



ZIMBABWE

ECD Voice

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Providing contextually relevant Early Childhood Development (ECD) information and ensuring that the Zimbabwean ECD Voice is heard

Zimbabwe Network Of Early Childhood Development Actors

Dear Readers

The seventh issue of the Zimbabwe ECD Voice comes amidst our 10th anniversary celebrations. It has been an epic journey to celebrate the championing of policy advocacy and networking in Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Zimbabwe and the region. This issue is dedicated on highlighting how nationally, the ZINECDA has influenced ECD policy through its participation in several platforms (Joint Monitoring Visits) that monitor child education for making recommendations to the policymakers on changes that will be needed to enhance the education sector's efficiency and effectiveness particularly ECD. On the regional front, key milestones for this quarter included the convergence of coalition partners and policymakers from Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Eswatini in Harare for the Road to SADC taskforce meeting which resulted in the high-level delegation consenting to advocating for an ECD policy framework at SADC level. This landmark meeting also resulted in the launch of the Southern Africa Network for Early Childhood Development (SANECD).

Dear reader, COVID-19 induced restrictions have resulted in abrupt closure of schools across the region negatively affecting the education system. The learning crisis has escalated and Zimbabwe has not been spared resulting in many of our children in ECD failing to grasp the basic numeracy and reading skills which are a pre-requisite at their level. Therefore, we are opinionated that it is not enough to reopen schools for children, especially if there is no systematic plan to get them to catch-up on learning lost during lockdowns. Therefore, in this issue, we are calling for the implementation and operationalisation of the catch-up strategy introduced by policymakers backed up by the following strategies:

- Investing more in education to recover lost time and investments in teaching resources, infrastructure, and teacher training induced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Developing and implementing policies that support nationwide enrolment and access to quality education services for all children.
- Strengthening service delivery systems and co-ordination across sectors at all levels to ensure that every child is accommodated into the learning environment.

Please be in touch with ECD related updates from your organization.

Happy Reading,



Naison Bhunu
Editor



HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY EVENTS FOR THIS QUARTER:



Road to SADC Taskforce Meeting

The Road to SADC taskforce meeting was held from the 14-18 March by coalition partners from the Early Childhood Development Coalition of Malawi (ECDC Malawi), Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA), Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL), Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), Swaziland Network for Early Childhood Development (SNECD) and Rede para o Desenvolvimento da Primeira Infancia (RDPI) resulted in the partners advocating for the inclusion of and adoption of an ECD child rights protocol, as a critical component of education at SADC level and in regional policy spaces.

The high-level delegation comprised of Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) Permanent Secretary Mrs Tumisang Thabela accompanied by Chief Director Edward Shumba and Deputy Director Kaunda Chidota; Lesotho's Principal Secretary Basic Education in the Ministry of Education and Training Dr. Dira Khama and his Chief Education Officer (Pre-Primary and Primary) Ms. Thuto Ntsekhe, Malawi's Deputy Director of basic education Mrs Ellena Gertrude Simango and the Chief Officer responsible for ECD in the Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare Pauline Simwaka.

The meeting reiterated the need to have a legislative instrument to direct ECDE policy at SADC level. The delegates agreed to lobby national governments to include ECDE as an agenda in SADC Ministers' Council and Heads of Government Summits.

The visiting delegation took part in the Look and Learn visit organised by ZINECDA's member Nhaka Foundation in Mashonaland East Province at Logan Lee and Muvande Primary Schools to appreciate the Nurturing Care Framework of Early Childhood Development regarding health, learning, nutrition, community and education capacity building and livelihoods enhanced through income generating projects. The meeting also attracted media coverage from several SADC countries and below are some of the published articles:

- [Road to SADC Discussion on HSTV.](#)
- [Zambia Daily Mail.](#)
- [NewZimbabwe.com.](#)



Experts for more early childhood development funding

Experts for more early childhood development funding

ANGELLA PHILI





Launch of the Southern Africa Network for Early Childhood Development (SANECD)

