

# The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN)

## STRATEGIC PLAN

2010-2015



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# Contents

Acronyms.....3

Message From the Board Chairperson.....4

Executive Summary .....5

**1. About ZWRCN.....7**

**2. Country Context and ZWRCN Milestones.....8**

**3. ZWRCN Programmatic Focus.....10**

**4. Gender and Information Programme (GIP).....11**

**5. Gender Economic Policies and Public Finance Programme (GEPPF)..... 13**

**6. Monitoring and Evaluation.....16**

**7. Organisational Capacity .....17**

## ACRONYMS

ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CSW	Status of Women
EED	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
GAD	Gender and Development
GBIs	Gender Budgeting Initiatives
GEPPF	Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance
GPA	Global Political Agreement
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MAD	Making a Difference (for Women Campaign)
MOHCW	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
MWAGCD	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
MOF	Ministry of Finance
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PA	Performance Assessment
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PLWHA	People living with HIV and AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PSC	Public Service Commission
STI	Sexually transmitted Infections
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
ZAN	Zimbabwe Aids Network
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation
ZEDS	Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network

## Message from the Board Chairperson

Developing an organisational strategy is a labour of love, and many ideas were shared by staff, Board, partners and friends since mid-2009 to reach the point where ZWRCN has a new 5 year Strategic Plan. It also coincides with a significant stage in ZWRCN's growth; the organisation's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! It is thus a good time to focus, in a concrete way, on what the future holds. Aside from an organisational review undertaken in the first quarter of 2009, ZWRCN also held two retreats during the course of 2009 to concretise ideas that formed the basis of this Plan. Two workshops were held in March and October 2010 to refine the first and second drafts and debate a number of issues further. This final Plan is therefore a creative outcome of learning, well thought out issue identification, and visionary thinking. Some new aspects of the plan include a shift towards feminist organisational practice, pared down programmes to focus on what ZWRCN does best, as well as a financial strategy.

The plan aims to reposition ZWRCN as a lead women's rights organisation underpinned by feminist values and principles, which will contribute significantly in the next 5 years to changing

the lives of women; in essence it is about making the rights of women work for them in reality and substantively. The Plan is also about organisational growth, where people who make up the organisation are at the centre, and are supported to meet their personal and organisational growth. In the next 5 years ZWRCN will also focus on strengthening its presence in the region (SADC), thereby expanding its working mandate beyond Zimbabwe. This is an exciting and challenging development, and our partnership strategy should prove invaluable in terms of supporting this and other ambitious processes that ZWRCN will embark on in its exciting journey towards realising its vision. ZWRCN would like to acknowledge all the cooperating partners that have supported the organisation to meet its mandate in the last 3 years and the next 5 years going forward. We trust that these partnerships will deepen and play a strong role in our sustainability in the long term.

## Executive Summary

ZWRCN is celebrating twenty years (1990 - 2010) of women rights activism in Zimbabwe, the SADC region and globally. This places the organisation's staff and partners in a position to speak more confidently about their experiences of women's movement building, and mainstreaming gender and women's rights in all aspects of human development, democracy and human rights. The organisation is well placed to move forward to 'Make a Difference for Women' (MAD), the overriding theme for this Strategic Plan.

Since the last Strategic Plan was adopted (2007 - 2009), a number of developments have occurred, for example, an increasing financial base, and this has made an impact on ZWRCN's capacity to deliver on its commitments internally and to various constituencies. These experiences and changes are outlined in this plan, and form the basis for the choices made, new and emerging opportunities identified, and limitations going forward in the next five years. The most significant shift is the decision to embrace feminist ideology and practice as the base for ZWRCN's activism towards gender equality. As shall be elaborated in this strategic plan, ZWRCN believes that unless the fundamentals that continue to perpetuate women's oppression and exploitation are squarely tackled, such as patriarchy, then only superficial change and not transformation of women's lives, will occur.

The 2010 - 2015 Strategic Plan (the Plan) is premised by the understanding that the most significant change and transformation happens when an organisation clarifies

and invests in its core business, that is, 'going back to basics' and focusing time, energy and resources in what matters most. This can best be explained by the story of the woman by the river:-

### *The Woman by the River*

*A story is told of a woman who was washing clothes by the river, when a woman came tumbling down from upstream gasping and screaming for help. The woman jumped into the stream and rescued her, and was soon washing clothes again. After a few minutes another woman came tumbling down, and again the woman jumped into the river and rescued her. After a few minutes the same thing happened again. The woman eventually stopped to reflect and decided that rather than continue to rescue the women tumbling down from upstream, she had better go upstream and do something about it.....*



The Plan (2010-2015) therefore seeks to ‘go upstream’ to strike at the core of what would make a difference to women in line with the organisation’s vision, by strengthening what ZWR CN is known for. In light of this, in the next 5 years the organisation is placing catalytic information programmatically at the centre of its work. This implies rearticulating information as a *resource for feminist organising and advocacy for transformative change*, and building structures, systems and processes to support this, including specialized information around critical gender equality issues that the organization will be working on going forward, such as women’s empowerment in economic governance.

