

ZINECDA

Report on the alignment of
the education policies and
circulars with the education
provisions in the Education
Amendment Act 2020

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ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AU	African Union
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
CBO	Community –Based Organisation
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CESCR	Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This analysis of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's policies and circulars to establish their alignment with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 and the Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment Number 20 of 2013 was done under the leadership of ECOZI and ZINECDA who contracted the consultants and provided the Terms of references.

Background

Need to unpack the Education Provisions in the Education Amendment Act 2020

The Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment No 20 of 2013 seeks to align the state's obligations to provide universal access to quality education for its citizens in line with the international and regional protocols and instruments Zimbabwe has acceded to and is a signatory such as International Convention on the Rights of the child and the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the Child. The Education Amendment Act 2020 aligns the educational provisions with the New Zimbabwe Constitution. Prior to its enactment and after its enactment, the Ministry of Primary and secondary Education (MoPSE) crafted a raft of policies and circulars to guide the provision of education in Zimbabwe. It is therefore necessary to analyse these policies to unpack their education provisions, identify gaps and make appropriate advocacy recommendations for improvement.

Purpose and Objectives of the Unpacking of the Education Amendment Act

The purpose of this desk review study is to unpack the Educational provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 in sync with the Constitution Amendment Act 2013, identify policies and circulars aligned to or needing to be aligned with the Education Amendment Act, identify policy gaps and recommend effective advocacy strategies to improve the provision of accessible, inclusive, quality ECD in Zimbabwe.

The objectives of the study are to:

- Comprehensively unpack the provisions of Early Childhood Development Education from the Education Amendment Act and the Constitution
- Clearly identify ECD advocacy issues that emanate from the enactment of the Education Amendment Act
- Recommend the development/improvement of existing statutory instruments, policies, circulars, directives and implementation mechanisms to ensure that ECD provisions within the Education Amendment Act are realized.
- Identify the key actors on the ECD landscape and how best they can add value to ECD learning
- Identify ECD advocacy strategy issues
- Present findings in the form of research paper as well as a PowerPoint presentation.
- Identify and recommend bodies/stakeholders and platforms that can be utilised to improve policy implementation and oversight.

- Make a presentation at a validation workshop of the research results.
- Present a final approved written report in hard and electronic form.

Scope of the study of the Education Provisions of the Education Amendment Act

The scope of this study is to unpack the early childhood development education provisions of the Education Amendment Act based on the Constitution Amendment 2013 and analyse the Education policies crafted before and after the enactment of the Education Amendment to establish the degree of alignment, identify policy gaps and recommend appropriate advocacy strategies.

Effect of COVID-19 on the study

The desk review study had to be done online because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic lock down. It predominantly depended on the policy and circular documents, which had to be accessed from MoPSE, which is currently operating with skeleton staff as most of the officers work from home. It took a month to access the relevant documents consequently delaying the start and the completion of the assignment. The documents are not available on the MoPSE website, which made it impossible to access them remotely.

Fortunately, ZINECDA working in collaboration with ECOZI were finally able to access the documents and avail them to the consultants to kick start the work.

Chapter 2

International and Regional Legal Frameworks

Globally education has been recognised not only as a human need but as a fundamental and indispensable human right. It has been described as an empowering right and the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised children and adults can realise their full potential in society. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (General Comment No.13, 1999). There is a body of both hard and soft law enunciating the right to education. According to European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) soft law refers to agreements, principles and declarations that are not legally binding while hard law denotes legal obligations that are legally binding on the parties involved and are also enforceable in a court of law.¹ Declarations, frameworks and UN Resolutions are examples of soft law. Soft law has the advantage that it shows the immediate commitment of the parties involved and it can be implemented immediately after agreement. On the other hand, hard law has to undergo processes such as ratification or accession before it becomes binding on the parties involved. Ratification is the international act by which a State indicates its consent to be bound by a treaty or Convention which it has signed. Signing of a treaty merely indicates an intention to be bound but it does not constitute consent to be bound by the treaty in question. Where a State has not signed a treaty it can still become a party to that treaty through accession. Accession is the process by which a State party accepts the offer or opportunity to become a party to a treaty which has already been negotiated and signed by other States. Accession has the same legal effect as ratification. There are two systems through which international law is incorporated into national legal systems. In countries with a monist system, international law automatically becomes part of national law upon ratification or accession. In countries like Zimbabwe which has a dualist system, international law has to be incorporated into national law through an Act of Parliament which is the process known as domestication. Through either ratification or accession, Zimbabwe is a State party to all the main Conventions that provide for the right to education.

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR, 1948)

As early as 1948 soon after the Second World War nations came together and made a collective declaration that human beings are born equal with equal rights. Article 26 of UDHR provides that every person has the right to education and that at elementary and fundamental stages; this education should be free and compulsory. The same article also speaks to the nature of the education to be provided by stating that education should be directed at full development of a human being. The role of parents in the education of their children is recognised as parents are given the choice to decide on the kind of education to be given to their children. These initial principles on the right to education are the foundation which later Conventions built on and expanded.

¹ European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights, Hard Law, Soft Law

UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)

The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education was an acknowledgement by the UN that although everyone has a right to education, discrimination can be a major barrier to the enjoyment of that right by certain marginalised groups of people in society. Thus the Convention's key focus is the prohibition of discrimination in education. Zimbabwe acceded to the Convention in May 2006. Article 1 of the Convention is of great significance because it defines what is meant by education in the Convention. The term education means 'education of all types and at all levels including access to such education, its standard and quality and the conditions under which it is provided.'² By implication this means that the provisions of non-discrimination enunciated in the Convention apply to all levels that are not expressly stated in the Convention such as pre primary education. The definition of education provided in the Convention gives insight into some of the key components of education which are accessibility, quality and the condition of the learning environment.

Article 3 of the Convention requires State Parties to take all administrative and legislative measures to eliminate discrimination in admission of pupils in educational institutions and to ensure that no one is discriminated by virtue of belonging to a particular group. Article 4 goes on to state positive measures that States must take to promote non discrimination in education. States have an obligation to repeal all statutory provisions that allow discrimination. Under Article 4 of the same Convention, States must undertake positive measures to promote equality. The Article further reiterates the provisions stated in the UDHR that education should be free and compulsory at primary level and that such education should target the development of a person's personality and their respect for human rights and freedoms. The elimination of discrimination ensures that no one is left behind hence the Convention is a key instrument in the realisation of inclusive education.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966)

Zimbabwe acceded to ICESCR in May 1991. Article 13 of the Convention is a commitment by State Parties to the realisation of the right to education. It emphasises the principle that primary education should be free and compulsory. Member States also have an obligation to make secondary education progressively free. The Economic and Social Council Committee (ECOSOC) discussed this article under its General Comment No. 13. It set out essential features of education which are now known as the 4As of education. These are availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. The Committee remarked that availability entails that there has to be educational institutions with the entire necessary infrastructure. The State in fulfilling its duty under this article must therefore build schools and ensure that the schools have all the required facilities such as water and sanitation facilities. Accessibility has 3 elements which are non discrimination where marginalised groups are able to access education, physical accessibility where educational institutions are within reach of the individual and economic accessibility entailing affordability. Education must be acceptable to the students by being relevant, culturally appropriate and it should be of good quality. Adaptability is about flexibility where education should respond to the changing needs of society. This is where the use of modern technology and new teaching methods

² Article 1 of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education

comes in. Article 13 also recognises private actors in education who are allowed to set up educational institutions and the rights of parents and legal guardians to determine the religious and moral education of their children.

Also of note in this Convention is Article 14 which places an obligation upon States on becoming a Party to the Convention to work out and adopt a detailed action plan on the progressive implementation of compulsory and free education in its territory. The implementation should be done within a reasonable number of years. In General Comment No.11, the Committee on CESCR notes that the duty to submit the action plans has to be ‘scrupulously observed’ While it recognised economic challenges that may be faced by countries due to structural adjustment programmes, it was also emphatic that such challenges cannot be used as an excuse for not adopting and implementing the required action plans. The Committee emphasised that the term “free of charge” places the entire obligation to fund the education on the State.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989)

Zimbabwe is a signatory to CRC which it signed in 1990 and ratified in September of the same year. CRC is the most comprehensive international instrument on children’s rights. Of paramount importance is the principle stated in Article 3 that in all matters concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration. This principle has been adopted globally and in national Constitutions including Zimbabwe’s Constitution Amendment No 20 of 2013. Article 28 of the Convention states some of the fundamentals which States must undertake for the realisation of the right to education by children in their States. Firstly, primary education should be compulsory and available to all free of charge. States also have an obligation to take measures to keep children in school and reduce dropouts. CRC addresses the issue of school discipline by providing that child discipline should not violate the child’s human dignity and the rights set out in the Convention. It provides that international cooperation should be encouraged in facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods prioritising developing countries.

The Convention is very expansive regarding the quality of education. Article 29 states that the child’s education must also be directed at his/her talents, physical and mental abilities to their fullest potential. In addition, Article 29(c) states that the child’s education must also develop the child’s respect for his or her own parents, cultural identity and language values and the child’s national values. It must prepare the child for responsible life in a free society without discrimination. Further, the education should also be targeted at developing the child’s respect for the natural environment. The CRC Committee gave a comprehensive interpretation of the aims of education stated in Article 29 in its General Comment No.1. It observed that the education provided for under this Article should be child centred; child friendly and it should empower the child with life skills to face the evolving challenges of later life. It also commented that Article 29 should not be regarded in isolation but together with all the other rights stated in the Convention. It observed that the principle of the indivisibility and inter dependence of human rights should apply. In other words, when the aims of education stated in Article 29 are fully implemented the child will be able to realise all the other rights such as freedom of expression, right to information, right to health and all the other rights. CRC therefore clearly sets out the key aspects to be considered in any national education Curricula.

