

# Gender Based Violence

A situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and  
Mazabuka

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### **Executive Summary**

Gender based violence is a problem that has become very prevalent in Zambia today, and media reports indicate that it is a problem, which negatively affects women and girls in particular. PLAN Zambia working in partnership with PLAN Norway decided to conduct a study to establish the prevalence and identify causes and consequences of violence against girls and women in the family, school and community in Plan programme Units.

The main aim of the study is to establish the prevalence, causes, and consequences of gender based violence particularly violence against girls and women in the family, school, community and to use the information to raise awareness and promote learning and change among women and children on the rights of girls and women and establish community anti – violence organisations and networks

The study adopted the definition of gender- based violence found in the United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women. Gender – Based Violence, according to the United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women, is defined as any act of gender – based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. The violence occurs at three levels, the family, the community and the state and these three levels are mutually reinforcing.

### **Objectives of the study**

Specifically the objectives of the study were to:

1. Establish the existence and prevalence of Gender Based Violence in Plan Programme Units.
2. Identify immediate and root causes of gender- based violence particularly violence against girls and women in Plan Programme Units at the family, school and community levels.
3. Determine the prevalence of gender- based violence in Plan Programme Units.
4. Identify the effects of gender- based violence on women and girls and establish suggested strategies to combat/ address gender based violence in Plan Programme Units.

### **Methodology**

This was a qualitative study, which employed several research instruments. The principal tool used was the focus group discussion, which were held at two levels. There were focus group discussions with adults in the communities, but also with children. At both levels the groups were further divided into male and female. The focus group discussion instrument sought to find out how gender – based violence was defined and whether it existed in particular communities. Other information sought was how the gender violence manifested itself in the given locale and how it was responded to. The instrument also sought to find out whether respondents were aware of the law. Key Informant interviews were held with individuals in strategic institutions, who were involved in addressing issues of gender based violence such as the Court officials, the health workers, the Police and other agencies. The key Informant Interview guide sought to find out how gender – based violence was defined and how the various institutions addressed it.

## Gender Based Violence A Situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and Mazabuka

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Testimonies sought to find out from survivors of gender based violence, what actually happened and the response from the family, school where that was relevant, the community, the State and the law.

Drawings sought to find out from children the forms of gender based violence that they witnessed in their communities. Prior to data collection a review of literature and the law was undertaken.

The sample was drawn from Early Childhood caregivers, Church leaders, Local leaders, teachers, Local Court personnel, representatives of Resident Development Committees and Area Development Committees, health personnel, the Police and children and adults in the PLAN Programme Units.

Data analysis involved grouping the findings in themes as it emerged from the data.

### **Findings**

The study found that gender – based violence exists in PLAN Programme Units and is prevalent in all sites. Poverty was a major contributing factor to gender – based violence. Gender – based violence had a distinct cycle; whereas it occurred throughout the year, it was more prevalent during the marketing season for the farming community and during pay- days for those in employment. Gender – based violence was also about access and control of resources whether that was at family, school or community level.

Women and girls were more vulnerable to the violence. The study also found that there is a high attrition rate for girls from grade 5 upwards because of the practice of forcing girls to get married early. Early marriages were rampant in rural communities, where they were not perceived by society in general as a form of violence. Where girls were forced into marriages, there was no place to for such girls to seek relief because of the notion that a parent has more say over the life of their child.

Some forms of gender – based violence were more prevalent in some sites than others. For instance cattle herding in Chadiza, where, this practice disrupted the education of boys, so that boys started school at age 15/ 16 years. In addition such children were hired out as labour to other families for 4 /5 year periods for which, payment was one animal. Such children worked under very difficult conditions. These are children who are denied their childhood. Cattle herding was present in Mazabuka, but not in the form that was found in Chadiza.

Child labour was another form of gender – based violence suffered by both girls and boys. This abuse was both in the home and at school. Children, as young as 7 years old, were made to carry 20 litre containers of water. In some schools, children were made to carry out tasks that should have been done by parents in school construction.

The study also found that there was a lack of appreciation of the value of education by parents. In Lubombo community in Mazabuka parents threatened teachers for punishing their children for coming to school late and yet that late coming was due to parents sending children on errands at a time when they should go to school. Sometimes a child is asked to feed the goats before going to school. If the child does not comply he / she gets punished and when they get to school late they are punished.

There was also a problem of parental neglect of their duty to support their children with the basic necessities of life such as food and clothing.

In Chibombo the study found child to child violence, where boys assaulted girls for excelling in class, for not sharing food.

## Gender Based Violence A Situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and Mazabuka

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In Mansa's Lungwishi ward and Mazabuka's Ngangula ward children complained of sexual abuse of children. In Ngangula this abuse was more pronounced in schools, both the formal government school and the Community schools. Sexual violence at family level was found among women in Mansa, who said that they lacked power to determine the number of children to have and their spacing, while in Chadiza the women said they were unable to use any family planning methods. Taking family planning resulted in wife battery.

Early marriages were common to all sites, but were more prevalent in the rural sites. Parents marry off their young daughters as a way of making money through marriage payments. Currently the legal framework does not challenge this practice because Zambia recognises customary law, which allows young girls to be married. The only concern under customary law is if the girl has attained puberty and if her parents consent to the marriage. In spite of Zambia being a signatory to many United Nations Conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CEDAW and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and registration of Marriages, young girls

In Chadiza and Mazabuka school children were hired as labour to surrounding farms by schools. In one school in Mazabuka, learning time was reduced to two hours, while more time was spent on working on the farms.

Orphans were more vulnerable to abuse and were often the subject of abuse both at home and at school in all the four sites. It was also clear that many children were not aware of their rights. In Mansa where the study met with members of Child Rights Clubs, it was evident that those children were aware of what gender-based violence was and knew where to report it.

In all the sites wife battery was the most prevalent form of gender - based violence suffered by women. It was linked to poverty and to access to and control over resources. Women reported that they worked with men on the land and often times more than the men; however when harvest time came then the man would exclude the woman in the money raised from the harvest.

The causes of gender – based violence were the attitudes to women, girls and children in general, which are linked to the social construction of female and male. Poverty, and some cultural practices.

### **Conclusion**

The study has revealed that gender- based violence exists in all PLAN Zambia communities. It manifests itself in many forms and some of these forms are acknowledged by society and others are not seen as such. These include early marriages, cattle herding and some forms of child labour. It manifests itself at three levels which are the individual / family level, the Community level and the State and these three levels are mutually reinforcing.

Wife battery is a common problem affecting women, early forced marriage affects girls and boys cattle herding and various forms of child labour affect all children especially orphans and vulnerable children.. Gender based violence is invisible because communities, families and individuals deny its existence.

Gender based violence is linked to poverty and poverty is a major contributing factor Children's labour is exacted by the families and the schools as a source of income.

Children are forced into early marriages because of lobola and girls and women are forced to succeed dead female relatives as wives especially if the man was well to do because of what the family thinks they can gain by so doing. The fact that children are forced to choose between school and working for the family all point to the issue of poverty. Even wives who are assaulted suffer the assault much more at harvest time and pay days. Poverty is central to the issue of gender based violence. Therefore in order to successfully address gender based violence there needs to be strategies addressing poverty at the family and community levels.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made to address the issue of gender- based violence:

- 1 **Awareness Creation**
  - PLAN should sensitise different categories of people on gender violence as well as on rights.
  - Traditional leaders and members of the community should be talked to on issues of nyau and initiation ceremonies
  - Schools both Government and community schools need sensitisation on the issue of child labour
  - Gender sensitisation is required for traditional leaders and for parents and teachers
  - Further research on social attitudes to children is recommended as a basis for taking further action.

### **2. Advocacy**

- PLAN should develop a strategy for advocacy on such priority issues as Child Labour, Children's Rights, Early Marriages, the importance of education in the life of a child.
- Advocacy should include identifying role models in each PLAN Programme Unit and publicising what they have achieved
- Child Rights groups should be initiated in each PLAN Programme Unit
- Working with other organisations, a celebration of the Day of the Child, International Women's Day focussing on the girl child
- PLAN should engage Members of Parliament in the areas where they are working on issues of advocacy as well as targeting the appropriate Parliamentary committees on these issues.
- PLAN should engage the District education Boards as well as the Ministry of Education on the issue of child labour in schools and the need for more sensitisation of both teachers and the community on the issue of the Re-entry Policy.
- In the sensitisation it is recommended that PLAN work with other stakeholders like the Police Victim Support Unit who have the personnel with knowledge on legal issues but lack logistical support. Other stakeholders like NGOs can also be identified.
- In the communities there are no structures addressing gender -based violence and there is need to explore which agency can provide such services in each of the PLAN communities
- Issues of sexual violence against children in Ngangula need to be addressed working in conjunction with the District Education Board in Mazabuka.

**3 Poverty**

- The families and communities need economic empowerment and PLAN can work with other stakeholders on this issue

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background Information

Plan Zambia in partnership with Plan Norway National Office embarked on a project on Gender and protection that is running up to 2007. One of the activities being embarked under this partnership was to conduct a study to establish the prevalence and identify causes and consequences of violence against girls and women in the family, school and community in Plan programme Units. The main reason why Plan commissioned this study is because Gender Based Violence has been an issue of great concern in Zambia and has negative effects on women and girls. It is for this reason why Plan commissioned this study so as to establish its existence, prevalence, causes and effects on women and girls with a view to establish strategies to address the issue.

#### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Gender Based violence has been a growing concern for a long time now in Zambia. It has mostly affected women and girls making it very difficult for them to participate in developmental activities at family, school and community levels. Gender based violence is evident in Zambia particularly against women and girls. Newspaper reports regularly report of incidences of violence where even babies are assaulted sexually. The Zambia Law Development Commission was reported in the media as having stated that customary law was working against women and was perpetuating gender – based violence while the Women and Law in Southern Africa were quoted as saying that marriage is a high risk factor for women for contracting HIV /AIDS and suffering violence. The problem of gender – based violence was acknowledged by the President as he launched the 16 days of activism against gender violence, which is celebrated annually, globally from 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December and he said that the Government was addressing the issue by reviewing the law and domesticating some international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination (CEDAW).

### **1.3 Rationale / Justification**

Gender – based violence is a phenomenon that has become a developmental challenge in Zambia. Media reports portray it, not only as an escalating problem, but also as one with new dimensions such as the sexual abuse of girls including babies. It is also an established fact that gender – based violence is shrouded in silence due to social – cultural expectations, which socialise women and girls not to share experiences of gender violence. This then masks the extent of the problem as most women and girls would be deterred from reporting. Gender violence is a form of discrimination, which, inhibits women, girls and some boys from enjoying their rights on a basis of equality with men. Zambia is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which in article 1 defines discrimination against women as, 'any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other fields.'

### **1.3 Aim of the Study**

The main aim of the study is to establish the prevalence, causes, and consequences of gender based violence particularly violence against girls and women in the family, school, community and to use the information to raise awareness and promote learning and change among women and children on the rights of girls and women and establish community anti – violence organisations and networks

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

Specifically the objectives of the study were to:

- Establish the existence and prevalence of Gender Based Violence in Plan Programme Units.
- Identify immediate and root causes of gender- based violence particularly violence against girls and women in Plan Programme Units at the family, school and community levels.
- Determine the prevalence of gender- based violence in Plan Programme Units.
- Identify the effects of gender- based violence on woman girls and
- Establish suggested strategies to combat/ address gender based violence in Plan Programme Units.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter starts by defining the concept of gender based violence and then reviews available literature followed by a review of the law.

#### 2.2 Definition of Concept of Gender Based Violence

Gender – Based Violence, according to the United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women, is defined as any act of gender – based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life

Gender- Based violence refers to violence perpetrated between people of the opposite sex. It is an established fact that women and girls are usually the victims of gender-based violence because of the unequal power relations between the sexes; however, men and boys are also victims of violence. Because Gender – Based violence usually manifests itself as violence against women and girls, it is important to refer to the United Nations definition of violence against women, which, states,

- “Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the home, dowry – related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non – spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the community including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in education institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetuated or condoned by the state wherever it occurs.”
- Gender –Based violence occurs at three levels and these are the individual, the community and the national or state level. These three levels are mutually reinforcing. Violence can be physical, psychological, sexual, economic, social or cultural.

Violence has been defined as any action which causes suffering, pain or discomfort to one’s body, mind or social well being or which diminishes her / his ability to make choices about her / his life YWCA (1994 pg 18). Violence therefore, is any ill treatment, directed at a person who is vulnerable and is not in a position to seek redress. Gender based violence is an issue around which there is both commonality and difference the world over. Guenette, (1991:11), defines violence as a manifestation of power, an act or an attitude that degrades and renders one powerless. It is viewed as any form of oppression experienced by women / men on the basis of one’s gender.

#### 2.3 Review of Literature



## Gender Based Violence A Situation in Chadizā, Chibombo, Mansa and Mazabuka

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Diawara in the Book *Femmes et Violence en Afrique* (Diawara:2005) argues that violence perpetrated against women and girls constitutes an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. It is a violation of the universal rights and fundamental freedoms of the human person and partially and totally prevents women from enjoying the rights and liberties to which they are entitled. The reality, she goes on to argue, is that in the case of violence perpetrated against women, the protection and promotion of fundamental rights and liberties are not always secured and constitute an issue of destabilizing concern to African States in spite of the adoption of the texts, protocols and conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Diawara further notes that since the Nairobi Conference, a lot has been learnt on the forms, causes and consequences of violence against women, as well as on their effect and the steps to take to combat them. Diawara makes an interesting observation that in all societies, in various degrees, women and girls are exposed to physical, sexual and psychological violence regardless of the income, culture and social and professional class. Furthermore, the low status ascribed to women at economic and social level, can also be one of the causes and one of the consequences of the violence perpetrated against them. Another study acknowledges that at the root of the problem of gender violence is the gendered nature of society where society places a higher value on the males and where boys are socialised to appreciate and value themselves and to perceive females as of a lesser value ( YWCA:2005). This leads to a general disregard for women and girls and to a lack of respect for their rights as human beings. This attitude permeates from the individual to the family to institutions in the community and to the State level. Thus gender itself needs to be addressed.

Research on Gender Based Violence done in Zambia by Women and Law in Southern Africa, which culminated in the book *Gender Violence- The Invisible Struggle* (WLSA: 2001) found out that gender violence within the family is invisible, and that the community and the agents of the Justice Delivery System tend to collude in keeping it invisible, resulting in untold suffering to those who are violated. For many women, the decision to break the silence results in fighting not only the abuser, but key members of the family, the Justice System, social isolation and the loss of personal security. The woman for example, the book says, may find herself suddenly homeless, her marriage threatened and where there are children, without support for them. Thus, faced with these seemingly overwhelming obstacles, women may opt to live in situations of abuse. Society, the researchers argue is not ready to confront violence, and from the family to the national level, cries of the victims have fallen on deaf ears. Thus the invisibility of gender – violence, is perpetuated by all.

In conclusion WLSA states that the study revealed that gender violence is an invisible struggle, which puts the burden of proof on the victim. The victim has to make visible the gender violence that they experience against many odds. It can seem from the perspective of the victim that they are "fighting the world", and opting out of the search for justice can be very appealing.

Most victims' struggles start from the family and continue as they go in search of justice from the various structures. The study also revealed that the structures' major challenge lies in breaking the silence and calling gender violence what it is. Among all the structures, the Police play a critical role and there is a great expectation from the populace that Police will respond to gender violence expeditiously; however this expectation is yet to be fully realized.

## Gender Based Violence A Situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and Mazabuka

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Yet another study on the situation of children (GRZ: 1999) provides a context to understanding the problem of gender based violence as it affects children. The study, which was a Situation Analysis of Orphans and Vulnerable Children revealed that :

- 70% of Zambians lived below the poverty line in 1996.
- The percentage of persons living in poverty in rural areas was higher than in the urban area.
- Nearly of Zambian children lived below the poverty line with little or no quantitative or qualitative difference between orphans and vulnerable children and others.
- In 1996 4.1 million children were under the age of 18 years, and of these 13% were orphans. Further the proportion of orphans increased with age.

From the foregoing it is clear that Zambia has a crisis when considering the issue of children as most of them could be described as vulnerable. The major crisis is the high levels of poverty, while families have to cope with increased dependency levels occasioned by loss of the productive age group to HIV /AIDS.

The report also raises a number of issues as follows:

- The definition of who is an orphan is not agreed upon nor is the definition of child agreed upon. Therefore comprehending the numerical size of the problem of orphans and vulnerable children is hampered by this lack of agreement. For instance the study observes that UNAIDS in their definition of orphans exclude paternal orphans.
- The distinction between orphans and non -orphans is problematic because raising this distinction is problematic where orphans constitute or 1/3 of the child population. In addition communities were not comfortable when special provisions were made for orphans when there were other vulnerable children.
- The absence of structures and systems that would provide support to orphans and vulnerable children is a gap.
- Children did not participate in decisions affecting their lives.
- The rights of children were not protected and this was evidenced by numerous instances of school participation rates being lower for orphans than non - orphans, of greater stunting among orphans and of orphans having to carry heavy loads
- Orphans suffer stigma and discrimination just like those living with HIV/AIDS.
- Incorporating the orphan into a family.
- The extended family remains for all practical purposes the fundamental line of response.
- The orphans and vulnerable children depend on the family and the family depends on the community. Both the family and the community need poverty alleviation strategies.

In the follow up study to the 1999 study (GRZ : 2004) the following were recommended:

- The definition of orphan need to be harmonised as well as how to collect data on orphaned children.
- The statistics of orphans and vulnerable children need to be disaggregated by gender.
- Other categories of vulnerability such as child labour, sexual abuse, homelessness, children living and working on the street should be refined.
- Child sexual abuse is surrounded with secrecy and was not amenable to conventional approaches in information gathering, thus new and innovative ways of research were needed.
- More research is needed on child rights to education, health, protection, equitable treatment without discrimination, the right not to be exploited through imposition of manual labour.
- More research was needed to unearth hidden forms of child labour.
- Gender based child rights abuses were not well researched. Thus this study will contribute to fill an identified gap in information.
- Access to education for orphans and vulnerable children hampered by loss of income and the reliance on child labour.
- School children were at risk of sexual abuse by teachers.

