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ZAMBIA



# NEWS LETTER



# FOREWORD

from the Resident Coordinator



Welcome to yet another exciting publication of the UN Zambia Newsletter covering the July to September period.

As we strive to respond to the development priorities of the Government and people of Zambia by Delivering as One, this issue will highlight the huge step forward for girls' education and empowerment in Africa through the Education Plus initiative which was launched during the 4th Mid-Year Coordination meeting between RECS and African Union Summit, our GRZ-UNJP phase II partnership which is giving hope to GBV survivors in Kalumbila district.

You will also read about our support to return 6,000 Congolese refugees' home, how we are strengthening SRHR-HIV service provision through cross-border learning and other stories highlighting our support to social protection, climate change, youth, and health.

Look out for our next issue which will highlight the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027, which we intend to launch in partnership with the Government by end of October 2022. The UNSDCF or Cooperation Framework was developed through an inclusive and consultative approach, will define our support to Zambia's development for the next five years.

Thank you and happy reading.

**Beatrice Mutali**  
**UN Resident Coordinator**

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# President Hichilema Shares Education Commitments at the Transforming Education Summit



Zambia's President Mr. Hakainde Hichilema addressed the 'Transforming Education Summit' at the United Nations on 19 September 2022 with a call for the need to elevate education to the top of the global agenda and shared the steps Zambia has taken to make education free and accessible to all.

Speaking at the 'Leaders' Roundtable' event, President Hichilema said that an educated population was essential for economic development. He noted that young people

should be kept in school and supported to develop their skills in any areas where they showed talent.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia is currently providing training to over 3,200 teachers in digital literacy and has recruited over 30,000 new teachers this year. The three-day Transforming Education Summit concluded with record national commitments, and follow ups expected. At the closing event, the UN Secretary-General's Vision Statement was unveiled.

The Vision Statement is the Secretary-General's call for action on four fronts: Ensuring a learning environment that supports the development of all learners; enabling teachers to transform themselves and become agents of change; harnessing the digital revolution for the benefit of public education through universal access to broadband connectivity; and investing more equitably, and more efficiently in education. It will also inform the SDG Summit (UNGA 2023) and the Summit of the Future (UNGA 2024).



# African leaders launch the Education Plus initiative

– a huge step forward for girls’ education and empowerment in Africa



Leaders meeting at the Africa Union summit in Lusaka, Zambia, have pledged their support for the Education Plus initiative at its continental launch.

The leaders committed to taking action to keep adolescent girls in school, which will dramatically reduce their vulnerability to HIV. Every week, around 4200 adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa acquire HIV. In 2020, six in seven adolescents aged between 15–19 years old acquiring HIV in the region were girls. More than 23000 young women died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2020, making it the second leading cause of death among women aged 15–29 after maternal mortality in sub-Saharan Africa.

Keeping girls in secondary school and providing them with life skills, training and employment opportunities is key to ending the AIDS pandemic in Africa. Research shows that ensuring that girls complete secondary education reduces their risk of acquiring HIV by up to half, and that combining this with a package of services and rights for girls’ empowerment reduces their risk further still. Education Plus calls for free and quality secondary education for all girls and boys in sub-Saharan Africa by 2025; universal access to comprehensive sexuality education; fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights; freedom from gender-based and sexual violence; school-to-work transitions, and economic security and empowerment.

“My government has committed to the provision of free primary and secondary education for all,” said President Hakainde

Hichilema of Zambia, who hosted the summit. “Education is the greatest equalizer and with appropriate education, everyone is given an opportunity to explore their full potential and be able to participate in the development process. Access to education empowers both girls and boys as it enhances their ability to access decent jobs and other means of production thus alleviating poverty.” The President of Senegal and current chair of the African Union, Macky Sall, launched the initiative flanked by three other presidents and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat.

“It is my pleasure to join you on the occasion of the ceremony to launch the continental “Education Plus Initiative” under the leadership of the Organisation of African First Ladies (OAFSLAD) in support of children and young girls in particular,” said President Sall. “There is a need for action to promote women’s rights and autonomy, to fight against the discrimination and violence which girls and women face. We must address gender inequality at all stages of life. At the continental level, AU Member States are committed to accelerating the implementation of gender-specific economic, social, and legal measures aimed at combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic by adopting various policy and legal frameworks including the Maputo Protocol.”

The launch was held in partnership with the Organisation of African First Ladies for

Development, convened by the First Lady of Zambia, Mutinta Hichilema. “I am confident that Education Plus will enable us all to protect, provide and preserve the lives of adolescent girls and young women by enhancing education standards and preventing new HIV infections by use of various interventions,” said Mrs Hichilema.

“We lend our voice to the transformative call for gender-inclusive education in Africa,” said Leyla Gozo, Executive Secretary of the Organisation of African First Ladies for Development, “First Ladies are uniquely positioned to amplify this initiative.”

The Education Plus initiative has taken on even greater urgency as the COVID-19 pandemic pushed millions of girls out of school. Even before the pandemic, almost 34 million adolescent girls aged 12–17 years old in the sub-Saharan Africa region were not in secondary school. Evidence also shows that girls are less likely to restart school once they have dropped out.

Ten African countries – Benin, Cameroon, Eswatini, Gabon, Gambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Uganda – have so far committed to the initiative which is jointly convened by five United Nations agencies, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, and brings together governments, civil society and international partners.