The ECD coalitions from 6 African countries namely Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Mozambique, Zambia, launched the SANECD, a vibrant and transnational network that will hold Governments accountable to ECD issues among other things. Officially launching the network, ZINECDA Board Chair Dr Patrick Makokoro said the objectives behind the launch were:

- Transnational evidence based ECD policy advocacy, promote learning and adaptive management in ECD policy and programme implementation.
- National ECD networks and transnational synergies need to be strengthened and the relationships between national coalitions need to be cultivated to ensure that ECD issues are articulated.
- The relationships between national coalitions and ICQNECD, AU ECED and AfECN need to be cultivated to ensure that ECD issues are articulated.

Key issues to be addressed by SANECD include:

- Lack of vibrant and transnational CSO coalition or alliance that holds governments accountable on ECD issues.
- ECD focused CSO coalitions local and global capacity gaps.
- Lack of comprehensive and inclusive ECD policies, legislation and systems.
- Controlling our own story and narrative through documenting our own stories.
- Developing and implementing a sub-regional ECD research strategy.



ZINECDA participates in Joint Monitoring Visits

With schools having opened on the 7th of February and closed on the 7th of April as informed by the Zimbabwean School calendar, ZINECDA participated in two Joint Monitoring Missions along with Government and other civil society partners in order to gain a deeper understanding of current practices, successes and challenges in schools. ZINECDA was fortunate to be part of the delegation of the Deputy Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Dr Edgar Moyo which visited Marondera and High Glen (Harare) districts. Dr Moyo's critical observations were that schools were lacking supervision from his Ministry and that not much learning was taking place [ZINECDA YouTube](#).





RFF delegation monitoring visit

As the ZINECDA is celebrating 10 years of championing policy advocacy, it was honoured to host Roger Federer Foundation CEO Janine Handel in Zimbabwe from the 23rd of March to the 25th of March. The Roger Federer Foundation (RFF) team was in Zimbabwe to assess progress in the implementation of the School Readiness Initiative (SRI) project whose aim is to provide vulnerable children with a good start into primary education by providing access to quality ECD A and B education. Together with partner organisations, the RFF met with policymakers, visited schools in Zvimba and Mbire Districts to assess the status of income generating projects, playground areas and observe teachers using the STELA tablet.

Advocacy issues identified from the visit were:

- Government to increase annual budget allocation for ECD from less than 1.0% to 5.0% of the overall education budget.
- Mainstreaming ECD in all strategic development plans from school to national level.
- Provision of adequate and age appropriate ECD infrastructure (classrooms, toilets, play centres, food preparation centres, furniture, and wash facilities).
- Provision of ECD sustainable, continuous, and nutritious school feeding

[View SRI Media Coverage.](#)



ZINECDA @10:

Matabeleland North reflects on the 10-year journey



Championing Early Childhood Development

In commemorating ZINECDA in championing policy advocacy, the network is conducting a series of interviews with its Provincial Chapter members to reflect, review and popularise the great work done with the membership-based organisations across the country. For this quarter, we are delighted to have interviewed ZINECDA's Matabeleland North Chapter Secretary Mr Meck Sibanda. Below is an excerpt from the interview.

Name: Meck Sibanda
Province: Matabeleland North Province,
joined ZINECDA in 2012

What was the motivation to being a ZINECDA member?

To promote and advocate for ECD interventions in the province, especially in rural areas. The collaboration journey with ZINECDA has been very helpful and fruitful as it has made us to be heard and visible in many spaces from local, regional to international. It has also enabled Christian Youth Volunteers Association Trust (CYVAT) to be part of the district education working group.

I also sit on the ZINECDA board and this has allowed me to participate in high-level decision-making forums on behalf of the organization. A number of capacity development workshops and trainings have been instrumental in forging ahead the ECD agenda in all our programming as an organization.

How has your organisation been performing in uplifting the status of ECD in Zimbabwe?

