

# Response Network

## Annual Report 2023

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This is the annual projects report to the board for the year 2023. It is a summary update of general events/activities and outlook for the year. The highlighted activities/events are related and some could have a positive and or negative effect on our implementation strategy and intervention.

### National Pandemic/Endemic Outlook

The Covid situation was completely under control throughout the year and wasn't a threat to the nation as well as our programs. There were isolated cases around the country and were taken care of without threat on human life. However later in the year, there was an outbreak of Anthrax, an animal disease, in most parts of Kazungula district. This has affected the livestock business and impacting negatively especially on peasant farmers, who are a majority of our primary beneficiaries, who depend on selling small livestock such as goats and pigs. In October there was another outbreak of cholera mostly in Lusaka. However the situation was not critical in our implementation areas so this had no big impact on the programs.

### Country Social, Political and economic outlook.

In 2022 and 2023, challenges in agriculture, mining, and construction slowed down the pace of post-pandemic recovery. Service than production driven Real GDP grew by 3.7% while the war in Ukraine raised Zambia's import bill while falling copper prices and output slowed growth in nominal export revenue. Uncertainty about debt restructuring, though now done, triggered a more than 30% depreciation of the kwacha between September 2022 and March 2023.

Unemployment has continued soaring up in the private sector, though Government has employed in sectors such as education, health, immigration, police and other defense forces. The majority of youths still remain unemployed.

On the political scene, we noticed increased democratic space though the opposition parties felt that the space had shrunk. But the citizens and not political players have a balanced opinion on this. Generally the new Government seem more tolerant compared to the previous one.

### Education policy

The free education policy was fully implemented but we have noticed that it has come with a lot of challenges such as over enrolment and the pupil teacher ratio is now wider. The school infrastructure system also is not coping because too many children are enrolling. In general, it's a good move because every child now has an opportunity to go to school. Further changes were announced in the education system in that National exams will now be in Grade 6 and not Grade 7. Thereafter children will go to Form 4 then stay on for another two years for A level. Degree courses in Universities have been reduced from 4 years to 3 years. These changes are likely to take effect only in 2025.

### Staffing

In 2023 there were 20 full time staff inclusive of the new NCA climate Smart projects and 24 volunteers for the sports, village program and SHG Approach.

### Major Capital Projects

No major capital project was planned in the year other than ordinary office buildings repairs and maintenance.

### Highlights on key programs and Implementation

#### a) Sports for Development program

The project was started and is being implemented, for the next 5 years, in the west of Kalomo district rural areas in Siachitema and parts of Chikanta chiefdoms. 10 volunteers were engaged and started working in the 10 identified centres. 2024 is the first year of implementation.

The program aimed at increasing participation of women and youths in sport, secondly enhancing safe sport among sports clubs and lobbying for exclusive communal sports spaces with documentation. Thirdly the program aimed at raising awareness among communities on issues of early marriages and teen pregnancies HIV/AIDS and other abuses and vices common in rural areas to enhance the well-being of youths especially girls. In order to enhance implementation efficiency we are considering opening a field office in Kalomo in 2024

Key achievements under the project;

