



A REVIEW OF ZAMBIA'S NATIONAL CHILD POLICY VIS-A-VIS UNCRC KEY PRINCIPLES.

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ABSTRACT

Children are future generation that should be socialized and grown in the harmless society. Therefore, children are supposed to be socialized in a health environment, however, the environment in Zambia does not guarantee this as there is high evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. This is despite Zambia being part to the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child and having sufficient regulations to protect children. The purpose of the study is to review the National Child Protection Policy in relation to United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child key principles in addressing the plight of children in Zambia. The study reveals that the National Child Protection Policy is anchored on key principles of UNCRC, however, it has been found out that despite the National Child Policy being anchored on these, it has failed to protect the interest of children.

The research has further found out that the National Child Policy has failed to guarantee survival and development of children and protection of children against discrimination. Although the National Child Protection Policy proclaim the Best Interest of the Child, however, this research has shown that there is no formal procedure with safeguards for making decisions that are likely to have fundamental impact on children's lives, for instance, in national budgeting children are not considered in planning and budgeting however, Child funded CSOs and NGOs assemble views that they consider to be in the best interest of children. Furthermore, this research has revealed that children have limited space for participating in decision making, this is partly as a result of cultural factors as well as the failure by government to create an enabling environment for children to participate in decision making on matters affecting them.

The policy has failed to achieve its objectives because of various reasons such as lack of financial resources that would guarantee children quality social protection, education and healthcare systems. There are no monitoring and evaluation frameworks to evaluate the performance of the country in upholding the four key principles. The dual legal system and multiple definition of a child by different pieces of legislation has also compromised the best treatment of children.

KEY WORDS: National child policy, best interest of the child, child survival rights, principle of non-discrimination, child participation, UNCRC, Zambia

INTRODUCTION

Children are the future generation who will be socialized and grown in a good health condition because they are the future adults and development in the overall world. If the children have not been socialized, they shall be exposing different faces for their physical, psychological and social development. Zambia's population is predominantly young. According to the 2010 Census of Population and Housing, the population stood at 13.1 million, of which 52.5 percent are 18 years and below. A young population implies that the country has higher dependency ratio, which poses a great challenge to socio-economic development and the provision of adequate child welfare services (CSO,2010, p.4)

In the quest to protect the plight of children, the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 adopted The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is a comprehensive, international binding agreement on the rights of children which is a widely ratified human rights treaty in history; all countries have ratified it with the exception of the United States of America and Somalia. When countries ratify an international treaty or convention, such as the UN Convention on the rights of the Child, they enter a binding agreement to meet its obligations (Children's Rights Alliance,2010, p.1). Zambia signed the UN Convention on 30th September,1990 and ratified it on 6th December,1991.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has adopted an integrated and holistic approach to the rights of children. In other human rights instruments, economic, social and cultural rights have been dealt with separately from civil and political rights, but in the UN Convention they are all brought together in innovative way. The rights are seen as necessary for the full and harmonious development of the child's personality and inherent dignity of the child. The different rights are not ranked in the order of importance; instead, they interact with one another to form a dynamic part of an integrated unit. That said, special emphasis is given to articles known as 'general principles', because they are considered basic to the implementation of all of the rights contained within the UN Convention (Children's Right Alliance,2010, p.2). It is for this reason the 2015 National Child Policy is founded on these principles. The principle of Non-discrimination, every child shall have the rights to access quality healthcare, education and other social services regardless of their age, sex, race, physical ability, residence, vulnerability and orphanhood as it is provided in Article 2 of UNCRC. The National Child Policy puts it that in all processes that have a bearing on children, the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration as contained in article 3 of UNCRC. The principle to right to life, survival and development although have not come out explicitly have been covered by a broad method called Human Rights-Based approach exactly as UNCRC Article 6 (Children's Rights Alliance,2010, p.2). The National Child Policy is also premised on the principle of child participation; thus, all children have a right to participate in the development process, especially affairs that affect them this is in order to avoid social exclusion. In that the opinions of children should be sought at every step of programming such as policy formulation, planning, programming, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (National Child Policy,2015, p.20).