In the next 5 years, ZWR CN is streamlining its main programme addressing women’s empowerment in economic governance issues, to deepen its work focusing

on economic policies and public finance, principally in the area of gender responsive budgets (GRB). In addressing GRB, ZWR CN’s shall be focusing on women’s empowerment. ZWR CN plans to engage more directly with Zimbabwe’s macroeconomic framework through gender analysis, participation in policy dialogue and tracking implementation of, amongst others, the newly adopted Medium Term Economic Plan (MTP) that Zimbabwe shall be implementing in the next 3 years.

Over the years ZWR CN has developed strong relationships with its peers in civil society, particularly the women’s movement in Zimbabwe and internationally. In the next three years, the approach is to *structure* the relationships so that they are mutually reinforcing and rewarding, while expanding the organisation’s reach to include mainstream organisations, research and other knowledge building institutions, as well as the private sector.

In order to ensure the base upon which organisational development rests is sound, ZWR CN plans to realign its approach to resource mobilisation with newly developed key principles that will inform its fundraising strategy. This will be coupled with streamlining internal policy and procedures, and a stronger focus on human resource development, underpinned by feminist principles<sup>1</sup>. The latter will include a staff retention policy that takes into account creative incentives and the growth potential of staff in the organisation. ZWR CN, which is experiencing significant skills gaps, plans to invest time and resources in building its skills base, particularly in the areas of information management and economic governance (including GRB).

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<sup>1</sup> ZWR CN shall adapt the feminist institutional principles outlined in the ‘Charter for Feminist Principles for African Feminists’; (2006) African Women’s Development Fund (AWDF)

## **1.0 About ZWRCN - Societal Transformation through Feminist Activism**

The Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) is committed to gender equality based on feminist principles. Feminism is both an ideology and social change strategy. It is based on the belief in and seeks equality with respect to the relations of power between women and men, namely gender equality.

For ZWRCN, engaging with feminism means<sup>2</sup>:-

- Undertaking activist work that will see the women of Zimbabwe and Africa achieve full citizenship, free from patriarchal oppression, with rights of access, ownership and control over resources, their own bodies, and all other fundamental rights and freedoms.
- Promoting and utilizing positive aspects of culture and tradition in a liberating and nurturing way.
- Advocating for the achievement of the rights of all women, without exception.
- Using time, energy and resources to advocate against all forms of patriarchal oppression and exploitation. Patriarchy frames the manner in which society enables and legitimizes every aspect of how men and women's lives are structured, and to privilege male supremacy.
- A focus on dismantling and ending patriarchy as a system, not against individual men or women.
- Challenging other forms and systems of oppression and exploitation that intersect with patriarchy and mutually support it; this includes all forms of fundamentalism, imperialism, and racism, amongst others.

### **Vision**

To see women enjoying the benefits of actualizing their full potential in all areas of their lives

### **Mission**

To enable women to make informed decisions about key aspects of their lives and act accordingly

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<sup>2</sup> ibid

## Strategic Aims - The Three Pillars

The organisation's strategic focus shall be informed by three pillars...

- Enhancing learning, knowledge building and sharing on women's rights and empowerment in Zimbabwe and globally
- Promoting women's human rights and empowerment, including access to, ownership and control over resources in Zimbabwe and globally
- Strengthening organisational capacity to achieve results that make a difference to women's lives.

ZWRCN's primary constituency is women at different levels and stages of their life cycle. In order to support women to achieve their highest potential, ZWRCN works closely with policy makers, programme planners and implementers, funding partners, media institutions, peers in the women's movement and other human rights organizations.

## 2.0 Country Context and ZWRCN Milestones

The implementation of the last ZWRCN Strategic Plan was in the context of a nation that was, and continues to, grapple with socio-economic challenges. 2007 - 2008 was particularly difficult, characterised by sharp increases in inflation, acute shortages of goods and services, poor harvest, deteriorating delivery of public services such as

water, electricity, sanitation and health, deterioration of the education sector, and high unemployment.

ZWRCN's Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance (GEPPF) programme has sought to influence the government to use the budget as a tool for addressing critical gaps in different sectors of the economy, and responding to the economic crisis in a gender responsive way that will achieve poverty reduction. GEPPF has been jointly implemented with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development. The budget in Zimbabwe, a key tool for resource allocation to address challenges, has traditionally been gender blind and did not allocate resources that are targeted at addressing the differential needs of women and men, girls and boys. Since 2007, the Ministry of Finance has mandated line ministries to incorporate gender concerns in their budget submissions. This set a precedent for subsequent budgets; a significant milestone and shift in budget formulation and implementation in Zimbabwe.

