



Who is ZWRCN?

Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) has been working in the sector for the past thirty-one years (1990 – 2021) focusing on women's rights activism in Zimbabwe, the SADC region and globally. This places the organization's staff and partners authorities on experiences of women's movement building, and mainstreaming gender and women's rights in all aspects of human development, democracy, and human rights. We are driven by the vision to see women enjoying the benefits of actualizing their full potential in all areas of their lives. Our mission is to transform women's lives and relevant institutions to achieve gender equality through strengthening resilience, agency and policy influence, knowledge, and information. Based on ZWRCN's commitment to the rights of all people to live free from poverty, we promote the empowerment of women and girls, and engage with men and boys, to transform unequal power relationships and address gender inequality. We place particular emphasis on strengthening the voice of women and girls and enabling them to influence the decisions that affect their lives. We support women's struggles to achieve their full and equal human rights.

ZWRCN defines women's economic empowerment as the process by which women increase their right to economic resources and power to make decisions to benefit themselves, their families, and their communities. This requires equal access to and control over economic resources, assets, and opportunities as well as long term changes in social norms and economic structures that benefit women and men equally. ZWRCN sees the importance of supporting economic empowerment of women as a key contributing factor to overall empowerment of women and thereby to substantive equality between men and women. In our work to empower women, ZWRCN seeks to strengthen women's position as economic actors and to address their exclusion from economic processes and structures (informal as well as formal). This reduces women's exploitation, marginalization, and vulnerability; enables them to participate in and reap the benefits of economic opportunities; and build prosperity for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Our strategic focus is informed by three pillars:

- ✚ To contribute towards Gender Responsive Public Services (GRPS) in Zimbabwe and globally
- ✚ To contribute towards social and economic transformation of women in Zimbabwe through advocacy for support towards women in the informal sector and supporting involvement of women into the mainstream economy.
- ✚ To develop through collaboration with Research Agencies and Institutions a data and learning resource centre for women's empowerment and gender equality.

What we do

The ZWRCN's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 lays out the three main roles we play for impacting poverty and social injustice, in our efforts to achieve lasting impact at scale.

Enhancing learning , knowledge building and sharing on women's rights and empowerment

- We work to develop through collaboration with communities, research agencies and institutions a data and learning resource centre for women's empowerment and gender equality. We aim to become central in disseminating pertinent information on a wide range of issues to women and girls which include gender responsive budget literacy, 16 days of activism against GBV, legal, economic and social support services available for women and girls in Zimbabwe.

Promoting women's rights and empowerment including their access to, ownership and control over resources

- Our programs and projects are led by a framework and tools for measuring the impact of women's economic empowerment across all our work. We provide innovative solutions for addressing the barriers to women's economic empowerment. We also engage with men and boys to challenge negative gender norms that see men as the sole breadwinner and natural decision-maker, and address women's time poverty by men and boys taking an active role in unpaid care and domestic work.

Strengthening organizational capacity to achieve results that make a difference to women

- ZWRCN works with women in communities and many other contexts and settings to support them to claim their rights. We play a leadership role in key partnerships and alliances through our engagement with women's organizations, wider national partners, alliances and coalitions to demonstrate scalable solutions, advocate for change and influence social norms and practices at local and national levels.

How we do it

In line with ZWRCN's approach, and based on where we believe we have the strongest comparative advantage, and the resources, capacity, and opportunities, we have identified 4 key areas of intervention for the economic empowerment of women:

Financial inclusion through feminist economics:

- This key area works to advance feminist inquiry into economic issues affecting the lives of children, women, and men as well as examine the relationship between gender and power in the economy and the construction and legitimization of economic knowledge. ZWRCN is an innovator within savings-led financial inclusion. It is a powerful foundation for the rest of our women's economic empowerment efforts. We seek to expand our reach and impact through continued creation of innovative products, services and models for outreach that can be scaled up for women.

