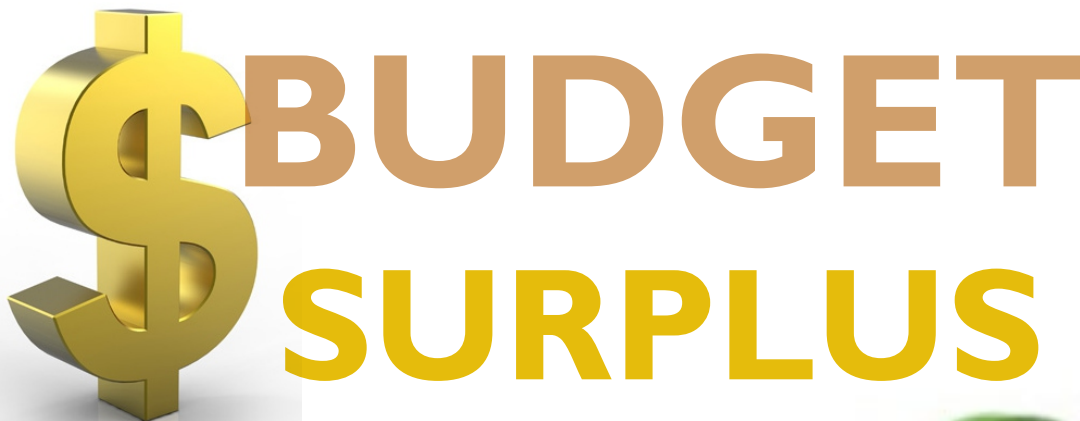


DEVELOPMENT WATCH

Civil Society
National Indicative Program
Monitoring
and
Advocacy

IN THIS ISSUE

- » Budget Surplus: To celebrate Or not?
- » Drug and Substance abuse and Youth Unemployment draft
- » Mushrooming of backyard colleges and their socio-economic development impacts.
- » Unlocking Value through sustainable transformative resource exploitation; traction towards a natural resource policy
- » Ending Child marriage, a possibility through efforts from all



\$ BUDGET SURPLUS

To Celebrate

OR
not?

EDITOR'S NOTE



Mr Leonard Mandishara
Executive Director
NANGO

Designed By
Chris Katsaura



5 STEPS TO DETECTING BREAST CANCER EARLY:

1. Practice routine self-exams
2. Know your risks and family history
3. Visit your doctor regularly
4. Know when to get a mammogram
5. Follow-up after a screening or test

Greetings to you our readers from the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) which is the umbrella body of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in Zimbabwe.

This issue brings forth interesting articles varying from social, economic and political dimensions. This edition predominantly features articles on natural resource governance, child development, and national budget analysis amongst other critical development issues.

It is worth noting that this issue is coinciding with Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October 01 to 31 October). October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the impact of breast cancer.

Covid-19 impact was felt across all sectors, further worsening the plight of the general citizenry. In this regard, the impact on breast cancer prevention and treatment further deepened. This was evidenced by setbacks in screenings and early detection. It is worth noting that our response is bearing fruits. Civil Society around Zimbabwe join the rest of the nation in solidarity, demonstrating that it is possible to **Build Back Better** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This month of October acts as an annual reminder to encourage screening, for early detection is key for effective cure and prevention. As NANGO, we take this time to share love and support to our sisters with this condition.

[#BreastCancerAwarenessMonth](#)

Budget Surplus, 'To Celebrate or Not'



By Staff Reporter

The national budget is an annual plan developed by the Government to give projections of revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year. An aggregation of the monthly revenues and expenditures gives the total revenue and expenditure for the year. More importantly, the national budget plays a pivotal role of addressing the inequalities and indeed the deep-rooted poverty levels within the economy. Thus, the national budget should thrive to practically contribute towards poverty eradication, reduction in inequalities and induce growth and development. Prudent fiscal policies contribute towards a stable macroeconomic environment. It is in this regard, that the budget should be able to conform to the macroeconomic benchmarks that are key to ensure macroeconomic stability.

The notable economic variables include debt, inflation rate, budget balances, current account balances, economic growth rate, balance of payment, unemployment rate amongst others. Thus, the national budget plays an important role to influence these indicators.