Our organization has done a good job in bringing the ECD agenda from the grassroots to the national level. We have done well in infrastructure development and participated in education working group meetings involving the education parliament portfolio committee. Also, with our partners, we managed to train ECD caregivers or facilitators.

Suggestions/Recommendations for the next decade:

- More capacity development trainings for members so that we have a good pool of ECD advocates.
- More interaction and affiliation with the all education structures in the country, regionally and internationally.
- Advocate for a an ECD policy that will be developed with wider stakeholders' consultations.
- To have an ECD conference that will take stock on who is doing what and how to improve the current situation especially after COVID-19.
- ZINECDA to consider chapter offices with a secretariat that will revive and coordinate all the chapters in the country.
- ZINCEDA to continue documenting best practices for future referencing.
- The need to have an education in emergency contingency measures in the ECD policy to allow for disaster and emergency preparedness in ECD (cyclone Idai and COVID-19 eras).



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Vision

Safe, self-sustaining communities where vulnerable boys, girls and women reach their full potential and realize their rights.

Mission

Promote a safe friendly environment that encourages participation, survival, development and growth of vulnerable boys, girls, children with special needs and women through interventions that are community and family focused. Address the underlying factors that prevent vulnerable boys, girls, children with special needs and women from fully realizing their potential through creating opportunities for positive change.

Our Commitment/Core Values

Integrity, transparency, accountability, Stakeholder Engagement
Participation, Sensitivity.

Areas of Operation

Mutare South District: Wards 6, 14, 20, 22, 32

Who Are We

Mwana Trust is a women-led child development, protection and women empowerment organization concerned with the welfare of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), children with special needs, women at grassroots level and communities. Mwana Trust engages local communities and schools in transforming the skills, knowledge, and beliefs of all individuals who impact the life of a child and women.

What We Do

We promote the holistic and sustainable interventions for child development, child protection and women empowerment. We aim to help children realize their rights to education, clean water, good health, shelter and the rights of children with disabilities through:

Our Goal

Advancing equal access, equity and progress to vulnerable boys, girls and women through innovative, safe and diverse quality interventions that empower and influence social change.

Our-Strategic Objectives

- Integrating education, child stimulation, nutrition and health interventions for a holistic child development approach that ensures quality, equity and access for better health and educational outcomes.
- Protecting children in all our interventions including life changing events for the realization of their rights.
- Contributing to improved health outcomes and lifestyle for children in need of care through proactive engagement.
- Building the capacities of vulnerable rural families with poverty reduction strategies that enhance social protection, resilience and adaptation.
- Promoting women's skills development and their right to decision making for social, physical, economic and psychological transformation.

Our Strategic Focus

Early Childhood Development (Child Stimulation and Nutrition, Health, Education)

- Child Protection
- Women Empowerment
- Sustainable Livelihoods

Our Strategies

- Strategic Collaboration
- Community Partnerships
- Evidence Based Practices
- Data –Informed Decision
- Professional Learning