ZWRCN's sector budget analysis and national budget studies conducted between 2004 and 2009 reveal that women are negatively impacted by various government policies and programmes that are not gender responsive with respect to budgetary allocations. The analytical work sought to point out to decision makers, that the deterioration of service delivery i.e. water and sanitation facilities, energy provision and poor road infrastructure further worsened the plight of women.

The health sector, which ZWRCN has focused on for some years, including launching the 'Making a Difference for Women' campaign in 2007, to promote women's reproductive health and sexual rights, has in the past 3 years also been adversely affected thus placing the care burden on women who are already over-burdened by home-based care programmes, a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Zimbabwe National Accounting System

does not take into consideration women's care work, and their contributions from the informal sector activities, yet women's contributions have generally dominated the informal sector enclave. ZWR CN has sought to highlight the need for government to recognise and value care work, and together with partners in the SADC region, through the southern African Gender Protocol Alliance, succeeded in ensuring that a provision was included in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (adopted in 2008).

Service delivery by local government is a crucial factor for women's access to basic services. ZWR CN launched its gender budgeting activities at local government level towards the end of 2008 (supported by DFID). The emphasis on budget allocations in the social service sectors is very significant. In 2009, ZWR CN, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), conducted a baseline on gender equality and budget allocation in the education sector, with a focus on primary and secondary education. The main purpose was to reveal the progress and gaps, with a view to engaging the Ministry of Education directly on policy change, including a child friendly budget. The 2009 National Budget ushered in a new operational environment through its liberalised economy budget proposal. It proposed to do away with all administrative controls, ushering in a self-correcting mechanism of the free market. It also gave authority back to local government for service delivery, and this has given greater opportunity for wider consultation and greater participation of communities and civil society. This has thus provided a window of opportunity for civil society to advocate for gender responsive budgeting in public service delivery, and ZWR CN has, since late 2008, been working closely with the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP), Urban Councils Association (UCAZ), Women in Politics Support Unit (WIP SU) amongst other

partners, to mainstream gender budgeting in local government.

There has been a discernible shift in public expenditure, with the 2009/2010 national budgets placing high priority on social sectors. In 2009, they received relatively large allocations in proportion to the total budget, with education and health receiving 20% and 12% of the total national budget respectively. These budgets have gone some way in redressing gender imbalances through the allocation of resources to various activities where women may also benefit i.e. social and production sectors.

Politically, 2009 proved to be the turning point from tensions and crises, when the Global Political Agreement that was signed in September, 2008 came into effect in the first quarter. February 11, 2009 heralded a new political dispensation with the formal establishment of the Unity Government. It also ushered in several reforms, including the constitutional reform process which is still ongoing. This has proved to be a significant opportunity for the women's movement, and ZWR CN has participated and made expert input in economic governance issues, including gender responsive budgeting. Information for women remains a centre point of awareness raising on the constitutional reform process, and ZWR CN is one of the organisations taking the lead in providing information on women's priorities and rights.

Since the last Strategic Plan, ZWR CN has undergone transformation in terms of vision and approach. It has begun to expand its regional (SADC) portfolio in concrete terms, with the launch in June 2009, in partnership with UNIFEM, of the Southern African Gender Budgeting Network. UNIFEM is continuing to support this initiative. ZWR CN was identified as the lead of the Economic Justice cluster of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance (Alliance). The Alliance is currently campaigning for the ratification of the SADC Protocol on Gender and

Development. A programme and organisational review exercise resulted in the streamlining of programme focus, and the reorienting of ZWR CN identity as a women's rights organisation, underpinned by feminist ideology and practice.

Zimbabwean civil society has struggled to sustain itself financially with a number of cooperating partners withdrawing support from the country. ZWR CN's resource base, however, has grown exponentially during the implementation of the last Strategic Plan. A number of new partnerships with cooperating partners were entered into, including UNICEF, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the Department of International Development UK Aid (DFID). UN Women (Formerly UNIFEM) also strengthened its relationship with ZWR CN.