Focus of this article is to look at one of the macroeconomic variables namely the budget balance. The budget balance mainly looks at the comparison between the government revenue and expenditure for a particular period or the year as well as the annual aggregate figures.

As such, there are three scenarios that will ultimately emerge at a given period. You can have a budget balance and this is a situation when the revenue and expenditures are equal for that period. You can have the budget surplus and this is when the revenue exceeds your expenditure for that period. Lastly you can have a budget deficit and this is when the expenditure is more than the revenue.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Hon Prof M Ncube highlighted that Zimbabwe achieved a budget surplus of ZW\$29 million in the month of October 2020, for the first time in many years. Furthermore, the Hon Minister Prof Ncube announced a budget surplus of ZW\$800 million, about US\$9,6 million, in the first quarter of 2021. The Fiscal Authority highlighted that the budget surpluses are a testimony to the impact of fiscal discipline and fiscal consolidation. The announcement by the Minister that the country has realised a budget surplus was received with mixed feelings by a number of actors. Some sectors of the communities highlighted that it was just a mirage that Zimbabwe had scored a budget surplus in reality.

This was achieved by strict application of the accounting principles of ensuring that revenue exceeds expenditure. Their other segment, highlighted that looking at the current predicament of the economy, where there are in fact lack of resources to support the social, economic, environmental and governance sectors that continue to decline in service delivery, it is purely academic to say that Zimbabwe has a budget surplus. Their arguments being that, if indeed the country has registered a budget surplus, these should then go to support the sectors that are yearning for more recurrent and capital expenditures.

What does it mean when a government has a budget surplus? Do we need to celebrate as a country?

There are many questions that are hovering around the rank and file as the public are wondering about the euphoria of Zimbabwe having a budget surplus. Recording budget surplus indicates a better and greater performance of the economy. This positive performance should also manifest in the transformation of the lives of the general citizenry. This can also be shown by uplifting a huge proportion of the poor from poverty and to wellbeing, sustained economic growth and development as well as reduction of high inequalities.

A budget surplus is evidenced by real and tangible development that transform the standard of living for the majority, towards human development. Many argue that, it is not necessary for the government to maintain a budget surplus when the public are in need of enhanced public services. Generally, a budget surplus implies that the government has extra resources that can be spent to cover the pressing needs of the public.

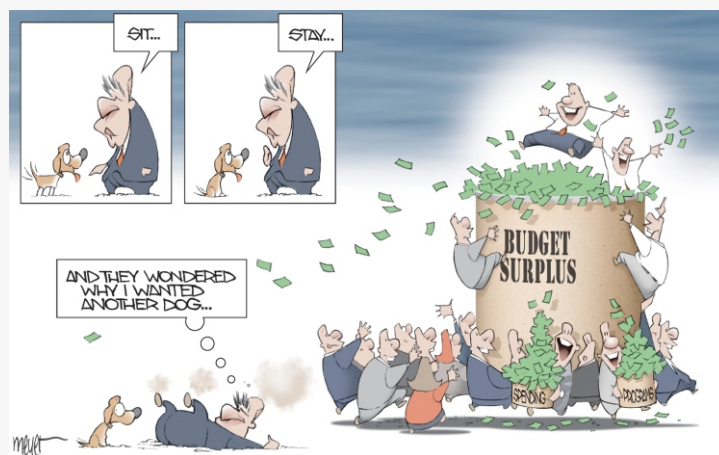
Thus, it is not always the case that a budget surplus is always the preferred position for the country to achieve inclusive economic growth and development. For Zimbabwe, preview to the current economic challenges and obtaining a budget surplus is testimony to the implementation of austerity measures that were introduced by the Hon Minister upon his assumption of the responsibility as the leader of the Fiscal Authority. At this juncture, we need to blow the trumpet on the programmes that are funded by the budget, payment of the debt amongst others, that are really transforming the fortunes of the general public.

The numbers that many are waiting for include but are not limited to the number of people who have been moved out of poverty, the number of jobs that have created, the number of women, children, persons with disabilities who have access to improved essential services. Some of the sentiments from the streets are that *'Budget surplus does not mean anything to me, what I expect the government is to*

facilitate access to my basic needs and support construction of key infrastructure that facilitate my potential and satisfaction. All I know is that I am struggling and the government has no money to facilitate my emancipation now' street voice.

