



ZIMBABWE NETWORK OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTORS (ZINECDA)

2018

ANNUAL REPORT



1. Introduction

In the year 2018, ZINECDA performed better than in 2017 in several aspects. This report will look at activities done, chapter status and will also give an update on the projects carried out by the organization. 2017 continued to be a difficult year as the Zimbabwean economy declined with funding directed mostly to international organisations. The ZINECDA Secretariat and Board have managed to score some important milestones as progress has been made on several quarters in relation to ECD.

2. Administration

2.1 *Staffing*

ZINECDA is currently operating with three staff members namely, National Coordinator, Communication for Development Intern and part time Finance and Administration Officer. This is in line with the mandate of having very low overheads, additional staff are only recruited on a funded project basis.

2.2 *Office Space*

ZINECDA is renting offices at Mukuvisi Woodlands, Action IEHDC offices. The offices allow for strategic growth and self-sustenance of the organization. ZINECDA is grateful for Action IEHDC for its reasonable support at no cost rentals from January to July 2018 until the OSISA grant support became operational.

2.3 *Finance*

The 2017 audit was not done due to lack of funds. It was decided to combine the 2017 and 2018 audits to reduce on costs and this was deferred to early 2019. Funds were received from three partners viz Roger Federere Foundation (\$20,000), OSISA (\$12,500) and Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN, \$5,000). The following table shows the funds were for, expended funds and balances.

PARTNER	PROJECT	RESULTS	PROJECT AMOUNT	EXPENDED AMOUNT	BALANCE
Roger Federer Foundation (RFF)	ECD Conference hosting	Advocacy to prioritise ECD issues on policy, financing and capacity	\$20,000	7,709.11	12,290.89
Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)	Development of 5 year Strategy Plan	5 Year Strategy Plan	\$5,000	\$5,000	0.00
Open Society Initiative for	Institutional Strengthening	Provincial Chapters	\$25,000	9,521.11	2,978.89

Southern Africa (OSISA)		functioning through holding meetings Regional Policy Forums held to influence National Processes			
Subscriptions			\$300	\$300	
Total			\$50,300	\$22,530.22	\$27,769.78

3. Projects

3.1 ECD Conference - supported by Roger Federer Foundation

The main aim of the conference was to build a common understanding, explore alternatives and build consensus on needed policy directions and actions for improved ECD in Zimbabwe and the specific objectives were to:

1. increase knowledge , valuing and common understanding of ECD in Zimbabwe
2. assess SDG4.2 (ECD) status in Zimbabwe
3. build commitments to increasing financing for ECD by the state and partners
4. focus on ECD policy directions and strategies in Zimbabwe through clearly formulated conference recommendations, resolutions and action plans for ECD in Zimbabwe.

Project Activities

The ECD Conference was not convened as the intent recipient of ECD advocacy, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, could not attend at the selected dates as they had their own scheduled activities. It was mutually agreed to postpone to early 2019 and be hosted jointly with MoPSE, ECOZI and ZINECDA. However the ZINECDA commissioned research on the status of ECD in Zimbabwe in July 19 2018 revealed the paucity of resources in ECD centres, policy gaps and failure in the implementation and the little material and financial resources support given to the sector.

3.2 Policy Advocacy for increased ECD recognition and financing in Zimbabwe - OSISA G08359 supported

The one year project is to strengthen the Secretariat into supporting Provincial Chapters in policy advocacy at their level and to influence national level policy making processes. The main purpose is to strengthen the chapter executive members and provincial senior officials in recognizing ECD as important sector through availing resources to it.

The goal of the project is to promote access to quality ECD for all children 4-5 years in Zimbabwe. The objectives are to:-

1. strengthen the Secretariat in supporting Provincial Chapters networking and advocacy skills for ECD development in Zimbabwe
2. conduct national advocacy and provincial support and monitoring
3. increase the quality of ECD advocacy at provincial levels.

Project Activities

Three regional and a national forums were held to identify and prioritise policy issues at provincial levels and to feed in to national policy processes. These were attended by 70 participants out of the anticipated 75 as shown in the table below

Region	Coordinating chapter	Attendance Female	Attendance Male	Total attendance
Southern	Bulawayo	11	6	17
Northern	Harare	13	6	19
Midlands	Masvingo	6	8	14
Masvingo national	Masvingo	10	10	20
Total		40	30	70

The following were identified as policy issues and interventions suggested for each at the provincial levels:

1. Lack of coordination, clarity and cohesion in the development and promotion of ECD policy in Zimbabwe
2. Underfunding of ECD
3. Barriers to education still exist - accessibility of ECD centers for children in rural areas is still restricted due to children walking long distances
4. Inclusion - children with special needs are not catered for especially with appropriate infrastructure (toilets, rails, pavements, chairs, braille) among other things
5. Restricted access - the entry policy to be clear cut because not all children are currently entering ECD A and B at the right time and age.

6. ECD Curriculum exists, it is not well understood by most facilitators. The curriculum is more oriented to subjects rather than stages, development and play.
7. ECD children do not have birth certificates
8. Outbreak of water borne diseases like Cholera and Typhoid is still incidental
9. Lack of official information on ECD centers, populations and actors in Zimbabwe

Provincially based interventions were proffered such as having awareness on ECD from family through school, ward, district and provincial levels so that the recognition results in more allocation of financial and material resources. This will also lobbying for the inclusion of ECD as part of social safety nets such as BEAM and its inclusion as basic education so that it is made free according to the 2013 amended Constitution. Other interventions suggested are drafting befitting growth, stages, play and development oriented curriculum and in-servicing of teachers into such methodology. Provinces agreed to monitor own member centres as part of ECD data gathering and analysis to inform policy.

