

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Change Agents

**BEST PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS DURING
COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**ZAMBIA. COPPERBELT PROVINCE,
LUFWANYAMA DISTRICT
PRESENTATION: MARCH, 2020**

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Introduction

- The Ministry of Education has the mandate of providing quality education services to all at all levels
- The underlying principle is to ensure all children access and participate in the universal and inclusive education
- This is in tandem with the National Vision 2030 of ensuring that No One is Left Behind
- Therefore, even in the advent of COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry in Lufwanyama District, Copperbelt Province, Zambia promoted access, participation, equity and equality, efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of education
- This was to ensure that the child is not denied the right to education despite COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Rights

- **Fear and Confinement (Gaps in information)**
- **Hunger and poverty (Loss of Jobs)**
- **Early Pregnancies and Marriages**
- **Inactive social and physical interaction (e.g. Sports)**

Best Practices to Promote the Rights of the Child during COVID-19 Pandemic

The district in line with the Government of the Republic of Zambia commitment through the Ministry of Health guidelines on COVID-19 responded well to the management and adaptation to ensure that children are treated as rights holders during the pandemic and beyond

Key Interventions and Measures to Promote and Preserve Child's Rights

- Children involved in education and information dissemination on how to keep themselves safe and healthy both in school and home
- Children involved in making and producing locally made information Education Communication (IEC) materials on COVID 19. This has been done together with teachers and shared with parents. The goal of this activity is to engage the children in discussions and spell out fear, worrisome, confusion, scary and anger among the children during COVID-19 pandemic

Key Interventions and Measures to Promote and Preserve Child's Rights

- Formation of peer groups to inculcate leadership during COVID-19 pandemic and help children keep themselves, families and community healthy. In these groups children share what they learn about the preventing the disease in school and community.
- In order to retain learners into school; children have been involved in the implementation of COVID-19 golden rules of frequently washing their hands with soap, social distancing, masking up when in big gatherings, not to touch the faces, eyes, nose and mouth anyhow.
- Continued provision of education to the children through well-designed measures such as: staggered sessions, limit class-size to 20 learners, Reduced contact hours to accommodate every one, physical distancing in classrooms

Key Interventions and Measures to Promote and Preserve Child's Rights

- Coordinated stakeholder participation in providing PPEs and Hand wash facilities in schools to ensure children attend school regularly (Public Sector, Non-governmental Organisations, Private Companies)
- Implementing Keeping Girls in School programme to ensure retention of girls into school
- Implementing school feeding to enhance school enrolments, attendance and exacerbate dropping out as a result of COVID-19 impact on socio-economic status of parents
- Developed study materials to distribute to learners to use during school closure

Key Interventions and Measures to Promote and Preserve Child's Rights

- Use of e-learning where applicable; especially whatsapp to share learning materials to keep the children busy during school closures
- Engagement of Health personnel and School Health Coordinators in health talks with focus on COVID 19 prevention routinely
- Used sport to disseminate the information on COVID-19 and help retain learners into school
- Strengthened school councils to spearhead the sharing of upholding children's rights and protection during COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

- The promotion of Child's rights is at the centre stage of every key stakeholder in the district. The Ministry in the district has partnered with Line Ministries, NGOs like Save the Children International (SCI) , Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), and Panos Institute Southern Africa to promote Child Rights, Social Protection and Accountability.
- The partnership is to see that the child enjoys the rights as enshrined in the CRC for a socially, emotionally, spiritually, and physically well-developed child.