

Response Network Zambia

Annual report 2022

Preamble

This is a summary update of general events/activities in our implementation areas as well as the country at large. Some of the highlighted activities/events are related and could have an impact, positive and or negative, on our implementation strategy and intervention.

COVID-19 – Country situation.

The year 2022 experiences a mild situation as regards Covid 19, however the effects of the pandemic continued affection both micro and macro variables in the economy. Generally, the Covid situation was not so much of a threat, guidelines had been relaxed and schools were back to normal.

Country Social, Political and economic outlook.

Subsequent to the August 2021 General elections, we saw a lot of political will towards rule of law and Good governance. Political violence came to a stop and no more harassment of the opposition as was the case in the past regime.

In spite of the current political stability, we noticed that the Macro and micro economic variables were quite out of control leading to high cost of living. The key factors attributed to this were increases in the cost of fuel and other commodities due to the Ukraine/Russia war and aftermath of Covid 19. being one of them. Inflation is at 12.17% while unemployment is still rampant. The National debt was at US\$ 31.74 Billion of which 54% was external debt. With assistance from World Bank, Government engaged into debt restructuring measures with external creditors. Finally, a deal was reached this month in June 2023.

Education policy

The new Government introduced the free education policy, and this was declared in October 2021. The actual implementation was in 2022. The strategy was fully rolled out during the year and several challenges ranging from over enrolment and shortage of teaching staff as well as overwhelmed infrastructure were noted.

From our implementation point of view, in spite of the free education policy, we have noted an increasing demand for support in form of uniform and other school accessories. This was a clear indication of the relevance of the sponsorship program.

Staffing

The staff levels during the year was 18 full time staff and 24 community volunteers.

Highlights on key programs and Implementation

a) Sports for Development program

2022 was the fourth and final year of implementation of the sports for development program after four years in Zimba district. 2022 was therefore more focused on exit activities and preparing the community members and sports clubs to operate without Response Network. In the exit strategy, the program also focused on linking all activities to existing structures so that the achievements and gains made in the four years are sustained beyond RN. Though we have exited in the area, we will continue monitoring the activities remote just to ensure the four years' work does not crumple after some time. It can be quiet costly but we hope community structures and former volunteers will help in this strategy.

Through the Young Sport Exchange Program (YSEP) we hosted three volunteers (2 from Norway and one from Malawi in August 2022 to June 2023.

At the same time, we focused on a 5 years application with NIF to NORAD. The application was successful hence we will focus on implementation of the sports program in Kalomo west for five years from 2023.

b) Academic Work sponsorship

The sponsorship program was successfully implemented supporting 611 children 11 of which were boys. Following the free education policy, we engaged with Akind on how to refocus the program. Later in the new we realized that there was not going to be any need for a major change in the program following the free education policy. We had hoped to make a saving on the funding, but it turned out that the saving was negligible because of the rise in cost of school prerequisites.

Tertiary Project

In 2022, the total enrolment of the girls in tertiary was 18 comprising of 10 in nursing, 1 doing medicine, 2 doing Agriculture, 1 doing Journalism, 1 doing pharmacy and 3 doing teaching.

Skills project for Kubala girls / Community members from clubs

The 2022 intake of the Kubala girl's skills at Livingstone Institute for Business and Engineering (LIBES) had 20 young ladies. One of the girls dropped out due to bad health hence only 19 graduated and were given start up packs in form of tool boxes for those who were doing electrical engineering and sawing machines for those that were doing tailoring. On the other hand, a total of 14 community members from various community clubs were enrolled at Zimba skills Training centre.

c) Community Schools

In 2022, we planned on construction of three extension of classrooms from 1x2 to 1 x 3 classrooms for three schools ; Mupotola, Mutumbi and Mutumbi and also two teacher's houses at Mupotola and Silonda community Schools. All the projects were fully implemented and completed by the end of Dec 2022.

Kapani Community School



The planned extension of the 1 x2-classroom block to a 1 x 3-classroom block project for Kapani went as per plan.

The completion of the project will ensure that the school has adequate infrastructure as it enrolls up to Grade 7 now. The extension included a strong room, this means the school will be able to apply as an examination centre so that pupils in Grade 7 will be able to write Grade 7 exams from the school.

Currently the school has total enrolment of 239 pupils (127 f, 112m) with three community volunteer teachers. The school is likely to receive teachers from the previous year's massive recruitment of teachers.

The community's main challenges now include need for a borehole for drinking water. At the moment the community depend on the nearby dam for both drinking water and also for their animals. Secondly, they will need additional desks for the extended classroom block.

Mupotola Community School

Mupotola community School was supported with materials for an extension of classroom block and a teacher's house. The classroom extension project was completed and the class was ready for use in 2023.



The new extension to the classroom block, which has a strong room, led to the school applying as an examination centre hence children will not need to walk long distances for their Grade 7 exams.

The other project for the school in 2022 was the construction of teacher's house. The house project was a bit slower in progress due to the double projects the community were working on. The other contributing factor was lack of water for building because the streams that they collect water for construction were dry. They had to fetch water from further away from the school. This caused the delays.

Mutumbi Community School



The school received support to extend the class from 1x2 CRB TO 1 X3 CRB. The structure was completed within the year. The community was very positive with the contribution of upfront materials and labor. The current enrollment at the is 252 pupils (127f,125m). The new structure included a strong room which means the school can hold examinations for Grade 7 pupils now.

Silonda Community School



Silonda community were earmarked for construction of a teacher's house. The location had widespread water challenges. The community has worked hard and massively contributed to raising the structure of the staff house despite the challenge of water. The school enrolment is at total 168 learners (101f, 67m). The project was successfully completed as can be seen below. It is ready for occupation at any time.

d) Village/Community education program

The village program was successfully implemented and on course, more focus was put on educating communities on how they can access the CDF funding from local Government and building the capacity of clubs to continue with their community clubs activities. Concentration was on Literacy, women's groups, health and Nutrition as well as involvement of women in leadership. The program was in the second year of implementation.

e) Norwegian Church Aid – Community Schools

Through NCA funding, we planned for 2 teachers houses, a 1 x 2 classroom block and a borehole plus SHRR awareness in all the three communities.

In Kabulanjovu a 1 x 2 classroom block was constructed and a borehole drilled which unfortunately was dry. In Namasute a teacher's house was constructed and 50 desks distributed to the school while in Nanyati a teacher's house was constructed.

Several awareness meetings on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights were also held in the Namasute, nayati and Kabulanjovu community schools and surrounding villages. The awareness was aimed at reducing teen pregnancies, early marriages and pregnancies and also awareness on Gender based Violence.

f) Kinder Not Hilfe – Save and Borrow

The program is ongoing with formation of over 120 savings groups in various communities spread out in Zimba and Kazungula districts.

h) Ready to Earn – Comic Relief

This program is ongoing and currently we have 19 young women from our target communities doing a one year General Agriculture course and also 26 young women doing Tailoring. The project will run for three years and we now into the second year of implementation.