Currently, no provincial meetings have been supported using project funds as funds were not sufficient for supporting the activities although some provinces met in the last quarter.

3.3 5 Year Strategy Plan Development – AfECN supported AF2018/03

The purpose of the grant was to strengthen the organization capacity of the organization by developing a five year strategy plan document. The objectives of the project were to:-

1. Review achievements and challenges for provincial chapters
2. Hold 2x2 days workshops to develop strategy plan for the two regions which will be integrated into one
3. Hold a 1x2 day workshop to integrate two strategies into one and present to National Steering Committee for adoption and recommendations
4. Hold one Board of Trustees workshop to adopt the 5 year strategy plan

Project Activities

Two regional strategy plan workshops were held to produce two drafts which were then consolidated into one draft which was shared before a final copy was developed using a consultant. The 5 year strategy plan document is still to be adopted by the Board of Trustees in their next meeting.

3.4 Network Activities

Governance Issues

Two Board meetings were held and the Annual General Meeting has been delayed due to financial limitations. The initial meeting adopted the annual 2017 narrative and financial reports, and the 2018 plan and budget. The Board of Trustees resolved to recruit at least two more Board members. A list of candidates was tendered for the Board engagement and decision making. The 2017 financial audit was not done but was decided to combine it with the 2018 one due to lack of funds.

Chapter management received limited attention as there were no funds to physically service them and that the only employee for most part of the year was busy with national level policy advocacy and resource mobilization issues. The situation improved when the communication for development intern was recruited in the last quarter of the year. There was a decrease in membership from 225 to 174 with only 6 members affiliating officially. The decrease could have been necessitated by the introduction of the subscriptions and the worsening of the economic climate. The most active provinces are Manicaland, Manicaland and Masvingo. Mashonaland Central chapter still needs to be established.

Resource Mobilisation

Resource mobilization remains the cornerstone of the organization. Previous efforts done in 2017 bore fruits as three funding streams materialized in the year being:-

1. Roger Federer Foundation support for ECD conference (once off \$20,000)
2. OSISA support for secretariat support to strengthen policy advocacy (one year of \$25,000) and
3. AfECN support to develop the ZINECDA 5 year strategy document (once off \$5,000).

Continuous efforts are being exert to secure further funding. Collaborations were effected with two organisations with promising prospects in the following:-

- a) National ECD Policy advocacy with ECOZI submitted to Roger Federer Foundation with ZINECDA as lead
- b) Assisted Nhaka Foundation in developing a 3 year project on access to quality ECCE in underserved rural areas of Zimbabwe and Mozambique submitted to BMZ through TDH Germany. Although this project is a grant of Nhaka Foundation, it is anticipated that ZINECDA will be delegated a role by Nhaka Foundation especially on curriculum issues and policy advocacy.
- c) Exploring a partnership funding arrangement with It starts with me (ISWM) to seek funding for a parenting programme.

Policy Advocacy

ZINECDA participated in several forums to lobby the development of conducive ECD policy and monitoring the implementation of the Education Sector Strategy Plan 2016-2020. The following are forums where direct participation resulted in some tangible results:-

- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) Annual ESSP review and plan for 2019 were done. ZINECDA managed to influence the focus of the development of the early learning policy in the year 2019.
- Engaged with the newly elected Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Education Committee to build their capacity of ECD issues and to lobby for increased financing of ECD especially from fiscus.
- Participated in the ECOZI led development of a locally focused school financing policy and mechanism which was later adopted by MoPSE for further adoption by Government.
- Was elected as ECD Thematic Chair thereby becoming a Board member of ECOZI.
- Participated in the 1st African ECD Conference in Kenya where the focus was on the nurturing care framework and the need to increase financing to ECD.
- The MOU with MoPSE is still to be finalized. It is hoped that the process will be faster with the change of leadership in the ministry.

6.0 Lessons Learnt in 2018

6.1 Partnerships and collaborations seems to be the best strategy for ZINECDA to access resources and to share responsibilities and risks. More needs to be done for the Secretariat to identify promising members and produce fundable proposals.

6.2 Policy advocacy needs to be based on evidence for credibility. There is need therefore to create research based projects for advocacy and to generate new information. There is need to focus on the research results and shared with various stakeholders and decision makers.

7.0 Future Plans

- 7.1 Continue with policy advocacy efforts towards increased awareness of ECD, policy development and its financing.
- 7.2 Establish the Mashonaland Central Chapter. Increase networking efforts nationally and globally.
- 7.3 Focus on achieving the 5 year strategy plan especially on initiating the parenting programme, research and policy advocacy issues.
- 7.4 Participate in the consultation processes and lobbying for ECD inclusion as part of basic education in the Education Bill, School financing and Early learning policy
- 7.5 Co-host the 1st ECD Conference in Zimbabwe
- 7.6 Increase visibility of ZINECDA through social media and policy forums participation.

8.0 Conclusion

The year has been fairly good for ZINECDA as it managed to record some milestones such as the employment of full time staff and also the securing of funding from both OSISA and AfCEN. Visibility of the network has also increased in the sector. More partners are showing an interest to join the network while several funding avenues are being explored, hence the platform is set for a successful 2019. What will be crucial going into the new year will be to continue networking and creating synergies with

government and players in the ECD sector, both local and international. Raising financial resources is an urgent need to sustain the activities of the Network.