The obsession of the government to have a budget surplus is meant to paint a healthy economy and prove that things have normalised on the economic front. Having a budget surplus can demonstrate that the economy is stable and performing better. However, it needs to be known that achieving a budget surplus should not be the primary target for the government, especially in our current economic context. Unlike, the private sector that establishes business to make profit, the government is not established to make a profit/surplus. The objective of a government, however, is to raise resources from the public to fund public expenditure, transfer payments or public investments that enhances service delivery for the general public. The pursuit of a budget surplus in an economy characterised by high unemployment, high formal sector, prone to natural disasters and constrained in revenue growth signifies that the government may be overtaxing the poor or advancing austerity measures.

In this development watch, we are going to be shading more insights on the fiscal policy issues in Zimbabwe and to further deliberate on the issue of the budget surplus. This issue is the first in a series of articles on the budget surplus.



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Drug and Substance abuse and Youth Unemployment.

'By Staff Reporter

A War on Two Fronts'

Never has a generation been faced with greater challenges than the current youth in Zimbabwe, which has presented a bleak and uncertain future for the youth. Faced with deplorable economic conditions that have relegated many into poverty. Reports from the World Bank and UNICEF, estimate that about 8 million Zimbabweans living in extreme poverty. Zimbabwe is predominantly a youthful population, against this background, the youth bear the brunt of poverty in the country. This is due to the fact that the labour market absorption capacity is low and the impact is worse for the youths. This situation has further been worsened by advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, that further deepened the employment opportunities challenges for then youths.

Many youths who had been trying out different activities to survive in the informal sector were forced to stop and weather the storm as the nation went into lockdown. Unemployment and substance abuse issues have been an emergency reality impacting the youths of Zimbabwe from

two fronts and negatively affecting their future prospects. Many of the youth are now regarded as unfocused youths due to the different challenges they have been exposed to.

A drug by definition is -“medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body”. The challenge that we are currently facing and also is growing is the abuse of these drugs and substances by the youths. A sizeable number of the youths are addicted to this practice, and someone of them cannot function or cope without the assistance of certain substance. According to the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drugs Network, some of the common substances abused by the youths are Marijuana / Weed / Chamba, Zed, Heroin, cocaine, bronCleer (brongo), and Crystal Meth/Mutoriro/Dombo/Guka makafela and kambwa that have recently been introduced in the illegal market. Currently there has been a huge uptake in crystal meth use and overdose cases. The youths who take it say it is cheaper than alcohol but more intoxicating. This switch to more hard drugs is due to the stress of unemployment which is rife amongst the youth.

“If you stare into the abyss for long enough the abyss will stare back at you” - A dark phrase that points out the plight of the youths. Being stuck in a stagnant situation for a long period of time will lead the youth to become more susceptible to growing influence of taking drugs by their peers. The unemployment situation has had a negative impact on the mental health of youths. The question “**What am I going to do with my life now?**” faces many graduates. With economic conditions that have not been improving for more than two decades, many youths now turn towards drugs and other substances as a panacea to deal with the anxiety caused by a hopeless situation.

Zimbabwe is facing a very serious situation for Mental Health Practitioners as there is lack of proper and adequate resource allocation or policy implementation to tackle this

worrying situation. Zimbabwe, like any other developing countries does not consider drug abuse and addiction as a condition or disease. Very little, or nothing is being done to assist people who are already addicted to drugs and substances abuse. Many are left in their conditions leading to more abuse of the drugs. It is about time that Zimbabwe need to realize that addiction from drug and substance abuse is a condition that need medical attention. More resources should be channeled towards provision of rehabilitation centers and support for those who are already addicted. More importantly, more resources, in the form of loans should be availed to the youths to initiate livelihoods projects. Lastly, there is need for intensive awareness raising by all stakeholders on the dangers of drug and substance abuse. **#LetsServethisGeneration.**

The main drugs of abuse

Type	Examples	Dependence liability
Narcotic analgesics	Morphine	Very strong
	Diamorphine	Very strong
General CNS depressants	Ethanol	Strong
	Barbiturates	Strong
	Methaqualone	Moderate
	Glutethimide	Moderate
	Anaesthetics	Moderate
	Solvents	Strong

Mushrooming of backyard colleges and their socio-economic development impacts.



