2023

	NOTES	2023 ZMW	2022 ZMW
ASSETS			
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant & equipment	2.	<u>5,568,787</u>	<u>6,295,456</u>
Current Assets			
Receivables & prepayments	3.	<u>3,861,558</u>	<u>4,310,106</u>
Cash & cash equivalents	4.	<u>19,314,476</u>	<u>21,400,096</u>
		<u>23,176,034</u>	<u>25,710,202</u>
Total Assets		<u><u>28,744,821</u></u>	<u><u>32,005,657</u></u>
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Capital and Reserves			
Accumulated Funds		8,015,427	8,022,967
Revaluation reserves		-	-
Capitalised grants	5.	<u>1,083,068</u>	<u>1,107,866</u>
		<u>9,098,495</u>	<u>9,130,833</u>
Current Liabilities			
Unutilised funds	7.	<u>16,029,023</u>	<u>17,960,378</u>
Payables & accruals	6.	<u>3,617,303</u>	<u>4,914,446</u>
		<u><u>28,744,821</u></u>	<u><u>32,005,657</u></u>

AUDITED BOOKS OF ACCOUNTS

ZAMBIA OPEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME for the year ended 31 December 2023

	NOTES	2023 ZMW	2022 ZMW
Income		37,103,124	42,534,665
Expenditure		<u>(37,110,665)</u>	<u>(40,948,900)</u>
(Deficit)/surplus		(7,540)	1,585,765
Other comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
(Deficit)/surplus for the year		<u>(7,540)</u>	<u>1,585,765</u>

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. Community Action for Out of School (CAOOSC) Endline Evaluation

Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) implemented the Community Action for Out of School from 2018 to 2022. The Community Action for Out of School (CAOOSC) project brought back to school 175,000 out of school children (60% girls, 40% boys) that were out of school.

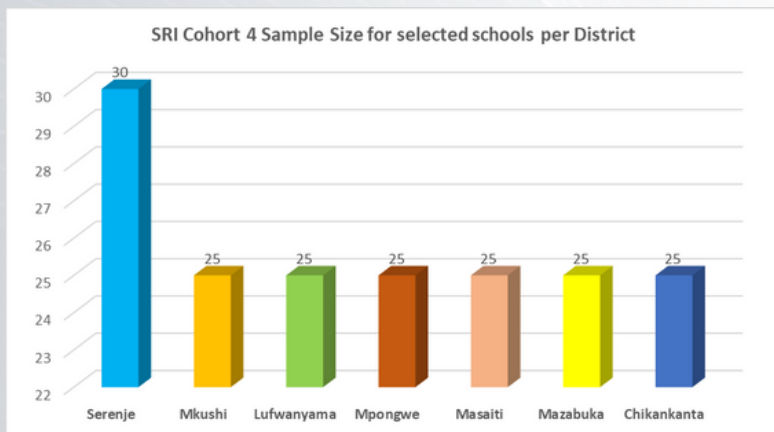
An external consultant was engaged to carry out an endline evaluation to review performance of the project. Below are the findings

CAOOSC - Endline Evaluation	Target	Achieved	% Rate
Number of OOSC enrolled (90,785 boys, 84,299 Girls)	175029	175029	100
Numbers of new community classrooms established	300	300	100
Numbers of Low-cost standard teacher's houses constructed	275	176	64
Number of OOSC with disabilities enrolled	1000	43	144
Increased number of trained teachers deployed to Community Schools.	500	875	175
Number of volunteer teachers trained in basic teaching methodologies	1500	1698	113
Volunteer teachers sponsored to tertiary education	30	30	100
Community Schools supported with school feeding programme during the hunger period to increase learner attendance.	100	170	170
Establish the number of School managers trained in management and entrepreneurship in the target Community Schools.	1000	824	82.4
Number of people sensitized on importance of education (15,600 male, 14,400 female).	35000	30000	86

2. SRI COHORT 4 Baseline Survey

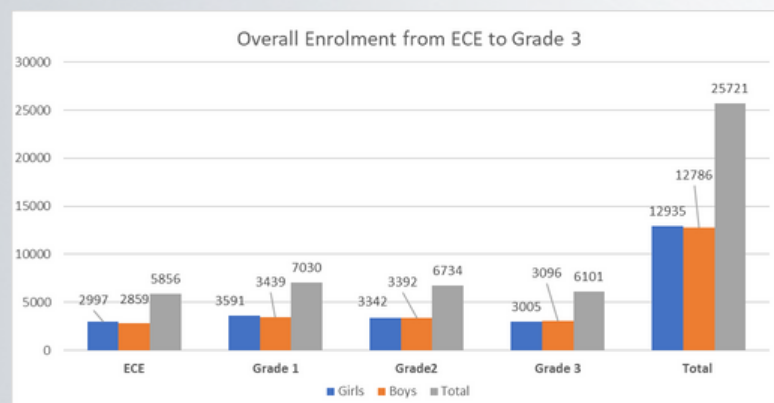
ZOCS undertook a baseline study to determine the current status of indicators and targets under the SRI project for the cohort 4. The baseline survey was to investigate issues affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in the sampled Schools. The baseline information was used as a yard stick for SRI Cohort 4 implementation in Southern, Central and Copperbelt Province for ZOCS.

