

# **ZIMBABWE PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN ASSOCIATION (ZPHCA)**

## **EVALUATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT**

**JULY 2006**

### **THANKS AND APPRECIATION**

The National Executive Committee, the National Head Office staff, the parents and children met during the evaluation process and the NFU staff are thanked for sharing so generously their experience, perceptions and points of view. This has helped shaped the report which hopefully will make a contribution in taking the organization to the next step to consolidation. The conversations with parents and staff were awe inspiring given the circumstances that the families find themselves in today in Zimbabwe, and the work being done by ZPHCA and NFU is to be commended. I am most grateful that I have had the opportunity to work with people so committed and humble in their work.

Dren Nupen

## **1. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The February 2006 Project Visit report stated that the 'main purpose of the evaluation will be to come up with a 3 -4 strategic plan for consolidating ZPHCA as a viable member based advocacy organization of parents with disabled children'. This implies that strategic objectives will be put in place by the NEC of the organization for this period and that projects and programmes will be agreed to in order to realize these objectives.

The Evaluation was commissioned as part of the ongoing process of evaluating and assessing the work of the ZPHCA, not only to provide the organization and NFU with the opportunity to reflect on progress that has been made during the previous strategic plan – up until 2004, but also to comply with the prescribed NORAD conditions for funding NFU, and finally to gather relevant information to inform the strategic planning process for the period from 2007 – 2010 which will be the basis for a further funding application by NFU to NORAD for ZPHCA.

The Terms of reference for the Evaluation are attached as Annexure A.

## **2. POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

The political, social and economic crisis in Zimbabwe has intensified significantly since the unbudgeted payment of war veterans in 1998, Mugabe's loss of the Constitutional Referendum in 2000, the Zimbabwe Defence Force's disastrous intervention in the DRC, the flawed March 2002 Presidential elections and the 2004 Parliamentary elections - which

brought public censure and outrage from the international community, the relatively uncontested Senate elections, Operation Murambatsvina in May 2005 (*Operation Clean Up*), increased poverty, hyper inflationary monetary conditions, landlessness, unemployment, food shortages, hunger and the intensification of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Severe human rights violations have marked the onset of the now infamous land resettlement programme and the country is experiencing rapid economic decline, which in turn has led to the general decline in law and order, while the undue influence of politicians over the judiciary have become common practice and has rendered the courts increasingly partisan. The democratic space has been increasingly eroded as opposition political leaders and civil society groups are unable to exercise their democratic rights. Legislation has been drafted and some promulgated to restrict the activities of NGOs working in the field of human rights.<sup>1</sup> Closure of newspapers and radio stations further limit free political activity. The economy is unravelling at an unprecedented rate as is demonstrated in by way of the following statistics. If 1996/97 is to be taken as the last year when the Zimbabwe economy was still functioning on a “normal” basis and expostulate the social, economic and trade situation to 2006 over a period of 10 years. The results are as follows:

<b>Factor</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>2005/06 (Estimated)</b>	<b>2005/06 (Actual)</b>
<b>GDP (US\$ billions)</b>	8,4	12.9	4.4
<b>Tourism (visitors)</b>	1 200 000	2 500 000	280 000
<b>Exports (US\$ billions)</b>	3,4	5.78	1,4
<b>Foreign Aid (US\$ million)</b>	800	1200	350

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<sup>1</sup> The Public Order and Security Act (POSA) which restricts basic freedoms, and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) which curtails freedom of speech

<b>Imports (US\$ billion)</b>	4.2	7.4	1.8
<b>Agric Output (US\$ b)</b>	1.554	2.564	500
<b>Mining Output (US\$ m)</b>	672	1176	780
<b>Employment</b>	1 400 000	2 030 000	850
<b>Population</b>	12 500 000	14 790 000	10 500 000

The effect of the economic implosion over the past 10 years are clearly demonstrated. The assumed rates of growth in these numbers is modest – 4 per cent per annum in GDP, more in exports driven by rising export receipts in mining and agriculture as well as tourism. It should be noted that the tourism industry in South Africa has doubled in size since 1995 and it is presumed that the industry in Zimbabwe would have increased faster than in South Africa under normal conditions. There were no major droughts or natural disasters during this decade.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident that the social, political and economic conditions prevalent in Zimbabwe have deteriorated at an alarming rate -within a general climate of militarization and the progressive collapse of the Zimbabwean state.