By Staff Reporter

Introduction

Since the attainment of independence in 1980 the Zimbabwean government has been putting much effort in the education sector by building schools in urban and rural areas in order to promote equality. Section 75 of the Zimbabwe Constitution speaks to the right to education and the government has been trying to ensure that everyone has access to affordable quality education. Of late the government has been providing social safety nets through the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) and the Grant-In-Aid which is meant to operationalise the basic state funded education as provided for in the Education Amendment Act. Literacy rates once went to over 90%.

The journey has not been a pleasant one with the education system going down the drain just like most of the other sectors in the country due to a myriad of reasons chief among them being the economic meltdown since the turn of the millennium, as well as the challenges brought about by Covid-19. In the midst of all this, the sprouting of backyard schools has been significantly prominent which is a matter of concern for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to attend to. Deriving the definition that backyard schools are unregistered schools that are mostly located at people's houses especially in the high-density areas. These have been brought into existence by rather

higher negative socio-economic factors such as the poverty upsurge and the effects of Covid-19. These mushroom colleges have resulted in negative effects on the social setup in the community, the environment as well as the education sector at large.

What are backyard colleges?



Source: *The Herald Zimbabwe*.

Back yard colleges in the Zimbabwean context are learning premises and ways that are not identified by the ministry of education since they are not registered. These are identified easily because they are mostly located in dilapidated buildings, home garages or gardens, former Rufaro Marketing Beerhalls and gardens (especially in Harare) and overall, they are an improper school setup. Some are even found at churches.

Empirical trends

The total number of learners enrolled in non-formal education (NFE) at both primary and secondary levels of education is 96 819 (41 471 males, 55 348 females). Enrolment into NFE varies from one province to another. Manicaland has the highest proportion of NFE learners (22.36 percent), followed by Masvingo with 15.10 percent. Bulawayo has the least proportion of primary and secondary school NFE learners (4.74 percent).

The proportion of males in primary and secondary school NFE programmes ranges from 4.58 percent in Bulawayo to 20.58 percent in Manicaland, while the proportion for their female counterparts ranges from 4.87 percent in Bulawayo to 23.68 percent in Manicaland. In each of the provinces, the proportion for females is above the proportion for males (Primary and secondary education statistics report 2020.)

Determinants of backyard colleges/schools

Backyard colleges are being caused by a myriad of socio-economic factors in the country. The Zimbabwean economy has been infringed by high economic meltdown which has resulted in an increase on the unemployment rates which later on results in low standards of living.

Over 60% of Zimbabweans are informal traders and most of them being cross boarders who are into buying and selling of different commodities. Some Zimbabweans work in the government where they earn low incomes. Due to the economic meltdown most of the parents are not able to send their kids to good schools hence they end up in government schools which have been characterised with disgruntled teachers as well as inadequate learning and teaching equipment. Facilities such as text books, computers, furniture, and chalk boards among others. Most of the government schools, especially in the high-density areas still practice hot sitting which results in less learning time for students. In trying to compensate for the lost time and inadequate resources in these government schools' students resort to extra lessons in these backyard colleges.

The lockdown measures aimed at containing the Covid-19 situation has seen schools being closed for a long time. Coupled with challenges such as teacher incapacitation, it has been difficult for the ministry to fully implement the catch-up strategy. This has necessitated the increase of backyard schools and colleges with parents getting concerned with the education of their children.

In addition, government teachers are not well remunerated

and, in a quest, to improve their income they end up offering extra lessons for students. Extra lessons increase the teachers' income for instance Mberi a 42-year-old in Dzivarasekwa Extension is offering lessons with his colleagues in the high-density area at his home claims that his business has been flourishing as he charges 7usd per child (The Guardian 14 February 2021). Government teachers are being paid in the local currency and some then get a chance to earn USD through their backyard colleges.

There has been an abrupt increase in the school fees rates in the country. Since most people are earning less be it through formal employment or through informal trade, they fail to save enough to send their kids to registered schools thus they resort to backyard colleges which are flexible and affordable yet do not produce students with substance as highlighted through the National Development Strategy I where it has been noted that the country has a critical skills deficit of up to 62% as recorded in 2020.