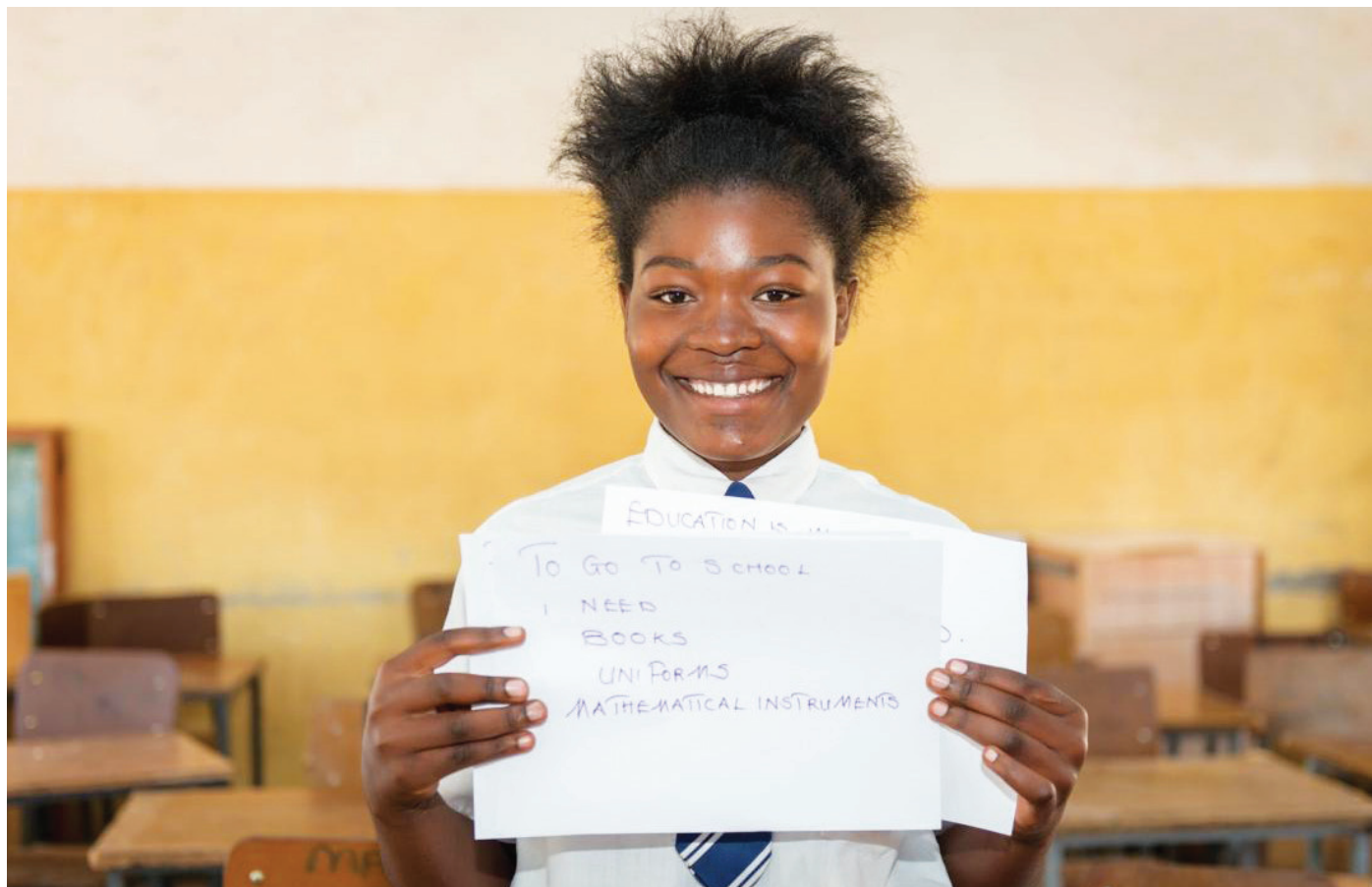
“We are making progress in Africa but not fast enough,” said UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima in her address to the launch. “We need to urgently address the gender inequalities that still plague the continent, with devastating impacts on poor girls and young women. We don’t have a minute to wait. Working together, we can all end discriminatory laws and harmful social norms, so that our girls are healthy, educated and empowered and can lead our continent, Africa, forward.”

Source: **UNAIDS**



# Children raise their voices to transform education in Zambia

## 130 students share insights ahead of global Transforming Education Summit



In the lead up to the Transforming Education Summit (TES) convened by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 19 September in New York, 130 students aged 11 to 21 from different provinces and backgrounds shared their valuable insights on how to ensure quality education for all in Zambia.

Girls and boys from urban and rural secondary schools in six provinces participated in a series of child-friendly consultations in which they discussed the challenges they face in their learning path and proposed solutions to make sure every child in Zambia has access to quality education.

The Transforming Education Summit (TES) has been convened in response to a global crisis in education – one of equity, and inclusion, quality and relevance and will help elevate education to the top of the global political agenda. The

education crisis is having a devastating impact on the future of children and youth worldwide, including Zambia. The progress towards the Education-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4) is badly off track. COVID-19 has interrupted the education of more than 90% of the world's children and for some, especially girls, the break in education might become permanent.

In preparation for the Summit, consultations with key stakeholders and young people have taken place around the world, including in Zambia. These have offered an opportunity for young people to express their concerns and ideas to improve education.

**Learners' voices are key to transform education and they have a clear**

**message: #LetMeLearn**

It is crucial to listen to children and young people's voices when creating education policies to ensure that the policies and practice reflect their needs.

Throughout the consultations, participants shared why education is important to them.

"Education is important because it builds the future of young people and they get to achieve their dreams", said Catherine, a participant in the consultation.

**Children's Dream school**

When students shared their ideas about their dream school, they addressed both challenges and solutions to transform the



education system in Zambia.

"It's wonderful that the Government of Zambia has introduced free education. Thank you, now we can all learn!", shared a learner from Chingola secondary school, while other peers said that this was a great thing, but more support is needed to provide them with uniforms and books.

Participants mentioned that their dream school has educated teachers who want to be teachers. According to them, the quality of teachers plays a major role in learning. "We want teachers who are passionate about their teaching. Because some teachers just teach. We want teachers that teach from their hearts, because we notice the difference," said learners at High Ridge Secondary School.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) was another important topic in the discussions. "Our dream school has safe water and sanitation facilities, because it affects school attendance, especially for girls on

their period. We need safe water, toilets and good hygiene to ensure we are comfortable and able to stay in school to learn," said learners from Naambe Secondary school.

"We need more education resources like the internet, libraries and laboratories, so that we can learn better," said a learner from Kabundi Secondary school.

Others mentioned issues like distance as a key barrier to access education. Our dream school is located close to the community, so the distance is not a hindrance for any children getting an education. "Sometimes the schools are too far away, make them accessible so that we all can learn", said a learner from Kabundi Secondary school.

Our dream school has a cafeteria where everyone get food, to ensure that all children get a meal. "It's difficult for me to learn when I am hungry. Please provide meals for those of us with little or no

food at home", said a learner from Naambe Secondary School.

Our dream school has recreational facilities. "I want a playground where I can play games with my friends", said learners in the consultation.

Our dream school is inclusive for everyone. "I want all children to be able to go to school, including children living with disabilities", learners said.

To ensure that all children can attend and complete their education the participants requested that the community and parents are sensitized about the importance and benefits of children going to school and completing their education.

The learner's insights on gaps and solutions to ensure quality education for all was consolidated in a report which was shared with the Zambian Government Ministry of Education.