DISCUSSION

CHILD SURVIVAL RIGHTS

Children in poverty are more likely to be living far from schools and health services and if accessed mainly are of a poor quality, more likely to live in housing that lacks clean water, electricity, proper sanitation and waste disposal. As a result, many children in poverty face difficulties in accessing protective services, therefore, are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. The number of reported cases of child abuse in the country has been steadily increasing over the past years, although many cases of abuse remain unreported, child abuse, especially sexual abuse is still a taboo in Zambia. Child abuse is a serious threat to survival and development of the child as its evidently documented that child abuse for instance sexual abuse undermines the health of a child and in many instances, it results in death. The National Child Policy has set objectives and measures to address concerns under this principle, however, there has been no co-ordination and effective management of multi-sectors in child welfare and programming. Besides, there has not been a comprehensive evaluation strategy to assess the effectiveness of measures that have been put in place by the policy.

Despite the National Child Policy been in existence in Zambia and revised in order to respond to new trends in child protection, over the years Zambia has seen an increase in child marriages, thus Zambia has one of the highest rates of female child marriages in Africa and indeed in the world, with a reported national prevalence of 42% and ranked 16th amongst countries with the highest rate of child marriage. The study found that the most common form of child marriage in Zambia is that between peers with girls ranging from age 12 to 18 and boys from 14 to 18 years of age most of these marriages adhered to customary law practice. Child marriages affect girls disproportionately more than boys. A 2017 policy brief by the, Population Council, UNFPA, and Government of the Republic of Zambia on child marriages states that although child marriages has declined by 25% from 41.6% to 31.4% among women aged 20-24 who reported being married before they were 18 years old, it is still among the highest in the world. Girls not bride strongly argues that lack of attention to child marriage undermined the achievement of the sixth and eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) between 2000 and 2015 (Caritas and Save the Children, 2018, p.17). According to the Population Council, UNFPA and Government of the Republic of Zambia; child marriage, which is marriage of a person below the age of 18 years undermines child survival rights, as it deprives adolescent girls of their reproductive health rights and impinges upon their opportunity to realise their full potential and enjoyment of their human rights as established in various treaties. This is because child marriage has serious consequences for the health of the girls, such as poorer pregnancy prognosis, higher risk of HIV infection, obstetric fistula, unsafe abortions and higher risk of suffering from domestic and sexual abuse than non-married girls and married women (ibid, 2018, p.17). Child marriages abrogate the following child rights; the right to education, the right to protection from physical and mental violence, the right to rest and leisure, and right to participate freely in cultural life, the right not to be separated from parents against child's will, the freedom of association and the right to eventual employment (Caritas and Save the Children, 2018, p.19).

Besides, the 2018 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) reveals findings contrary to the aspirations of the National Child Policy. For instance, IMR in the past five years are 45 to 42 deaths per 1,000 live births. At these mortality levels, 1 in every 16 Zambian children does not survive to his or her fifth birthday. Neonatal mortality has remained at approximately at 24 to 27 deaths per 1,000 live births (Zambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2018, p.7). Besides, in Zambia 35% of children under five are stunted, or too short for their age. Wasting is an indication of acute malnutrition, thus, 4% of children under five are wasted, or too thin for their height. In addition, 12% of children under five are underweight, or too thin for their age, while 5% are overweight. (Zambia Demographic Health Survey, 2018, p.11).