The COVID 19 pandemic induced lockdowns resulted in closure of schools. However, some students had already registered for exams from primary to advanced level. The government introduced e-learning and radio lessons; however, there is lack of the necessary gadgets and infrastructure in the country especially in the rural areas. These situations leave parents and students with no choice but to resort to backyard colleges.

Educational consequences of backyard colleges

The negative effects of backyard learning far outweigh the positive effects. Most of the staff at backyard schools do not follow the proper teaching format system for the students. A syllabus that is supposed to be taught in a year may be taught in a three months period. The teaching staff focuses on teaching students how to tackle an exam rather than imparting knowledge on the students.

For instance, Integrated Science has a few practical works that needs a laboratory and these are non-existent in the backyard colleges thus the education system has people with certificates but without enough knowledge and skill.

Students are also deprived of the extracurricular activities that are offered at a proper school setup like sports and “guidance and counselling”. These activities are important for students as it enhances their mental health and physic. To note, UNICEF and several Civil Society Organisations such as SayWhat usually carry out different in-school activities. for example, health awareness campaigns in educating students on sexual reproductive health as well as advising them on sexual harassment at schools. These services are not available for these students learning in these illegal institutions. These backyard colleges have been characterised by consistent exam leakages which undermines the Zimbabwean education system.

What has been done

The government has continued to disapprove and crack down on this form of learning.

So far over 124 unregistered colleges have been closed down by the government. In addition, the government has barred registration of students learning at unrecognised

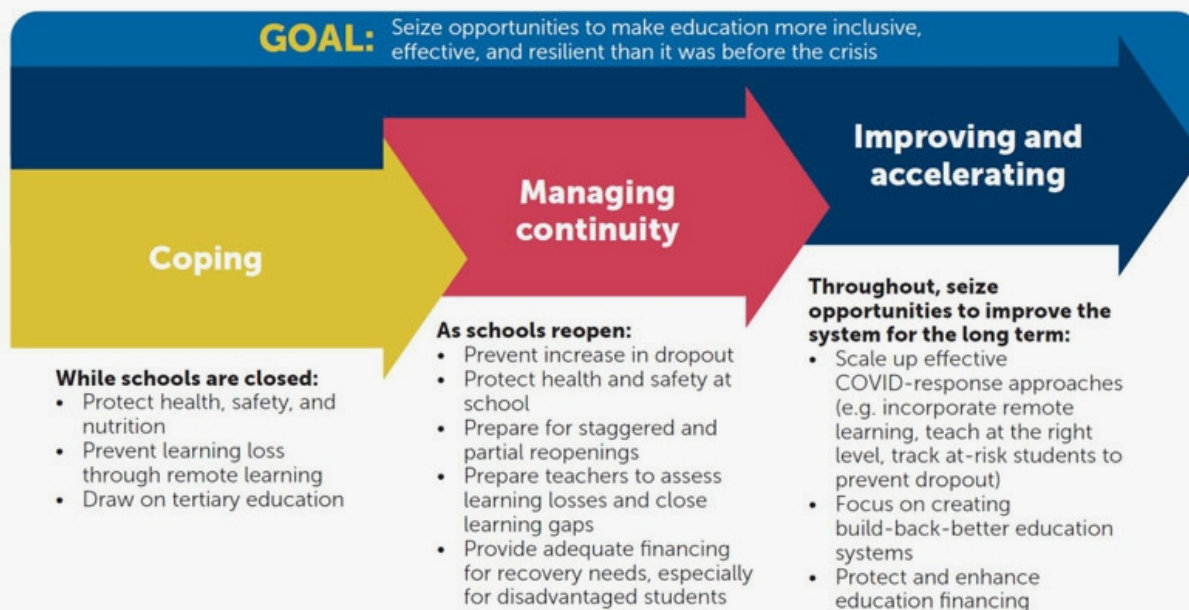
institutions.

Summary

Backyard colleges have negatively impacted the Zimbabwean education system as the country now has a critical skills deficit and continue to churn out students that are half backed.

Recommendations

- The government should remunerate employees well above the Poverty Datum Line so that they do not resort to illegal activities
- There is need to improve budgetary allocation to the education sector to ensure that there are adequate learning facilities especially now that we are in the covid-19 period where online learning is important.
- There is need for the government to drive the development through increased innovation and industrialization within the country so that it becomes productive and be able to absorb employees who are also well remunerated to be able to afford sending children to proper schools.