The 1999 Situation Analysis of Orphans and Vulnerable children did not acknowledge the psychological needs of orphaned children. According to the same report studies revealed that orphans had problems dealing with grief and loss. Children like adults experienced the different stages of grief which included shock, denial, anger, anxiety, self – blaming, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. However, the same study observes that children's expression of grief, which may include denial of a parent's death, anger towards the surviving parent or relatives, withdrawal, loss of interest in school, bed wetting and other displays of socially unacceptable behaviour can be misunderstood by caregivers. Such misunderstandings by adults can make it difficult to provide adequate emotional support to them.

Yet another study focussed on child labour as a form of abuse and provided insights into this phenomenon. The Zambia Child Labour Survey 1999 (GRZ: 1999) was a study whose objectives were to:

- Identify and analyse factors responsible for the emergence and growth of child labour in Zambia
- Provide Policy makers, researchers and other stakeholders with a comprehensive set of data and indicators on child labour
- Form the basis for the creation of a long term data base on child labour in Zambia

This study revealed the following:

- The total number of children aged 5 -17 years was 3.8 million representing 36% of the total population of Zambia, 61% of these children lived in rural areas, while 39% lived in the urban areas.
- Slightly over half (55%) of children in the age group 10 – 14 years were attending school at the time of the survey. Although current school attendance was

## Gender Based Violence

### A Situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and Mazabuka

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- increasing with age until it reached 76% in the age group 10 – 14 years and then it dropped by 20% for the age group 15 – 17 years.
- A total of 595,033 of children aged 5 – 17 years were found to have worked during the last twelve months. 87% of these children were found in agricultural occupation, most of whom (96%) lived in the rural areas..
  - There were 347,357 children between the ages of 5 – 14 years who reported to have worked over the same period. This represents more than half of all working children (58%).
  - Occupations relating to trading accounted for the largest occupations in the urban areas with a percentage share of 27 marginally above agriculture
  - Children working as domestic servants accounted for 22% of all working children in urban areas.
  - Street vending or hawking was a predominantly urban phenomenon with 12% of working children engaged in this activity
  - The participation rates show the highest probability of finding a working child in Southern, Eastern provinces and rural areas in general. In Southern Province one out of every four children was reported to be working, while for Eastern Province one out of every five was reported to be working.
  - The majority of children (97%) were working as unpaid family workers. Out of 447,013 (92%) were found in rural areas while 36.21% were found in urban areas.

The same study alludes to another study carried out on children in prostitution where interviews were conducted in Lusaka, Chirundu and Kapiri Mposhi involving 628 children. The findings were that:

- Friends, relatives and guardians provided significant support to children in prostitution
- The percentage of children in prostitution who were living alone was higher in the smaller towns
- The majority of children 81.4% had ever attended school and of these 73% were in the age group 15 – 17 years and 22% in the age group 10 – 14 years had ever attended school
- Only 15.4% of all respondents were attending school at the time of the survey, although the percentage of those attending school and those who were not attending school increased with age.
- One in three children involved in prostitution had lost one parent, while 28.3% had lost both parents. 34.1% indicated that their parents were still alive. 2.2% did not know the whereabouts of their parents and whether they were alive or not.

This study was a comprehensive one covering all districts and provinces of Zambia based on a representative sample of 8,000 households. It provides a data base on the issue of child labour however; it does not provide information on the implications of child labour and all its ramifications. This is because the design of the study which was quantitative is limited in yielding this kind of information. Therefore this study will contribute to filling this gap in information.

The National Gender Policy 2000 acknowledges the existence of GBV in Zambia and indicates that it has been in existence for a long time. The National Gender Policy, outlines its manifestations as follows:

- Femicide / female killing
- Spouse battering
- Property grabbing
- Rape in and outside marriage
- Incest and defilement especially of girls / children
- Sexual harassment particularly at places of work-harassing and beating of women perceived to be improperly dressed.

The Young Women Christian Association's study on incest found that incest occurs, but is rarely reported to the Police (Young Women Christian Association: 1999). In addition the study noted that the concept of incest was problematic partly because there were no words in the local languages that were a direct translation of the term. The study also revealed that:

- Incest is a hidden crime that is rarely discussed and much less reported to the Police.
- When unveiled, incest results in stigmatization, which is another reason why victims do not report it to the Police.
- Culturally incest is linked to witchcraft.
- There is tolerance for incest among some ethnic groups, when it is done for ritual purposes.
- Incest affected both females and males
- There are no support services for victims of incest.

#### **2.4 The Review of the Law**

The Constitution of Zambia is the supreme law of the country and it does not provide for women's and children's rights and their protection against discrimination. On the one hand under section 11 the Constitution does not allow discrimination, yet under section 23 (e) it allows discrimination; however; in the draft Constitution, article 79 guarantees the right for protection from discrimination and declares laws and customs that permit discrimination against women void. The draft Constitution has broadened the Bill of Rights and new rights have been included (GRZ: 2005:Articles 32 – 94). The Draft Constitution gives courts the discretion to use international law, however a self – executing provision would have been preferable so that courts do not exercise discretion but are bound to use international law. Further under article 79 of the Draft Constitution provides protection of women against all forms of violence and defines violence. There are also provisions for children's rights, which were not available in the current Constitution.

The Penal Code is the principle piece of legislation on criminal law, which provides for a variety of crimes and their punishment, however; this legislation is in the process of review and the Penal Code Amendment Bill 2005 was under consideration. This was due to the fact that this piece of legislation like so many others, is a legacy from Zambia's colonial past that has been over taken by events so that a review was necessary to deal with the changes. New crimes have arisen which were not covered by the Penal Code such as sexual harassment, selling or trafficking in children, to mention but a few.

The challenge lies in the approach taken of reviewing different pieces of legislation affecting children to align them to the CRC, whereas a comprehensive review of all laws

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relating to children might allow for dealing with inconsistencies in the various pieces of legislation. For instance the lack of a uniform definition of who a child is. The CRC needs to be domesticated as well as other international instruments, which impinge on children's rights such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for marriage and Registration of Marriages, which, places an obligation on State Parties to take appropriate measures to abolish such customs, ancient laws and practices by ensuring complete freedom in the choice of a spouse, eliminating completely child marriages and the betrothal of young girls before the age of puberty, establishing appropriate penalties where necessary (GRZ: 2000 p 16).

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in its concluding observations on Zambia's initial report on the convention expressed concern on several issues concerning the legal situation of children. They recommended that the provision, which, states that a child is criminally responsible at the age of 8 years be reviewed and increased. They also recommended that the customary and general law positions on the definition of a child needed to be reconciled and be aligned with the provisions of the Convention. The committee also recommended that domestic legislation was not in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and some aspects of customary law were in opposition to the provisions of the Convention. They recommended that a review of existing laws be undertaken including customary law to bring them in line with the provisions of the Convention. The latest reports on the situation of children indicate that the country opted to review various pieces of legislation that affect children, however no comprehensive review of the law has been done and that such a review was necessary (GRZ: 2004). In addition customary law in this country represents the customs and practices of the 73 ethnic groups found in Zambia and this body of law is not written, therefore the approach to its revision needs to take this into account. Approximately two years ago the Zambia Law Development Commission embarked on a project to codify customary law and to this end carried out research on specific issues country-wide and a document has been produced which codifies customary law.

Zambia signed the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children in 1999. In order to implement the programme, Government appointed a technical committee to review all matters pertaining to violence against women and children and to make recommendations on all measures necessary to address the problem, including proposing new legislation. The Committee presented a report on 'The Strengthening of Laws; Enforcement Mechanisms and Support Systems Relating to Gender Based Violence, particularly Against Women and Children.' The committee made the following recommendations:

- An integrated approach on combating gender violence should be adopted by putting in place an institutional framework comprising of all stakeholders which would cover the community, district, provincial and national level;
- in all legislative provisions, the age of the child should be raised from 16 to 18 years because in the Zambian context, an 18 year old is still in school and in the custodianship of parents or guardians;
- the tradition and customary laws be codified into written laws;
- the Republican Constitution should expressly provide for women's and children's rights especially with respect to gender based violence and violence against children;
- the Republican Constitution and National Laws should only domesticate the international and regional instruments which are relevant to Zambia;

- the office of Director of Public Prosecutions should further be decentralised to the districts in order to speed up the process of prosecution;
- the Government should introduce free education from Grades 1 – 12 in order to address the issue of early marriage and child labour which have arisen as a result of poverty;
- Government should enact a Law specifically for HIV related issues and offences;
- Government and NGOs should have a deliberate sensitisation programme on gender violence;
- Government should address the socio – economic imbalance between women and men by implementing deliberate empowerment programmes for women such as, credit scheme, allocation of land and other means of production to women; and
- Government, NGOs and other stakeholders should establish where possible strengthen a database on gender – based violence.

The Government is working on harmonising different pieces of legislation into a comprehensive body of child – related laws, which will conform to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The review of the literature has shown that some studies on the issue of gender- based violence have been undertaken and reveal that GBV does exist in Zambia and that it is an issue that needs to be addressed if women and children who are the most affected have to participate in national development and also enjoy their human rights. Literature has revealed that gender based violence is experienced at three levels, which are the family, the community and the state. These three levels are mutually reinforcing.

The review has also shown that at the root of the problem of gender based violence, lies the gendered nature of society, where society places a higher value on males than females. In addition the unequal relations of power make women and girls vulnerable to violence. Another important contributing factor in the Zambian context is the high poverty levels, where over 75% of the children live below the poverty line. According to literature there is little difference between orphans and vulnerable children and those children with parents or guardians. Thus, providing strategies to alleviate poverty at the family and community levels are important steps to combating gender based violence.