Dignified Work:

- ZWRCN works to support women to gain equal access to quality work, which is safe, fairly, and equally rewarded, and to have greater levels of control over their earnings from this work. This requires a combination of efforts to improve labor rights, both legally and in practice, and to change attitudes to women's productive vs. reproductive roles at household, community, and structural levels. Women's unpaid and paid work is undervalued. We work to influence governments and private sector to shift these social norms and policies. Women are stuck in precarious jobs, with limited access to decent work. We work towards women gaining more power in markets and more agency from their employers. And finally, we work towards a caring economy where heavy and uneven care work is not the norm and we better value all of women's work.

Economic and Social justice:

• ZWR CN aims to ensure society embraces the ideal that we are all entitled to basic human rights. Justice is the first virtue of society hence requires a balance of rights and responsibilities through opportunity without discrimination and basic social services which provide a social safety net. Some of the key constraints to realizing social and economic justice for women include lack of skills and knowledge, limited control over economic resources and earnings, lower productivity in sectors that women typically engage in, and lack of access to credit and financial services. ZWR CN supports women's ability to build financially (and environmentally) sustainable, profitable, and growing enterprises, with the potential to enter the formal economy, by targeting the specific vulnerabilities women face.

Climate change and Renewable energy justice:

• ZWR CN acknowledges the urgent need to guard the poor populations against the vagaries of climate change such as droughts, floods, storms and changing weather patterns which lead to loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, biodiversity loss and agricultural systems, new disease strains and high levels of poverty. As ZWR CN we are playing our part through implementing a selected set of activities under the Climate Change and Energy Programme that seek increase public awareness and understanding of climate change impacts and actions to fight global warming including use of clean technologies and other renewable or green energy to promote a green economy.

Information dissemination and communications:

• Gender and Information Programme is premised on that information is central to women's empowerment and to the nation's development, and it focuses on promoting women's access to and control of information. ZWR CN manages the flow of gender and development information generated within and outside the organization through processing, repackaging, and publishing it. The organization's social networks on Facebook, Twitter and website blog aim to maintain dialogue on pertinent gender and development work and the organization's activities. ZWR CN facilitates brown bag sessions at the Secret Garden, the secret garden is a safe physical space, particularly for women, where gender and development information are exchanged, and discussions take place. ZWR CN is now harnessing the digital platforms through facilitating brown bag webinars. As a tool of information dissemination we have been using edutainment through skits as a way of information dissemination on vital issues.

ZWRCN have also been making use of edutainment through skits as a way of information dissemination on vital issues. Below are links to some of the skits:

Zvinorwadza sei	https://fb.watch/6R3XDCrjIB/
Makabata basa	https://youtu.be/_jXa1_QPDA
Women Cross borders	https://www.facebook.com/ZWRCNZim/videos/839119443315162/
Ridza Mhere Ubatsirwe	https://www.facebook.com/ZWRCNZim/videos/1686761708146105/
Itumeleng	https://www.facebook.com/ZWRCNZim/videos/277663146886894/
Covid 19 is real	https://www.facebook.com/ZWRCNZim/videos/553506908920037/

Examples of our successful programs

“Advocating for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Access and Utilization of Green and Inclusive Energy in Zimbabwe”: ZWRCN implemented the Green and Inclusive Energy (GIE) Partnership under a consortium led by Hivos with ZWRCN’s mandate being to engender energy access issues and to empower women by bridging the gap between men and women on issues of energy. ZWRCN raised awareness on the relationship between gender and energy, lobbying and advocating for policy reforms among 4500 women and 1700 men across three districts. The initiatives included efforts to encourage women’s participation in consultations and women-targeted initiatives (e.g., livelihood support, vocational training, formation of self-help groups, and credit access schemes). For example, a \$3.5m solar farm was established in Mutoko district supplying 4,700MWh/yr. to the national grid. The project ensured that both women and men participated fully in consultations and negotiations, had access to grievance redress, and shared benefits of employment and replacement assets. In addition, women were provided support to ensure access to training, credit, and business development services. Furthermore, resettled housewives were provided equal opportunity to access empowerment programs.