- Under objective one, the project aimed at building lasting and sustainable sports structures and networks that deliver safe, equitable and inclusive sport activities. Courtesy calls were paid at Chief Siachitema and Chief Chikanta palaces to introduce the programme in the two chiefdoms. This was followed by identifying and visiting the District Sports Association Committee (DSAC) to assess the status of sporting activities in the district. These activities led to an endorsement of the project by the chiefs giving a leeway for the organization to implement sports activities in the communities and this made the communities to be positive during the sensitizations and activities that followed. On the other hand, the dialogue with the DSAC led to understanding the status quo of the sports structures in the district thereby equipping RN with an opportunity to devise strategies to ensure the project succeeds.
- Under the second objective, which aimed at increasing the participation of youth, women and persons with disabilities in sports activities and structures, RN mobilised the communities to participate during the International Day of Sports for Development and Peace (IDSDP). In total 589 youths participated (462f/127m) and apart from sports and other ball games awareness was raised on Safe Sport, Hygiene, traditional games and sessions on Life skills. The program also collaborated with National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ), EDU-SPORT Foundation, and Sports In Action (SIA) in organizing the Inclusive Festival in Livingstone where 350 youths participated and were taken through different life-skills, movement games and different sports. This enhanced the collaboration among the NOCZ partners and Government agencies. The platform was also used by the partners to showcase the collaborative efforts in lobbying for inclusive sport and the need for government to create a conducive environment for sport to be accessible to all.
- In the third objective, the project aimed at strengthening the capacity of sport structures to implement safe, equitable, inclusive, and accessible sport in Simwatachela and Chikanta chiefdoms in Kalomo. Under this objective, 10 Response Network volunteers, (4F, 6M) were trained in various aspects of implementing a sport for Development program that focus on safe, equitable, inclusive and accessible sports.
- 7 coaching trainings were conducted and reached out to 197 (80F 117M) participants. Through these trainings grassroot coaches and other interested participants were introduced to basic coaching so that they deliver safe and fair sports.
- 9 Sports Administration trainings were conducted reaching out to 239 sports administrators (86 F 153 M) During the training, administrators were encouraged to develop club constitutions, rules and policies to address several issues and most importantly match fixing, age-cheating and ensure safe sport. In the third objective, the project aimed at strengthening the capacity of sport structures to implement safe, equitable, inclusive, and accessible sport in Simwatachela and Chikanta chiefdoms in Kalomo. Under this objective, 10 Response Network volunteers, (4F, 6M) were trained in various aspects of implementing a sport for Development program that focus on safe, equitable, inclusive and accessible sports.
- Under Objectives four, the project aimed at making sport fair and safe among sports structures. To achieve this objective, the project held awareness meetings on the 16 days of activism against Gender Based violence and reached out to 850 youths, women, men and PWDs (546F, 300 M & 4PWDs). This led to raised awareness on GBV issues among community members and steps to be taken in an event that an abuse or violence occurs. It is envisaged that this will also result in increased reporting of cases in year 2.

#### **b) AKIND sponsorship program**

This project was funded by Akind and continues in 2024 with an aim of supporting +600 vulnerable girls in 64 primary and secondary schools. During the year 610 girls and boys (7) were on the program.



During the year, 59 Grade 7 students made it to Grade 8 and 56 students in grade 9 made it to Grade 10 while 67 students completed Grade 12 as at 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2023. No Grade ones were enrolled in 2024 as agreed with Akind starting to phase out the Grade 1 to 7 support following the free education policy.

### c) Community Schools

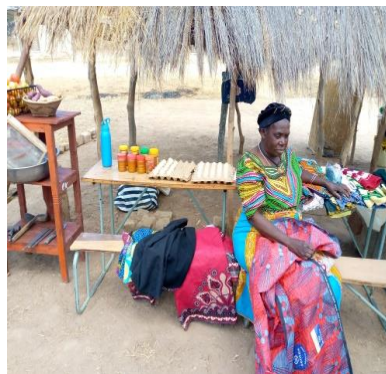
This project was funded by Akind and will continue in 2024. Four projects were done this year under the community schools project. We constructed three teachers' houses and one classroom extension.



During the year, three teachers' houses were constructed at Louis Mohr, Mweemba and Malanga community schools. In addition, a classroom stand-alone extension of a 1 x 1 CRB was constructed making it four projects successfully done. There were also 100 desks distributed to Tusime School (20), Chilaba (40), Mupotola community school (20) and Chisiwe community school (20).

### d) Village/Community education program

The village program which has been running for the past three years came to an end as of December 2023. The village program was funded by Akind and this was the last year of implementation of the three years strategy. The main focus in this final and exit year was to strengthen the existing activities and link them to district structures to ensure sustainability.



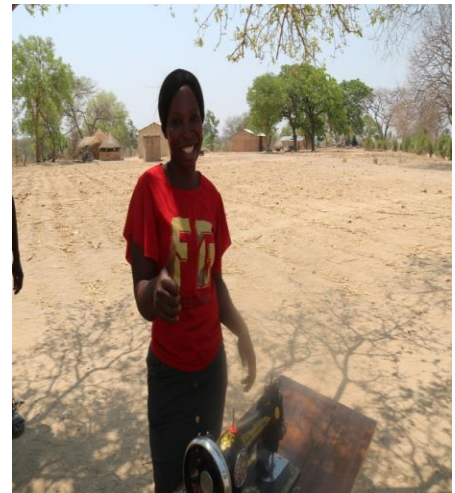
The following were the key results that were achieved after several activities that were implemented in the target communities;