Literature has also shown the effects of gender based violence and the need to address it. However, the review has revealed that research on gender- based violence is still in its infancy and there is a need for more studies such as the current study by PLAN International.

The literature has also revealed that there is still a lot of work to be done to review and strengthen the legal and policy environment for women and children especially girls. In terms of the laws that protect women and children, it was revealed that very few have access to the law while the few that can access it do not have a clear understanding of the law making it very difficult to use it when they are violated against.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

### 3.1 Introduction

The research design was qualitative, employing a multi – method approach because of the complexity of the subject of gender – based violence. The study used the actor perspective, where survivors of violence, were seen as active participants in ameliorating their situation as opposed to being victims.

### 3.2 Methods

The following methods were used:

- Focus Group Discussions sought to investigate types of gender – based violence occurring in each research site and were very useful in getting different points of view on gender – based violence especially from a gender perspective These were held at two levels, with adults and children.
- Key Informant Interviews were held with representatives of institutions which had a key role in issues of gender based violence. These included the Police, teachers, Court officials, health personnel, Church Representatives, Plan staff and selected members of the community. Key Informants also included some Non Governmental Organisations and other strategic Government Ministries and agencies. These included the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, the Forum for African Women Educationalists –Zambia Chapter (FAWEZA), The Police Victim Support Unit at Police Service Headquarters and the YWCA-National office.
- Drawings from children on what they perceived to be gender- based violence in their communities or schools. The number of drawings by children was 13 from Mazabuka, 2 from Chibombo, 5 from Chadiza and 4 from Mansa.
- Testimonies from individuals who had survived gender based violence, their experience of the violence, the help given to them.
- Secondary data was obtained through a review of literature and the law. This review of literature revealed what was already known about the subject of the research and also located the study by identifying the gap that the findings would fill in the existing body of knowledge on gender based violence.

### 3.3 Research Sites

The study covered all the PLAN programme units in Chibombo, Mansa, Mazabuka and Chadiza. The areas covered by PLAN correspond to the Wards. In some districts there were wards where PLAN had worked for a long time and in the selection of sites this aspect was taken into account as well as accessibility given the short time in which the study had to be done. The sites were peri – urban and rural. In each site the following were covered:

**3.3.1 Chibombo** – out of 11 communities 4 were covered, which included Mukalashi, Chikobo as the peri - urban sites , Chikonkomene and Chamuka as the rural sites. The Plan was to cover five wards, three in the rural and two in the peri -urban, however the problem of undertaking the study in an area where there were Seventh Day Adventists meant that one of the Wards could not be covered.

**3.3.2 Mansa** – Out of 4 communities 3 were covered, which included Luapula, Lungwishi and Lukangaba. The one community not covered namely Misakalala had not yet started any activities. Of the three covered Lukangaba was new and the two were areas where PLAN had been working. PLAN's work in the district was fairly new.

**3.3.3 Mazabuka** – Out of 13 communities 4 were covered, which included 2 peri urban sites Neganega and Kabobola, as well as 2 rural sites of Malala and Ngangula.



3.3.4 **Chadiza** – Out of 10 communities, 5 were covered which included Zemba, Naviruli, Nsadz, Kandabwako and Chilenga, and all were rural communities.

### 3.4 Sample

The sample for the study included respondents from both the peri – urban and rural areas and included adults as well as children. The respondents included teachers, Early Childhood Caregivers, Church leaders, local leaders, Health personnel, teachers, Local Court personnel, Community Based Organisations, Resident Development Committees / Area Development Committees and NGOs.

### 3.5 Sample Size

The study plan was to cover the following per district; 4 Focus group discussions, 6 key informants, 2 testimonies, 10 in –depth interviews, 2 testimonies and 5 drawings. A total of 28 Focus Group Discussions were held, of these 10 were held with children. 48 Key Informants were interviewed and 5 testimonies as well as several drawings by children indicating the types of violence they observed in their situation were collected. The table below indicates the actual sample size against planned sample.

**Table NO 1 Sample Size by District**

Research Site	F G D Adults	F G D Children	Key Informants Female	Key Informant Male	Testimonies	Drawings
Lusaka			3	1		
Chibombo	4	2	4	10	2	2
Mansa	2	1	5	8	1	4
Mazabuka	5	4	5	5	1	13
Chadiza	5	4	3	4	1	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24</b>

### Limitations

- Some of the areas visited such as Chibombo and Mazabuka, are Seventh Day Adventists and this made it difficult to carry out the research over the weekend as this became necessary, due to the limited time available to conduct the study.
- In the second place another limiting factor was that the timing of the research was such that it coincided with major farming activities such as preparing the fields for farming, since this time of the season farming activities are scaled up by the greater majority of the research sites
- Another limitation was that some Community Development Facilitators were non resident in the research sites and so undertaking work in such areas was not possible.
- In some key Institutions and others it was difficult to find key personnel who could give information on Gender Based Violence.
- In Kabwe the researchers experienced difficulties in communication occasioned by problems in the Celtel mobile phone network, which were being experienced in Kabwe during the time of the research. This resulted in

difficulties and delays in reaching key people like the Programme Coordinator.

- In Mansa a road traffic accident at the time of research claimed many lives of people living along one route, which was an area of research, and so some scheduled discussions could not proceed as the truck which was delivering the bodies for burial had just done that in one community and so the research work was cancelled.
- The study intended to cover both in and out of school children but more in school children were covered because of the difficulties of accessing out of school children.
- It was intended to cover parents of abused children, but practically this was difficult to accomplish because of the stigma attached to survivors of gender based violence.

## Chapter 5

### FINDINGS

#### 5.0 Findings - General

The study found out that Gender Based -Violence does exist and was prevalent in Plan Programme Units visited and that there was a direct relationship between socio – economic conditions, social inequalities and violence encountered and experienced by women. In all the places visited, the Police affirmed that the victims who usually appeared at the Police stations to make reports were mostly poor, ill educated and timid. Reporting an incident of gender based violence especially to the Police led to more violence.

The data collected showed that women and girls were most vulnerable to Gender Based Violence and that very few men were victims of Gender Based Violence. Where a man was a victim more often than not the cases were not reported and where it was reported, the structures available such as the Police mocked the male victim.

Gender Based Violence had a distinct cycle, while occurrences are spread throughout the year, they were more prevalent during the payment season for example during paydays or marketing seasons when payments for produce was paid in all the research sites whether peri -urban or rural. In Mansa the Police indicated that gender based violence also escalated during the hot season.

Statistics collected from two different schools one in Mansa and Mazabuka clearly demonstrated that the problem of early and forced marriages was prevalent with few and fewer numbers of girls reaching grade 5, 6, or 7. Even where enrolments for girls may have been higher in grade one the figures showed that towards upper primary levels the statistics on the girl child may have gone down by up to 80 to 90 percent. The teachers themselves in the particular schools attested to this trend and the literature review confirms that there are high attrition rates for girls from grade 5 upwards.

Gender Based Violence was present in all the sites and it included physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and financial forms. Usually survivors of violence suffered several forms at the same time. Someone who is beaten suffers not only physical violence but psychological as well. The following is a list of the types of Gender Based Violence prevalent in the areas researched:

- Early Marriages
- Forced Marriages
- Property Grabbing
- Defilements
- Sexual Cleansing
- Child Labour manifesting as cattle herding for boys as well as fishing and early marriages for girls and child labour in schools especially the rural schools.
- Humiliations
- Adultery
- Absence of Communication
- Physical Violence especially manifesting as wife battery
- Accusation of Prostitution
- Inciting Prostitution
- ILL treatment of orphans and vulnerable children

### **5.1 Definition of Gender Violence**

In order to ensure that the respondents understood the topic under investigation, they were asked to define gender based violence. To make it easy, they were asked to define the words separately- gender and violence. Most communities understood the concept of gender as involving sharing of responsibilities fairly between women and men, girls and boys especially in the home and some were very clear on the difference between sex roles and gender roles, however for most the concept of gender was not so clear as gender was defined as being the state of being a woman or man. The concept was confused with the concept of sex as it defines male or female. Among the Key Informants the concept was well understood by most of them.

On the other hand, the concept of "violence", was defined as bad treatment by another person to another, doing something that would cause pain to another person regardless of sex, age and economic status. It was also defined in most sites particularly rural sites as oppression in the home usually experienced by women and girls and thus this definition agreed with the meaning of discrimination against women alluded to in the CEDAW (CEDAW article 1), which resulted in denying and or restricting women from enjoying their human rights in all spheres.

The study found that the definition of gender- based violence was wide and included all forms incorporated in the literature review. The lack of provision of certain basic services such as schools, clinics, water were defined as acts of violence on the

communities and /or contributors to gender based violence in the home. For example the severe shortage of water in one ward in Mansa was allegedly causing violence. The only source of water was a piped water point at the school. Sometimes the school authorities would say school teachers were to be given priority in accessing water, when members of the community had been queuing for some hours for the commodity. Quarrels at the water tap among those waiting to draw water were frequent, while husbands at home beat their wives because they did not believe that they were spending so much time waiting for their turn to get water.