“Women Capacitated to Influence, And Duty Bearers’ Role Enhanced, For Delivery of Equitable, Quality and Gender Responsive Health Services by Local Government”.

The project empowered 6,000 poor, young women (ages 18-35years) in urban and peri-urban areas of Harare, Bulawayo, and Midlands’s provinces. Groups of young women mobilized and grew their savings without external capital and used the platform to jointly act on their common social and economic problems. The results of the project showed an increase in safety and well-being: belonging to a solidarity group, being financially empowered and being exposed to knowledge about reproductive health and human rights. By far the most significant change was the reduction in the vulnerability of young women to poverty induced abuse and violence.

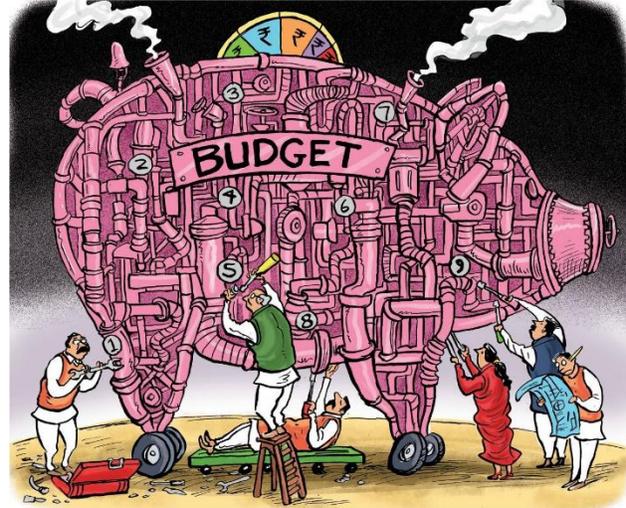


“Promoting the effective delivery of quality, affordable and gender responsive public services in agriculture, including access to and ownership by women of productive resources.”

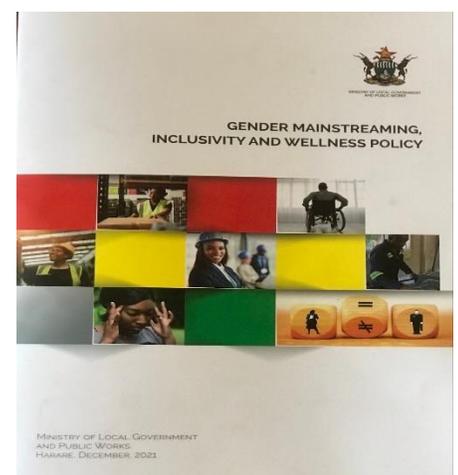
Through this project, ZWR CN contributed to the improvement of the quality-of-service delivery, affordable and gender responsive public services in agriculture by the Murehwa Rural District authorities, including access to and ownership of land by women. The project strengthened the gender responsiveness in planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems of Murehwa Rural District Council and other local institutions, as duty bearers; while enabling and facilitating citizens and especially women as rights holders, to effectively participate and claim their rights to access productive resources.



“Inclusive and gender responsive local government policy, planning and budgeting processes for equitable public service delivery” The project was designed to facilitate for women to monitor budget allocations, releases, and execution of the budget at local level to generate evidence based advocacy initiatives on delivery of services at local level and to facilitate spaces for women to participate fully in the definition of economic priorities, including budgeting and monitoring expenditure, whilst simultaneously taking leadership in framing the key decisions that affect their communities. The project through Gender Champions empowered women, and communities to monitor performance, influence decision making and take part in the design and delivery of services regardless of their political affiliation benefiting 29 127 women, 9414 men and 12999 youth through direct trainings, citizen education, community dialogues, improved service delivery, social media and mass media activities. The project made progress towards enhancing horizontal and vertical cohesion in the communities in Harare and Bulawayo and improved the local government’s responsiveness to service demands and the quality of services delivered. Gender-responsive budgeting further improved the quality of decision-making processes on budgets with local governments making deliberate efforts to mainstream gender in planning and allocation of funds at all levels through gender mainstreaming.