Zambia has almost achieved universal primary education and substantial progress towards universal secondary education, significant challenges remain for children from marginalized and disadvantaged communities to have access to quality education with a good teacher-pupil ratio, pupil-book ratio, pupil-desk ratio, pupil-classroom ratio and pupil-drop hole ratio. There is a challenge in participation rates across education levels, as measured by the Net Enrolment Rates (NER) and the Net Intake Rate (NIR). The official school entrance age into Grade 1 is seven years, and in 2018 the primary school NIR was reported as being just 54.5 percent of the total population of eligible children; the remaining children mostly began at an older age (JICA, 2012, p.12). This late school start, and the insufficient access to ECE, results in children losing age-appropriate education (UNICEF, 2021, p.50). Besides, progress has been made in building the institutional frameworks for a comprehensive expansion of access to quality ECE for children aged three to six years old, but this is currently being guided by 25-year-old Educating our Future Policy. This inadequate and somewhat out-of-date policy direction, compounded by insufficient funding, has seriously impacted ECE provision. The Government is the main provider of education services in all parts of the country, but NGOs including communities are also playing a prominent role in relation to increasing access, especially to ECE and secondary education (PMRC, 2017, p.9). The above analysis clearly shows that the Zambian government has failed to guarantee the child survival rights despite being provided in the National Child Policy.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Although there have been numerous campaigns promoting national unity, several groups of marginalized and disadvantaged children continue to experience regular, on-going discrimination. Children face systemic and multiple forms of discrimination. Discrimination against girls remains an issue, with child marriage disproportionately girls than boys. The constitution does prohibit discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability, however, children with disability continue to face difficulties in accessing education and other social amenities (The National Child Policy, 2015, p.12). Furthermore, children with different sexual orientation (LGBTQI) suffer discrimination. Children living with HIV/AIDS face stigmatization, difficulties in accessing education and effective care and support services that meet their needs. Children in urban and rural continue to face discrimination and exclusion due to socio-economic status. The legal framework regarding children with disability is strong, however, there gaps that disadvantage children with disabilities. Zambia is part to the Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities and made a declaration of the

principle of non-discrimination and equality. The 2015 National Child Policy notes that 34.4% and 21% of children under 5 with disabilities never attend school in rural and urban areas, respectively. People with disabilities usually experience barriers to the enjoyment of their basic human rights and inclusion in society. Similarly, some parents tend to reinforce stigmatization of their children with disabilities by hiding them from the public. In turn, disabilities predispose children to discrimination and abuse and lack of access to quality education and health services, exacerbate the incidence of poverty and vulnerability. Many schools and public buildings are not responsive to the needs of children with disabilities. Schools do not have ramps and pathways for wheelchairs, lack of teaching and learning materials for children with disabilities and do not have enough teachers and counsellors. The problems highlighted still remains a thorny to the inclusion of children with disabilities to the full enjoyment of the basic human rights (The National Child Policy,2015, p.13).

Besides, children suffer discrimination in accessing quality healthcare, this discrimination is on the basis of socioeconomic status. For example, in the line healthcare workers will be selective about who they attend first-they assume children from poor families cannot do anything about it, hence, there are given a second treatment. Throughout focus group discussions in Accountability and Redress for Discrimination in Healthcare in Botswana, Malawi and Zambia of 2016 key informants and consultations with NGOs and CBOs a repeated theme emerged on the exclusionary role of poverty and rural location as systemically entrenched ground of discrimination for healthcare users. Respondants also identified practical limitation that made healthcare access difficult for rural population including distance to facilities, shortage of essential drugs and lack of specialized services (Southern Africa Litigation Centre,2018,pp.119-120).

BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

The “best interests” principle is legally binding and although the UNCRC does not give a precise definition of the principle, or explicitly outline common factors of the best interests of the child, the concept does broadly describe the overall well-being of a child. The absence of a specific definition in the UNCRC allows for the considerations of each case to be balanced in relation to its own context ,but factors such as age,gender,level of maturity and experiences, as well as social context factors, such as the presence or absence of parents, quality of the relationships between the child and his or her family/caretaker, the physical and psychosocial situation of the child, and his or her protection situation (i.e. physical security, protection risks,etc).The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC),established pursuant to the provision of Article 43 of the UNCRC,in 2013 during its Sixty-second session, published General Comment No.14 to provide guidance on the interpretation of the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken into consideration, as demanded in Article 3 and constitutes an authoritative interpretation as to what is expected of state parties, Zambia included, in the implementation or operationalization of the principle (IOM,2018,p.15).

As earlier mentioned, Article 3 of the UNCRC provides that “in all actions concerning children whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies. The best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration and that state parties must

undertake to ensure the child protection and care is necessary for his or her well-being (IOM 2018, p.16). Therefore, the UNCRC together with National Child Policy seek to ensure the application of and respect of the best interests of the child. However, in the National Child Policy there is limited guidance on how to assess what is in the best interest of the child. Besides, there is little emphasis on considering how children's rights and interests will be affected by decision and actions taken by both public and private bodies. There are no formal safeguard procedures for making decisions that are likely to have fundamental impact on children's lives, for instance, the national budget children are not considered in the budgeting however, Child funded CSOs and NGOs assemble views that they consider to be in the best interest of children.