### **3.0 Overview of ZWRCN Programmatic Focus-Making A Difference (MAD) for Women**

ZWRCN's programme work in the next five years is influenced by a set of interconnected national and regional women's rights and development instruments. These include the national gender policy, macroeconomic policy (including gender budgeting), the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (SADC Gender Protocol), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The overall theme that informs all programming is 'Making a Difference for Women' (MAD). This implies working in an innovative way that aims to transform the lives of women in a fundamental way, where results of ZWRCN's work translate directly into measurable and significant change in women's lives. ZWRCN will focus on two programmes from 2010 - 2014. The anchor is the Gender and Information Programme (GIP) aimed at raising the profile of ZWRCN as the leading information organisation in Zimbabwe and beyond. The second programme, the Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance (GEPPF), aims to democratise the macroeconomic framework through fostering women's participation in the economy, including in policy formulation and implementation and the national and local budgeting process. ZWRCN shall simultaneously support and provide capacity to government structures, systems and processes to mainstream gender and women's empowerment in macroeconomic policy development and management, as well as the budget process. Through the programme it is envisaged that support to other key players in civil society shall be

provided, so that they demand greater accountability in public finance management, in particular with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment in the national budget.

Between 2008 and 2009, ZWRCN undertook two externally facilitated reviews of the organization (culture, values, programmes, finances), and the findings have informed ZWRCN's new programmatic approach. Firstly, streamlining programming to create stronger synergies. Secondly, to put in place better mechanisms for inter-programme dialogue, and joint planning so that each programme leverages and complements the other and quality results and impact are achieved. This will be supported by a well structured monitoring and evaluation system.

### **4.0 Gender and Information Programme**

#### **4.1 Strategic aim: Enhancing learning, knowledge building and sharing on women's rights and empowerment in Zimbabwe and globally**

ZWRCN is placing a premium on the Gender and Information Programme (GIP) over the next 5 years, based on the understanding that information is a key resource for catalyzing women's self-understanding and empowerment and that it plays a key role in national development. The vision is to transform the programme, including structures and systems into a leading information management hub that supports organisational growth whilst simultaneously supporting women, ZWRCN peers, cooperating partners, government in Zimbabwe and beyond to make significant steps towards achieving women's full rights. Improvement of electronic capacity, including website

and other resources to enhance access by stakeholders will be a primary area for financial and human resource investment.

There are six key areas of focus between 2010–2015, namely:-

- Updating all electronic resources
- Collecting and collating specialist information (feminism, economic analyses, women’s rights, amongst others)
- Coordinating research and writing of specialist information (including sector specific areas )
- Servicing clients and partners (including women), scholars, government personnel, civil society activists, amongst others)
- Creating platforms to debate current feminist and gender equality issues, and outreach to women in all parts of the country and globally
- Investing in and nurturing the human capacity to support knowledge management work

### **Programme Performance Goal**

Enhanced visibility of ZWRCN as a hub for information on women’s rights, gender equality and development to support feminist activism by the organization, peers and partners

### **4.2 Programme Outcomes**

- Increased knowledge and awareness by women and other stakeholders of feminist, gender equality and development issues.
- Strengthened capacity of ZWRCN to effectively manage and produce knowledge products and services to advance the women’s empowerment agenda.

- ZWRCN, women and other stakeholders capacitated to advocate and lobby for pertinent feminist and GAD issues at national and regional level

## **4.3 Core Activities**

### **4.3.1. Updating Information Management Infrastructure and Systems**

In order to create a vibrant and cutting edge knowledge centre, ZWRCN plans to update the Documentation Centre, which is at the heart of ZWRCN information management work. The centre provides library and photocopying services. The users of the Centre, in particular the library, comprise academics, students, women, civil society activists, policy makers and researchers, amongst others.

Over the next 5 years ZWRCN plans to create an efficient, effective and functional information kiosk, as part of a broader plan to provide a space for women in particular to easily access the latest information using technology, as well as networking. The information kiosk services will include wireless internet facility and access to electronic data bases, e-journals and social networking sites.

Going forward, the plan is to provide a service to users in a way that builds their capacity to appreciate and use information as a resource to advance their careers, personal lives and communities. ZWRCN shall also raise revenue through membership fees for users of the

Documentation Center, in order to provide specialized information and other services, whilst sustaining the Centre in the long term. Archiving of information shall be upscaled, based on a revised system that is flexible and user friendly. ZWRCN, in 2009, revived its outreach initiatives to link with rural libraries, and plans to continue with this work over the next 5 years as a critical way of reaching women with the kind of life changing information they would not otherwise access.

#### **4.3.2. Repackaging of Information and production of Promotional Materials**

A key function of the GIP is to support other programmes with repackaging of any research undertaken and information that ZWRCN generates. In the last 3 years, several publications have been produced in sectors such as health, agriculture, and SMEs.