Policy formulation and support to Ministry of Local Government and Public Works in Developing the Gender Mainstreaming, Inclusivity and Wellness Policy. The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works as one of the Line Ministries in Government embraces Gender Mainstreaming, Inclusivity and Wellness as provided for in the revised National Gender Policy. ZWR CN has been facilitating the development of a Gender, Inclusivity and Wellness framework for departments with the Ministry and roll out of the Gender, Inclusivity and Wellness Policy to the Provinces and Districts.



Funding Partners in the past Five Years

HIVOS Southern Africa – Advocating for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Access and Utilisation of Green and Inclusive Energy in Zimbabwe project. In this project the proposed intervention was three pronged, taking its cue from two dimensions identified in the NEP (2012), namely ensuring that “the challenge of gender equality in the energy sector becomes a visible and key concern at the policy level”, and ensuring that “all energy interventions create opportunities for women’s empowerment and gender equality at the programme level”. This entailed influencing national level policies and strategies through revitalising the critical mass of gender activists through a network (GENEZ) to articulate the issues as a collective and in relevant spaces. Capacity building on contemporary gender and energy issues in Zimbabwe shall be undertaken, coupled with tools for advocating for these issues at national and local level, depending on the mandates of the collective. It focused on strengthening advocacy with relevant government structures, through a series of dialogues on different dimensions related to gender and renewable energies. This included production of technical papers (policy brief, opinion pieces), designed to support knowledge production for the technocrats on the subject.

Bread For the World (BFDW)- Transforming health service delivery through women’s rights activism that influences health service systems and processes, in particular public resource management through budgeting for health, was the main goal of the project. This entailed undertaking a series of mutually reinforcing activities at national and local level with government as well as community based non state actors that were reinforcing and would contribute to improving women’s health seeking behaviour and change of a health system that was not placing women at the centre of the state’s duty to deliver on their sexual and reproductive health rights.

SWEDISH EMBASY– ZWRCN has been implementing a Diakonia supported project which focuses on ensuring enhanced interaction between the public and local authorities to promote accountable governance to improve the lives of citizens progressively and sustainably. ZWRCN has contributed towards gender responsive and gender sensitive programming at community, local government and partner level using the two-pronged approach which focuses on both the supply side and the demand side. The project is implemented in Bulawayo, Zvishavane and Shurugwi focusing on mobilising and advocacy efforts of communities through technical backstopping, creating platforms for dialogues amongst women themselves, as well as other marginalised groups, on leadership and development issues, improving their knowledge on gender and public finance through budget analysis and regular information, and strengthening all advocacy efforts through engaging other organisations and the legislature.

Open Society Fund (OSF) – The program intends to address several issues affecting Women Informal Cross Boarder Traders (WICBTs) by working with the selected community structures. These structures will work towards the facilitation of full application of the by-laws through provision of proper and functional amenities in the areas where traders operate. This includes making sure that proper infrastructure is in place to cater for the public service needs of women



in the informal sector, such as adequate water and sanitation facilities as well as collection of garbage on time to avoid disease outbreaks. This could be done by working with the different layers of stakeholders; recommending that a lower marginal tax rate and a strengthening of institutional arrangements ought to improve tax collection from the informal sector in Bulawayo and Shurugwi; and working with council officials, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), Members of Parliament and other stakeholders to be more active in interfacing with informal traders to enlighten them on the standing policies and regulations.

TRACE (supported by DAI EUROPE)– This project looked at contributing to increased responsiveness, transparency, and accountability of local and national authorities in the delivery of gender responsive and equitable public services to citizens to enable citizens, especially women, youth and other socially excluded groups to enjoy their civic and socio-economic rights. The project had three objectives with the first one being to strengthen the institutional capacity of civil society partners in the partnership to effectively advocate for citizen’s rights (especially women, youth and socially excluded groups) and to engage local and national authorities to ensure gender responsiveness in local government policy dialogue, planning and budgeting processes. The second objective was to strengthened platforms and safe spaces for women, youth and socially excluded groups to participate in policy engagement, planning and budgeting processes and to monitor service provision. The final objective was to facilitate inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogues that facilitate increased collaboration and synergy building among Partnership members, other strategic CSOs, LAs and other key actors.