[African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child \(ACRWC, 1990\)](#)

Zimbabwe is a State party to ACRWC which it acceded to in 1995. The Convention addresses the issue of child protection. Article 5(2) of the Charter requires States parties to take measures to ensure the survival, protection and development of the child to the maximum extent possible. Article 11 of the Charter provides for the right to education for every child. It restates the provisions in the CRC on compulsory and free basic education and also contextualises the aims of education for Africa. Article 11 of the Charter states that the education provided to the child must be targeted at the preservation and strengthening of positive African morals, traditional values and cultures. It must also target the promotion and achievement of African unity and solidarity. Article 11(h) provides that education should be targeted at the promotion of the child's understanding of primary healthcare. The element of healthcare in education is absent in the other Conventions.

[Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW, 1976\)](#)

CEDAW came into being as an acknowledgement by the international community that discrimination against women including girls is one of the barriers that hinders them from enjoying their rights on an equal basis with men. It was ratified by Zimbabwe in 1991. Article 10 of the Convention provides the right to education for women with a focus on removing the barriers that make education inaccessible to women. More specifically States parties are mandated to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination in the field of education by ensuring:

“(a) the same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training”³

This provision is all encompassing as it does not only cover adult women but the reference to pre-school ensures that girls in early childhood education must also be treated with equality to the boys. The provision also makes it clear that it applies to both urban and rural settings. This means that in fulfilling the right to education for its citizens, a State should ensure that educational establishments in rural and urban settings have the same non discriminatory conditions.

Article 10(c) addresses the content of the education Curriculum with State Parties being required to eliminate all stereotyped concepts on the role of men and women at all levels of education thus covering pre- primary. The elimination of stereotypes has to be done by encouraging coeducation and the revision of textbooks and school programmes and adaptation of teaching methods. Discrimination is therefore not eliminated by the enactment of non discrimination laws only but the whole system including the Curriculum, learning environment and teaching methods need to promote equality and non discrimination.

[Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD, 2006\)](#)

Another key Convention regarding the fundamental right to education is CRPD. Zimbabwe acceded to CRPD and the optional protocol in 2013. Article 7 of the Convention is entirely about

³ Article 10(a) of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women

children with disabilities. It mandates State Parties to take measures to ensure that children with disabilities fully enjoy the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as their counterparts without disabilities. Article 5 of the Convention is the equality and non discrimination clause under which State Parties shall recognise that all people are equal before and under the law and are entitled to equal protection before the law. The Article also expressly prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. In order to promote equality reasonable accommodation is to be provided to people with disabilities and affirmative action taken to accelerate or achieve equality of persons with disabilities shall not be regarded as discrimination.

The Convention also has its provision on the right to education for people with disabilities. In terms of Article 24 of the Convention, State Parties have an obligation to take measures that ensure inclusive education. Such measures must ensure that people with disabilities are not excluded from free compulsory education and secondary education. The article also provides specific actions to be taken by States to ensure effective education for people with disabilities. These include providing reasonable accommodation for the individual and facilitating the learning of sign language. The environment must also maximise the academic and social development of deaf and blind learners. The Convention emphasises the need for education to be inclusive for persons with disabilities. The CRPD Committee defined inclusion as:

“.....a process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers with a vision serving to provide all students of the relevant age range with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their requirements and preferences.”⁴.

The CRPD detailed provisions and the clear definition of inclusion by the Committee constitute normative guidelines for the development of national inclusive policies for education. They highlight the fact that inclusive education is not only at learner’s level but it includes the training Curricula for teachers and all the staff within the education system.

[Other International and Regional Declarations on Education](#)

Recognising the importance of the right to education nations have also convened international conferences which elaborate on the right to education. These soft law instruments are a clear expression of international commitment to the realisation of the right to education. They also contribute to the understanding of what is education with particular emphasis on quality and who should be targeted by education which is everyone that is, children, youth and adults. They also provide goals and targets for education. The first major Conference on Education for All was held in 1990.

[World Declaration on Education for All, 1990](#)

The Conference drew participants from 155 countries from government departments and civil society. The participants agreed that education must be directed at meeting basic learning needs. The content of the curricula and the teaching methods must empower the learner with knowledge,

⁴ CRPD General Comment No.4

life skills and enable them to respect the rights of others and promote international peace. The Declaration emphasised the universality of education paying particular attention to the need to ensure gender equality in education and the inclusion of marginalised groups such as working children, nomadic populations and people with disabilities. The Conference also acknowledged that learning begins at birth and therefore communities and institutions must also focus on early childhood care. Article 6 of the Declaration states the need for societies to ensure nutrition, health care and physical and emotional support for learners. The Declaration therefore emphasises that education must be of the best quality, must target every person from children to adults, must be inclusive and equitable to cater for marginalised groups and the learning environment must be learner friendly and conducive for effective education.

[The Dakar Framework for Action, 2000](#)

The Dakar Framework for Action is a reaffirmation and commitment by countries to achieve the goals agreed upon at the World Declaration on Education for All of 10 years earlier. The participating countries adopted 6 goals for the achievement of Education for all. The first goal specifically targets early childhood care and education with the countries committing to expanding and improving such education particularly for the most vulnerable children. The second goal which was to be achieved by 2015 was to ensure access to free compulsory primary education of good quality for all children particularly girls and those in difficult circumstances. The other goals relate to equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills by youth and adults, increasing adult literacy, eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education and improving all aspects of the quality of education. The focus on early childhood care and education is of great significance since it had not been specifically addressed in the World Conference of 1990 and even in Conventions focusing on education.

The Dakar Framework was a culmination of regional Conferences that had reviewed progress made in the implementation of the EFA goals set in 1990 at the World Conference on Education for All. Among other goals, the Africa Region committed to improving access and equity in education by expanding and providing early childhood education to all children of the appropriate age. The target was for governments to work towards providing early childhood education for all children between the ages of 3 to 6 years by 2015.

[Sustainable Development Goals, 2016-2030](#)

Under the auspices of the United Nations, countries developed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs are a comprehensive package of goals and targets which individual countries must focus on to achieve development in various areas by 2030. Education being a key development issue in itself and an enabler for the achievement of other goals is addressed under SDG 4. The goal is to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” Target 4.2 states that:

‘By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education’.

This is a clear statement of intent by the nations to make early childhood education available and accessible to all in fulfilment of the right to education. The target also provides guidance on the standard of the education to be provided by highlighting that it should be quality education.

[Continental Education Strategy for Africa \(CESA, 2016-2025\)](#)

CESA 16-25 is of vital importance in the education discourse in Africa because of its express recognition of the pre primary phase of education. Pre primary education is described as “the pillar on which future learning and training are grounded.”⁵ Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) was identified as the next frontier for Africa to focus on in order to achieve quality education and training. However, CESA 16-25 notes that the pre- primary subsector is currently under resourced and in most cases staffed with untrained teachers. In most African countries, there is also difference in quality between the education provided in rich and poor settings and in urban and rural areas. Furthermore, the private sector is the main provider of such education with the public sector playing a minimal role. CESA therefore called for regulatory frameworks to monitor the quality and relevance of the early childhood education.

These international and regional Conventions and Declarations complement each other and they constitute the normative framework to be applied by individual countries in their educational systems to enable their citizens to realise the right to education. The Conventions are legally binding agreements which State parties have an obligation to implement.

[Southern African Development Community \(SADC\)](#)

Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) developed a protocol for Education and training which emphasizes the issue of cooperation. The member States acknowledged that primary and secondary education forms the critical foundation upon which tertiary education is built. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the standards of basic education and ensure that it provides lifelong skills. They agreed to provide universal basic education for at least nine years particularly giving special support to socially disadvantaged groups. However, the SADC Protocol is silent on the key aspect of basic education which is Early Childhood Development.

[Zimbabwe’s Obligations under International Law](#)

State parties to the various treaties have an obligation to ensure that the provisions of these treaties are incorporated into their national legal systems so that they can be implemented easily.

As a State party to all the above treaties with provisions on the right to education, Zimbabwe has an obligation to incorporate them into its national laws and to implement them. Section 34 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, 2013 hereinafter referred to as the Constitution places an obligation on the State to ensure that all treaties and Conventions to which Zimbabwe is a party are domesticated into national law. Zimbabwe has not domesticated all the main Conventions relating to the right to education. Key conventions such as ICESCR, CRC, ACRWC, CEDAW and CRPD have not yet been wholly incorporated into Zimbabwean law. The above conventions have expansive provisions on the right to education which address the aims and quality of education. The aims and issues of quality education are extensively addressed in Article 13 of CESC, Article 29 of CRC, Article 11 of ACRWC and Article 24

⁵ Continental Education Strategy for Africa page 18

of CRPD. These Conventions define the aims and quality of education envisaged in fulfilling the right to education. They state that the education must be directed at the full development of the human being, empower him or her with life skills and strengthen their respect for human rights. Zimbabwe prefers a system where it incorporates some provisions of the Conventions into national laws instead of domesticating a whole Convention. For instance, the right to basic State funded education in Section 75 of the Zimbabwean Constitution is provided for under ICECSR, CRC and ACRWC. However this piecemeal approach is not desirable as it leaves out some key provisions on the right to education such as those relating to the aims and quality of education. Moreover one cannot approach the Zimbabwean courts alleging a direct violation of the provisions of the said Conventions since they are not a part of Zimbabwean law. The provisions of the Conventions can only be used to support a case of rights which are guaranteed in the Zimbabwean Constitution.