Over the next 3 years, time, energy and resources shall go towards:

- Diversifying publications into different forms
- Producing more information profiling the organisation's work
- Supporting organisational growth through stronger media engagement, including developing a media policy
- Developing a communication strategy
- Finalizing the ICT policy, which is critical for the effective use and maintenance of electronic resources of the organization

#### **4.3.3. Networking, Creating Spaces for Feminist Engagement**

In order to nurture feminist spaces for critical engagement on contemporary issues, trends and developments, ZWRCN shall strengthen networking with organisations, institutions and individuals that share similar values, as well as creating platforms for engagement. Over the last 20 years, ZWRCN has developed a large data base of partners, and sought to strengthen these partnerships either through undertaking joint activities, periodic meetings, or creating platforms for exchange of views and ideas. Other networking partners periodically drop in at ZWRCN offices for face to face discussion with staff. More recently, selected partnerships have become more structured, through signing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); for example with Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU), Municipal Development Partnership (MDP), Women's Action Group (WAG), Gweru Women AIDS Prevention Association (GWAPA) and the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD) amongst others



ZWRCN has also gone regional in its networking efforts and plans to strengthen its role in the recently launched Southern African Gender Budgeting Network (which

ZWRCN launched in June 2009 in partnership with Un Women/UNIFEM, and the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance and Amanitare). The experience of involvement in these regional networks has given ZWRCN new opportunities to tap into other regional and international networks in order to firmly place the feminist agenda on the regional agenda.

There are specific annual activities that ZWRCN has been involved in over time and intends to deepen its involvement to strengthen networking in the next five years, and these include:-

- International days, including International Women's Day
- 16 Days of Activism against gender based violence
- The Eve Zinanga Memorial Lecture, (in memory of the late ZWRCN Board Member)
- The Zimbabwe International Book Fair

ZWRCN has been identified with GAD talks since the 1990s. GAD talks have proved to be the anchor space for successful networking with friends of ZWRCN, partners, and new stakeholders. In the next five years, and given the new opportunities and existing challenges particularly in the economic and political spheres, ZWRCN plans to maximise the use of this platform to discuss contemporary feminist, women's rights and gender equality issues. This will also include creating space for feminist activists from the region and internationally to engage with women of Zimbabwe.

## **5.0 Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance Programme (GEPPF)**

### **5.1 Strategic aim: Promoting women's human rights and empowerment, including**

### **access to, ownership and control over resources in Zimbabwe and globally**

Over the next 5 years, ZWRCN will be working on gender and economic governance as a strategic contribution to a sustainable human development agenda<sup>3</sup> in Zimbabwe and globally. This is based on the belief that development is not just about economics and neither is it a gender neutral space. It is also about human rights, issues of gender equality, equity and fairness in the distribution of resources at all levels. This means, fundamentally, that all development efforts must be people-centred, and 'the state must therefore be developmental as well as ethical, responsible and accountable to the people'<sup>4</sup>.

ZWRCN's focus is ensuring that women play a central role in defining and participating to advance the sustainable development agenda, and this is encapsulated in the Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance Programme (GEPPF) which has evolved from a project to a fully fledged programme over a period of 11 years from 1999. The next 5 years build on the work to contribute towards mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment in the policies, programmes and budgets at national and local government levels. ZWRCN will continue with the proactive process to engage directly with 'in government' process (national and local government), whilst simultaneously mobilizing civil society to demand accountability to women, in particular poor women, in public finance management. This is premised on the need to mainstream gender in economic governance, with a view to contributing towards closing

<sup>3</sup> The discussion on sustainable human development is informed by the perspectives and views in (2007) 'Towards a People Driven Development Agenda', Alternatives to Neo Liberalism in Southern Africa (ANSA), and (2009) 'SADC Poverty Profile, RPRF Rationale and Approach', Chipika J ,

<sup>4</sup> ibid

gender equality gaps, achieving women's empowerment and reducing poverty. For ZWRCN the key indicators for good economic governance require that the following 6 components are realised<sup>5</sup>:

- Leaders and decision makers must make sound economic and political decisions, taking into account gender equality issues.
- Active and empowered constituencies of women, exercising their basic human rights, and able to participate in and define a clear economic agenda.
- A clear economic agenda underpinned by gender equality concerns, in which actions of decision makers are aligned to those of their constituencies.
- Institutions must be open and accountable to women, through a democratic political system.
- Information is a powerful tool in economic decision making, and both women and decision makers must have access to it, and utilise it effectively.
- Monitoring and accountability processes must be institutionalised and effective, to enable women to make demands.

### **Programme Performance Goals**

Contributing to women's empowerment through promoting gender sensitive socio-economic policies, programmes and budgets for development, in particular poverty reduction and improved societal welfare.