# Because everyone counts! Zambia Undertakes 2022 Census of Population and Housing

**18 August, 2022:** The Government of the Republic of Zambia, with support from UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and UNHCR among other partners, undertook the first-ever electronic 2022 Census of Population and Housing, with the first family of President Hakainde Hichilema and first lady Mrs. Mutinta Hichilema being among the first to be counted.

As the lead UN Agency in the area of Population and Development, UNFPA has provided technical and financial support to the Government of Zambia towards the 2022 Census undertaking. This includes support towards the mapping exercise and other Census processes, as well as procurement of equipment such as bicycles, motorbikes, tablets and printers, among others.

More than just a head count, the Census remains a key source of data for the country as it informs decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and resource allocation at national and sub-



national levels. The data collected also plays a prominent role in providing the demographic surveillance necessary for monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which place the highest priority on leaving no one behind and serving the furthest behind first.

"UNFPA and the UN family in Zambia acknowledges the commitment by the Government of the Republic of Zambia for undertaking this significant exercise, which is key for national development. UNFPA remains committed to supporting the 2022 Census undertaking and other post-enumeration processes" highlighted Ms. Gift Malunga, UNFPA Representative.



# Nearly 6,000 Congolese refugees return home from Zambia

**U**NHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, with the governments of Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has helped nearly 9,442 Congolese refugees, comprising 2,545 families, to return home since the second phase of the voluntary repatriation movements started on 18 July 2022.

The refugees fled political and inter-ethnic clashes in the DRC's south-east region in 2017 and found safety in Zambia.

They have expressed excitement and joy at returning home and look forward to reuniting with family and friends and starting their lives anew.

Refugees have been issued voluntary repatriation documents and have received expedited immigration clearance, health screening, security, food and water prior to returning.

Children account for nearly 60 per cent of the refugees.

Children born in Zambia were issued birth certificates as proof of their identity. The Ministry of Education issued transfer documents to schoolchildren, enabling them to continue their education in the DRC.

Those with special needs are being supported by caregivers from Zambia's Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, to ensure they travel in safety and dignity.

Voluntary repatriation of refugees from Mantapala settlement in Luapula province to Pweto in Haut-Katanga province in DRC began in December 2021. The refugees have been transported on buses in weekly convoys of approximately 600 people to the Lunkinda border post. While parts of the country remain highly insecure, other regions like Haut-Katanga have been stable, allowing for the



returns.

More than 11,000 Congolese refugees are registered to go back to DRC by the end of 2022 following the declaration of improved security in some areas of Haut-Katanga province.

At a UNHCR transit centre in Pweto (DRC), where the returnees are accommodated for two days, Congolese authorities issue documentation including birth certificates for newborn babies and school certificates to allow them to quickly integrate and access services.

UNHCR's health partner also conducts medical screening and cases with special needs receive basic treatment.

Returnees also receive cash assistance to help cover basic expenses upon arrival home.

This covers transportation to their destination, hygiene and household items, and initial rent assistance. Based on family size, a month's supply of pulses, maize meal, oil and salt is also given to returnees.

Additional reintegration assistance, such as helping children in enrolling in school, is also provided. UNHCR will continue to advocate with the Government of the DRC and traditional authorities, who are critical partners in their reintegration, for the

enrollment of children in schools, security, access to employment and provision of key civil documentation.

The voluntary repatriation of Congolese refugees is conducted on the basis of the tripartite agreement signed in 2006 by UNHCR and the Governments of Zambia and the DRC.

Over 18,000 Congolese have lived in Mantapala settlement where they acquired livelihood skills including farming, carpentry and artisan crafts.

According to a country-wide verification exercise, Zambia hosts 95,677 refugees, asylum seekers and former refugees. These include 60,236 from DRC. Nearly a million Congolese refugees are still hosted in neighbouring countries.

Millions of refugees dream of going home in safety and dignity. Voluntary repatriation requires a full commitment by the country of origin to help reintegrate its own people and the continuing support of the international community.

UNHCR's financial requirement for Zambia this year is US\$244 million. As of 31 October 2022, however, the operations have been only 38 per cent funded.



# Innovation key to Africa's food security



From 17-20 July 2022, Zambia hosted the fourth African Union (AU) Mid-Year Coordination Meeting, which was also attended by WFP Southern Africa Regional Director (RD), Dr. Menghestab Haile. The meeting was held under the theme “Building Resilience in Nutrition on the African Continent: Accelerate the Human Capital, Social and Economic Development”.

On the side-lines of the meeting, Dr Haile toured Woodlands B Primary School in Lusaka, Zambia, to appreciate the impact of the WFP-supported hydroponics school garden on both the school and surrounding communities. During the last day of the

meeting, the RD interacted with local media as he reflected on the theme, raising concern about the effects of climate change on the sustainability of agriculture production.

Asked whether Africa was ready to

avert the looming global food crisis, the RD observed that for the continent to be food-secure, it needed to adopt farming methods that maximise productivity while protecting the environment. He, therefore, challenged players in the agriculture sector to promote innovative methods of farming.

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***“Our current food systems as a continent are not sustainable. Why do I say so? Because our production system is heavily based on smallholder farmers, depends on rain-fed agriculture, [and] traditional tools,” he observed.***

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# Zambians in the diaspora urged to stay away from all forms of extremism



The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is implementing programmes aimed at preventing violent extremism with a focus on identifying and proactively addressing context-specific drivers, risk factors and individual incentives for radicalization and joining violent extremist groups.

Working at institutional, community and individual levels, IOM takes a whole-of-society approach to understanding and addressing underlying vulnerabilities and building community and individual resiliency, especially among the youth.

With Zambia's Diaspora community growing, the need to prevent extremism and other vices cannot be overemphasized as was re-echoed by the Republican President during the opening of the Zambia Diaspora Conference held from

6 - 8 July 2022 in Livingstone, Southern Province.

Speaking during the conference dubbed, "Zambian Diaspora Conference: Shifting Mindsets to Ignite Growth," President Hakainde Hichilema called on Zambians to stay away from groups that are involved in extremism, human trafficking, and other vices.

He said the country cannot develop if Zambian Nationals involved themselves in extremism.

"The fabric of a Zambian is not one that is involved in extremism" he added further.

The President reminded delegates

at the conference of the challenges neighbouring Mozambique is facing due to extremism.

"Do not fund groups that are destabilizing countries because we don't want the issues that are going on in other countries to come to Zambia" he added.

President Hichilema further applauded IOM's remarks for the technical support on diaspora engagement.

IOM supported the organizing of the Zambia Diaspora Conference and participated in plenary sessions on Unpacking the Zambia Diaspora Policy & Perspectives on successes, challenges, and best practices for diaspora engagement and management.