Source: World Bank Group

Unlocking Value through sustainable transformative resource exploitation; traction towards a natural resource policy

The sustainable urban and rural development proposition in Zimbabwe is only feasible through a well-crafted national natural resource policy. This policy is critical in informing the trajectory towards the transformative agenda of the country through a robust rural development strategy which guarantees the advancement and empowerment of the marginalised rural communities.

Suffice to say the perpetuation of enclave laws that alienate communities from guaranteed inclusion in the resource value chain through value addition and beneficiation cannot be over emphasized. Communities are left to endure the environmental and health impacts, notwithstanding the unclear relocation, displacement and compensation policies by government to the affected communities.

The triple E factors are endemic across communities in Zimbabwe, the exclusion, enclosure and externalisation of natural resource wealth. It is apparent that the resource endowment remains a curse rather than a blessing as long as communities are excluded from participating from inception and through the processes of resource exploitation. This is fundamental to participatory governance, it has been the outcry that communities are the last to know. The artisanal small-scale miners through their annual remittances continue to prove with no ambiguity that they have the potential to surpass their current significant threshold, whilst creating employment for the unemployed youths. The biggest challenge is the environmental degradation as such regulating the operation of artisanal small-scale miners is a priority.

The much-anticipated socioeconomic development through comparative and competitive advantage, leveraging on technological transfer premised on the strategic mineral wealth that we boast of, may catapult the economy to greater levels. Suffice to say finite resources must be carefully exploited in order to ensure local enterprise development through forward, backward and sideway

linkages.

The Agricultural sector remains critical in the advancement of socio, economic and environmental development. Paradoxically, it is postulated as the second highest in emission of greenhouse gases together with deforestation. Mitigating the climate change impacts together with harnessing the potential to maximize from small scale farmers is fundamental. The emphasis on value addition within the agriculture sector remains a huge gap, cotton, tobacco, macadamia nuts amongst other agricultural products can be value added locally and create jobs locally rather than externalize jobs through the exportation of unprocessed goods and products.

The balance of payment deficit is a key challenge, that requires critical thinking regarding putting in place policies that will enhance the countries optimization in growing exports which is accompanied employment creation and sustainable economic growth and transformation. These are key in advancing livelihoods of the previously poor through human development indicators rather than the Gross Domestic Product alone. The natural resource policy cuts across all resources and ensure the management and governance of Zimbabwe's resources for posterity.

The Zimbabwe Natural Resources Dialogue Forum continues to create a platform for discourse on resource governance and management in order to inform policy reforms crucial transformative sustainable development that is holistic.

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Ending Child marriage, a possibility through efforts from all



Child marriage is an urgent issue in Africa. In Zimbabwe, the main drivers of child marriages are poverty, religious and cultural practices among others. Research by UNFPA (2012) showed that child brides are at a higher risk of HIV infection when compared to unmarried girls of the same age. ZimStats, (2021) indicated that child brides in Zimbabwe married at the age of 15 is at 5% and those married at 18 is at 34% whereby rural girls are twice more likely to be married before the age of 18 than their urban counterparts.

This could have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 lockdowns that have seen children being idle and as they say, 'an idle mind is the devil's workshop.' Being married as a child is usually associated with unprecedented pressure from the child's family and the husband's pressure as well as sexual coercion by the husband. Such factors together with higher risk of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and problems associated with pregnancy and child birth have a huge negative impact on women's health.

At YWCA, young women act as strong role models to their peers, through peer education they demonstrate a particular influence over their peers through providing peer to peer education on topics such as Sexual Reproductive Health. They have shown the ability to activate behaviour change among their peers and the power of young people speaking out against early marriages. They are strong role models for their peers and

are living evidence of what life can be like, if children are allowed to stay in school or continue with another form of education. In addition, more efforts are being made to reduce the problem of child marriages through increased sensitizations on issues of child marriages.

This has been necessitated through working in partnerships with other NGOs in conjunction with community leaders, the police, schools, parents, religious and traditional leaders in order to raise awareness and promote dialogue to change social norms and attitudes which perpetuate child marriages. Other efforts being done by YWCA to curb this vice includes Vocational Training Schools in an effort to delay or curb child marriages as studies have shown that girls with no education are three times more likely to marry before the age of 18 than those with a secondary or higher education.