The Zambian government reported to 71st Session of the Convention on the Right of the Child on 22nd January, 2016 in Geneva that "the amended constitution has provision on the effects of customary law and it stipulates that customary law should not be inconsistent with constitutional provisions. The government further reported that the provisions of the draft Bill of the Rights will clearly espouse the principle of the best interest of the child," however, the Bill of the Right did not go through during the referendum which means the principle has not been taken care of in the Constitution of Zambia. On the other hand, the dual legal system thus the customary and statutory law nearly makes it impossible to realise "the best interest of the child", for instance local court adjudicators are not very conversant with statutory law making them unaware of their jurisdiction in statutory law that supercedes customary law (Movitz.S and Young. A ,2018, p.19).

CHILD PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

Respect for the views of the child is another fundamental principle that must be taken into consideration in all matters affecting the child. Article 12 of the UNCRC provides that:

"States parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his/her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

The child is to be provided, in particular, with the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body, in manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Zambia is obliged to secure press freedom and access to information by children and necessary legislation must be put in place. This will accord opportunity for all citizens including children to participate in decision making processes at all levels of society including resource mobilisation, budget execution, monitoring and evaluation and social accountability mechanisms. Zambia has a range of legislative and policy instruments in place to underpin children's participation. The constitution is the starting point for child participation; the Constitution of Zambia in Article 11-23 guarantees a range of civil and political rights and freedoms for everyone in Zambia, including children. The Constitution of Zambia provides for freedoms of expression, assembly and association in Articles 19,20 and 21. As regard to freedom of expression, the Republican Constitution is the most defining legislative framework on expression. Article

20(1) accordingly provides that except with his own consent, a person shall not be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say, freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to impart and communicate ideas and information without interference, whether the communication to be to public generally or to any persons and freedom from interference with his correspondence. Children have the constitutional right to freely express their opinions on affairs affecting them and receive any information on the same. They have constitutional right to communicate amongst themselves or with the general public including influencing decision making in public policy (UNICEF,2021, p.116).

However, Zambia has faced a number of challenges in realizing this principle, the children code bill which is aimed at synthesizing common, civil and customary laws and overhauling outdated statutes affecting children has taken long to be passed into law. Besides, the Public Order Act (POA), Cap 113 of the Laws of Zambia, the newly enacted Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act of 2020 and the Penal Code. These are however argued to be restrictive to effective participation. The POA has affected the children's engagement in public discourse, especially when children mobilise themselves and stage demonstrations and protests; this contravenes the POA. On the other hand, the newly enacted Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act of 2020 would affect engagement in cyber space (UNICEF,2021:117). Thus, the legislation pointed above are contrary to the National Child Policy with a vision to build a society where children survive, thrive and reach their full potential.

In Zambia, cultural and religious beliefs and practices are key consideration in child participation. Children, in their familial, community and public life role are often relegated to being passive recipients of programmes, activities and benefits that are directed at them. Mindsets that support exclusion of children are often backed by cultural practices and beliefs that do not create a supportive environment for children. For example, in Zambia, expressive children are labeled as unruly.

Although a certain section of society argue that children are exposed to various platforms of participation, notables among many platforms are the media. However, the way media are accessed and consumed by children adds to the weakened participation in key processes, critical conversations and decision-making. Moreover, children mainly participate in media on special occasions and this lessens the opportunity to add their voices to matters of concern. It is further revealed that participation of children and adolescents in decision making is weak this is according to children that participated in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Children said that they are not adequately consulted on issues concerning them hence, their needs are not fulfilled. It was further noted that even when children's voices are heard they are not properly considered (UNICEF,2021:118).

FINDINGS

This part of the study will highlight some of the factors that have posed a challenge to realization of the objectives and measures that have been put in the National Child Policy. It has been found that the National Child Policy is anchored on the UNCRC principles although the country has not actualised them owing to the fact that child abuse, lack of participation in decision making, malnutrition, Infant mortality, poor health and education services are acute.