# Single Windows Initiative impacting Livelihoods in Mongu



Life was not easy for Imasiku Mubiana after her husband left her in 2015. As a middle-aged woman who relied on her husband for financial provision, Imasiku had no choice but to take up her role in fending for the family.

"My husband left me with 5 children and 3 nephews, my only option was to raise money by working in people's fields in order to put food on our table", she expressed. "I didn't have any capital to start a business so I would walk long distances seeking opportunities to cultivate someone's land," she added.

Imasiku felt like her life was shattered when she realised her husband was never returning. She sought after any opportunity to earn money, but at times she hardly had any money to buy food for her family. "I was a full-time housewife in my marriage, my husband didn't allow me to take on any income-generating activity," she explained.

In 2017, she was identified by Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) and enrolled on the Social Cash Transfer Programme which aimed at providing cash payments to vulnerable families to reduce extreme poverty. "I was happy to receive the cash support from the government. However, it was not enough to sustain our household," said 40 years old Imasiku.

Through the cash transfer programme and working the fields, Imasiku was able to pay for rent as well as provide at least one meal a day for 8 members of her household. As time went by, Imasiku realised that her children started to get sickly due to inadequate food.

"My deepest desire was to start a business

that could yield profits so I could build a small home, take my children to school and provide well-balanced meals for my family," she shared. "It pained me to see my children suffer every day and I could hardly do anything," she added. One summer afternoon in 2019, our community leader called for a meeting that was being organized by local district officers from various ministries. The sensitization meeting shared information on the Single Windows Initiative which was an access point that introduced me to various social protection programmes", said Imasiku from Namushakende in Mongu district.

"We no longer have to walk long distances for hours to access information on various social protection services. District officers, use access points, such as schools or clinics in our villages/wards to sensitize communities as well as enrol eligible people on programmes", Imasiku narrated.

Through the single windows access point, Imasiku was able to get information and get enrolled on the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) programme that aims to help households overcome malnutrition and stunting. "I received 3 goats; 1 male and 2 females", she shared.

Later on, Imasiku was enrolled as a member of the Pulukelo Village Bank that was provided with money through the Single Windows Initiative entry point. Each member received a K2,000 loan to get kickstarted with a small business. "I used my loan to buy more goats and through breeding and they multiplied to 30 in two years", she added.

Imasiku uses the manure from the goats to grow her garden and sells it to other farmers in her area. "The district officers have taught us on sustainable farming techniques, how to make manure for gardening as well as how to feed my children a healthy diet," she shared. "I now have a vegetable garden which I started two years ago. When my product is ready, I go into the city to sell it at a lucrative price," she added.

The Single Windows Initiative also provides a platform for various ministries as well as CSOs to sensitize, provide information as well as hold capacity building trainings on nutrition, sustainable farming techniques, how to run a business and many more social services to improve the livelihoods of households and communities.

"I am so happy with the programmes I was introduced to. I sold some of my goats and was able to buy a solar panel for electricity in my house," she exclaimed. "It's a dream come true, I can now provide nutritious food for my family and most importantly, my children can now go to school," narrated Imasiku.

The Single Windows Service (SWS) delivery system provides a "one-stop shop" approach in the delivery of social protection programs hosted in district government structures as well as enhancing coordination of social protection service provision through locating social protection services close to the people, empowering local communities and the sub-national administration in the delivery of services, and increase access to information, transparency traceability and case management through efficient management information systems.

The ILO with other cooperating partners are supporting MCDSS in the implementation of the Single Windows Initiative aimed at with participation of other line ministries in the delivery of social protection programmes through the GRZ-UN Joint Programme on Social Protection UNJPSP II (ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP) and the Irish Aid Partnership Programme.



# How One Stop Centres for GBV are securing health and rights for women and girls



## Lina's\* Story

**L**ina\*, an adolescent mother from Mutanda village in Kalumbila District of North Western Province, shares how a One Stop Centre for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within her community helped her claim her rights against sexual and gender-based violence.

"At age 10, I dropped out of 4th grade at school because I was sexually abused and impregnated by a relative who was 10 years older than me. My mother was ready to marry me off to the man so that he can take care of me and the baby, and being very young, I found it very difficult to refuse, even when I knew what she was doing was wrong. However, my situation changed when I participated in a GBV sensitization activity in my village, which encouraged me to reach out to a peer educator who lived near my house. The peer educator linked me with a One Stop Centre for Survivors of GBV in Solwezi District, where I received the help and support I needed" says Lina.

Through the Solwezi-based One Stop Centre for GBV established by the Government of Zambia, and managed by the Young Women Christian Association with support from the United Nations – Government Joint Programme on Gender-Based Violence, Lina

was taken to a safe house for survivors of GBV, where she received counselling, medical and legal support while awaiting legal action for her case of sexual defilement and child marriage.

"I am happy that with support from the One Stop Centre, legal action was taken against the man who abused me, and I was protected from forced child marriage by my mother. I now have a 4-months old baby girl, and looking forward to returning to school. While staying at the shelter, I acquired valuable knowledge and skills. I learnt about my human rights and built my confidence to pursue my dreams. When I grow up, I want to be a nurse, so that I can provide medical support to other girls who may have suffered sexual abuse" Lina highlights.

### Community-driven actions to end GBV

In Zambia, One Stop Centres for GBV have emerged as a key strategy for the protection and empowerment of women and adolescent girls at risk and affected by sexual and gender-based violence. The Centers offer a comprehensive package of services that include psychosocial counselling, paralegal services, occupational therapy, sexual and reproductive health information and

services, as well as the re-integration of GBV survivors into society.

To date, over 30 One Stop Centers have been established country-wide by the Government of the Republic of Zambia, with support from the United Nations – Government Joint Programme on Gender-Based Violence, among other partners.

### Inspiring action for women and girls

Using her past experience and knowledge acquired through the GBV shelter, Lina is now encouraging other girls affected and at risk of sexual and gender-based violence through group discussions organized by peer educators at Kazomba clinic in Solwezi District.

Lina shares a message with her peers: "I would like to encourage other girls who may have experienced sexual abuse. Please don't be afraid to speak up when you are sexually abused or forced into child marriage. Learn about your rights and seek help from other people such as neighbours or community leaders, even if your family is not supporting you. To parents, I urge you to speak to your children about sexual and gender-based violence, so that we know what to do when we are faced with such challenges", Lina concludes.