States implementation of international law obligations are monitored through the State party reporting process. The main international treaties have reporting mechanisms which require State parties to submit periodic reports to a Committee constituted under that particular treaty. The reports state the progress made in implementing the treaty and the challenges encountered. The Committees also consider input from civil society and UN agencies. The reporting State can submit an inclusive report incorporating submissions from civil society or civil society groups can submit alternative reports. The Committees then examine the reports and makes recommendations to improve implementation and when the State party submits its next report, an assessment is made on how it has implemented the previous recommendations. It is through these reports that Zimbabwe can be held accountable for fulfilling, respecting and protecting the right to education. Civil society can enforce their right to make submissions to treaty bodies and demand implementation of the treaties. The UN Human Rights Council also has special rapporteurs including one on the right to education who are empowered to carry out country visits and conduct enquiries on any alleged human rights violations. However, where a country fails to implement recommendations of these treaty bodies, there are no legal penalties and the system relies on nations' political will to honour their obligations.

National Constitutional Framework

Founding Principles and National Objectives

One of the key commitments which State parties make in international Conventions is to align their laws beginning with their Constitutions to the provisions of the Conventions. The current Zimbabwean Constitution has been lauded as the most progressive Constitution which Zimbabwe has had to date. The main reason for its wide approval is the Declaration of Rights which is in line with International human rights law. The theme of respect for human rights is an underpinning principle throughout the Constitution. Beginning with Section 3 which outlines the founding values and principles, fundamental human rights and freedoms are identified as one of the founding values and principles. Section 3(2) outlines the principles of good governance that must guide the State and all its institutions and agencies and they include the recognition of the rights of ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic and religious groups, the rights of persons with disabilities, women, the elderly, youths and children and veterans of the liberation struggle. These rights are then detailed in Chapter 4 of the Constitution which is the Declaration of Rights.

Before the Declaration of Rights, the Constitution states national objectives which are to guide the State in carrying out its obligations Section 8 reads:

(1) The objectives set out in this Chapter guide the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level in formulating and implementing laws and policy decisions that will lead to the establishment, enhancement and promotion of a sustainable, just, free and democratic society in which people enjoy prosperous, happy and fulfilling lives.

(2) Regard must be had to the objectives set out in this Chapter when interpreting the State's obligations under this Constitution and any other law.

One of the objectives stated in Section 11 is that the State must take all practical measures to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms set out in Chapter 4 and to promote their realisation and fulfilment. Other objectives which are of significant relevance to education include gender balance (Section 17), children (Section 19), persons with disabilities (Section 22) and education (Section 27). The State's intention and commitment to fulfil, respect and promote human rights culminates in the Declaration of Rights which spells out the specific fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

Right to Education

In line with international law, the right to education is among the rights enshrined in the Declaration of Rights. Section 75 provides that every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has a right to basic education funded by the State. This education includes basic adult education. Zimbabwean citizens and permanent residents are also entitled to further education for which the State is under obligation to make progressively available and accessible through reasonable legislative and other measures. Section 75 is an abridged version of the right to education when compared to provisions in international Conventions such as CESCR and CRC. By committing to provide basic State funded education for citizens and permanent residents, the Constitution fulfils Zimbabwe's obligations under international law. However, Section 75 is silent on issues such as the aims and quality of the education. In order to address this gap on the aims of education, reference is to be made to Section 46(c) of the same Constitution which provides that in interpreting any of the provisions of the Declaration of Rights, a court, tribunal, body or forum must take into account international law and all treaties and agreements to which Zimbabwe is a State party.

Section 75 of the Constitution also limits the right to education by making it subject to progressive realisation and the availability of resources. However, in anticipation of such a scenario, Article 14 of CESCR which binds Zimbabwe requires State parties to adopt and implement action plans on how the progressive realisation is to be achieved. In its General Comment No.11 on Article 14, the CESCR Committee reiterated that lack of financial resources should not be used as an excuse for failure to fulfil the right to education. The Committee observed that where a State party has genuine financial challenges, the international community has an obligation under the principle of international cooperation to assist the Member State. Part 3 of Chapter 4 elaborates rights and freedoms applicable to certain groups of people to ensure their certainty. The rights of children including the right to education are elaborated in this Part under Section 81. Firstly Section 81(1)

defines a child as a boy and girl below the age of 18 years. This definition is in accordance with international law. Section 81(1)(c) provides that every child has a right to education, health care services, nutrition and shelter. The fact that these basic rights are put together in one subsection is an acknowledgement of their interdependence and indivisibility. The Constitution makes no specific mention of early child education but the definition of a child in Section 81 makes it clear that children in the pre-school age group also have a right to education and all the other rights provided for under this section because they are below the age of 18 years. Most significantly for children, the right to education under this section is not made subject to progressive realisation or subject to the availability of resources. Therefore, the State cannot use non availability of resources as an excuse for not fulfilling the right of children to education. Section 81 adopts the international principle stated in all the key children's rights Conventions that in all matters regarding children, the best interests of the child shall be of paramount consideration. This should be the guiding principle in all State institutions that deal with children including the education sector.

Rights of People with Disabilities

Section 83 elaborates the rights of persons with disabilities. It provides that the State has an obligation to take appropriate measures within the limits of its resources to ensure that persons with disabilities realise their full potential. The measures include provision of special facilities for their education and provision of State funded education and training where they need it. The Constitution does not expressly provide for the right to inclusive education for people with disabilities. It also lacks the crucial details of some of the measures which State parties are required to take to ensure the right to education for persons with disabilities. These gaps in the Constitution need to be addressed through other laws in order to reflect Zimbabwe's commitments under the CRPD.

Rights to Inherent dignity, Personal security and Protection from violence

All the human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in Chapter 4 of the Constitution are relevant to the child and consequently to education. However, there are some provisions which are key considerations in the field of education. Both international and regional Conventions on children's rights such as CRC and ACRWC emphasise the States obligation to register children at birth, respect the inherent dignity of children and their right to protection from all forms of violence and abuse. Section 35 (b) and 35(c) of the Constitution guarantees the rights of every Zimbabwean citizen to travel documents, birth certificates and other identity documents. Birth certificates have a key role in children's realisation of the right to education as they provide proof of age and they are a requirement in registering for national examinations. In some instances, they are also required in order to enroll at some schools.

Section 51 of the Zimbabwe Constitution entitles every person to inherent dignity in public and private life. Section 52(a) provides the right to personal security and freedom from violence in all public and private spaces. Section 17 (2)(c) requires the State to ensure that children are protected from maltreatment, neglect and abuse. Section 81(e) provides for the right of children to be protected from economic and sexual exploitation, maltreatment and any form of abuse. Section 53 prohibits subjecting a person to torture, cruel or inhuman degrading treatment or punishment. In *S v C*, the High Court ruled that Section 53 of the current Constitution outlaws corporal punishment in schools. The judgement was confirmed by the Constitutional

Court in 2019. Therefore, regarding protection of children from violence, abuse and corporal punishment, the Constitution is in compliance with the international Conventions to which Zimbabwe is a party.

Languages

International Conventions on education also emphasise the need for education to promote the learner's respect for culture and to be culturally appropriate. CESA encourages the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction in education. Language is a part of a person's cultural identity. The Constitution under Section 6 now recognises 16 languages as official languages of Zimbabwe. These 16 languages are to be treated equitably and their use is to be promoted. Educational institutions are the key centres for learning languages hence the need for these languages to be taught in schools. Section 63(a) and (b) provides for the rights to language and culture respectively. Every person has a right to choose the language which they want to use and to participate in the cultural life of their choice. The Constitution as the supreme law of Zimbabwe constitutes the broad normative framework from which all the other laws are derived. Details that may seem lacking such as implementation details on all the provisions of the Constitution including the Declaration of Rights can be provided through Acts of Parliament as long as those Acts of Parliament are consistent with the Constitution. Therefore, the Education Amendment Act, 2020 has to be measured against this standard of whether it is consistent with the Constitution. It also has to be measured on whether it fulfils the State obligations on education set out in the Constitution and the international and regional Conventions to which Zimbabwe is a State party.

Enforcement of the right to education

One of the main principles elucidated in international law is that the State is the main duty bearer regarding the enjoyment of human rights by people in its territory. It has a duty to fulfil, respect and protect the human rights of people under its jurisdiction. Section 85(1) of the Constitution provides a list of the people who are entitled to approach the courts alleging violation of rights namely:

- (a) any person acting in their own interests;
- (b) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
- (c) any person acting as a member, or in the interests, of a group or class of persons;
- (d) any person acting in the public interest;
- (e) any association acting in the interests of its members⁶

This is a broad range of people who are entitled to approach the courts if any of their rights under Chapter 4 is violated. Section 85(1)(b) is of particular significance to children whose right to education is violated as it empowers their parents or guardians to approach the courts on their behalf.