- Out of the 13 literacy classes formed 5 were linked to Government through the Ministry of Community Development. This will lead to literacy classes benefitting from Government by receiving learning materials and other Government projects aimed at Literacy activities in the district. At the end of the year, 6 clubs with membership of 142 learners were recorded as still active and functional.
- There was noticeable increase in participation of women through 56 clubs with exclusively 672 women actively participating up to the end of the year.
- 125 Income generating Activities (IGAs) clubs were formed and engaged in various self-help activities such as basket making, beekeeping, sewing and vegetable and maize growing.
- 32 clubs were linked to various service providers while 15 clubs have benefitted from the CDF by the Government where 12 of these clubs are women's clubs

### e) Tertiary and Skills Training project



This project was funded by Akind and 2023 is the final year of the support from Akind. Following the Evaluation, it was resolved that Akind would only support the current girls in various institutions but no recruitment would be done in 2024 hence forth.



26 students were fully supported on the tertiary program in 2023 and the total includes all students from 2021 to 2023 students. In addition 10 community members were enrolled into skills and in addition 9 Kubala girls were enrolled into skills. Below is the breakdown of all the students currently on tertiary; 2021-11 students, 2022- 06 students, 2023- 09 students and total 26 students

The aggregation by areas of study for the girls on tertiary support is as follows; Nursing - 17, Teaching – 04, Bio medicine – 01, Journalism – 01, Agriculture – 02 and Pharmacy – 01. The total being 26.  
Total 26

### Other/Individual donors' sponsorship

Under other and individual donors, we had 27 students under the NIF sponsorship program out of which 12 are in primary, 13 in secondary and 2 in tertiary. There were also 4 children under other donors; 1 in primary, 2 in secondary and 1 in tertiary.

### Norwegian Church Aid – Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights and Community Schools project

This project was supported by Schools in Norway but funds remitted to RN through NCA – Zambia. Five schools were earmarked by NCA. We had awareness meetings on reproductive health rights, early marriages and other vices and practices that negatively affect children especially girls in all the 5 schools. In addition, we sunk a borehole which was dry unfortunately, and a teacher's house at Kayaba Community School. 80 desks were distributed to Kayaba (40), Naloombe (20) and Nanyati (20).



### Norwegian Church Aid – Climate Smart Economic Empowerment Project





This project was supported by NCA and aimed at addressing increased productivity among small scale farmers through Micro Climate smart investments such as bee keeping and horticulture production in the target communities as well as linking markets with the farmers and raising awareness among communities on climate change and preparedness. The project will be supported for another extra year in 2024. During the year, we established four Community Disaster Management Risk Response Committees (CDMRC) in the villages that will be reporting to the Government district structure. In addition, we established 13 incubation sites reaching out to 143 small scale farmers engaged in drip irrigation in horticulture. We also distributed 98 beehives which have been segmented into 7 sites each has 45 farmers (315 beneficiaries) in both Zimba and Kazungula districts.

Other households have been given seed packs in form of groundnuts and sunflower to enhance food security at household level. In total 502 people have been targeted and benefitting from the project.

### **Nansen Project**

This was a one year project supported by NCA which will be ending in June of 2024. It was rolled out to support the Climate Smart project on one front and also to create resilience and increase food security among households. We rolled it out in Kapani and Nampongo communities of Zimba and Kazungula districts respectively. Under this project we procured oil extractors, solar dryers and solar egg incubators. They were set in demonstration sites/centres which will run with the community cooperatives and hopefully turn them into community social enterprises. 833 people (small scale farmers) were targeted and 770 benefitting from this project currently.



### **f) Kinder Not Hilfe – Save and Borrow**

This program was a continuation and we currently have 210 Self Help Groups with membership of 3,244 members. 8 CLAs have been formed in preparation for formation of a Federation/people's Institution in 2024. The total savings for the groups was at ZMW 248,000.

### **h) Ready to Earn – Comic Relief**

This project was in progress in 2023 and will come to an end in April of 2024. In total 43 out of 45 young women were successfully trained in tailoring and Agriculture. They have been given start up packs and grants in form of sewing machines, agriculture inputs and irrigation kits.

#### **j) Other donors**

In spite of the poor feedback and reporting to individual donors, we feel this project is very important. Improved reporting and feedback would maintain and probably get more individuals on board. We plan to have a good reporting system next year.