# Creating Awareness About Sexual and Reproductive Health through Debate



Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights are crucial for young people to holistically develop into future leaders. In Zambia, Higher and Tertiary Education Institutions (HTEIs) house a substantial number of young people. It is noteworthy that young people at this stage of their life are vulnerable to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) related concerns and risks as they navigate new responsibilities, relationships, and experiences. Several students start making their own decisions for the first time in unfamiliar settings. The negative sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes, such as unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortion, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), immediately affect students' well-being and can cause disruptions in educational attainment, career progression and life goals, ultimately restricting the potential of this critical human capital to contribute towards national leadership and development.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is implementing the "Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future Plus" (O3 Plus) project in 12

HTEIs in Zambia with the goal of having young people enjoy improved Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), through sustained declines in new HIV infections, early and unintended pregnancy, and gender-based violence, enabling them to reach their full educational potential. The O3 Plus project is using HTEIs as an entry point to peer-led health promotion. The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes health promotion as the process of enabling people to increase control over, and improve, their health. Health promotion involves more than individual behaviour change, it focuses on social and environmental interventions to address health challenges in our communities.

To ensure that SRH programming is effective, the O3 Plus project is using different methods to reach students. One such method involving the full participation of students is debate. The debate raises awareness of SRHR with student opinions highly expressed through their arguments. Debate further improves students' ability to learn basic

critical thinking and presentation skills. Health promotion debates can train students in rational thought, community and cultural understanding, customs, and manners. Student debate can genuinely involve the students in appropriate learning and encourage students to be profound thinkers. The Copperbelt University held such a debate on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) supported by UNESCO O3 Plus project.

The one-day debate session at The Copperbelt University involved students from different faculties with the objective of broadening the students' understanding of CSE and SRHR. This platform saw four (4) teams participating in the debate with students from as far as Ndola CBU School of Medicine. The first-round sessions debated on the motions "The Ministry of Health has not played a critical role in disseminating information in the fight against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)" and "Indecent dress code is the major driving force of sexual harassment".

The winning teams from this round qualified for the final round session and debated on the motion "Comprehensive Sexuality Education has negatively impacted the cultural beliefs of the nation". While waiting for the final debate session results, one of the female students lamented the lack of quality CSE in some schools and shared:

*"The school that I went to, started out with 60 females in grade 11 and only about 25 females completed grade 12. It was shocking when I learned that the reason my friend's stopped school was because they got pregnant. I was lucky I had the privilege to access CSE and SRH information through my cousins".*

The debate created a platform for sharing lived experiences of the students attending the sessions.



# Promoting climate resilience on World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

**D**rought and desertification have deep and widespread impacts on societies, ecosystems, and economies, and represent one of the greatest threats to sustainable development. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) recently released a report called "Drought in Numbers", which shows how climate change has made droughts more frequent and more severe, even in areas that have previously been unaffected.

Drought and desertification can lead to famine, displacement, and death. It is also extremely costly, with economic losses from agriculture and other sectors. In particular, they are a significant threat to food security and livelihoods, as crops wither and harvests diminish when insufficient water is available.

In Zambia, the Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) is combating drought through the Strengthening Climate Resilience of Agricultural Livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions I and II in Zambia (SCRALA) project, funded by the Government of Zambia and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The project helps 16 particularly climate-vulnerable districts in the country to better cope with climate change threats through sustainable growing techniques and facilitating an improved understanding of climate issues.

"Together with the Government of Zambia, the private sector and other UN agencies, UNDP is working with communities to strengthen climate resilience at grass-root level through climate-smart agricultural practices, alternative livelihoods and commercialization of resilient agricultural products. Thanks to the project, small-scale farmers, particularly



women have better access to improved climate information and are empowered to make critical and informed decisions to better manage climate risks for more profitable, resilient and diversified livelihoods." says Lionel Laurens, the UNDP Resident Representative in Zambia.

By building solar-powered irrigation schemes and boreholes, the project promotes access to water in drought-prone areas and helps farmers manage dry periods. In Chirundu district, farmers have formed a Water Association to manage an irrigation system that is being constructed by the SCRALA project. Upon completion of the Tauya Irrigation scheme, it is expected that farmers would be able to grow a range of horticultural crops and vegetables on 19 hectares of land.

The project also promotes conservation agriculture, a sustainable and drought-resilient way of growing crops. Conservation agriculture encourages many climate-friendly farming techniques, such as low-till farming, rotating crops, adopting drought-tolerant varieties, and using certified seeds. Low-till farming also protects the soil from exposure to wind and water erosion, which in turn slows down the rate of desertification.

In addition to conservation agriculture, the SCRALA project promotes alternative

livelihoods like beekeeping and goat rearing to improve the income of farmers and reduce the need for climate-harmful practices.

Further, having accurate weather and climate information can minimize the impact of adverse weather on crops and boost agricultural production. This increases farmers' resilience to drought and other harmful impacts of climate change.

The SCRALA project supports the development of the Zambia Meteorological Department's capacity to provide weather and agriculture advisories through the provision of 20 Automatic Weather Stations and 300 manual rain gauges. This has strengthened their ability to generate climate information and resulted in an increase of their weather observation network in the project districts.

To fight drought and desertification, strong community involvement and cooperation is key to protecting ecosystems and ensuring food security. The SCRALA project has mobilised Farmer Field Schools, where farmers meet and learn about conservation agriculture through practical demonstrations. These community-led groups are spearheading drought-resilient agriculture, improving their livelihoods in the process.



# GRZ-UNJP phase II gives hope to a GBV Survivor in Kalumbila District



**G**race Mumba is a single parent with two children, and she dropped out of school in Grade Nine in 2014.

After dropping out of school, she was married whilst in the Copperbelt province. However, her marriage did not last long as she was divorced in 2018.

After being divorced, she decided to follow her parents in Kalumbila district of North-Western Province in 2020.

Both her parents are not in formal employment, therefore, their living conditions were not very good.

This made her life to be more complicated as she was now taking care of both her parents and children in terms of feeding and other basic needs.

In 2021, she was fortunate to have been identified and selected by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) Community Development Assistant (CDA) under Manyama Sub-Centre in Kalumbila district as a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) survivor for support with economic empowerment services under the

Government of the Republic of Zambia-United Nations Joint Programme on Gender-Based Violence (GRZ-UNJP-GBV) Phase II project.

The project targeted 27 GBV survivors in Kalumbila district and they were provided with trainings and other capacity development activities using Community Savings Groups (CSG) and GET Ahead for Women Enterprise. The 'Get Ahead for Women in Entrepreneurship' training is the International Labour Organization (ILO) tool for capacity social and economic empowerment.