⁶ Section 85(1) (a) to 85(1) (e) of the Constitution

Alignment of the Education Amendment Act to the Constitution

The preamble to the Education Amendment Act herein referred to as the Act quotes Section 75 of the Constitution in its entirety. It is thus an expression of the State's intention to operationalise Section 75 of the Constitution and to adopt the human rights based approach to education. In this regard, the Act expounds on the Constitutional provisions on the right to education

Compulsory basic State funded education

According to the Education Amendment Act 2020, Basic education is education from Early Childhood Development to Ordinary level (Form Four). Basic State Funded Education means children from ECD to Ordinary level will not be required to pay fees and levies charged by school authorities. Furthermore, the State shall provide them with learning and teaching material, for example educational toys, textbooks, stationery, facilities, infrastructure subject to the availability of the resources according to section 75 of the Constitution. This basic State funded education is compulsory and parents who deny their children access to education will be prosecuted.

The Act is to be commended for including Early Childhood Education in the definition of basic education and basic State funded education. It is significant that the State funding starts at early childhood development level. The Act also adds the element of compulsion of the basic education, an element which is absent in Section 75 of the Constitution but provided for in international Conventions. The emphasis that basic education is to be compulsory is reflected in the imposition of a criminal penalty on any person who deprives a child of the right to education.

Progressive Realisation of the Right to Education

Section 75 of the Constitution subjects the right to basic State funded education to progressive realisation. The Education Amendment Act while restating that the right is silent on how the progressive realisation will be achieved. International law, as discussed above makes it clear that progressive realisation does not equate to the absence of implementation until resources are available but rather it is about implementation in phases. This is the reason why article 14 of ICECSR requires State parties to develop and adopt action plans setting out time bound targets on how it will be achieved. On that premise, the Act should have included a provision empowering the Minister to make regulations for the development and implementation of a national action plan to achieve progressive realisation of basic State funded education. However, the national action plan can still be developed as a policy through a participatory process inclusive of civil society and development partners.

Early Childhood Development

The Act defines Early Childhood Development as the physical, mental and social development of children between 4 and 5 years. This constitutes a limited definition of early childhood development. The second principle of the 4As of education which has been agreed upon in

international law is that education must be accessible. Limiting ECD to the 4 to 5 years age group amounts to a denial of access to education particularly the right to basic State funded education for pre primary children outside this age group. The new Section 2(b) of the Act which is an import of Section 56(3) of the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the ground of age and the limitation on age may amount to discrimination for those ECD children below the age of 4 years.

Enrolment at Nearest School

In terms of Section 10 of the Act, pupils are entitled to be enrolled at the school nearest to them unless the school is fully enrolled. If the school is fully enrolled, the child is to be enrolled at the second nearest school but if that is not possible, the first nearest school has to enroll the child. This provision is good for ECD pupils who are too young to walk long distances to school particularly in rural areas. However, it may result in an unintended outcome of increasing the teacher pupil ratio in schools in situations where a school has to take in a pupil who cannot be enrolled at another school even if the school is fully enrolled. Large classes have a negative impact on the quality of education. The first A of 4As education framework obligates the State to make education available by increasing the infrastructure, human resources and teaching materials for education. Section 8(2) of the Act seeks to address the issue of infrastructure by placing an obligation on every local authority to provide land for infrastructure but the provision does not provide the modalities on how this is to be implemented. It is also silent on the recipient of the land to be provided hence it is not clear whether the land is to be provided to private actors or the central government.

Languages to be taught in schools

The new Section 62 of the Act is an alignment and operationalisation of the Education Act with Section 6 of the Constitution which lists 16 languages as the officially recognised languages of Zimbabwe. It requires every school to endeavour to teach every officially recognised language. The issue is whether such a requirement is practical as it will require every school to have teachers who are skilled in all the 16 languages. There is need for the development of a comprehensive language policy which will guide the education sector on how this provision will be implemented.

Pupil Discipline

A new Section 68(A) in the Act aligns the Education Act with the Constitution by abolishing corporal punishment. The new Section empowers schools to develop disciplinary policies which respect the inherent dignity of a pupil and does not amount to inhumane degrading treatment. This is a progressive provision which fulfils Zimbabwe's international obligations regarding child discipline. The Act also prohibits teachers from beating pupils but it does not prescribe a penalty for violating the provision. There are also other forms of physical punishment such as kicking or pinching which are excluded by use of the word "beat". Furthermore, there are other staff members at schools who are not teachers who may beat pupils but the Act limits prohibition from beating pupils to teachers only. The provision therefore needs to be strengthened so that it can encompass all forms of physical punishment and all the professionals at schools who are capable of imposing corporal punishment.

Pupils with Disabilities

Section 68(B) requires registered schools to put in place infrastructure for pupils with disabilities and to have action plans on how the rights of pupils with disabilities are respected in their schools. By limiting the obligation to nongovernmental schools only, the State is abdicating its Constitutional and international obligation to fulfil the right of pupils with disabilities to inclusive education. The provision needs to be extended to all schools including government schools.

Provision of Schools

The state has an obligation to provide schools for all its citizens to access education but it cannot do this without the assistance of non-state actors. The clauses in the Education Amendment Act 2020 allowing non-state actors to build schools regulated by the Minister through registration and approval of fees arise from this realisation. EMIS 2019 data on school ownership confirms that the state owned 80.17 of primary schools and 73.80 secondary schools. Notwithstanding these erstwhile efforts to provide schools, Zimbabwe still has a deficit in the provision of schools causing schools to resort to double sessions as a coping measure.

Role of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) through the designated minister is the one responsible for administering the Education Act as amended. The ministry is a State institution hence in accordance with Section 2(2) of the Constitution, all the obligations imposed by the Constitution are binding on it and it has a duty to fulfil them. More specifically, the ministry has a duty to fulfil the right to education not only in accordance with the Constitution but also in line with Zimbabwe's obligations under international law. According to its website, the mandate of MoPSE is to provide a wholesome education for all Zimbabweans. This mandate resonates with Zimbabwe's international commitments including Goal 4 of the sustainable development goals. Goal 4 of the SDGs is a commitment to ensure quality, equitable and inclusive education for all. The ministry's mission is to "provide equitable, quality, inclusive, relevant and competence driven primary, secondary and non formal education. While the mission statement is commendable for addressing the key components of education, it leaves out pre-primary education. Target 4.2 of the SDGs is focuses on ensuring quality early childhood and pre-primary education for boys and girls by 2030.

Advocacy Issues

Domestication of International human rights treaties on the right to education

The State must comply with Section 34 of the Constitution, which requires it to ensure that all treaties and Conventions to which Zimbabwe is a party are incorporated into national law through

Acts of Parliament. Domestication makes the Conventions easier to enforce as an aggrieved person can approach the courts alleging direct violation of any of the provisions of the Conventions. Domestication also ensures a wholesome adoption of all the provisions of a particular Convention at the same time.

Development of a National Action Plan for Progressive Realisation of Basic State funded Education

In compliance with CECSR, Zimbabwe was supposed to develop an action plan on how it would implement basic free education within 2 years of becoming a State party to the Convention. Thereafter a State is required to submit another action plan if the first one was interrupted by some negative circumstances which hindered implementation. In other words, at any given time, State parties should have an active action plan on the issue. This plan should be reflected either in the Education Amendment Act 2020 or in the subsequent policy documents developed by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to make the provision of free basic education a reality.

Clause on keeping schools free from Violence

The clauses in the Education Amendment Act 2020 on the management of sexual abuse and banning the use of corporal punishment to discipline pupils show commitment to create child friendly schools conducive for learning. However, this should have been extended to protect schools from all forms of political violence, which can happen during times of political polarisation with disruptive effects on pupils' learning.

Implementation time lags

The Constitution Amendment was in 2013 and the enacting of the Education Amendment Act to align it with the Constitution was 7 years later in 2020. The crafting of relevant Education policies aligned with the education provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 is also proceeding slowly. Delayed education rights mean denied rights so there is need to advocate for an expedited crafting and signing of Education policies.

Education and Birth Certificates

Birth registration is critical because it provides vital information for planning the provision of education and also gives the pupils legal entitlements as citizens. While this falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs, it should have been highlighted in the Education Amendment Act 2020 that the Ministry will facilitate pupils' access to registration documents so that they are not excluded from education.

Chapter 3

Education Policies, Circulars and the Education Amendment Act 2020

This section analyses the links between the Constitution Amendment 2013, Amendment Act 2020, policies and circulars the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has developed to promote access to equitable, inclusive quality Education. Using the Knoster Change Management Model, it identifies the gaps in the provision of education in general but more specifically the provision of Early Childhood Development education. It concludes with recommendations for improvement.

The Constitution

Articles 2(1) and 2(ii) of the Chapter 1 of the Constitution Amendment 2013 define the following two critical attributes of the constitution:

1. The is the supreme law of Zimbabwe and any law, practice, custom or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid to the extent of the inconsistency
2. The obligations imposed by this Constitution are binding on every person, natural or juristic; including the State and all executive, legislative and judicial institutions and agencies of government at every level must be fulfilled by them.

The Education Amendment Act 2020

The Education Amendment Act 2020 was enacted to align the previous Education Act with the education provisions in the Constitution Amendment 2013 and is meant to inform MoPSE decisions in providing Education to Zimbabwean citizens. The Act has more operational details of the provisions in the constitution

Policies

MoPSE has crafted a raft of education policies and circulars to guide the provision of accessible, equitable, inclusive quality education. These policies and circulars need to be reviewed and aligned with the legal provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 in tandem with Constitution Amendment Act 2020.