#### **k) Survivor Community Led Response (CSLR)**

This was a project which was funded by DCA following RN being trained on how the concept works by giving the funds straight to community groups who in turn decide how to use the money on various projects that they identify. RN's role was to identify and harvest outcomes on which to base the report. For a start, in 2023, two pilot projects in Nampongo community were identified by drilling two boreholes and installing solar pumps and tanks for communities to access clean drinking water as well as drinking water for their livestock. The two projects were successfully done to the satisfaction of the donors. There is a high possibility of receiving more resources from the donor.

#### **International Students/Visitors**

##### **NTNU Students**

Under this program, we had 15 students from NTNU who were placed in three places. The first group comprised of 11 students and then this was followed by a group of 4 students in October. We are anticipating about 12 students in February of 2024 from NTNU.

##### **Academic Work Travelers**

We had 14 visitors from Academic in March after a break of three years due to Covid. They visited schools and village program projects in the villages. They seem to have had gone back with a good impression of the value for their money. We anticipate more co-workers to join the sponsorship program based on the feedback that the visitors will give to their colleagues. We have started preparations for the next visit which will be in March from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024.

##### **Go Global students**

We hosted 22 students plus 4 teachers from the Go global students program under Danish Church Aid. The students were placed at Nampongo village where they planted about 500 shade trees and fruit trees at the school and in the villages. They also planted some of the trees at Kamwi School, a community school East of Livingstone near Mukuni village. We are currently planning for another visit scheduled for next year.

#### **Friend of Response Network – See the real Africa Campaign.**

We received 8 people under the friends of RN 'See the real Africa' Campaign - Turid, Guri, Ragnhild, Turid's family x 4 and Liv Kasland. We are appreciative of the feedback we received from all the visitors. It's up to us to capitalize on their impressions and motivate them to spread the word and talk about Response Network. For us it was a pleasure to host them.

#### **Norway Board members visits**

The following board members visited Response Network Zambia during the year and rendered technical support in various areas to strengthen the organisation in different aspects. Preciosa should have travelled but the trip did not materialize due to some personal commitments. .

- Håkon Spigseth
- Marianne Olsen
- Turid Fjeld
- Vidar Henningsen

#### **Financial update**

Audited Financial statements are attached under separate cover. We also had a separate audit done by KPMG who are auditors for NCA/DCA and we had a separate audit report also issues specifically for the Climate Smart project – Also attached.

### Annual organizational budget

Annual projected master budget by donor

Donor	Program/Project	ZMW	Status
Akind	Sponsorship	1,700,500	On going
Akind	Community Schools	1,307,286	On going
Akind	Village program	792,214	On going
NIF	Sports for Development	855,000	Up to 2027
Joint Country Program	CSSSE	1,811,995	Up to 2024 subject to Renewal after JCP strategy
Joint Country Program	Community Schools	877,928	on going
Joint Country Program	Nansen project	965,012	Up to June 2024
Comic Relief	Ready To Earn (Young Women Emp.	493,635	Up to April 2024
Other Donors	Various	250,000	Ongoing
KNH/DAPP	Save and borrow	100,000	On going
TOTAL	ZMW	9,153,570	
	NOK	4,776,901	

### r) Social Initiative Assessment

Finally the assessment has been completed by Social Initiative, the consultants hired by Akind to do an evaluation and the following were the findings and recommendations made to Response Network;

#### Village Programme

- If we assume that none of the activities in the clubs were happening prior to the Response Network intervention, there has been a change in activity levels
- Whether this has led to improved living conditions, we can only assume

#### Community Schools

- 57 schools initiated and built with >18 000 children (51% girls) now enrolled
- Response Network has been catalytic - other external donors have contributed at least as much in the 57 schools

#### Kubala Girls

- 2 583 unique girls have enrolled in the programme 2010-2022
- 38% have dropped out of the programme, most of them after failing grade 9 exam. Pass rate Kubala Girls 47% vs national average 53% (2021).

#### Skills programme

- Not evaluated

Few students are interested in the skilling programme according to Response Network

The way forward after the assessment was as follows;

- Due to free education policy introduced in 2021, the primary level sponsorship support will phase out and focus will now be from Grade 8 to 12 since that is where the need was identified as critical
- The tertiary and skills project will not run from 2024 but all the children on tertiary and skills will be allowed to complete
- The village program would be confined to the Akind working areas and scaled up to a smaller project with available resources.
- The community Schools project would continue but focused more on the assessment recommendations.