1.1. INADEQUATE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Zambia's debt stock stands at US\$ 14.71 billion which is unsustainable for a country with a GDP of US\$ 18.53 billion, therefore, huge amount of the annual budget is towards servicing of external debts. According to Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) the Government spent 42% of domestic revenue on emoluments that is wages and salaries while 29% is spent on servicing loans. As 30% of the government revenue is spent on other government programmes which drive the country's development such as health, education, agriculture, social protection and so on (CUTS International,2019:5). It is incontestable fact that the set objectives and measures in the National Child Policy cannot be attained with ill funding from the government treasury. This argument coincides with an analysis carried out by Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) in five provinces namely Eastern, Luapula, North-Western, Southern and Western Province on quality of social sector services. The analysis revealed that the quality-of-service delivery in these provinces has been deteriorating. Education provision is suffering from lack of funding. The teacher to pupil ratio has remained high with an average ratio of 1 to 60 and there is limited access to teaching aids and support infrastructure such as desks. The health sector is under resourced with most rural health centres and clinics not having medical doctors and support staff such as pharmacy technologists, laboratory technologists and midwives. Also support to farmers has fallen due to limited number on Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) and lack of extension officers; the ratio of these officers to farmers is as high as 1:1,200 in some areas, three times the ideal of 1 to 400 (CUTS International,2019, p.5).

Besides, various stakeholders lack resources, both human and financial, to be able to effectively play their role in child protection and consequently mitigate abuse. Child protection and gender committees, that have been proven to be effective in addressing child rights and protection issues are not functional as they do not receive funds to discharge their functions. This is a situation in Kenya and Tanzania where the Departments of Children's Services (DCS) has limited budget which does not even provide small amount of money to help children receive medical care, educational fees, food, housing, counselling and or emergency placement out of the home (Save the Children,2012, p.42).

1.2. INADEQUATE CO-ORDINATION

Although the National Child Policy provides guidance on how various government bodies and non-state actor would collaborate in order to attain the goals and aspirations of the policy, however, there is lack of co-ordination amongst the different stakeholders in child protection and this has continued to pose a challenge to the achievement of the vision, objectives and measures of the policy that are founded on UNCRC's guiding principles. This coupled with other factors have weakened the capacity of child welfare service providers to respond, monitor, build linkages, follow ups and provision of justice to children. The Department of Child is responsible for co-ordinating child protection services across the country; however, its co-ordinating function is made ineffective due to limited resources and lack of presence at district level. This has also been observed by OAK Foundation in Uganda that Uganda National Child Protection Framework lacks effective co-ordination and governance mechanism within various child care sub-systems (Save the Children,2012, p.44).

1.3.LACK OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Save the Children in the Desk Review an Analysis of Literature on Child Protection Systems in the Eastern African Region notes that effective child protection system is founded upon a meticulously planned and implemented data collection, analysis and documentation. Data is an important component of any child protection system in that it informs policy makers about programme interventions and development; inform the public on the situation of children, for national budgeting purpose (Save the Children, 35, p.2012). In Zambia there is no centralised data collection and management system that would clearly provide service providers with information about children, hence there is no accurate data for planning and designing of children services, thus, there is no comprehensive and up to date data on the prevalence, trends and outcomes on child protection variables, constituting a major limitation to the functionality of the child protection system.

Through coordinated effort between the project, the local primes for District OVC Systems Strengthening Project (DOSS) and Zambia OVC Monitoring and Information System (ZOMIS). The ZOMIS would create a database which will assist in disaggregating data and information gathering on children. The information collected was to inform policies and budget allocation. However, the project came to end without these systems being in operation. Sector Advisory Group (SAGs) review how child related programmes are implemented. SAGs obtain reports from districts which submit to provinces and province report to SAGs which are organised at national level. However, this mechanism is irrelevant because of the absence of the National Plan of Action. It is also reported that Protection Officers have no resources to set up individual children's files with information on the child's assessment, services provided and notes from case conferences (ZOMIS quarterly report 2013). The lack of centralized data collection and management system has made it impossible to track the progress made in the realisation of the objectives of the National Child Policy.