One key informant from the health sector gave a comprehensive definition of gender based violence, which he defined as an act that would inflict either psychological or physical harm to a person due to their sex. He classified forms of violence as follows:

- **Psychological Violence** - There were so many women, who upon losing their husbands through death have had their property grabbed and have had to bring up children without any means of support. This was a form of psychological violence. In Mansa and Mazabuka both women and men complained that they were violated by the Intestate Succession Act, which, gave widows and children what they perceived to be a large share of the deceased estate. They argued that as parents, bringing up children was something they did as a sacrifice and they believed they were entitled to more from the estate of their male children than the widows and the children. The widow and the children were perceived as one and the children's share is considered the mother's. A study on inheritance showed that the problems of property sharing in Zambia were felt more by matrilineal ethnic groups for whom the new law excluded those who would have benefited under customary law, and both Mansa and Mazabuka are areas of matrilineal ethnic groups (WLSA :1992).
- Another form of psychological violence is in the way male infidelity is not only tolerated culturally but encouraged by such sayings, "*ubucende bwa mwaume tabuonaula cupo*" ( a man's infidelity can not break a marriage), but for a woman it is unacceptable. When a man has relationships outside the home he inflicts psychological violence on the wife and over time this violence has consequences for her physical and mental health.
- Orphans were made to stop school because of psycho-social factors and that constituted abuse because the girl should have access to education but her destiny was being defined by fate because of gender.
- Yet other children because of socio – economic factors were deprived of parental care and this led them to prostitution as they went in search of money. This is abuse because such girls were plunged into something they can not come out of.
- Some girls are forced into early marriages as successors to deceased married women relatives, especially where the son in law is well to do. This is done even against a girl's wish and it is psychological violence.
- Many orphans are constantly reminded of their status because of being made to work long hours compared to the biological children of the guardians.
- **Physical Violence** - In the homes men take advantage of their physical strength to punish their wives by punching them and this is enhanced by alcohol and substance abuse. Whenever a woman in this situation complains to her parents, they demand evidence, which is difficult to produce and in the meantime the woman continues living in a violent situation until sometimes it results in her death. An example was given of one such woman who was axed to death by her husband in full view of their 12 year- old daughter in 2003. The daughter testified and he was sentenced to death in 2005.

- Ritual Sexual Cleansing - In villages there is a strong belief that once a spouse dies sexual cleansing is a must and women and girls are forced to engage in this deadly practice. In Lukangaba community in Mansa respondents expressed in strong terms that sexual cleansing was important and they even defended their statement by saying that there are two different types of death; death through illness and other types of death like those arising from road accidents. They said that in their view when a person dies from causes other than those related to illness the surviving spouse must be sexually cleansed. In Mazabuka too respondents indicated that sexual cleansing was important.

## **5.2 Existence of Gender Based Violence and its Prevalence**

The study found that gender based violence existed in all the sites, and the only difference was in the way it manifested itself. The findings will discuss gender- based violence at the three levels referred to in the literature and they are as follows:

- The individual /family
- The community
- The State

## **5.3 Types /Forms of Gender Based Violence**

Gender based violence manifested itself in different forms in the different sites, but some forms were manifest in specific areas than others such as use of the school children's labour as a source of income for schools which was found in Mazabuka and Chadiza and others were peculiar to certain areas, such as cattle herding in Chadiza. Some forms of violence were not perceived as such by the communities such as cattle herding in Chadiza and early marriages in all sites.

### **5.3.1 Gender Based Violence at the Family Level**

At the family level gender based violence was experienced at two levels and that is violence against women and violence against children. The study found that violence against men was rare in all the sites. Violence against women is discussed first followed by violence against children.

## **A VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

### **5.3.1.1 Wife Battery**

In all the research sites wife battery was the most prevalent form of gender- based violence suffered by women especially in marriage. In Chibombo wife battery was the most frequent form of gender based violence. In Mukalashi it was the major form of gender- based violence, while in Chikobo, the study found that 50% of cases handled by the Local Court were of wife battery. It is noteworthy that cases of wife battery, are settled by the Local Court when that level of court has no jurisdiction in such matters. In fact in Malala community in Mazabuka, a Local Court Official responded thus when asked about how they handled cases of gender based violence:

*"Gender- based violence is a serious crime and we do not deal with it because we are a Local Court and we use the Local Courts Act. We deal with customary cases such as infidelity and some cases of witchcraft because some cases of witchcraft are referred to the Magistrates Court."*

The Headman in Liteta and Area Development Committee Chairman for Chikobo also confirmed that the most frequent form of gender -based violence was wife battery and that cases of husband battery were rare and only one case had been handled at the Local Court. Wife battery was reported to be the major form of violence in the rural sites of Chikonkomene and Chamuka.

In Mansa, the Police said it was the most prevalent form of violence reported to them and this was the same for the Anglican Church who indicated it was a major problem. Data from the Health centres also showed that wife beating is the major type of gender based violence that they handled, however; according to health officials most women never reveal what the cause of their injuries is until after counselling. Often women say that they fell or hurt themselves while closing windows, an indication of the silence surrounding this issue. The Legal Resources Foundation an NGO dealing in the area of the law also confirmed that wife beating is the most common form of violence in Mansa representing 25% of their total case load.. The focus group discussions concurred with the findings on wife beating.

In Mazabuka wife beating was a common problem for many women. The Police said it was rare for a man to be beaten by a wife. Police at Mazabuka Central Police Station said they received 6 / 7 reported cases of wife battery per week and wife beating was the main reported problem at Neganega, however reporting the violence was itself a case of further violence.

In Chadiza wife- beating was also a form of violence that was prevalent and in Zemba according to the Police 75% of the cases they received were on that form of violence. The Health Centre in Zemba also confirmed the findings from the Police as they said the most prevalent form of violence handled by the health centre was wife battery. This was confirmed by other respondents in focus group discussions. According to the paralegals from Chadiza gender based violence existed in their communities and it took the following forms: Domestic, Psychological, Emotional and Child Labour. In Chibombo some children wondered whether wife – beating was violence

#### **5.3.1.2 Lack of access by women to money from harvest**

The other forms of violence were that, some men do not give their wives and children money after the sell of the farm produce. Instead they use it selfishly and therefore, the family does not benefit. This was common to all sites where agriculture was an activity. It was a problem in both the peri -urban as well as the rural areas, but the problem was more pronounced in the rural areas where agriculture was the main form of economic activity. Many women said they worked in the fields with their husbands and sometimes with their children as well, but when it came to reaping the benefits from the sales of the agricultural produce the man was the only beneficiary. In Mazabuka respondents talked about men having a *Kasolo* bank because men kept money from such sales in the hip pocket of the trousers.(Kasolo in Tonga means hip). In Chadiza this was a major complaint by women respondents in all the communities visited. In Mansa and Chibombo women said this contributed to other forms of violence such as fighting in the home.

#### **5.3.1.3 Sexual Violence in the Home**

Sexual violence in the home was found in Mansa and Kandabwako community in Chadiza, where women indicated that this manifested itself in two ways in Mansa forced sex in marriage and the lack of power on the part of women to determine the number and spacing of children, while in Chadiza it was the inability and lack of power to plan the family. The taking of contraceptives by a woman resulted in wife battery.

#### **5.3.1.4 Use of abusive language**

This is when a husband / wife uses abusive language to the spouse. It was however, revealed that husbands are mostly the ones that use abusive language to their wives

and it was found in Mazabuka, Chadiza. In Chadiza and Kabobola community in Mazabuka children said their parents insulted each other in the presence of children. Parents also used abusive language to children. This is a psychological and emotional type of abuse. Children in Chadiza were insulted for choosing to go to school than to go on errands such as going to the grinding mill or even to the fields in the farming season.

#### **5.3.1.5 Gender Violence against Mothers by Sons**

In Chamuka community in Chibombo, the study found that sons beat up their mothers for failing to provide food for them and their families. This form of violence was only found in Chamuka. The sons were adult married men who were still living with their parents. There was a general lack of respect for women by sons and husbands. In Chadiza this lack of respect was very manifest following initiation of young boys into the nyau. Even at schools teachers complained that these boys wanted to be treated differently from other children. They expected teachers to prefix their names with 'ba', which is one of the ways in which some ethnic groups in Zambia culturally give deference to someone older.

### **B VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

Violence against children was gender based and took many forms. The study found that for some children violence was suffered at all the three levels of the family, the community and the State. For example some children were required to engage in manual labour before going to school and when they went to school they found that the school had hired them as labour for neighbouring farms. When the State does not intervene to protect such children then the violence occurs at all levels and is mutually reinforcing.

#### **5.3.1.6 Child labour**

This form of violence was reported to be very prevalent in all the sites, however; in rural communities children suffered more from this form of violence than those in the urban areas in terms of working conditions and the burden of responsibility. In all the sites it affected both boys and girls; however, child labour had a differentiation based on gender and location whether rural or urban. Thus cattle herding was a form experienced by boys in rural agricultural communities, while girls in rural areas experienced early marriages and those in peri – urban areas were exposed to trading.

The worst form of child labour that the study found was cattle herding, where boys as young as 5 years were hired out by their families to people who owned cattle. This practice resulted in boys delaying starting school up to the age of 16 years and the study found pupils aged 15 /16 years in grade 1 in schools because of this customary practice. This practice in this form was found only in Chadiza. Although cattle herding is present in Mazabuka it did not take this form. It is noteworthy that the literature review revealed that most children (87%) involved in child labour are engaged in labour in the field of agriculture and that most of the children are in the age range 5 – 14 years ( GRZ: unpublished). The same study also indicates that the highest incidence of child labour is in Southern Province at 25% and Eastern province at 20%. It is also a form of violence, which is not seen as violence by the concerned communities because it was an accepted cultural practice.