### **5.2 Programme Outcomes**

- Increased knowledge and technical capacity of national and local government officials and policy makers to address women's empowerment and human development concerns in macroeconomic policies, programmes and budgets

- Increased knowledge and effective participation of women and CSOs in influencing public policies and budget priorities
- Increase in pro poor and women's empowerment resource allocations in the national budget, with related impact

The economic governance conceptual framework outlined earlier frames the direction of the GEPPF programme going forward over the next 5 years. In essence, ZWRCN, based on the 6 components necessary for effective economic governance, will focus on supporting and tracking women's empowerment and macro economic policy implementation, through the national budgeting process. This will be done at four levels:

- a) Building capacity to strengthen the national government structures and systems to implement gender budgeting, with a focus on women's empowerment
- b) Building capacity of local government structures and systems to implement gender budgeting for effective delivery of services, particularly for poor women
- c) Supporting and capacitating women and other stakeholders, to participate fully in the national budget process and influence policy change and resource allocation
- d) Engaging ZWRCN civil society peers, through the Zimbabwe Gender Budgeting Network to demand greater accountability in achieving gender equality and poverty reduction through the national budget process.

### **5.3 Core activities**

#### **5.3.1. Institutional Strengthening**

The essence of the work with regard to this core activity is strengthening the institutional structures and

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<sup>5</sup>Conceptual framework adapted from <http://www1.aucegypt.edu/src/engendering/>

mechanisms, to enable them to open spaces for greater participation in socio economic policy by citizens especially women, whilst implementing gender budgeting and women's empowerment effectively to foster human development and reduce women's poverty. At local government level, the focus is at 2 levels:

- Build capacity of local district councils to mainstream gender and women's empowerment in their policies, programmes and budgets
- mobilize and sensitise women to participate fully and make demands with respect to their interests in the budget process

At national government level, this entails scaling up and sensitization of senior level staff managing the policy development and implementation process as well as the government budget process, training of gender focal persons, and budget review officers in the Ministry of Finance (MOF), amongst others. Monitoring and tracking tools shall be developed with MOF and CSO to determine effective and efficient utilization of resources.

At regional level ZWRCN will provide training on women's empowerment and economic governance to CSOs and government officials in the SADC region, with specific focus on gender budgeting.

### **6.3.2. Capacity building of Women and CSOs**

There will be skills building of women, particularly poor women and CSOs on gender budgeting, budget monitoring and expenditure tracking, mobilization, lobbying and advocacy skills. A special emphasis shall be placed on demands for improved resource allocation to respond to women's priorities in social and economic sectors, not just with respect to practical needs but also strategic needs. Skills building will be conducted through

targeted training, GAD Talks and community meetings, amongst other spaces.

### **5.3.3. Mobilisation to advocate and lobby for gender sensitive budgets**

ZWRCN will continue to conduct pre and post budget meetings in order to engage with diverse communities and various social groups, in particular women, on gender budgeting. A clearer strategy has evolved, which requires working closely with women and the larger community to ensure their effective participation throughout the budget cycle so that the impact of their participation and contribution is better felt. Sensitization and mobilization shall be supported by simple user friendly information that will be distributed periodically either directly to the end users, or through various media. ZWRCN shall identify gender sensitive champions to play a key role in the community mobilization and sensitization processes.

Over the next 5 years ZWRCN will target specific districts and sensitise the women, CBOs and CSOs not only on the need to participate in the budget process as a basic right, but also to play a role in democratizing the process so that it is more 'people-centred'. The importance of this core activity is that the mobilization strategy also entails reviewing and democratizing governance structures responsible for budgeting and policy formulation to ensure that structures are gender balanced in terms of representation and participation.

One of ZWRCN's successes was the launch, with partners, of the Zimbabwe Gender Budgeting Network (ZGBN), which has formed the centre point of ZWRCN's engagement with peers in civil society. The organisations participating in the ZGBN are diverse and work at both policy and community levels, thereby complementing and mutually reinforcing the agenda to 'mobilise from below' whilst influencing change at the highest level.

Over the past 3 years, the ZGBN members have been sensitized and in turn successfully conducted outreach work in the districts.



Going forward, ZWR CN shall be mobilizing more civil society partners to play a role as advocates and lobbyists of women's empowerment and economic justice, and in particular gender budgeting, either through the ZGBN or as part of other coalitions that can influence policy change and impact of the livelihoods of communities, such as the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, ZIMCODD, CCZ.

#### **5.3.4 Budget monitoring and expenditure tracking**

ZWR CN shall develop budget tracking tools for use by different actors responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the national budget process. This shall be reinforced by periodic information on trends and development in gender budgeting and gender in socio economic policy globally, and identification of regional and international best practices to support local work.

ZWR CN will build on its efforts to ensure gender inclusiveness in the budget development and implementation process, through post budget analysis for the social and economic sectors. The effectiveness of the budget will be monitored through the tracking tools developed. Continuous review of policies in the social and economic sectors in relation to the budget will be critical to ensure gender mainstreaming for equitable resource allocation and women's empowerment

#### **5.3.5. Research and Publications**

Analytical research on sectoral gender budgeting has been a hallmark of ZWR CN's work. The research shall be targeted on social and economic sectors such as health, education, SMEs, agriculture and land. Research findings and other information shall be packaged for different users, to strengthen awareness, networking, lobbying and advocacy.