Function of Education Amendment Act 2020, Policies and Circulars

The Education Amendment Act 2020, the Education policies and circulars have the following functions:

1. Indicate government position on the provision of education
2. Standardise practices in education
3. Are accountability documents since they can be used to assess progress in the provision of education

4. Can be the basis for resource mobilisation and allocation
5. Are change management tools.

Knoster Change Management Model

Knoster (1991) devised a change management model with five critical ingredients which is useful in analysing the education provisions in the policies and circulars as tools to create and manage change. The critical elements for effective change are:

1. Vision : which is a clear idea or articulation of what you want to achieve or where you want to go
2. Skills: any change will require capacity development of people to do things differently. Without skills on how to do things, people will experience counter-productive performance anxiety.
3. Incentives; People need to be motivated enough to work or to implement whatever changes are proposed. This is why sustainable development goals identify qualified and motivated teachers as critical for the attainment of quality education
4. Resource. Without the means to do the work or resources, it is impossible to do the work or provide the desired quality education. Lack of resources creates frustration
5. Clear Action /Implementation: A clear implementation outlining the steps to be taken is critical to achieve desired change and to monitor progress. Without it people can be stuck in one place.

School Financing Policy draft

Without adequate resources it is impossible to provide sustainable compulsory free basic education as enshrined in the Constitution Amendment 2013 and the Education Amendment Act 2020. The proviso clause that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within the limits of the resources available to it, to achieve the progressive realisation of the right set out in subsection(1) of section 75 is underpinned by this awareness.

The Provision of Education in Zimbabwe has been bedeviled by inadequate resourcing with most of the education budget going to salaries leaving parents and guardians bearing the brunt of financing education. ECD specifically has historical disadvantages undermining quality learning. It has the highest learner to classroom ratio, (1:60) learner to trained teacher ratio (1:66) and learner to teacher ratio (1:40) in the Zimbabwean schools. The shortage of qualified Teachers is because of fiscal constraints since there are many unemployed qualified ECD teachers.

The School Financing Policy draft 2019-2030 seeks to mobilise sustainable funding to provide free basic education. The state is obligated to provide free basic education as stated in the

Education Amendment Act 2020 which spells out the roles of the State and the citizens in the joint provision of education and has a phased road map for the progressive realisation of this right.

The Goals are linked to Sustainable Development goals as follows:

1. Overall Goal: Free primary and secondary education by 2030
2. Mid Term Goal: State funded basic education by 2025
3. Short term Goal: No cost schools for the poor by 2020

The policy identifies the critical elements required for the provision of equitable, inclusive quality education viz. infrastructure, wash facilities, teaching and learning materials, teachers' houses, uniforms, transport fees and government should take cognisance of these needs to come up with a funding model

Gap and Alignment issues

1. Charging for profit schools a registration fee and an annual levy may be a disincentive and undermine the goal to build more schools to improve access to education. While private schools do not promote equity, they help to decongest the public schools. However, the registration fees and annual levies could be justified if it is part of the fund-raising strategies for the National Education Fund to provide free basic education.
2. Qualifying the mid-term goal of providing fully state funded quality education to say from Grade 1-7 excludes ECD yet it is an essential part of basic education to be provided by the state.
3. The Education Amendment Act 2020 qualifies free basic education as education where citizens are not required to pay fees/levies and the state provides teaching and learning materials, facilities, infrastructure and resources. Having a fund-raising strategy where parents pay levies and fees violates this provision unless it is a temporary measure moving towards the progressive realisation of this right.
4. The Secretary's circular minute number 3 of 2019 on removing barriers to access quality education needs to be harmonised with the School Financing Policy and the Education Amendment Act and categorically state that it is the legal obligation of the state to provide free basic education without requiring citizens to pay levies and fees.
5. On resource mobilisation strategies, Government could also consider tax or duty concessions on education in-puts to bring down their cost to make them more affordable.
6. The School Financing Policy has to address funding issues which will feature in other policies.

National Early Education Policy

The National Early Learning Policy Draft which has been validated and is still to be adopted and signed, is a coherent framework to guide the provision of equitable, inclusive quality Early Childhood Development Programmes. It aligns the various circulars and statutory instruments MOPSE had promulgated to regulate the provision of ECD.

The National Early Learning Policy draft is in sync with the Constitution Amendment 2013, the Education Amendment Act 2020 and the Competency-based Curriculum 2015-2022. The development of the Early learning Policy is in the Education Sector strategic Plan 2016-2025.

Quality challenges addressed by the Policy

1. Low and inequitable access for ECD
2. Insufficient quality of service
3. Low participation of Children with Disabilities
4. Unaffordable costs to some indigent children
5. Long walking distance
6. Shortage of facilities
7. Inadequate qualified teachers
8. Weak teacher supervision
9. Lack of teaching and learning materials

[Alignment with the Education Amendment Act](#)

The Early learning Policy draft acknowledges free basic Education as a state provided right and provides for free early childhood education to promote access and equity since high fees charged by some private ECD services providers have excluded some children from attending. All children aged 4 -5years are to be enrolled in ECD A and 5-6 in ECD B making primary school education become 9 years in line with Secretary's circular number 2 of 2014 and Secretary's circular number 14 of 2004 which made it compulsory to attach ECD A and ECD B to primary schools to democratise access to education.

The medium of instruction in ECD will be a local language which is consistent with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 and also upholds the children's right to learn and access learning in their mother tongue.

School feeding is critical in ECD to promote children's healthy development, improve

attendance and promote learning. The national Early learning policy draft has school feeding provisions in line with the Education Amendment Act 2020 and the Permanent Secretary's circular number 5 of 2019 on School feeding.

The Early learning policy draft has an implementation matrix to cost its implementation and in line with the School Financing policy, has resource mobilisation strategies.

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is responsible for coordinating and regulating the provision of ECD Education by the line Ministries and the parents and guardians of the ECD children.

The National Early Learning Policy has a clear vision, strategies for capacity development and resource mobilisation and a costed implementation matrix which are critical elements for success provided it is signed and implemented with fidelity.

Gaps in the National Early learning Policy

1. Defining ECD as the period from 4 to 5 years excludes the children from 0-3, The common definition of ECD which is also shared by the Colleges of Education is that it is the development period spanning from 0 to 8 years.
2. The policy speaks of developing ICT skills in ECD and also recognises the challenges of internet access and connectivity in Zimbabwe yet does not include the Ministry of ICT, Posts and telecommunications who are key in providing these services EMIS 2019 data reveals that only 26.25% of primary schools and 42.76% secondary schools had access to internet in 2019.
3. In calculating the unit cost of providing ECD Education per child it is also necessary to calculate the cost for providing ECD education to children with various disabilities so as to promote inclusive education.
4. The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Police is vital in providing birth registration and ensuring children's safety when crossing roads to and from school in urban areas and should be listed among the line Ministries in the policy
5. More creative strategies to reach the hard to reach out of school children with ECD Programmes like children with incarcerated mothers and children on the streets need to be explored. These could be mobile ECD outreach programmes.
6. Since ECD suffers from a serious dearth of teaching and learning materials, mobile toy libraries could be part of the long term vision to promote quality learning in ECD
7. The National Early Learning Policy also needs to address the issue of health assessments to track growth and development milestones inclusive of malnourishment.
8. Employing qualified ECD teachers needs to be prioritised to promote quality learning and improve mentorship of the pre-service ECD students during their one year Teaching practice attachment at the school. ECD has the highest percentage of unqualified teachers

in education .According to 2019 EMIS data 59.58 percent of ECD teachers are qualified in Zimbabwe.

9. There is a need to expedite the process of registering private ECD centres to facilitate inspection and supervision to ensure quality and data capturing
10. In rural areas, ECD centres are far apart, and ECD children have challenges walking more than 5km to get to school. There is need to explore the provision of quality ECD through community centres to promote inclusive access to ECD.

Related Circulars and Statutory Instruments.

1. The Early learning Policy draft synthesizes all the provisions of ECD which previously had been provided guided by piece meal circulars. The provisions include school feeding, enrolling into ECD, registration of ECD centres, staffing ECD with qualified teachers and supervision in ECD among others. The following is a summary of the circulars and statutory instruments
2. Statutory instrument 106 of 2005. This instrument provides the regulations for the operations of ECD A and B classes and stipulations on registration of centres, age of attendance, health and safety, staffing and duties of the head.
3. Secretary's circular Number 14 of 2004 which provides guidelines for the implementation of the recommendations of the 1998 Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and training to democratise access to ECD by making it part of the primary school.
4. Director's Circular Number 12 of 2005 which was meant to operationalize the guidelines of the Secretary's circular Number 14 of 2004. Among its stipulations are the role of the School Development Associations in mobilizing resources for construction and provision of furniture, supervision of ECD centres and the use of play based pedagogy in ECD
5. Principal Director's Circular number 20 of 2011 The circular is on curbing the mushrooming of unregistered ECD centres to ensure the provision of quality ECD and protect children
6. Secretary's Circular Number 2 of 2014 which makes attendance of ECD A and B, a mandatory requirement for enrolling into Grade 1, requires school heads to identify and register children with disabilities and the need to recognise the 16 languages in the constitution.

Notwithstanding these erstwhile provisions, the draft National Early Learning Policy, there is an urgent need to establish an ECD directorate at Head Office with decision-making power and reconsider the establishment of the ECD trainer in the districts.

School Feeding Circular

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has always recognized the role of school feeding in optimising attendance, improving school attendance, retention, achievement of learning outcomes and health outcomes. No wonder, school feeding was always an essential component in the provision of ECD programmes from their inception. School feeding remains a topical issue in Zimbabwean education in the context of COVID-19 economic disruptions and the ongoing drought which have adversely affected food security and undermined most households' capacity to provide a balanced diet for their children. The Secretary's circular Number 5 of 2019 explains in detail the manner of school feeding mentioned in the Education Amendment Act 2020.