Youth insights can help program designers understand what strategies girls in communities use to self-protect and avoid early marriage. Thus, we have introduced the Feminist Friday whereby YWCA members world-wide discuss issues that affect the girl child so that they can-not recognize their full potential and also take time to acknowledge those women that have influenced greatly on the girl power movement.

Therefore, as YWCA we believe getting and keeping young girls in school, and ensuring that they receive a quality primary and secondary education may be one of the best ways to foster later consensual marriage.

Emphasis should be put on increased access, quality and governance in education with a clear commitment to gender equality. Despite education being recognized as a basic human right in Zimbabwe, the country has failed to fulfil this right, hence the government needs to go back and re-strategize on how they can fulfil their obligation of providing education for all.

The programs such as BEAM needs to be revisited since in the past years' corruption has hindered the success of the program and also the program does not cover other materials needed for school such as uniforms, food, transport, books and stationery which are basics for one to be able to attend school fully. Thus, if these issues are to be addressed it could go a long way in helping the girl child to stay in school and delay marriage.

Furthermore, YWCA has also noted that young girls get pregnant because there is no comprehensive education around sex and sexuality at school. They do not know where to find information on services or how to protect them from getting pregnant, the use of the internet if at all one is fortunate to have access to it has proven to be misleading without having an expert to interpret. Hence, there is need to have more youth friendly centres established at school, clinics and community centres such that the young girls and boys can have access to SRHR information.

Therefore, in summation, as YWCA we envision a Zimbabwe with NO child marriages through #Goal2035 whereby we are saying, 'By 2035, 100 million young women and girls will transform power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war, leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women.'

Organisational Background

YWCA is a voluntary membership association of Christian women and girls founded in 1894 by four associations namely; Great Britain Norway Sweden and the United States. YWCA work had begun in Britain when Christians responded to the housing, recreation and spiritual needs of young girls who had migrated to the cities during the industrial revolution. Since then, the YWCA community grew into a global movement that continues to meet the needs of women and girls over a hundred countries worldwide.

In Zimbabwe the YWCA started in 1957; through more than 60 years of existence it has played a crucial role in leadership and development among women and girls ensuring women's economic autonomy through income generating projects in both rural and urban areas. The organization also endeavours to make the public space safer for women through championing a violent free society for women and girls and increasing women's participation in decision making powers in the home and public spaces. YWCA targets especially the economically disempowered of society through initiating poverty alleviation programs vocational schools and empowerment trainings to boost the socio-economic empowerment of women and girls in Zimbabwe.

Where YWCA Zimbabwe operates

YWCA is operating in Zimbabwe across all 10 provinces and the country is divided into 3 regions namely Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North and Bulawayo, with the regional office in Bulawayo. The Midlands province comprises of Masvingo and the Midlands where the regional offices are in Gweru. Lastly, the largest region which is Mashonaland is comprised of Mashonaland West, Central, East, Manicaland and Harare with offices in Mbare and Head office. The Head Office oversees all the centre coordinators that man the regional offices. The Head office is located at number 189 Westwood Drive in Harare. The regional offices have regional boards responsible for governance issues at regional level while the secretariat level is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization.

Vision

The vision of YWCA is of a fully inclusive nation where justice, human dignity, freedom, and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership.

Mission Statement

YWCA is a voluntary organization that seeks to unite women and girls in its endeavour to develop the leadership and collective power of women and girls to achieve social and economic empowerment human rights, health, security, dignity, justice and peace for all people inspired by Christian faith.



**YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL OF ZIMBABWE**

(WORLD AFFILIATED)

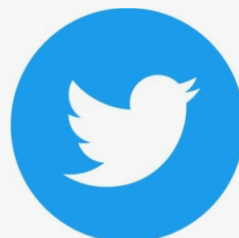
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The contents of articles from independent writers do not necessarily reflect the position and resolve of NANGO, European Union and United Nations Development Programme. This newsletter also promotes stories written by NANGO members and the broader civil society.

NANGO is supported to provide platforms that promote national dialogue on topical and contemporary issues that affect Zimbabwean

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