It was revealed that at the age of 5 - 7 years, some parents send their children to members of the community that own cattle. The boy child gets contracted for a period of 4 years per contract and renewable. For each contract, the boy is given one small cow, which, does not belong to him but to the family. The boy has no control over the

cow. When the father wants to sell the cow the boy is not even consulted and does not even get to know the amount the cow is sold.

It was reported that the families that contract the children did not look after them well. Some were physically abused, lacked enough food, did not interact with the children of the employer- and therefore were lonely all the time. It was also revealed that in most cases the families that hire the labour do not pay on time and also give the boy children the smallest cow and sometimes in bad health. In some cases it was reported that the owner of the cow would inject the cow with poisonous substance so that it dies. Some boy children have had their cow die in a short time after collecting it resulting in 8 years of labouring without payment.

This type of work which, the boy children do delays them to start school at the recommended age –thus 7 years. This means by the time the boy has done two contracts; he would be 15 years old and then starts school at this age, and is uncomfortable to learn with the 7 and 8 year olds. Such children feel out of place and do not continue with school but rather opt to stop school and get married. This cultural practice among the Chewa people is said to be premised on the need for the boy to have cattle in case he makes a girl pregnant and this is what would be used to pay damages to the family of the girl or when he marries to pay Lobola. This practice not only negatively affects the boys involved in that their destiny in life is determined by it, but also it negatively affects gender relations if this is the kind of sacrifice one has to make to get married. Thus the stage for violence in the home is set by such cultural practices.

Another form of child labour found in Chadiza was related to growing of tobacco. The study learnt that when it was time to tie the tobacco, children spent one month away from school and they were forced to choose between going to school and tying the tobacco.

Child labour also manifested in different forms and one form of abuse, which, was mostly directed at children particularly orphans. With the HIV/AIDS pandemic that is claiming lives on daily basis, a number of orphans are left without anyone to take care of them. When one or both parents die, in most cases, some relatives come forward and take the children to look after them. It was revealed that most of the orphans in home do more work than biological children. The type of work, which they did included:

- Drawing water- it was revealed that some children aged as low as 7 years were asked to walk long distance to draw water in 20 litre containers.
- Looking after babies and being denied the chance to go to school because of this especially during farming season.
- Doing house hold chores some of them beyond their age.

#### **5.3.1.7 Denial of Food**

Some children particularly orphans reported that after doing house hold chores, they were denied food, proper beddings and generally suffered ill treatment by their guardians. This was common to all sites

#### **5.3.1.8 Denial the Right to Education**

This type of violence was more pronounced for orphans who failed to continue with education due to the death of their parents. Even in a situation where a mother was the surviving spouse and was dependant on a man, meeting the school requisites for children was a challenge which forced them to drop out of school. This was a common form of violence found in all the sites. In Mansa one of the children in the child Rights group explained the position in this way; *"If a girl lives with an uncle and there are five*



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*children going to school, then you are told that you won't go to school because there are too many people to pay for."* The child quoted above was narrating her own experiences as an orphan. In some of the sites there was also an evident lack of appreciation for education generally. In Chadiza parents preferred to send their children to herd cattle rather than send them to school. In Mansa the study learnt that in the swamps parents prefer for boys to go fishing rather than attend school. The lack of appreciation of education is a contributing factor to the early marriage of girls. One female respondent in Mansa expressed it in this way; *"I tried to force my daughter to marry, but she refused and she went on to study agriculture and driving at Don Bosco training centre and I now really appreciate her"*

The Police in Mansa said that the most prevalent form of violence against children was negligence by parents in providing for basic necessities for children including education. In Kandabwako ward in Chadiza the study found that a lack of appreciation for education caused a variety of problems for children both orphans and non -orphans. Children were physically beaten for opting to return to school rather than work at home or even denied food. Children in Chadiza reported that their parents fought over whether children ought to go to school or not.

#### **5.3.1.9 Early / Forced marriages**

Early/forced marriages were another form of violence reported. It was learnt that some parents do force their girl children to get married from the age of 12. Most of these marriages do not last, so girls end up going back to their parents and continue depending on their parents. This practice was prevalent in all sites but was more prominent in the remote rural sites, where it was not recognised as a form of violence.. School records showed very high attrition rates for girls from grade 5 upwards because of this practice. Some parents were reported to be forcing their girl children into early marriages as young as between the age of 13 and 15 years. Even when parents observed that the marriage was beset with problems, they were unable to retrieve the young girl because of the cultural requirement among some ethnic groups for part of the lobola to be repaid. The study did, however find that some girls are able to come out of such bad marriages. In Zemba one girl gave her testimony as follows;

*'I got pregnant while in school and following the pregnancy, I got married. I found life very difficult because marriage has many tasks which as a child, I could not manage. My father died in 2003 and with support from my mother I left the marriage and I am now back in school. My mother looks after my child. My advice to other children is that pay attention to school because marriage is not easy and one's thoughts are divided between the child and school.'*

#### **5.3.1.10 Early pregnancy**

Early pregnancy was also reported to be common in all the communities visited. Some girls became pregnant at the age of 13 years and this denies them of their right to education consequently raises the illiterate rate among girls and women. However, with the introduction of the re-entry policy by the Ministry of Education, some schools have been able to follow the girls up and bring them back to continue with school. In Mazabuka the study learnt of a girl who got pregnant twice and was able to complete secondary school with very good marks 11 points. This girl was accepted at the University of Zambia. Such examples of what is possible should be made public, without appearing to promote early pregnancy.

In Chikonkomene community in Chibombo respondents were not in favour of the re-entry policy which allowed pregnant girls to return to school after giving birth. In Mansa

some female respondents said that fathers arranged girls' early marriage without their knowledge so that they felt they too were violated along with their daughters.

#### **5.3.1.11 Sexual Violence against Children**

Although the data from the adult respondents showed that sexual violence against children was not a major problem, however discussions with children showed that sexual abuse existed. Children revealed in Lungwishi community in Mansa and Ngangula community in Mazabuka that this was a problem in their areas. In Mansa data from the Health centres indicated that what was common was the sexual abuse of women more than of girls, so may be cases of sexual abuse of children are not reported. The Police in Mansa said cases of sexual offences against children were many and they handled 1 – 2 cases per month. Perpetrators were aged 19 – 70 years old. Children were used for sexual cleansing where a man dies, especially where the deceased was well to do and this was found in Mansa especially in the remote rural parts of the district. In Chibombo district the Chipembi Health centre in Chamuka community the majority of cases were of sexual violence against girls in the age range 14 – 18 years; however the clinic focussed attention on the 12 – 15 years old age group. According to the clinic any girl / woman above the age of 16 years suffering sexual abuse is assumed to have consented to the sexual violence. Through their assumption a certain category of children are left out and denied the right to protection and secondly it is a gross violation of the rights of girls and women to assume that if one is sexually violated over a certain age they asked for it. This is secondary violence.

#### **5.3.1.12 Parental Neglect of their duties towards Children**

The study found that some parents neglected their duties to their children in terms of providing for the basic necessities of life. In Mansa the Police said it was the major form of child abuse in the district and explained it thus:

*"Parents are negligent. They fail to provide for basic necessities for children including education."*

This was confirmed by the data from the clinics in Mansa, which revealed that there was a lot of malnutrition. The Police in Mansa regretted the fact that the law in section 169 of the Penal Code provided that a parent who is unable to provide for their children can not be prosecuted. Children are disadvantaged as a result.

In Chadiza, in Kandabwako community the study found that parental neglect of children was due to parental irresponsibility and this was not because parents lacked the capacity to provide for their children, but a case of being irresponsible.

In all the sites orphans and other dependent children were neglected because guardians neglected their duties to provide for such children. They were over worked, under fed and the most likely to have their education disturbed. In Mansa's Lungwishi ward children indicated that there were two categories of children who stopped their education. Those who stopped on their own and according to them these were children whose parents were still alive, while the second category involved children withdrawn from schools by guardians and these were usually orphans. The withdrawal of orphans from school in order for them to be used as labour in the family was common to all sites.

In Ngangula community the study found that parents/ guardians delayed seeking medical attention for their sick children. Sometimes mothers went to the clinic to ask for treatment without the patient and this was usually orphans who were treated this way. This form of neglect was found in Ngangula.

#### **5.3.1.13 Physical Abuse of Children**

The study found that children were subject to beating sometimes in the home environment. In Chibombo's Mukalashi community the study learnt that children were beaten at home. This form of abuse was also found to be prevalent in Mazabuka where children particularly girls reported that they were often physically abused by their parents or guardians. Orphans were reported to be experiencing physical abuse more than the biological children. An example was given in Mazabuka where a mother fried the hand of a child after discovering that she had eaten some relish that was supposed to be served for the whole family.