The ILO has provided trainings and other capacity development activities to 584 conducted 398 economic empowerment trainings among GBV survivors, those at risk and community members in 15 districts across the country.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia and five United Nations Agencies with financial support from Sweden and Ireland are currently implementing the GRZ-United Nations Joint Programme on Gender-Based Violence (GRZ-UNJP-GBV) Phase II. The participating UN Agencies

are: the ILO, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

The joint programme, which runs from 2019 to 2022 is a multi-partner programme designed to reduce the prevalence of GBV in Zambia. The programme builds on and consolidates the gains made in the GRZ-UN Joint Programme Phase I implemented from 2012 to 2017 and the ILO is responsible for the component of economic empowerment to ensure GBV survivors, those at risk and communities are empowered to break the cycle of abuse.

After she underwent the trainings for two weeks together with other GBV survivors those at risk and community members, she was later empowered with a start-up kit of ZMW 2,000 (About USD\$ 125).

She later started her business of selling rice which she buys from Meheba refugee settlement within the district.

She has also ventured into the selling of assorted vegetables and dried fish.

Grace and the other 15 supported beneficiaries later formed a CSG within her community together with other GBV survivors that were trained in CSG and included some other community members in their group.

The Savings Groups has provided an opportunity to access affordable credit. Grace said in future she wants to be a major supplier of rice and poultry products not only in her community but also in the mines as she lives near Lumwana Mine, one of the biggest mines in Zambia.

She said she was empowered with knowledge on Gender Equality and GBV, Community Savings Groups and start-up capital, stating that this has not only enabled her to take her children back to school but also help her parents and siblings in terms of feeding, clothing, and education. With the re-introduction of free education by the Government of Zambia through the Ministry of Education, she has enrolled herself in Grade 9 at Manyama Primary School in Kalumbila district.

After conducting her business in the morning, in the afternoon she goes to attend class. When she completes her Grade 12 Secondary School, Grace would like to pursue nursing as a career.



# Behind the Number – Our World at 8 Billion

An opinion piece by UNFPA Zambia Country Representative Ms. Gift Malunga



**1 August 2022:** We are reaching a critical time in the history of human existence. According to the United Nations, the world will be home to 8 billion by 15 November 2022. We are welcoming each new billionth person at an ever-increasing rate, noting that it has taken only 11 years to add 1 billion people to the planet, since October 2011.

Unquestionably, a world of 8 billion cues a widespread debate about the sustainability of human existence. On one hand, a popular concern by many is that there are too many people chasing too few resources, with unequal access to the resources that exist. It is projected that we would need 70% more food requirements by 2050, to keep up with an

increased demand for food.

Yet this is not necessarily as unsettling as it sounds. The arrival of this milestone - 8 billion people sharing the planet at one time - is also cause for optimism. It is a mark of improvement in medicine and health systems, and a landmark in human survival. But whether we have 8 billion people or 1 trillion, we still have only one planet, which has finite resources.

### Catching them whilst they are young

The addition of 1 billion people within a space of only 11 years reminds us that

we are overwhelmingly a youthful planet. Considering our population will continue to rise for some time, the big question is: how do we secure sustainable development as our population continues to grow beyond 8 billion?

Since the beginning of my career, I have always believed that the answer to that question is remarkably simple – it rests on young people, especially adolescent girls!

In Zambia, current data shows that 82% of the country's population is comprised of young people - which is the population aged below 35. This translates to 10.7 million young people! The next chapter for





Zambia depends on this number.

With the largest population of young people in its history, Zambia has a unique opportunity to reap a “demographic dividend”, which is the economic growth potential that occurs when there are growing numbers of people in the workforce relative to the number of dependents. This means that a country with both increasing numbers of young people and declining fertility has the potential to reap this demographic bonus, provided systematic and holistic investments towards young people’s health, education, employment and empowerment, are available.

**Shifting focus from “numbers” to “possibilities” for adolescent girls**

Whilst Zambia continues to record steady improvements in key development indicators, adolescent girls, sadly, continue to profile among Zambia’s critical development challenges.

Data shows that 1 in 3 girls (29%) become mothers, while practically children themselves, while another 1 in 3 girls (29%) are married by the age of 18 years. Adolescent pregnancy is the only reproductive health indicator that has not improved since the previous Zambia Demographic and Health Survey of 2014.

From an economic perspective, adolescent pregnancy remains one of the key factors driving inter-generational poverty in many developing countries like Zambia, with corresponding impacts on the availability of skilled workforce required to grow an inclusive and strong economy. The lifetime opportunity cost related to adolescent pregnancy,

measured by the mother’s foregone annual income over her lifetime, ranges as high as **30% in developing countries** such as Zambia.

Looking behind the number, 8 billion reveals that adolescent pregnancy cannot be left unchallenged. This brings us to the heart of the issue: how do we as decision-makers at the community and national levels make the right investments in our fast-growing and youthful population, thus ensuring a sustainable future for us all?

The current efforts by the Government,

civil society, community leaders and cooperating partners to scale-up multi-sectoral national responses to adolescent pregnancy are indeed commendable. However, as we welcome the 8 billionth person to the world, it will be increasingly critical to enhancing investments in access to **health, education, skills and employment** opportunities for young people, especially girls.

A combination of policies and interventions that address these critical areas will improve development outcomes for adolescent girls, thereby providing the necessary conditions to harness a demographic dividend, towards a sustainable future for our country, and the planet at large.

There is cause for optimism when adolescent girls are empowered to fulfil their potential. No matter the size of the world population, as leaders and policymakers, we must remain committed to the rights of every individual, especially the girl child.

As highlighted by the UNFPA Executive Director, Dr Natalia Kanem, in her message for the 2022 World Population Day: “People are the solution, not the problem. Numbers matter, but let’s count carefully. A resilient world of 8 billion, a world that upholds individual rights and choices, offers infinite possibilities - possibilities for people, societies and our shared planet to thrive and prosper”.





# Strengthening SRHR-HIV Service Provision Through Cross-Border Learning



The benefits of migration should not be seen only from the perspective of what migrants can bring to a given territory.

Migration is a multicultural and multi-dimensional reality that can not be addressed by one government policy sector alone. IOM advocates for the strengthening of health service provision for people on the move including Migrants, Sex Workers and Adolescents and Young People for sustainable development goals to be achieved in the African Southern region.

IOM Southern Africa Sexual and Reproductive Health and rights (SRHR), HIV Knows No Borders project manager Dr Francis Mulekya noted that many countries in Southern Africa were still reporting double-digit HIV prevalence rates and with young people amongst the most affected.

