



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia
to the United Nations in Geneva

NOTE: 068/2023

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to Secretariat of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to forward herewith a copy of the report on the Rights of the Child and Inclusive Social Protection.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 6 March 2023

The Secretariat of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais Wilson
GENEVA





REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**REPORT ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AND INCLUSIVE SOCIAL
PROTECTION: HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 40/20**

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1. What social protection system are in place for your children in your country? Please provide examples of specific laws and regulations, measures and programmes directed at ensuring children's access to inclusive social protection?

Introduction

The Government of the Republic of Zambia looks at social protection as a key strategy to reducing poverty and vulnerability among its people including children. A number of programmes that are being implemented include Social Cash Transfer (SCT). Under this programme beneficiaries engage in income generating activities and livestock rearing of small animals such as goats and chickens in order to meet household needs and school requirements for their children.

Below are the examples of the programmes that have been put in place:

- **Girls Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihood:** Under this programme, beneficiaries are able to sustain families and pay school fees as a result of running business for their improved livelihoods.
- **Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS):** This programme responds to payments of school fees for the children in need of educational support.
- **Home Grown School Feeding Programme:** The programme facilitates feeding of children in some schools which improves school attendance among children.

All these programmes impact on children as household food security is improved thereby, improving the nutrition status of children; families/households are able to engage in business/income generating activities thereby being able to meet school requisites and fees.

- **Laws, Regulations, Measures and Policies:** These include the following;
 - i. Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022
 - ii. National Child Policy
 - iii. National Education Policy
 - iv. National Social Welfare Policy
 - v. National Gender Policy
 - vi. National Health Policy
 - vii. National Social Protection Policy
 - viii. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
 - ix. African Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)
 - x. Convention on the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour (C182)
 - xi. National Child Labour Policy
 - xii. National Response Plan on Ending Violence Against Children (VAC)

- xiii. National Child Safeguarding Guidelines
- xiv. National Child Participation Guidelines

All the above listed are being implemented in a coordinated, multisectoral manner to ensure children have access to inclusive social protection.

2. Main gaps and challenges to children's enjoyment of social protection in law, policy and practice in the country and the impacts on children's rights.

- **High Poverty Levels:** According to the 2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), 54.4% OF Zambians were poor and 40.8% of the classified as extremely poor with 60.8% in rural areas and 12.8% in urban areas. Children were more affected by the effects of poverty as 15% were underweight and 34.6% were stunted.
- **HIV/AIDS:** High rates of HIV contributed to poverty whereas 14.3% of adults had HIV, 1.5 million children were orphaned as a result of the disease. Thereby impacting negatively on children in terms of access to education, healthcare, food security among other services.
- **Climate Change:** In the 2019/2020 farming season, the effect of climate change were experienced in most parts of Zambia. There was an increase in severe draughts and flash floods which led to low agricultural productivity. This affected the wellbeing of citizens including children, especially those in rural areas.
- **Education and Skill Development:** In 2018, there was an estimated of 1,117 secondary schools against 9,050 primary schools. This effect increased the dropout rates especially among girls. Girls living in rented facilities new or further from school are also prone to sexual abuse by older men resulting in teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.
- **Children with Disabilities:** Some children with disabilities encounter challenges to access social protection services as most buildings are not disability friendly. Other children are hidden in homes by parents/guardians who eventually deny these children access to essential services such as physiotherapy, sign language, counselling among others.

3. **Good Practices Initiated by Government to ensure that Social Protection Benefits the Rights of Children in the Country:** Unconditional implementation of the Social Cash Transfer (SCF) as a Social Protection Programme to respond to increasing vulnerability and persistent high poverty levels which lead to impact more on children through lack of access to services such as education, healthcare, adequate nutrition among others.

- Improved Literacy levels in most rural areas as most girls enrolled in schools through the keeping Girls in School (KGS) programme. During the 2020/2021 period, some of the children from SCT households were supported with school supplies from grade 8 to 12.
- Increasing funding to social protection programmes such as the Social Cash Transfer, Farming Input Support Programme (FISP), among others as a way of mitigating poverty at household level which impacts on children.
- Facilitating the continued donor support in the implementation of social protection programmes in the country to ensure poverty reduction especially among children and person living with disabilities.

4. Examples of how measures and responses to alleviate poverty through Social Protection Systems in Emergency situations or , for example in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, have positively affected children's rights, particularly to social security

- The effects of climate change had a negative impact on the social and economic development of the country. The adverse effects of climate change such as draught, rising temperatures and flash floods largely affected the poor and vulnerable groups. For example, during the 2019/2020 farming season, Zambia experienced severe draught and flash floods which reduced productivity thereby reducing food security especially among the rural populations. This meant inadequate nutrition among the children. Government through the Ministry of Community Development intensified the planting of climate change reliant inputs and also launched the wetlands component under food security pack to caution the effects from the shocks.
- The impacts of Covid-19 not only affected the economy but undermined the livelihoods and welfare of many people, especially the poor and vulnerable. To address the impacts of Covid-19 on poor and vulnerable households, stoke responsive interventions such the Emergency Social Cash Transfer were implemented in districts and provinces worst hit by the pandemic.
- The beneficiaries indicated that they were happy with the support because they were able to meet their basic needs as the amount of money received was much higher than the regular Social Cash Transfers.

Additionally, institutions like the Disaster Mitigation and Management Unit (DMMU) also provided support in terms of floods, draught and other related calamities. This support includes shelter, food stuffs, and healthcare among others to affected communities countrywide including children.

5. How states can deliver more effectively to ensure the effective implementation of universal social Protection for children including through international cooperation:

- The programme “Keeping Girls in School” should be reformed to include support for boys from the Social Cash Transfer (SCT) households in the spirit of “leaving no one behind.”
- Government and cooperating partner should continue to mobilise and allocate more resources towards social protection programmes that target vulnerable households in which children in need of care and support are found.
- Parents/Guardians who have children with disabilities should be encouraged to come out in the open to ensure that these children can access services such as physiotherapy, special education, sign language among others.
- Coordination in the implementation of social protection programmes should be strengthened at district, provincial and national levels for more effective programme implementation.

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