### **5.3.2 Gender Based Violence at the Community Level**

The study found that at the community level gender violence existed and this was very evident in schools. At community level there are many institutions such as the church, the family, however the focus of this study was to investigate gender based violence at the level of the school. In the Zambian context there are two types of school

#### **5.3.2.1 Child labour / Too much manual work**

The study also found that some schools were using school children as labour for hiring to nearby farms, for which the schools were paid. This was found in Chadiza and Mazabuka rural only. Whereas the problem affected all the communities in Chadiza, in Mazabuka it was more severe in the Ngangula community. Children reported that it was a trend for some members of the community to arrange with the school administration to hire their labour to do work on farms at a fee they did not even know. They also reported that they are never told how the money is spent. The manual work would even lasted for five days and that lessons were only conducted from 07 00hrs to 09 00 hrs and the rest of the day would be spent working. In cases where the school was building a classroom block, instead of parents offering their labour, children were assigned work to do for example collecting bricks, crashing stones, drawing water from a long distance. This exercise demanded that children make several trips in a day and for a number of days. The parents in Ngangula community in Mazabuka said schools were giving children tasks that were too heavy for them and which, they as parents did not give them to do at home. In addition this was done without the schools consulting them.

#### **5.3.2.2 Sexual Violence in School**

Children in Ngangula community in Mazabuka revealed that there was a lot of sexual abuse in both the government and community schools. Teachers as well as head teachers were involved. In Malala the study found that it was a common practice for teachers to assign school children to carry out tasks in teachers' homes and child sexual abuse perpetrated by teachers was very common.

At another level child to child sex was said to be prevalent in the Chikobo community although it was difficult to detect. In Mansa children who were members of the child rights group said children involved in child to child sex, they were not violated but chose to engage in such activities themselves.

#### **5.3.2.3 The Use of Abusive Language**

The use of abusive language was also reported by pupils in all schools visited. Pupils reported that some teachers are fond of insulting and using other abusive language to humiliate them in the presence of their friends. Though this form of abuse was reported in all the schools visited, it was more pronounced in schools in Chadiza communities. However, interviews conducted with teachers revealed that in the Chewa culture when a child reaches the age of 13 years, the parents begin respecting the child by calling her Ba-Maria or Ba James and when they come to school teachers just address them with

their first names. This offends the children hence the reason why they cited use of abusive language as a form of violence against children.

*'Ba' is a prefix that show respect to someone*

#### **5.3.2.4 Violence targeted at the Teachers from the Parents/ Guardians**

The study found that teachers were also threatened with or suffered violence from the parents or guardians. In Chikobo community, data revealed that at one of the schools with a high percentage of orphans, reporting violence against children resulted in violence or threats of such violence to the teachers. In Lubombo community in Mazabuka teachers were insulted by parents for punishing children, who came to school late. The reason for late coming was due to parents / guardians sending such children on errands, such as being required to feed the goats before going to school. Thus children found themselves in a difficult situation where failing to obey instructions from parents attracted punishment, yet obeying such instructions caused punishment at school. Children in Chadiza also faced a similar dilemma. The fact that both these sites of Mazabuka and Chadiza are primarily agricultural communities may be a factor because other studies (GRZ: 1999) show that the highest number of children, at 87%, involved in child labour are found in the agricultural sector.

In Neganega community in Mazabuka, Early Childhood Care givers also suffered violence from parents when their child was beaten by another child. This problem was only found in Neganega and did not arise in the other communities covered by the study in Mazabuka or elsewhere.

#### **5.3.2.5 Child to Child Violence**

The study found that gender violence starts at an early age and is usually learnt from the home environment. In Kabobola community respondents said that there were more boys than girls in school and that boys oppressed girls and this affected girls' participation in school. They also said that the boys violated girls taking the example from their fathers. In Malala respondents said that there are children who are bullies who violate other children.

School boys threatened school girls with violence or actually beat them for getting the answers right in class and for refusing to share their food. This was evident in Chibombo, where, teachers revealed that boys find it difficult to honour a girl who is appointed captain; however there was no problem when a boy was the one appointed. Boys bullied girls by for example locking them up in a class- room.

#### **5.3.3 Gender Based Violence at the Level of the State**

When the State condones gender violence it perpetuates the violence. The most common forms of gender violence at the level of the State occurred as a result of agents of the State not performing their functions as they should or the non availability of such services. The Police were perceived to be contributors to the maintenance of gender based violence when they failed to address the violence reported to them. In Chibombo for those communities within reach of the Police such as Chamuka and Chikobo the complaint was that the Police, sometimes compromised the course of justice by advising people to settle cases of gender violence out of court especially where the offender was known to them. At other times they carried out their duties satisfactorily. In communities such as Mukalashi, Chikonkomene in Chibombo, Ngangula and Malala in Mazabuka, Lungwishi in Mansa and Kandabwako and Chilenga in Chadiza, the Police were not physically accessible and therefore perpetrators of violence could do so with impunity in the knowledge that seeking remedy was difficult for the survivors of the violence.

#### **5.4 Causes of Gender Based Violence**

There are root causes to the problem of gender- based violence as well as immediate causes.

##### **5.4.1 Gendered Nature of Society and the Social Perception of Women, Girls and Children**

The root causes of gender- based violence lie in the social construction of what being, female and male means as well as what childhood means. The gendered- nature of society, along with the unequal power relations, create a climate for violence. There is a general disregard for women, girls and children, which results in their considered for their use value only as opposed to respecting them as persons in their own right. There is a tendency to 'own' these categories of people. They are considered first and foremost as a resource and that is why there are struggles in arenas such as should children go to school or go and help provide food for the family.

There is a need for a new way of looking at these categories of people. While the country has invested a lot of resources in creating gender awareness, what gains have been made are lost through the traditional institutions of initiation ceremonies of both boys and girls. Initiation rites vary in intensity of what they teach and the degree to which behaviour of the initiates is monitored. Thus in Chadizā for example all boys must go through the Chewā initiation rites of *nyau*. To fail to do so attracts sanctions, which, in a village setting actually limits one's social life. The girls have to go through *cinamwali*, which teaches them to never look at an adult in the eye when being spoken to, to leave the path when an adult is coming especially a man. While the schools promote pupils participation, they suddenly find a girl who was active in class is suddenly so withdrawn after going through *cinamwali*. The boys on the other hand come back from their initiation ceremony even more bold and all females suddenly are expected to respect them by prefixing their names with 'ba'. Thus school authorities find boys become difficult to control and girls are unable to participate in class. However it is important to note that these ceremonies differ in all the four study sites and they are particularly intense for boys in Chadizā, whereas in the other three sites these ceremonies focus on girls.

In relationships between adults violence sometimes comes as a result of a lack of understanding and appreciation for one another's roles. Thus in Mukalashi some men complained that their wives violated them by going to the road side and coming back home late. According to them the men would be without food until the woman came back from the road side, which was quite a distance to walk. In further discussion the question posed was who was violating who? Was it the man who remained at home doing nothing while the wife walked a long way to the road to raise income for the family? The question was what stopped men from preparing their own meals when they were at home with all the food in the house. It is a question of attitude and what gender roles are acceptable.

In all the sites many women complained that men generally disregarded their contributions to the home especially in terms of ideas. There was also a general lack of trust between couples particularly in the peri – urban sites.

##### **5.4.2 Poverty**

The study found that poverty was a major factor in gender- based violence. Parents and guardians were more concerned with monetary compensation for girls who were sexually abused than seeking justice. The Liteta Local Court in Chibombo revealed that cases often came before the court when the compensation was not paid and not because of the abuse. Even where the court referred litigants to the Magistrates courts,

the usual response was that the parents only wanted to be compensated. Some of the gender based violence was a result of following advice from traditional doctors who sometimes recommended that child sexual abuse could help make some one rich or cure illness.

In a resource poor environment such as that of Zambia, where people invest in other people the violence is usually linked to control of those people. This control over labour is a contributor to violence. In Mazabuka a young couple had to divorce because the mother of the man felt she was not getting enough help from her son's wife. In fact she did not want this couple to live on their own which became a source of disputes in the home. In order to address gender based violence it is also important to address issues of poverty and empowering families and communities to have economic power. The family is very over burdened because of the HIV /AIDS pandemic and the havoc it is wreaking by killing the productive age group on whom both the children and the elderly depend. Many families are finding themselves starting the parenting role all over again in their old age when they themselves need to be supported. The family continues to have a growing dependency burden with no help from the State

In addition in the absence of other forms of wealth society tends to measure wealth in terms of the human resource. There is a tendency to want to control the human resource by those who are more powerful relative to others whether that is in the family or the school. Thus at another level it is a struggle over scarce resources and this makes poverty an important contributing factor to gender based violence. The fact that the incidence of gender violence was highest at times of harvest for the farming community and on pay days for those who work confirms that the struggle is over scarce resources; however, the lack of respect for human rights of women and children was also a contributing factor. Other causes have to do with changing gender roles and the consequent issue of power relations.

#### **5.4.2 Cultural Practices**

The study found that there were certain cultural practices that constitute violence that is gender based and others that predispose women and children to violence. In all the sites initiation ceremonies were said to contribute to early marriage. In Chadiza there are ceremonies to mark rites of passage for girls and boys and among the Chewas it is *cinamwali* for girls and *nyau* for boys. The schools in Chadiza revealed that they observed that once a girl goes through *cinamwali* she becomes subdued and her level of participation in class goes down drastically, while for boys they become more assertive and difficult to control. Thus it would seem that the curriculum in these initiation rites contradicts some of the principles that are promoted in school such as active participation in class and respect for women and men.