Factors recorded during the survey included Early Childhood Education (ECE) Enrolment, ECE and Primary teachers highest qualifications, ECE transition, Water access, Sanitation and hygiene practices, Infrastructure, community stakeholder involvement in ECE, Indoor and outdoor ECE playing materials.

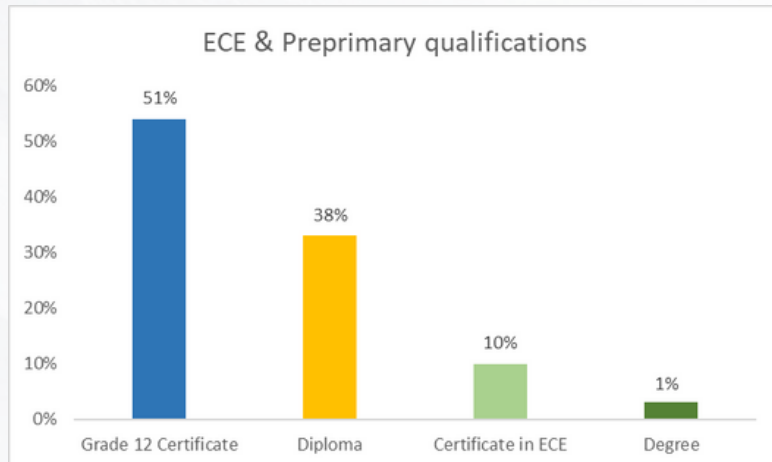


Findings:

Fig 3: Enrolment by Gender



ECE Enrolment was at 5856 (2997 Girls, 2859 Boys) across the sampled districts. It was observed that Girls ECE enrolment were higher at 51% across the districts when compared to boys (49%).



The data indicated that fifty-one (51%) of the sampled schools had volunteer teachers with grade 12 certificates who were teaching ECE learners.

3. FREE EDUCATION POLICY STUDY

ZOCS was privileged to have been one of the local education partners supported by the Embassy of Ireland for a period spanning close to two decades. Since the year 2006, the Embassy of Ireland devoted itself to supporting ZOCS interventions aimed at bringing change in the lives of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). This financial and technical support from the Embassy of Ireland support was directed towards ensuring that OVC in Zambia have access to quality education. With support from the Embassy of Ireland, ZOCS commissioned a study to assess and document challenges and gaps related to the implementation the Free Education policy in Zambia.

Key Findings

The study findings revealed the following.

- FEP brought back into schools out-of-school children, almost 7 in 10 (67%) head teachers indicated having enrolled over 50 of such children back in schools.
- FEP resulted in an overall increase in enrolments in all types of schools
- Shortage of desks because of overcrowding.
- FEP has caused severe pressure on toilets and laboratories. In some schools, over 50 learners were using one toilet.
- There is also an increase in the text-pupil ratio of as high as 1:9 in some schools.
- FEP increased the teacher-pupil ratios with some schools having one teacher teaching over 100 learners in a class.
- Overcrowding affected the teachers' ability to teach effectively (teacher's workload has increased, resulting in poor learner assessments as teachers are not giving enough assessments as required).

4. Monitoring visit

ZOCS management and MEAL Team conducted several monitoring visits to make sure that project activities are implemented the way they are described in the workplan as well as to document lessons learnt for future programming.

Monitoring visit was conducted to Mumbwa, Mazabuka, Kalomo, Zimba, Kazungula, Serenje, Kabwe, Chibombo, Chisamba to check on the status of the ECE centers and playpark under the SRI project. The objectives were to assess the progress made in the construction of ECE Round Huts, play-parks and age-appropriate toilets, assess how teachers were faring in the use of the tablet and all its applications including the progress of Knowhow self-guided course. Assess whether schools are implementing a school development plan which includes the improvement of ECE at School.

Projects effectiveness.

Findings of the Monitoring activity showed that; the projects under the ZOCS program were undoubtedly an important and essential intervention in the schools and communities. It tackled critical issues that hinder children from entering school and remaining in school. The findings indicate that the projects contributed towards resolving the OOSC problem in the districts of implementation.

Projects in the organization were relevant because they sought to address the problem within the context of national policy efforts. Based on findings in the field, the program brought into action efforts from players at national, district and community levels with a view to reduce the number of OOSC.

The bursary support programme identified poor implementation of the re-entry policy, inadequate active community involvement and inadequate of incentives for community members as some of the main challenges. Working together with relevant actors at all levels the programme contributed towards national efforts directed at reduction of OOSC.

Government Commitment to the Programme

FMOE through DEBS were committed to the programme because it was aligned with overall ministry agenda. Against this background, DEBs staff were also part of a joint monitoring team that visited a number of selected districts. To appreciate the project and give feedback about the project in the districts.

A MESSAGE FROM THE HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE



Dear ZOCs Staff,

The Human Resource Office would like to express its gratitude to all of you for all the phenomenal efforts exhibited during the year 2023.

This office is impressed at how well you have managed your work and grown in your years working with us. All the extra hours you put into your job, and your professionalism is seen in the transformed lives of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children ZOCs exists for.

As an organisation, we have always made it a point to make every project we undertake a great success. You have helped achieve our vision, and we hope you will keep going that extra mile for us. Thank you again for all that you do.

Warm Regards,
Human Resource Office & Administration

Our Work in Pictures



MAKE A DONATION

Giving a donation to ZOCS so you help us to reach more children transform their lives for the better. Join your hands with us for a better life and beautiful future.

Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS)

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