UPCOMING EVENTS

Global Action Week for Education

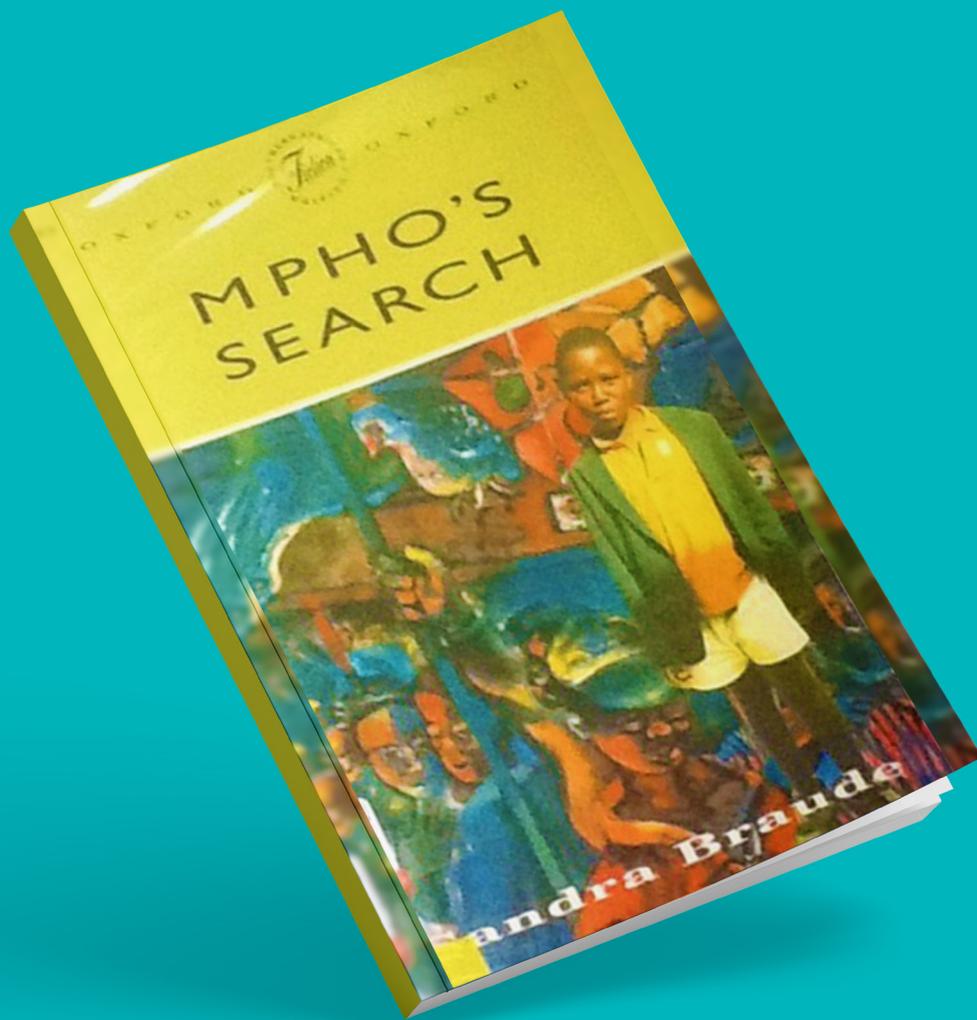
The 2022 Global Week for Education (25-30 April) will be held under the theme: Protect Education in Emergencies Now! ZINECDA together with partner organisations will conduct regional and in country discussions in the month of June on advancing ECD in emergencies such as COVID-19 and unpredictable climate change as part of GAWE or support to the global campaign. Follow ZINECDA's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) social media accounts for updates on GAWE.



The World Forum on Early Care and Education (Orlando 2022)

ZINECDA will from May 16-19, 2022 join early childhood professionals and advocates from around the world in Orlando, Florida for an informative and inspiring experience on Early Care and Education discussion. Topics to be covered will include Leadership, Climate Change and Its Impact on Young Children o Race & Equity Around the World, Connecting Children to Nature, Indigenous Education and Children's Rights. A visit will be conducted on early childhood centres, explore Orlando, dance, dine, network, and develop relationships with new friends from across the globe.





The book *Mpho's Search* by Sandra Braude [\[PDF\] Mpho's Search \(Southern African Writing\) by Sandra Braude Download Book \(greggdev.com\)](#) is a story set in apartheid South Africa, in the context of race, nation, and its role in educating children about their past. The novel also gives a realistic insight into the life of Africa's street children reflected in South Africa's set up.

The story is about a boy who goes on a search for his father who works at the gold mines and when he arrives in Johannesburg, Mpho gets roped into the city life by becoming a street kid. A typical day for them would be standing on busy roads asking for food or money from drivers, stealing food, eating from trash cans, sleeping on pavements, and getting into trouble with the police and passer byes.



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