Other key publications shall include, training manuals, tools and guides, and analysis documents.

## **6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E)**

ZWR CN has, over time, developed several M & E frameworks, largely influenced by existing programmatic approaches. In 2008, through the results based management (RBM) process, an externally facilitated comprehensive electronic monitoring system was developed. The different departments in ZWR CN could input their data into the system, which in turn generates the required reports periodically. However, the system requires strengthening, and a more flexible, user friendly approach supported by simple tools that staff can use to track progress and impact.

Over the next 5 years, and building on the existing M & E framework, ZWRCN plans to review and develop a system that will synergise the various operational aspects of the organisation, in particular programming, so that periodic results are generated and impact measured in a more systematic way. Staff will be involved in every step of the process, and will thus be able to critique the system and ensure that it works effectively in the context within which they are operating.

## **7.0 Organizational Capacity**

### **7.1 Strategic aim: Strengthening organisational capacity to deliver impactful results, based on feminist institutional ethics.**

After 20 years, ZWRCN recognizes that in order to support organizational growth, it is essential to put time, effort and resources in at least 3 key areas to support this, namely:

- Systems and Procedures
- Human Resource Capacity
- Financial Sustainability

The overall vision in the next 5 years is an organisation that is able to effectively deliver results, through a positive work ethic and a culture of professionalism informed by feminist leadership and management ethics.

### **7.2 Systems and Procedures**

ZWRCN systems and procedures are regulated through the Policy and Procedures manual that requires periodic reviews. There are gaps in policy that the organisation plans to bridge. A feminist approach that takes into account gender equality concerns is critical. This represents a shift in approach, where ZWRCN seeks to be more explicit as regards its position on women's rights.

The ZWRCN HIV and AIDS policy also needs to be articulated. Administratively, a number of functions require streamlining to ensure greater efficiency and a good spread of responsibilities between staff.

Processes and procedures need to be flexible to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Greater alignment between administrative procedures and programme delivery is required; staff shall be supported to ensure familiarity with systems and procedures to enable them to smoothly and creatively work in the organisation.

### **7.3 Human Resource Capacity**

An organization cannot exist without people, and ZWRCN over the next 5 years will seek to entrench the 'people first' culture in a more concerted way. This includes reviewing the human resource (HR) policy to include the following:-

- Streamlining job descriptions so that there is an alignment between job requirements and the talent of the individual
- Strategic recruitment of qualified and passionate staff, to ensure a 'fit' between the job, the culture of the organization, and the personal vision of the staff member
- Skills training which is structured and supported by the organisation, including long term staff training as appropriate
- Providing incentives for staff to encourage excellence, including bonuses where funds are available
- Improving tools for staff performance to facilitate the achievement of their full potential, including review of the Performance Assessment (PA) system
- Review of staff grading and salary system, to ensure that it is transparent and competitive

Putting the above measures in place shall hopefully contribute to a stable, passionate and creative staff complement, stem staff turnover, and inspire staff that are prepared to go the extra mile to achieve organisational and personal goals.

#### **7.4 Enhancing the Capacity of ZWRCN Staff to deliver impactful results**

ZWRCN has invested time and resources in staff training in areas such as gender budgeting, HIV and AIDS, Research skills, Documentation, M & E, policy briefs, financial sustainability and Results Based Management (RBM). However technical backstopping has been provided through a pool of experts some of whom have benefited from ZWRCN Training of Trainers (TOT) programmes in various sectors. Strong partnerships with experts such as the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), and Forum for Women in Development (FOWODE Uganda), PROFILE, amongst others have been invaluable in delivering high level technical training in gender budgeting, and transferring of these skills to staff.

Whilst the knowledge building of staff has been significant, staff turnover has resulted in the skills and institutional memory dissipating. More efforts are required over the next 5 years to retain and train staff to achieve results under the programmes at a high level. The Documentation Centre shall continue to be the focal point in supporting staff to access current information required to keep them up to date with trends and development. Staff shall also utilise GAD talks, networks and other platforms for exchange of ideas with their peers. Staff shall also be encouraged to be proactive in their own learning, and this will be a key feature of their performance assessment, in order to provide incentives for staff to take charge of their own self development.

#### **7.5 Financial Sustainability**

Financial sustainability is one of the biggest preoccupations of the Board, Management and Staff of ZWRCN, and remains a key area of constant reflection, planning and action. The current position that requires critical action is as follows:

- Approximately 99% of ZWRCN financial resources come from cooperating funding partners, and 1% is generated from ZWRCN assets. This places enormous pressure on the organisation to find innovative ways of generating its own resources in order to be less dependent on external funding sources, whilst simultaneously strengthening existing relationships with current and potential funding partners
- Whilst ZWRCN has grown exponentially over the last decade in particular, the organisation still struggles to cover core costs, including administration and staff salaries. This situation needs to be addressed to ensure stability and sustainability in the long term
- Some major components of programming such as organisational M & E and ICT are underfunded but necessary for leveraging the work of the organisation, and these require urgent attention
- Funding in some areas of programming is tied to short term projects and is not sustainable.