Circular Objectives

The circular has the following four objectives:

1. Standardize operational guidelines for the implementation of Home Grown School Feeding Programme
2. Strengthen compliance with food safety standards: storage, preparation and serving
3. Promote high standards of accountability in the management of resources
4. Encourage participation of local communities in the constant supply of food

Circular Stipulations

The circular has detailed guidelines on multi-sectoral linkages in the provision of school feeding, inter-curricula linkages, infrastructure provision, food preparation, serving utensils, balanced diet recommendations and capturing of monitoring and evaluation data.

Through multisectoral linkages, involvement of the community and promotion of Agriculture, the circular attempts to ensure that the school feeding is sustainable.

Gaps in the School feeding Policy.

1. The government has taken a stance to feed all school children but it is important to have a proviso to prioritise the feeding of ECD children when resources are limited since these are most vulnerable.
2. The circular must also recommend measures that ensure that the critical school feeding is not interrupted during emergencies like Cholera and the current COVID-19 pandemic. Setting up a community-based feeding scheme could be one way of ensuring uninterrupted school feeding in emergencies.
3. There is need for clear modalities for ensuring equity in school feeding. Past experience has shown that more affluent communities provide better meals than their less resourced counter-parts. Food insecure communities will require more support to provide school feeding.
4. This circular also needs to be harmonised with the guidelines in the School health Policy, National Early Learning Policy draft and the Inclusive education Policy draft
5. The circular needs to categorically state that it is the state's obligation to feed school children as a strategy of promoting access to equitable, inclusive, quality basic education.
6. Without a costed implementation matrix it is doubtful that adequate resources will be mobilised to provide the required infrastructure, utensils, training and food for school feeding
7. Public food handlers need to be medically examined to protect the people they feed. Since most schools rely on rotating parents to prepare food for the children, it will be a great challenge to have all these medically examined. There might be a need for permanent positions of school feeding personnel in schools catered for by government.

School Health Policy

The School Health Policy is aligned to section 29 subsection (1), and (3) which reads:

(1)-The state must take all practical measures to ensure the provision of basic, accessible and adequate health services throughout Zimbabwe

(3)-The state must take all preventive measures within the limits of the resources available to it, including education and public awareness programmes, against the spread of disease.

The School Health Programme gives guidelines for the provision of a comprehensive school programme and addresses the health issues in the Education Amendment Act 2020 namely school feeding, prevention of violence in school, provision of facilities for ensuring menstrual hygiene and management of sexual and all forms of abuse in the school.

Related previous circulars

The School health policy resonates with Director's circular Number 22 of 2005 on "incidents of child abuse in schools", Director's circle number 41 of 2006 on "Making schools centres of care and support for the promotion of quality education" and Director's Circular Number 49 of 2007 on "Increasing incidents of bullying in schools" which are addressed under the component of Safe and Sanitary School Environment.

The School Health Policy is also in harmony with the School Feeding Policy draft, the National Early Learning Policy and the Inclusive Education Policy draft. The component on school based Health and nutrition services is aligned to the Permanent Secretary's circular Number 5 of 2019 on School feeding.

Circular p. 35 allows for the return to school of girls who would have been withdrawn due to pregnancy while the Education Amendment Act 2020 forbids the withdrawal of girls from school due to pregnancy. The school Health Policy addresses issues of sexual and Reproductive Health which include this issue of pregnancy.

Play promotes children's health and healthy children play and in ECD children predominantly learn through play. Hence the need for both in-door and out-door play areas. Unfortunately, while the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022 recognises that ECD children learn through play, it is subject –based and this has consequently undermined play-based learning.

ECD issues

The school Health Policy was jointly developed by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education and the Ministry of Health and Child Care and addresses many issues related to children's health and development. For the below five it provides for immunisations against diseases. It also provides for oral health inspections and mass drug administration, training in first aid for staff. This is very important because the Ministry of Health is responsible for the Health care of young children while the Ministry of Education attends to the Education component when they enroll into ECD.

ECD children by virtue of their age are susceptible to bullying so it is very important that schools are free from all forms of violence including bullying.

Gaps

Zimbabwe has experienced a number of Emergencies, Cyclone Idai, floods, cholera outbreak and the current COVID-19 lockdown which have disrupted learning and exposed a lack of disaster preparedness. There is need for a separate policy on School Disaster Risk Reduction giving detailed guidelines on how to prepare for and deal with disasters.

The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technological Development trains ECD Teachers through the colleges of Education and Universities. As part of a sustainability capacity development strategy, the policy should also extend the capacity development offered to in-service teachers to Teacher educators for preservice students to ensure that the students have the needed skills when they are employed in the schools.

The policy also requires a costed implementation Matrix to ensure that implementation will not flounder for lack of resources.

Inclusive Education Policy draft

The provision of inclusive Education is at the core of these Sustainable Development goals:

1. By 2030, ensure that all boys and girls complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
2. By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

The provision of free basic education defined as education from ECD to form four enshrined in the Education Amendment Act 2020 is meant to provide the inclusive education highlighted in this goal. Children with disability and girls are specifically mentioned in the Act because they have suffered from historical exclusion. The inclusive education draft policy was developed to remove all barriers that hinder access to education both from without and within to ensure that all children learn and achieve learning outcomes from ECD to secondary level. Like all the other Ministry's policies it seeks to bring together all the provisions of the previous circulars into one coherent framework aligned to the Education Amendment Act 2020.

The Inclusive Education Policy draft identifies the following inclusive education barriers and suggests strategies to overcome them:

1. Distance: learning centres inaccessible to the pupils because of long walking distances. More pronounced for young ECD children.
2. Disability: learning institutions not accommodative of children with disabilities through universally designed infrastructure, differentiated teaching methodologies and non-stigmatizing attitude

3. Gender based exclusion: discrimination on the basis of sex, failure to employ gender responsive pedagogy or to meet gender specific needs like the provision of sanitary wear and facilities for menstrual hygiene
4. Financial: exclusion from education through unaffordable fees
5. Healthy conditions: learning institutions not accommodating children with certain health conditions like asthma, diabetes or HIV.
6. Hostile learning environment: school not child friendly because of violence, bullying, sexual harassment, corporal punishment and other forms of child abuse
7. Lack of birth certificate: child not allowed to attend school or examinations because s/he has no birth certificate register

Section 22 Of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (no.20) ACT 2013 states that institutions and agencies of government must recognise the rights of persons with physical or mental disabilities to be treated with respect and dignity. The state must also take appropriate action to ensure that public buildings and amenities are accessible to people with disabilities. Schools therefore need to be legally compliant and ensure that their buildings are universally designed to be accessible to children with disabilities and that they also use forms of communication suitable for children with physical disabilities.

Some Ministry's Circulars subsumed in the Inclusive Education Policy draft

1. Secretary's circular number 3 of 2019 which stipulates measures to strengthen sector performance in the provision of equitable access to infant, junior and secondary education for all.
2. Circular Number 2 of 2000 on the inclusion of learners with disabilities
3. Secretary's Circular number p36 of 2006 on guidelines for providing equal access to education for learners with disabilities
4. Secretary's circular Number 2 of 2014 which has stipulations on the use of local languages in school and accommodating learners with disabilities.

The Practical Inclusive Handbook for Primary and Secondary Schools provides practical guidance on how to practise inclusive education in the schools and is available on the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's website.

ICT policy For Primary and Secondary Education 2019-2023

The current COVID-19 pandemic crisis and unprecedented school closure has underscored the need for ICT to promote remote learning during the lockdown and beyond. Technology literacy is one of the skills of the 21st century. The new Competency-based curriculum framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015-2022 lists Information Communication Technology (ICT) as one of the seven learning areas constituting the curriculum of infant school level. One of the outcomes at the end of the infant school (ECD- Grade 2) is “learners proficient in performing basic operations in literacy, numeracy, technology and technical skills”.

The ICT policy for Primary and Secondary School 2019-2023 provides guidance on the use of ICT in the whole school system. It is intended to guide the development, deployment and use of ICT resources and services throughout the Infant, Junior and Secondary education sector in Zimbabwe.

Since the policy is meant to improve the teaching and learning of all learners and summative and formative learner assessments it also applies to ECD. Therefore, the challenges of access, equity, inclusivity and quality raised apply.

The learners are unable to enjoy the optimum benefits of ICT supported pedagogy because of the following challenges:

1. Unavailability of a reliable source of power
2. Inadequate ICT tools
3. Lack of prioritisation for ICT programs
4. Inadequate skilled ICT personnel in the schools
5. limited access to communication infrastructure
6. connectivity challenges and high cost of access to information due to high tariffs

The long and short of it all is that not all schools ‘primary and secondary have access to radios, computers and internet. The rising internet tariffs also limit access even for those few schools that have internet.

The ICT policy has this inexhaustive list of the following devices and applications constituting ICTs in education: computers-tablets, computer projectors, smart boards, smart phones, digital textbooks-libraries, network access, virtual digital laboratories, video gaming learning systems and adaptive technologies.

The use of ICTs in education and during this current nation wide schools lockdown has exacerbated the digital divide between the rural and urban areas and between the low income and high income households. The following inequalities need to be addressed:

1. More rural than urban schools do not have a reliable source of power, internet connection and information communication technologies compromising their ability to offer quality education.
2. Children from low income families attend lowly resourced schools and have less access to ICT technologies leading to low ICT literacy.