#### **5.4.3 Parental neglect of their duty**

Children were also exposed to gender based violence because of parental neglect of their duties. In Mansa and Chadiza the study found that some children suffered violence because of parental neglect. In some cases it was not because parents were unable but simply because they chose not to protect their children.

#### **5.4.5 Violence breeds violence**

Children who grow up in an environment where there is violence learn that it is normal and are likely to repeat the violence in their own lives. Most of the drawings by children showed physical violence as well as other forms. One drawing showed a child whose mother had died and another child whose mother was alive but was a drunkard.

#### **5.4.6 Inadequate or Lack of Response to the Violence by the Justice Delivery System**

The study found that in many instances respondents who report the violence to the Police sometimes did not receive an appropriate response. Sometimes the Police were allegedly advising people to settle cases out of court or failing to prosecute cases. This inaction sends a message to the perpetrators of the abuse that what they are doing was not that bad and it was something that society tolerated.

## **5.5 Consequences of Gender Based Violence**

The consequences of gender- based violence are many and they include poor health, depression and death in some situations. Violence also breeds violence so that children living and growing up in a violent home are likely to be violent and so the cycle of violence is sustained. Violence also really creates psychological and emotional problems for the survivors of it. While the violence may be an incident in the life of the perpetrator, it has life long consequences for the survivors.

### **5.5.1 The Individual level**

At the individual level there is trauma, which, continues to violate an individual long after the incident of violence. It can lead to low self esteem and under achievements, health complications such as inability to ever have children because of sexually transmitted infections arising from sexual abuse or permanent and irreversible damage to a child's body leading to death. In Chibombo a 15 year -old girl was forced out of school by her family and forced into early marriage. She was unable to have children and soon she suffered mounting pressure from the family of the man who believed the inability to conceive was her problem and not the man's. She faked a pregnancy and stole a baby. The response of the man's relatives was joy and acceptance of both the girl and her baby. At the time of the study she was in Police custody charged with stealing a baby. This girl found herself in a situation, which was not of her own making and is consequently continuing to suffer the trauma of her parents' decision.

For many orphans the cruel treatment they receive at the hands of guardians serves to remind them of their status as orphans. The cruelty is not only at home but even at school. They suffer rejection and are denied their childhood. In Chibombo 15 year old twins were subjected to long hours of work at the road side after school with little or no meals and sometimes they are forced to sleep at the roadside. These boys were in the custody of their uncle and his wife. Many orphans are tired all the time because before they go to school they have to be involved in some work and at school the work continues and when they return home they may be sent on errands while the rest of the family eats. Thus they are over worked and under fed with poor bedding and clothes.

The consequences of child labour such as cattle herding in Chadizā are that the future is permanently affected as they start school very late at age 15/ 16 years and have to sit in class with 7 /8 year olds. Without education their opportunities for advancement are severely limited and in a sense the cycle of poverty repeats itself. Girls sent to early marriage are usually given to old men and before long they are widowed. Without education their future is bleak and their circumstances force them to always depend on other people. In addition a number of such children have complications with pregnancy and others die in the process; however, it is not possible to know the scale of the problem as the health system is designed to mask such cases. Children aged 14 /15 years are treated like any woman coming to give birth.

Living in a situation of prolonged abuse can lead to mental distress or even illness and finally to death.

In Chibombo the study found that many children especially girls are made vulnerable to gender based violence because the only Secondary school is at Chibombo. One student

narrated what it took to get to school from where he lived. He leaves the village at 09:00 hours and walks 24 kilometres, which takes him five hours to arrive at the road -side. He then catches a bus to Chibombo and then walks another 7 kilometres in three hours to get to school, where he arrives at 17:00 hours. Because there are no facilities for boarding such pupils make their own arrangement for accommodation and they pay K 10,000 -00. Many parents complained of the lack of boarding school for their children forcing them to live far from home without adult supervision. The consequences have been many pregnancies for young girls.

Early marriages are causing high attrition rates of otherwise promising students. The attrition rates are very high from grade 5 upwards. The lives of these young girls are affected in such a way that their future is determined by parental choices. This is compounded by a general lack of appreciation at community level of the violence suffered by those girls who are forced into marriage. In addition there are no services at community level to assist such people.

### **5.5.2 The Family Level**

It can lead to death and the dissolution of relationships such as marriages. It creates distrust and attracts stigma. The stigma can be directed at the whole family and this sometimes contributes to the lack of reporting of incidences of Gender – based violence. Families often prioritise the interests of the group over those of the individual with dire consequences especially for the individual affected. Children in Chibombo also showed through drama, how families argue over which child should stop school and even though the girl may be brilliant families opt to discontinue girl education. In the drama they showed how children learn what they live. When the home is violent, a child may grow up thinking violence is normal. At the level of the family violence is maintained and sustained especially when it is not challenged. In Chibombo an example was given of a woman whose child was sexually abused by her husband and he was not the biological father of the girl. She did not challenge what happened and did not report the matter either. Later she decided to divorce the man and got married to another man. At that point her husband, the abuser sued her for bigamy. At this point she decided to reveal that he had sexually abused the child and the court refused to entertain her complaint.

### **5.5.3 The Community**

The community also suffer stigma when cases of gender violence are in their midst. The inability to talk about the violence means that the violence is not addressed and in many communities there are no services to assist those who have been violated.

### **5.6 Knowledge of the Law**

Many respondents were not aware of the law and of their rights. The concept of children having rights and being worthy of respect was not appreciated neither was there respect for women's rights.

### **5.7 Strategies to address Gender Based Violence**

There are many strategies to be employed but the most important is engaging communities in discussing this issue so as to break the silence. Provision of income generating projects is crucial because the study has revealed a close link between poverty and access to resources and gender- based violence. Certain cultural practices need to have their curriculum examined such as *nyau* dancing and initiation ceremonies.

### **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study has revealed that gender- based violence exists in all PLAN Zambia communities. It manifests itself in many forms and some of these forms are acknowledged by society and others are not seen as such. These include early



marriages, cattle herding and some forms of child labour. It manifests itself at three levels which are the individual / family level, the Community level and the State and these three levels are mutually reinforcing.

Wife battery is a common problem affecting women, early forced marriage affects girls and boys cattle herding and various forms of child labour affect all children especially orphans and vulnerable children.. Gender based violence is invisible because communities, families and individuals deny its existence.

Gender based violence is linked to poverty and poverty is a major contributing factor Children's labour is exacted by the families and the schools as a source of income. Children are forced into early marriages because of lobola and girls and women are forced to succeed dead female relatives as wives especially if the man was well to do because of what the family thinks they can gain by so doing. The fact that children are forced to choose between school and working for the family all point to the issue of poverty. Even wives who are assaulted suffer the assault much more at harvest time and pay days. Poverty is central to the issue of gender based violence. Therefore in order to successfully address gender based violence there needs to be strategies addressing poverty at the family and community levels.

One of the root causes of gender -based violence is the gendered nature of life and the subordinate position of women and children. There is a lack of respect for the rights of women and children. Parents believe they are at liberty to do as they want with children, and it is this notion, which needs to be challenged. Respect for the rights of children and women need to be taught to all categories of people and they include parents, teachers, traditional leaders and the community in general. Children themselves need to learn and know their rights. However; rights awareness creation must include duties and responsibilities because every right has an accompanying duty.

Those who suffer the violence have to live with the consequences of that violence all their lives. Whereas the violence may be an incident for the perpetrator, the violated continue to suffer the effects for a long time. This is made more difficult by the lack of structures in the community to address the violence.

There is no knowledge of the law relating to gender based violence across all groups, children, parents, teachers, health workers and the community in general.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made to address the issue of gender- based violence:

#### **1 Awareness Creation**

- PLAN should sensitise different categories of people on gender violence as well as on rights.
- Traditional leaders and members of the community should be talked to on issues of nyau and initiation ceremonies
- Schools both Government and community schools need sensitisation on the issue of child labour
- Gender sensitisation is required for traditional leaders and for parents and teachers
- Further research on social attitudes to children is recommended as a basis for taking further action.

#### **2. Advocacy**

- PLAN should develop a strategy for advocacy on such priority issues as Child Labour, Children's Rights, Early Marriages, the importance of education in the life of a child.
- Advocacy should include identifying role models in each PLAN Programme Unit and publicising what they have achieved
- Child Rights groups should be initiated in each PLAN Programme Unit
- Working with other organisations, a celebration of the Day of the Child, International Women's Day focussing on the girl child
- PLAN should engage Members of Parliament in the areas where they are working on issues of advocacy as well as targeting the appropriate Parliamentary committees on these issues.
- PLAN should engage the District education Boards as well as the Ministry of Education on the issue of child labour in schools and the need for more sensitisation of both teachers and the community on the issue of the Re-entry Policy.
- In the sensitisation it is recommended that PLAN work with other stakeholders like the Police Victim Support Unit who have the personnel with knowledge on legal issues but lack logistical support. Other stakeholders like NGOs can also be identified.
- In the communities there are no structures addressing gender -based violence and there is need to explore which agency can provide such services in each of the PLAN communities
- Issues of sexual violence against children in Ngāngula need to be addressed working in conjunction with the District Education Board in Mazabuka.

### **3. Poverty**

- The families and communities need economic empowerment to reduce violence against women and children, which is poverty related. PLAN can work with other stakeholders on this issue

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