Dr Mulekya said this during a symposium for traditional leaders from six countries (Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and host Zambia) held in Chipata recently that traditional leaders needed to learn from each other on how they can enhance social norms, beliefs and cultural practices that could help tackle the SRHR and HIV challenges in the region.

*"We also acknowledge that our communities are confronted with teenage pregnancies, child marriage and early pregnancies."*

Also, during the COVID-19 outbreak, we witnessed an increase in sexual and gender-based violence. The program is multi-sectoral where we feel traditional leadership could play a catalytic role in promoting better reproductive practices, especially among the young people," he said.

Communities living along international borders and transport corridors are often linked through migration for sociocultural and economic purposes and traditional leaders are key allies in promoting and advocating for SRH rights and behaviour change through their gatekeeping structures.

Eastern Province deputy Permanent Secretary Ms Beauty Undi Phiri said traditional leaders played a critical role in shaping the social norms and values of people.

*"We have faced so many challenges with adolescents and young people. Some of the challenges include parents marrying off their children in order to have an income. Eastern Province, in particular, records high numbers of teenage pregnancies," she said.*

She further applauded IOM and Save the Children for working with traditional

leaders in responding to challenges such as child marriages as well as teenage pregnancies.

Meanwhile, Chief Madzimawe of the Ngoni people said traditional boundaries that existed for different countries had made it difficult for people to access health and other non-health services, but this was slowly being worked on by respective governments and traditional leadership. Border communities often have to travel long distances to access basic social services which may be available within reach across the border in their neighbouring country. Further, international boundaries separate communities and families who have long-held sociocultural and economic ties. "Our chiefdoms often extend beyond these borders", he said

Partners providing SRH – HIV services to young people during the three-day learning visit for traditional leaders from Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and hosted by Chieftainess Kawaza and Chief Madzimawe of Zambia

**Traditional leaders from Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, South Africa, Malawi and Zambia and IOM and Save the Children officials at the three-day learning exchange visit organized by the SRHR – HIV Knows No Borders project.**



# Scaling Up Nutrition Phase II: Voices of the Beneficiaries

## A global movement to help countries overcome malnutrition and stunting

Zambia has made progress on reducing stunting over the past decade, but it remains a challenge. 35 per cent of children are stunted at five years old (ZDHS 2018), the third highest rate of stunting in the southern Africa region (World Bank 2018). Childhood stunting is an irreversible outcome of growth failure in the first 1000 days of life, from pregnancy through to a child's second birthday. Stunting is a result of chronic malnutrition.

In response to high stunting prevalence globally, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), a global movement, was formed to help countries overcome malnutrition and stunting. Zambia was among the early adopters, joining the movement in 2010 to implement a programme focusing on the reduction of stunting.

The SUN II programme is a 4-year initiative supporting MCDP II led by UNICEF in partnership with the National Food and Nutrition Commission, line ministries, other UN agencies (FAO, WFP, WHO) and non-governmental



organizations. The programme is generously supported by the European Union, the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank, the Swedish international development cooperation agency (Sida) and UK aid

from the British people. SUN II provides a package of interventions in communities that adopt multiple approaches to delivering services to households in 17 districts of Zambia.



### Frachel Phiri

35 years old mother with a 3week old baby Wiseman. Frachel is a beneficiary of a chicken livestock pass on scheme in Chipata District, Eastern Province.

*"The Scaling Up Nutrition Phase 2 (SUN II) Programme has helped me and especially my children a lot. When I was pregnant, I was able to eat a lot of eggs which was good for the baby and me as the proteins kept us both strong and healthy. I delivered a healthy baby boy; his name is Wiseman. It feels so good to be able to provide for my own family - my children are strong and even more energetic than me! We are all well and healthy and I am thankful."*



### Roxina Mwanza (27)

a member of Mutenguleni Savings Group in Chipata District, Eastern Province.

*"I bought 300 chickens with the cash. It cost me 4,000 Kwacha. It would not have been possible without the savings group. I have been able to multiply the money - first save the money and then invest it. Facilitators under the Scaling Up Nutrition Phase 2 (SUN II) programme came to our community and taught us how to set up the savings group. The group is three years old now. My dream is to use the money I am going to make from chicken farming to build a house. I want to build a mansion in the village."*





**Namukolo Nyambe (28)**

Nutrition Support Group Volunteer delivering a nutrition lesson to a household in Mongu District, Western Province.

*"I love being a Nutrition Support Group volunteer. I am learning a lot and get to teach what I learn so everyone enjoys the benefits. I teach the importance of nutrition and how to avoid malnutrition and stunting by eating balanced meals using foods we can produce locally. I have been working as a volunteer for two months now and it is an enriching experience."*



**Nobuto Sibyl**

Through the SUN program the farmers are taught how to look after the livestock before they receive it. The Mbekise group was started in 2015, one of the first wards recognised for scaling up nutrition.

*"Through SUN I received 1 goat and I now have 8 goats. I use the money from selling the goats to pay for school fees and food. From SUN I have learned about keyhole farming and also how to make manure and to feed my children a healthy diet. I benefited from the program because I used to think that only "city" people would be able to feed their babies well but now I have learned how to prepare locally made food, and I can feed my children equally well and make them feel good."*



**Beauty Lungu (40 yrs)**

has 5 children, She farms mielies, soya beans, ground beans and orange sweet potatoes

*"I like farming because I can sell some of my crop to make money and I can keep the rest to feed my family. My children always have food to eat and they are growing strong and healthy. I have learned new ways of preparing nutritional food for my family which I didn't know before. I learned that you can extract milk from soya beans. Being a farmer is sometimes difficult - you cannot control the elements like rain, drought and changing weather patterns."*





ECA Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary Dr. Vera Songwe greeting the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat during the AU Summit in Lusaka.



Delegates at the 41st Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union and the 4th Mid-Year Coordination Meeting between the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities and the Regional Mechanisms Summit in Lusaka, pose for a picture.



UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima with some members of the UN Country Team and Cooperating Partners Group pose for a picture during her visit to Zambia.



UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima interacting with the Mayor of Lusaka, Chilando Chitangala at Lusaka City Council, while UNAIDS Regional Director ESA Region Anne Shongwe looks on.



UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima presenting the Education Plus concept paper to the Minister of Education Douglas Syakalima, while Minister of Health Sylvia Masebo looks on.



UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima and UN Country Team members pose for picture during her visit to Zambia.



UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima with Vice President WK Mutale Nalumango when she paid a courtesy call on her during her visit.



National AIDS Council Director General Dr Connie Osborne interacting with President Hakaiinde Hichilema, while UNAIDS Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Winnie Byanyima and WHO Country Representative Nathan Bakyaita looks on.

PICTURE FOCUS



# Evaluation of Health Systems Strengthening Programme reflects positive results for women and adolescents

Implemented over a period of 5 years from 2017 to 2022, the “Health System Strengthening Programme for Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health and Social Accountability” has made notable progress towards achieving universal health coverage in Western and Central Provinces.

Launched in October 2017, the Programme was a joint initiative of the Government of Zambia and the United Nations in Zambia, with funding from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The Programme focused on the following:

Government service delivery through which provincial, district and health facilities implemented high impact Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH&N) interventions;

1. Complementary demand-driven technical assistance by the UN Agencies;
2. Social accountability;
3. Leadership and governance-focused interventions tailored to advance ongoing health sector reforms.

In 2019, the Health System Strengthening Programme was redesigned to focus on two areas aligned with key national priorities namely:

1. Family planning and adolescent sexual and reproductive health, implemented by UNFPA
2. Mother, child health and nutrition interventions, implemented by UNICEF

The UNFPA-led Zambia Integrated Family Planning and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (FP-ASRH) Programme sought to improve the health and well-being of women and adolescents in Central and Western Provinces, while providing catalytic support to strengthen policy and health systems at the national level. The Programme covered 138 health facilities, of which 78 are located in 16 districts of Western Province, and 60 located in



12 districts of Central Province.

Overall, the FP-ASRH Programme has made a remarkable contribution to the health sector in the two target Provinces. The Programme evaluation highlighted increased utilisation of sexual and reproductive health services among women and adolescent girls through high-quality, public sector delivery channels, as well as improved capacity among health workers to deliver innovative and integrated quality family planning and comprehensive abortion care.

Over the last two years, the programme facilitated the procurement of reproductive health commodities estimated at over US\$ 5,286,373.27 (ZMW 89,498,300) and contributed to over 60% of public sector commodity needs, and more than 1,990, 354 Couple Years of Protection.

Additionally, the programme achieved remarkable progress in

capacity strengthening for the delivery of adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, enabling all the targeted 138 health facilities to provide a standard package of adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services. The services reached an estimated 200,306 adolescents (107,200 girls and 93,106 boys). The Programme further supported Level II hospitals (provincial hospitals) and Level III hospitals (district hospitals) in 28 Districts with enhanced capacity to deliver Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) services and avert maternal deaths, through the setting up of high dependency units, as well as the procurement of utility/ambulance vehicles, motorbikes, medical equipment and supplies.



# Children voice their call to action for an Africa fit for Children



**T**he Africa Children's Parliament called for affirmative action on a sideline event of the Africa Union Heads of State Mid-term Summit in Zambia held 15-16 July 2022. 100 children from 15 African countries participated and reminded governments of their commitments and aspirations in Agenda 2040 to make Africa fit for children. The event was organized by Joining Forces in partnership with UNICEF Zambia and ECOSOCC at the Zambia National Assembly.

Children called the decision-makers to ensure that children are actively involved in decision-making regarding issues that

affect their well-being.

"It is not about being kind to let children participate, it is a right children have," said 17-year-old Felicia from Eswatini. She encourages leaders to bring in the voices of children, including children living with disabilities.

### Children's aspirations reflected in the committee reports

The child parliament members submitted six reports prepared following a consultative process and engaging children from across the continent; including Ghana, South Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Burundi, Niger, Sierra

Leone, Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania among others. Problems, solutions and calls for action were mapped on Climate Change and Resilience, Nutrition and Food Security, Social Protection, Child Protection, Education and Child Participation.

The parliament anonymously call the leaders to act to "reduce the rising food prices at markets so that every household can manage nutritious and balanced diets," when presenting the Nutrition and Food Security report. Lucia from Kenya urged governments to educate farmers on using additional

drought-resistant crops.

Children are most vulnerable to climate change. "The effect if not addressed, will only keep getting worse," said Zakarias from Mozambique, Climate Change and Resilience Committee Leader.

"We want an Africa fit for all children by 2040. I believe this is only possible when we put children at the forefront of climate action and environmental protection. It will give us the ability to achieve sustainable development goals," said Kimberly, 17 years old, from Zimbabwe.





"The COVID-19 pandemic has made us lose many hours, some of our friends are not yet back at school after school reopened," said Education Committee leader Nancy from Zambia. She explained challenges such as school infrastructures being destroyed by floods, rising fuel costs affecting school transportation, teachers not wanting to teach in rural areas, and poor water and sanitation conditions affecting menstruating girls. Education is key to success, we call upon African leaders to invest in this key so we can have a successful continent that is fit for children," said Nancy.

The Committee report on Child Participation states "that [meaningful child participation] is the only way adults will know children's challenges. This is how duty bearers can make informed and quality decisions about children."

**Vibrant interactions**

"What I want African government

leaders to do for us as children is to make sure we are included in all programmes that can help us towards the realization of Agenda 2040, that is fostering an Africa Fit for Children," said Mona Lisa, 17, from Zimbabwe.

A vibrant question-answer session between child parliamentarians and decision-makers raised the issue of accountability of government and call for action while encouraging children to

participate in community-level activities as young change makers.

"I am your ambassador, and I will always speak about the rights of children. About what matters to children. About what children want, because you are the future," said Doreen Mwamba, the Community Development and Social Services Minister of Zambia whilst pledging her commitment to making the change the children called for.

Joseph Ndayisenga, the Chairperson of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child, Doreen Mwamba, Minister Community Development and Social Services of Zambia, Deputy 1st Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia Malungo A Chisangano, Representatives from UNICEF Zambia and Joining Forces Country Directors listened to the children at the Africa Children's Parliament.



# UN Joint Programme trains MCDSS staff in digital communication



**T**echnological advancements are quickly changing the way humanitarian and development actors communicate, availing new opportunities and channels through which information is shared and behaviour change campaigns are conducted.

It is for this reason that through the United Nations Joint Programme on

Social Protection (UNJPSP), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and International Labour Organization (ILO) recently trained 12 staff from the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) on digital communication.

The training aimed to create awareness on the importance of digital

communication and to strengthen the capacities of MCDSS staff on the use of digital communication tools and methods during behaviour change communication campaigns.

Just before the training, WFP, ILO and UNICEF supported the Ministry to finalise its communications strategy designed to streamline MCDSS communications activities around social protection.





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