3. The children with disabilities need to be prioritised in line with the special mention in the Education Amendment Act 2020, in the provision of ICTs in education
4. Since ECD lays the foundation for future learning, it is key in the building a digitally literate society and should be prioritised in the provision of ICTs in education.

ICT policy gap

The ICT policy for primary and secondary education 2019-2023 does not have a costed implementation plan and time framed implementation activities. Consequently, it might not be effectively implemented and fail to transform education practices on the ground.

The ICT policy identifies the challenges for country wide internet coverage yet makes no reference to the National ICT policy or have the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services and the Ministry of Information Communication Technology and Courier Services as line Ministries to provide synergy for the implementation of the policy.

Policies still to be developed

Education Disaster Risk Reduction Policy

Zimbabwe has experienced a number of disasters that have affected education delivery in different locations in different ways. These current COVID-19 pandemic has caused a national lockdown of schools, Cyclone Idai that devastated schools in Chimanimani and the current drought that has caused food insecurity in some regions. Some schools have also been at one time or another been affected by an outbreak of cholera, floods or blowing away of classroom roofs by rain storms. All these events underscore the need for an Education Disaster Risk Reduction Policy to ensure school preparedness. While some disaster preparedness is included in the school curriculum and some disaster risk reduction strategies are in the School Health Policy, this is not comprehensive enough.

Teacher Continuous Professional Development

Zimbabwe should be commended for developing and implementing Teacher Professional Standards and Teacher Professional Standards Supervision instruments. Plans are also underway to establish a Teachers' Professional Council to regulate the teaching profession and promote teacher professional growth. Notwithstanding these efforts, there is need to develop a Teacher Continuous Professional Development Policy with costed implementation strategies to ensure that all teachers keep abreast with changes in their disciplines. Teacher quality is a key determinant of the quality of teaching and learning.

Quality ECD Venn diagram Summary

The focus of this chapter has been to analyse the ECD Policies and circulars aimed at promoting children’s access to inclusive quality ECD and establish their alignment with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020. Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the relationship between policies and the achievement of high learning outcomes in ECD.

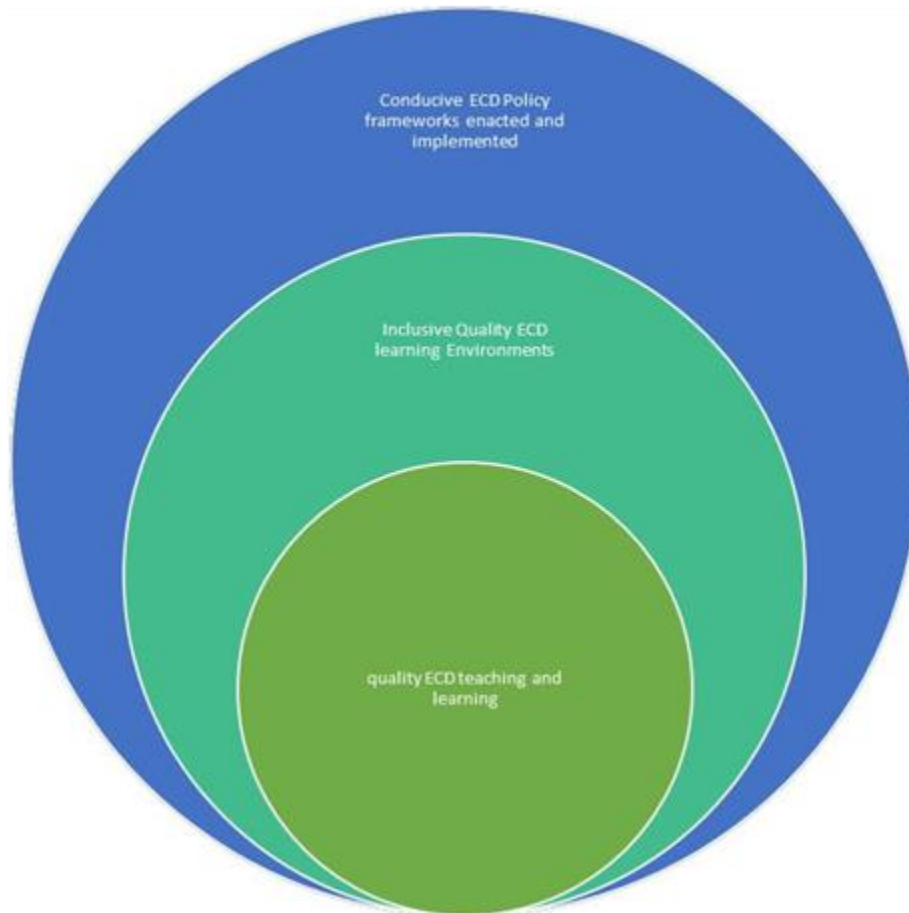


Figure 3.1 ECD Venn Diagram

Chapter 4

Advocacy issues, Organisational Mapping and Advocacy Strategies

This chapter synthesizes the ECD Advocacy issues emanating from an analysis of the provisions of the Education Amendment Act 2020 and the MoPSE policies and circulars. This is followed by an Organisational mapping of the organisations working in ECD in Zimbabwe and strategies to strengthen ECD advocacy.

ECD Advocacy Issues:

1. Early Childhood Development is the age spanning 0 to 8 years and learning begins at birth. The Education Amendment Act 2020 sees ECD as the development between the ages of 4-5 years while MoPSE sees ECD A and B as classes for children aged between 4-6 years. There is need for a holistic vision of ECD that reflects the spectrum of development needs of all children from 0 to 8 years. This national definition of ECD should also be shared with the teacher education colleges and Universities currently training ECD teachers.
2. Prior to the enactment of the Education Amendment Act 2020, the government had not clearly stated its obligation to provide free compulsory basic education for all children. While government was assisting some indigent pupils through BEAM, this did not cover all pupils and sometimes disbursement was not timeous. Now that the government has made it explicit that free basic education is a right and its provision a state responsibility, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education needs to reflect this in its vision statement and ensure that it permeates every policy and circular document as a declaration of accountability.
3. While the Ministry has made attendance of ECD A and B a mandatory requirement for enrolling into grade 1 the ECD facilities are inadequate and of different quality making it impossible for all children to access equitable, accessible, inclusive quality ECD. There is therefore an urgent need to prioritise the construction of quality ECD centres in disadvantaged areas to eliminate distance barriers, lack of infrastructure and lack of structures with universal design.
4. Parents and communities still bear a disproportionate part of ECD provisions since they pay for paraprofessional teachers, construct school buildings, pay for school furniture and contribute towards school feeding. Their income level determines the quality of the buildings, furniture and meals provided. There is need to prioritise funding for ECD equipment and teaching and learning materials to ensure that all children have access to learning and achieve learning outcomes.

5. Some policies and circulars have clauses that are ultra-vires to the Education Amendment Act 2020 and need to be cancelled or have these clauses replaced so that they are aligned with the Education Amendment Act 2020. Circular P.35 which provides guidance for administering corporal punishment needs to have this section cancelled to align with the abolition of corporal punishment in the Education Amendment Act 2020.
6. There is need for enhanced coordination among the line Ministries to ensure that ECD children benefit from Integrated ECD services that address the full spectrum of their developmental needs.
7. Teacher quality is key in the provision of quality education. There is therefore an urgent need to recruit qualified ECD teachers so that ECD children are taught by teachers who can effectively mediate the competency-based curriculum and employ play based child centred pedagogy. The teachers also need to be provided with in-service opportunities for Continuous Teacher Professional Development to keep abreast with new developments in their field.
8. The provision of sustainable, equitable, inclusive, accessible quality education requires adequate resource mobilisation, allocation and expenditure. All the inputs of quality ECD require sustainable inflow of funds. The adoption of the School Financing Policy and implementation of the resource mobilisation strategies there in should be prioritised. In fact its robust implementation could leverage Results-based funding. To ensure that ECD is adequately funded, the School financing policy must make provisions for the setting up of a National Education Fund with priority on ECD.
9. Policy –making is a political activity with a lot of trade-offs between competing priorities and policy implementation is the acid test of political commitment. It is therefore prudent and beneficial to the learners if policies are timeously developed, adopted and implemented with fidelity. Such practices demonstrate to the citizens and the funders the government’s commitment and could help leverage future funding.
10. Policies and circulars are guidance and accountability documents and should be made accessible from the MoPSE website. Circulation should include key partners like the line Ministries and School Development Associations.
11. School Development Associations play a pivotal role in the provision of Education. They mobilise resources through levies and provide infrastructure and some teaching and learning materials. They can also hold the government accountable to meet its education

obligations. However, some of their efforts to collect levies have violated children’s right to education. School Development Associations therefore need capacity development to ensure that they fully support ECD and do not violate the children’s right to inclusive quality education.