Action Aid – ZWR CN conducted a study under this partner, this study aimed at uncovering women’s care work circumstances and to analyse the budgetary and fiscal effects of the current levels of recognition and distribution of Unpaid Care Work (UCW) in Zimbabwe which will help in assess the link between women’s burden of care work and economic empowerment. The study took a two-pronged approach incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. It looked at evaluating the current recognition and distribution of UCW in the AAZ LRP (Nyanga, Saunyama, Nyamaropa, Nyazura, Makoni, Chiendambuya, Hwedza, Nkayi, and Binga). ZWR CN has also partnered the above partner in creating a platform to discuss the current state of violence against women in Zimbabwe during the 16 Days of Activism against GBV.

LIST OF WORK ZWR CN DID WITH DIFFERENT MINISTRIES

Development of a Gender Inclusivity and Wellness Policy for the Ministry of Local Government	2021
Bulawayo City Council Gender Policy	2020
Revision of Bulawayo City Council Policies	2019
Gender Analysis of the 2019 Budget	2019
Gender Analysis of the Local Government Legislative Framework, Policies & Budgets for the City of Bulawayo, Zvishavane and Shurugwi Town Councils and Tongogara Rural District Council	2019 and 2020
Gender Analysis of Local Government Sector Legislative Framework, Policies and 2020 Budgets for Bulawayo, Shurugwi, Tongogara and Zvishavane Local Authorities	
Gender and Energy Toolkit for CSOs and other Stakeholders	2017
Rapid Assessment of the status of Gender and Energy in Zimbabwe	2017
Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Advocacy Toolkit for Communities	2016
Gender Responsive Budgeting tool and guide for local Government	2016
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Information Toolkit	2016
Gender Analysis of the 2016 Budget	2016
Promoting Gender Responsive Local Governance to Deliver on Citizen's Social Rights'- toolkit for communicating local Government information.	2015
Information toolkit on Gender Equality for Policy Makers	2014
General Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming- A tool for use by Gender Focal Persons and Government Officials (Ministry of Women Affairs)	2013

ZWRCN Other Publications and Research

Stories of Most Significant change under the Inclusive and gender responsive local government policy, planning and budgeting processes for equitable public service delivery.	2021
Snapshot of the service delivery realities of citizens in the communities	2021
Research on women's care work circumstances and analysis of the budgetary and fiscal effects of the current levels of recognition and distribution of Unpaid Care Work (UCW) in Zimbabwe	2020
Snapshot highlighting the challenges faced by the Women Cross Boarder Traders ICBTs during covid 19	2020
Referral Pathway document for SGBV survivors- produced through the "Ridza Mere" campaign and road show	2020
Stories of Significant Change "Promoting the effective delivery of equality, affordable and gender responsive public services in agriculture, including access to and ownership by women of productive resources	2018
Women have a right to land Article	2018
Gender Budget Watch VOL 3.1 – 3.3	2017
Policy Brief on the current situation of women's universal access to renewable energy in Zimbabwe	2017
Fact Sheet on the opportunities for women's universal access to renewable energy	2017
Fact Sheet on the Gaps in women's universal access to renewable energy	2017
Advocacy Note- Stakeholder action to enhance women's universal access to renewable energy	2017
Position Paper on gender and health budget issues for the 2017 budget by the gender budget alliance	2017
Mainstreaming Gender in the 2017 budget	2017
Gender Budget Watch Volume 1 and 2	2016
Stories of Significant Change -Promoting Gender Responsive Local Governance to Deliver on Citizen's Social and Economic Rights	2016