Given the above scenario there are several strategic actions that ZWRCN plans to undertake over the next 5 years:-

- a) Fund raising, targeting both traditional and non traditional funding partners. ZWRCN is running very big programmes, and a key consideration is the recruitment of a fundraiser to assist with a solid fund raising strategy.
- b) Increasing ZWRCN's own generated financial resources from 1 to 4% by 2015.

- c) All fundraising proposals have to cater for core costs, and governance
- d) The organisation shall place a stronger emphasis on programme funding which is long term and lays a good foundation for sustainability.
- e) Staff training in fundraising shall be a priority, in particular for programme staff who have the responsibility to fundraise in support of the Executive Director
- f) ZWRCN will set up cost centres aimed at ensuring that programmes and other organisational aspects contribute towards administrative, HR and other recurrent costs.
- g) The long term strategy is to negotiate for basket funding with funding partners, which will allow maximum leveraging of resources, and streamline programme spending, administration and reporting.

In order to ensure effective and efficient management of ZWRCN's current finances and assets, the Finance Department will ensure that the following is undertaken in the next 5 years:-

- Improvement of financial systems
- Ensuring timely and efficient financial accountability internally and to funding partners; professional reports, periodic internal reports
- Effectively managing, maintaining and utilising organisational assets, including insurance, hiring out and renting of assets
- Ensuring up to date financial accounting systems, using the latest technology

## 7.6 Organogram

ZWRCN's organogram has evolved over time, influenced by growth and expansion of the organisation, or streamlining due to programmatic and administrative changes. Going forward, and in line with the shifts in

approach and vision, ZWRCN is realigning its skills set requirements, thereby ensuring that the organization delivers effectively on its mandate in the next 5 years.

### a) The Gender and Information Programme (GIP)

The next 5 years require a dynamic team with a range of skills to ensure that ZWRCN participates meaningfully and takes the lead in the gender, information and knowledge society. There shall be a special focus on harnessing electronic resources available to facilitate effective delivery of the ZWRCN mandate. The following are the core competencies required:

- Expertise in knowledge management
- Desktop publishing skills
- Editing, research and research management
- Expertise in media engagement and communications, public relations
- Information Resources Management (Information kiosk, internet, archiving)
- Budget management experience and fund raising
- Training, facilitation skills
- Events management experience

### b) The Gender, Economic Policies and Public Finance Programme (GEPPF)

The streamlining of the GEPPF requires that ZWRCN focus on ensuring that the core competencies and skills necessary for implementing this large scale programme are in place. These are outlined below:

- Expertise in gender and economics
- Policy analysis knowledge and experience
- Research and management skills
- Knowledge and experience in public administration (including public finance)

- Expertise in community mobilization
- Knowledge and application of gender and feminist theories of change, GAD, Feminisms
- Monitoring and evaluation expertise
- Budget management and fundraising expertise
- Training, facilitation, awareness raising skills
- Lobbying and advocacy skills and experience
- Events management, logistics

### **c) Finance and Administration**

The Finance and Administration department anchors the entire organisation and plays a lead role in ensuring transparency and accountability, whilst also playing the service role as regards programme delivery and overall organisational performance. The core skills and experience required to ensure that the department is fully functional and effective are outlined below:

- Financial management experience
- Accountancy and bookkeeping skills and experience
- Financial report writing experience
- Understanding of programme development and implementation
- Administration and Human Resource Management experience
- Logistics management (transport, reception, cleaning)

- Budget management experience and fundraising expertise
- Monitoring and evaluation experience
- Public relations experience
- Information Technology skills (including finance software)
- Knowledge of gender and feminist theories of change, GAD, feminisms

The approach to ensuring that the organization achieves this comprehensive skills set requirements is to undertake a skills audit, identify existing skills and experience and enhance them, whilst filling the gaps through identifying new expertise to fill vacant positions. In this way the existing pool of talent in ZWRCN is nurtured, whilst new expertise is attracted into the organization. At the same time ZWRCN shall continue to work closely with a pool of consultants and technical committees such as the GEPPF Advisory Committee which is high level, comprising academics, public finance institutions representatives, and NGO partners. Interns shall remain an integral part of ZWRCN professional support, and the Internship Policy shall be revised to align it to ZWRCN's vision to nurture young talent, in particular young women.

# ZWRCN Organogram