1.4. INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION LAWS AND POLICIES

In Zambia, there is inadequate enforcement of legal and policy frameworks for children protection, whilst the legal frameworks and policies support effective protection of children from all forms of exploitation and abuse, there are some gaps in the implementation of these laws and policies leading to weak child protection system in Zambia. These gaps in implementation are as a result of lack of uniformity of the legal framework which has created space for vices such as child marriages, sexual and physical abuse. For instance, customary law considers puberty as a minimum criterion for girls to get married while statutory law provides a minimum of 16 years (with parental consent) and 21 years (without parental consent). Besides, most of the provision in international and regional treaties are have not being incorporated into domestic legislation. For instance, the Bill of Rights embodied in Part III of Zambia Constitution provides for the protection of fundamental rights pertaining to the improvement of the welfare of children such as education, health, housing, food and nutrition and employment although are not placed in the Bill of Rights. However, these rights are placed under Part IX of the constitution which deals with Directive Principles of State Policy and may be attained as state resources permits (Banda and Fared, 2006, pp.13-27).

Besides, the inconsistency in the definition of the child under national laws and a different consideration of “who is a child” under customary law. This means different treatment of children by different pieces of legislation and courts. This is a common problem in dual legal system countries as the Child Rights Coalition Malaysia reported that there is contradiction in the definition of child under both civil and Sharia law and little has been done to realise the practical intent of Article 13 and 15 of the CRC and policies and realities on the ground have remained unchanged (Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, 1).

In Zambia’s rural areas many people in low-income communities are unaware of their human and legal rights, as well as proper court procedures. Because of this, one of the most contributing factors of child abuse is the dissonance of Zambia legal system thus, statutory and customary (Lungowe ,2012, p.12). Although, local Courts ACT, states that statutory law prevails over customary law in all circumstances, however, in rural areas with less access to information of statutory law, customary law takes precedence over written law despite the laws being in place that restrict it (Movitz.S and Young.A, 2018, p.11). This is a challenge to progressively realisation of survival and development which is highly pronounced in the National Child Policy.

1.5. LACK OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The National Child Policy is alive to the fact that monitoring and evaluation is important in the assessment of whether the set goals and objectives are being attained or not. In this quest the then Ministry of Youth, Sport and Child Development wanted to operationalized the National Child Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and the National Child Policy Implementation Plan 2015-2016, however, these plans are not in operation. The Zambia Orphans and Vulnerable Children Systems Strengthening Project a five-year project funded by USAID through PEPFAR with overall goal of improving the quality of OVC services through strengthened systems and policy framework for coordination, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, however, the project has come to an end without realising its objective. Therefore, in the absence of the

robust M&E framework, it has become difficult to consolidate information to showcase progress in the implementation of the National Child Policy; The lack of Monitoring and Evaluations has also made it impossible for various actors in child protection to learn from each other's experiences, building on expertise and knowledge. Besides, it's difficult to hold the government accountable in upholding the UNCRC key principles in the absence of verified information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is urgent need to pass the children code bill into law.
- Adequate funding to the Department of Child Development for enforcement of laws and policies to protect children.
- Adequate funding to social service sectors in order for them to provide quality services for the wellbeing of children.
- Decentralization of the Department of Child Development in all districts for easy co-ordination of children welfare.
- Operationalisation of the National Framework of Action to the guide the implementation of the policy.
- Development of the monitoring and evaluation framework to track and monitor progress Zambia is making in achieve the objectives of the National Child Policy.
- Development of Information management system for easy management of the information and for stakeholder mapping.
- Annual review of the country's performance in upholding children's rights by an independent body.

CONCLUSION

The National Child Policy is well founded on the UNCRC key principles, thus child survival rights, the best interest of the child, child participation in decision making and the principle of non-discrimination. However, the policy has failed to attain its objective of coordinating and managing multi-sectoral child welfare and development programmes in order to ensure child survival. This is as a result of inadequate enforcement of legal and policy frameworks for children protection, this is despite them being supportive to effective protection of children from all forms of exploitation and abuse. Besides, the absence of M&E framework makes it difficult to track and monitor the progress Zambia is making in the protection of children. Inadequate financial resources have resulted in poor provision of social services such as health and education that are aimed at guaranting child survival and development.

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