Policy Gaps and Interventions to address them

While developing policies and legal frameworks is an essential step towards the creation of a conducive environment for providing quality ECD services, it is not the panacea. It has to be supported by other steps like policy harmonisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and policy review, the table below illustrates the possible gaps and appropriate interventions to address them:

Policy Gap	Intervention	Example
Policy non-existent	Policy Formulation informed by a situational analysis	School Disaster Risk Reduction Policy
Policy at developmental stage and not yet adopted	Follow through with Policy development processes until it is adopted	National Early Learning Policy
Policy exists but is contradictory	Policy harmonisation to eliminate inconsistencies	Circular P-35
Policy exists but is not known	Wide Policy dissemination	ICT Policy for Secondary and Primary Education 2019-2023
Policy exists but is not implemented	Analysis of constraints followed by policy implementation addressing the constraints	The issue of Teacher-Pupil ratio of 1:20 in Statutory instrument 106 of 2005
Policy implemented but not monitored evaluated	Plan for policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation	
Policy exists but some aspects are not covered	Policy review to address issues not covered	The state’s obligation to provide food for school feeding in Circular 5 of 2019

ECD Stakeholder Mapping

The provision of accessible, inclusive quality ECD depends on the collaboration of many government line Ministries and many stakeholders and so does effective advocacy for policy development and implementation. The table below is a summary overview of some of the stakeholders in ECD provision in Zimbabwe.

ECD Stakeholder	Relevant ECD Responsibility
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing accessible, inclusive, quality primary, secondary and non-formal education in Zimbabwe 2. Making Budget bids for the provision of ECD education 3. Developing and implementing ECD policies to create a conducive teaching and learning environment 4. Making requests for the filling of staff establishments to the Public Services Commission especially for a directorate at head office level 5. Providing in-service continuous professional development for teachers 6. Development and the implementation of the ECD Education Curriculum for the schools
Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, innovation, Science and Technology development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has overall responsibility over all Universities, and Teacher Education Colleges
Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (ZIMCHE)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The regulatory body of all Universities in Zimbabwe. 2. Oversees the process of University Degrees harmonisation to ensure that there is a minimum body of knowledge. 3. Is key in the standardisation of ECD degrees offered by the various Universities in Zimbabwe
Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teacher education colleges in Zimbabwe are affiliated to it under the scheme of Association 2. Has developed Distance Education modules on ECD 3. Provides in-service staff development for the college lecturers
All Universities offering ECD degrees in Zimbabwe	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out research on ECD 2. Offer Bachelor's and Higher degrees in ECD 3. Sometimes hold symposia on Education 4. Have publications on Education
Teacher Education colleges training ECD teachers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train pre-service ECD teachers 2. Sometimes train school-based mentors 3. Supervise ECD students during Teaching Practice 4. Biannually hold a Teacher Education Research Conference
Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Social Welfare	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administers the Basic Education Assistance Module funds 2. Responsible for Child protection and safeguarding issues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.Regulates the registration of Private Voluntary Organisations 4.Provides capacity development on Child Protection and Case management 5.A possible ally in eliminating beating of pupils in the schools
Ministry of Health and Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsible for maternal and child care 2. Child nutrition and immunizations and supervision of wash facilities in the school 3. Key in the implementation of the School Health Policy 4. Opportunity for collaboration in incorporating ECD messages during antenatal and post-natal visits
Ministry of Home affairs and Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuing identity documents 2. Assisting children when crossing busy roads going to school in town
Ministry of Justice, legal and Parliamentary Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parliament approves Ministry budgets 2. legislative role 3. Parliamentary Committee on Education has oversight on ECD issues
Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulates the Civil Protection Unit responsible for Disaster Preparedness 2. Owns some schools in the urban areas 3. Responsible for construction and maintenance of government buildings 4. Providing land for construction of schools
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget allocation and disbursements to ministries 2. Monetary policies
Ministry of Energy and Power Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of power supply and electrification 2. Key in ensuring that all parts of the country have a secure source of power from the national grid
Ministry of Information, Publicity and broadcasting services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuing of broadcasting licenses 2. Broadcasting programmes on national radio and television 3. Key in providing remote learning and information dissemination
Ministry of Information Communication Technology and Courier Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulates the providers for internet and courier services 2. Responsible for facilitating the provision of ICT infrastructure in the country 3. Development of ICT policies 4. Key in the implementation of the ICT Policy for Primary and Secondary Schools
Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender policies 2. Women and Girls ‘ empowerment 3. Parental Education

UNICEF	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protects the rights of the children 2. Conduit of EDF and GPE funds that support the implementation of ESSP activities 3. Provides institutional and professional capacity development to MoPSE 4. Participates in Education monitoring visits 5. Carries out research on education 6. Hosts platforms to discuss education issues like the Education Working Group
UNESCO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tracks progress in the implementation of Education Sustainable Development Goal 4. 2. Advocates for education for sustainable development 3. Teacher Professional Development
World Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides technical Support to government 2. Implements some bank executed Education projects 3. Member of the Education Coordination Group and participates in joint monitoring visits
NGOs and CSOs working in ECD (CAMFED, Plan , Save the Children, World Vision)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.in collaboration with MoPSE implement ECD projects in schools in their areas of operation 2. conduct baseline surveys and end of project evaluation that yield a lot of information on the quality of education 3. help in influencing policy and education practice 4. provide in-service capacity development for teachers
Regional and International Networks working in ECD (AFECN, OMEP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. support activities which improve children's access to higher quality education and care 2. Involved in policy advocacy to improve the provision of ECD
Owners of ECD schools, ECD and Day-care centres	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provide education services for ECD children 2. Provide parental education for parents for ECD children

The information in the table above is not exhaustive. ZINECDA and ECOZI will need to do a more thorough exercise, identifying the comparative strengths of each organisation, the key decision makers in these organisations and ways of collaborating with them to strengthen ECD advocacy.

Advocacy Opportunities to influence ECD Policies

1. Sustainable Development Goal 4.2 has identified accessible quality ECD as key to children's capacity to transition into grade 1 which will help to make it a priority area for MoPSE

2. The current Education Sector Analysis and the development of the 2021-2025 Education Sector Strategic Plan provides an opportunity to incorporate ECD issues that need to be addressed
3. Joint monitoring Visits are opportunities to interact with and influence policymakers and decision makers in education
4. The enactment of the Education Amendment Act 2020 provides opportunity to hold the government accountable for delivering the education provisions stipulated in the Act.
5. Having some NGOs and CBOs working in ECD as members of ECOZI and ZINECDA helps to amplify the advocacy voice.
6. The many Universities and Teacher Education colleges in Zimbabwe offering ECD degrees and Diplomas means we have an adequate pool of qualified ECD teachers who can be employed. These institutions also carry out many education researches, which could if they were shared influence ECD policies, programmes and practices.

Advocacy Strategies

Research

Effective Education Advocacy needs to be evidence-based and must be backed up with accurate data. The 2014 UN Report “ A World That Counts” could not have stated better when they argued that “ data are the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability.”(IEAG, 2014, p.2). Research is needed on policy implementation and policy impact, which then informs policy review. Policy makers are interested in both the challenging issues and proffered possible solutions. Advocacy Organisations on their part also need to research on the effectiveness of their strategies and draw lessons for improvement. ECD researches will provide vital information in the situational analysis and policy validation. Apart from carrying research on ECD policies, and ECD policy implementation, the organisations also need research on their capacity to provide effective advocacy since this is key to achieve advocacy outcomes. Media watch to identify ECD advocacy issues from the press, radio broadcasts and Television broadcasts is one of the inexpensive ways of research.

Dissemination of Research Findings and Data to influence decision-making

Once data or evidence has been gathered through research it needs to be widely disseminated to people who can use it to improve the quality of ECD services delivery. This could be through policy formulation, policy implementation or the design and implementation of ECD programmes. The research findings can be packaged into reports, Policy Briefs, Position papers, case studies, and newsletters. It can also be packaged into films, video clips, infographics and illustrations. Meetings like panel discussions, breakfast meetings and symposia require evidence and data to be effective advocacy encounters.

Strengthening Coalitions, Alliances to amplify advocacy voices.

There is need to strengthen links or networking with organisations and institutions for furthering early childhood development policies and practices. Strengthening synergies with like minded organisations amplifies the advocacy voice and makes it possible to benefit from sharing of information, skills and resources. Shifting from competition to collaboration makes it possible to exploit each other's comparative strengths. Associations for people with disabilities might have more information on the education challenges for Children with disabilities while the Universities and Teacher education college might have more researches on teaching and learning challenges in ECD which they could bring into ZINECDA. There is therefore need for an ECD organisational mapping followed by a targeted membership drive and building of alliances with national, regional and international organisations working in ECD.

Extending Advocacy Targeting to the line Ministries.

Most of the ECD Advocacy efforts have been targeted at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education yet there are other line Ministries key in the provision of Comprehensive or Integrated Early Childhood Development. To meet the full spectrum of the ECD children's needs, there is need to target the decision-makers in these Ministries with advocacy messages. The Advocacy targeting is also key in breaking down silos and strengthening collaboration and coordination in the provision of ECD services. Joint Breakfast meetings, inter-ministerial collaboration dialogues on ECD could be some of the advocacy activities. Key people in the Ministries might also change due to natural attrition, transfer or resignation so there is a constant need to keep an updated contact list and ensuring that these people are well briefed on the ECD advocacy issues.

Building Own Advocacy Capacity

Effective organisations have strong capacity to achieve results. It is therefore critical that ZINECDA and ECOZI as ECD advocacy organisations enhance their capacity. They need to take stock of the resources at their disposal to carry out their advocacy work as well as carry out skills audits to identify the skills they already have and the skills they need to effectively discharge their advocacy mandate. Advocacy work needs to be guided by a well thought out Advocacy Strategy. To create capacity to adapt and self-renew in a fast changing environment members require continuous professional development on ECD related issues and advocacy related topics. This capacity development is critical to increase their visibility, credibility and influence.

Through thorough research on ECD advocacy issues, using evidence to develop advocacy messages targeting decision-makers and strengthening of coalitions and networks to amplify voices success can be achieved.

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