These are, in general broad strokes, the political, social and economic conditions in which the ZPHCA is operating and is trying to build a sustainable organisation for one of the most marginalised groupings in any society, but especially in a country where respect for human rights is at an all time low for ordinary normal citizens, let alone for those that are severely marginalised because they are disabled.

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<sup>2</sup> An unpublished informal information sheet produced by Eddie Cross

### **3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The Evaluation methodology was based on an interactive approach where the consultant made sure that she spent most of her time in discussion with various stakeholders regarding the issues relevant to ZPHCA, the evaluation and the strategic planning process. All points of view were encouraged and the emphasis of the process was on open communication. These discussions did not only focus on the internal workings of the organization but also on the fears, concerns and challenges that members and staff of the organization are experiencing during this present time in Zimbabwe. These personal accounts of the challenges that are facing the parents of disabled children and young adults provided an understanding of the many difficulties and problems the organization and the parents face in terms of fulfilling the organizational mandate of advocacy and lobbying, while at the same time trying to ensure the sustainability of the institution, and their own survival.

Before the visit to Harare the Consultant was briefed by the NFU Programme Officer and provided with various Project Visit Reports<sup>3</sup>, the ‘Strategy for NFU’s Work for International Solidarity : 2006 and Beyond’ document, the report from the Follow Up meetings of the Regional Co-ordinator and others to provide background information to the Evaluation process and the Strategic Planning meeting. In Harare the Consultant was further given all the files and documentation dating back to the organization’s establishment in 1987 to the present day. These included; minutes of meetings, NEC minutes, financial documents, NFU reports, field office reports, minutes of meetings held at the Bulawayo offices and many others. The documents and reports reflected the successes and challenges of the various stages of the organization’s

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<sup>3</sup> Project Visit Reports for the period from 2004 to 2006

development, the inter-relationship between the structures of the organization, how the organization has endeavored to implement its Vision, Mission and the project plans that have been formulated to ensure that it remains a democratic parents driven institution focusing on the needs and rights of disabled children in Zimbabwe.

The Consultant visited 3 branches, viz KweKwe, Bembere and Harare. Further meetings were held with members of the NEC, including the Chairperson, the Treasurer and some members of the provincial leadership, the Programme Officer and the Secretary. Once the field visits and consultations had taken place and the Consultant had had the opportunity to peruse all the documentation that had been provided by the Head office, a two and a half day strategic planning meeting was convened.<sup>4</sup>

At branch level the Consultant met parents, children and young adults with disabilities, teachers, health workers, parent trainers and NEC members as well as staff at both the Head office and the Harare office. Where there were no ZPHCA offices meeting facilities were generously made available at a clinic and at Bembere branch the Head Master had made available some of his classrooms. The meetings were all very useful and provided critical information about the trends currently being experienced in the organization. Recommendations were made by the parents attending the meetings about what is needed to ensure the sustainability of the organization – some suggestions were about how to strengthen the branches, build the capacity of staff at Head Office, mobilize more members, how to use the Manifesto to lobby for free inclusive education, free housing, free medication, social grants etc etc., the need for a more diversified funding base as well as assistance for the implementation of the income generating projects. Other issues raised will be explored later in the Report.

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<sup>4</sup> The strategic planning meeting was held on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2006

All the branches that were visited expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the work done by ZPHCA, as well as both the technical and funding support provided by NFU and the lead donor, NORAD. But there were also a host of practical problems cited where members were unable to find relief from government and inevitably turned to ZPHCA for solutions. Under normal circumstances the State would be held accountable, and be responsible for delivering effective services to children and young adults with disabilities. These would generally include; transport such as buses and taxis, feeding schemes, physio-therapy support, specialist educators in schools, sustainable home based assistance and training in how to care more effectively for children with disabilities, the provision of equipment such as crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids, books and reading equipment translated into Braille, sign language, as well as general health and social welfare support. But because of the deteriorating situation in Zimbabwe, characterized by political polarization and a failed state, NGOs are taking on the role and responsibility of the state, but without the necessary resources at their disposal. This poses a major dilemma for non governmental organizations working in this environment. With the support of international donors they generally have greater flexibility in terms of being able to respond more quickly to the needs of the constituency than the government ministries or departments. But there is also an expectation that because they have funds, whatever the amount may be, they are in a position to resolve all the problems and social ills faced by the people of Zimbabwe, which includes the basic necessities of life such as the provision of housing and food. In reality some NGOs and DPOs such as ZPHCA are funded by organizations that are themselves reliant on a donor, and therefore any programmatic support is limited by the amount received by the partner organization from the lead donor. Because of this, project design is usually based on principles of self sufficiency and relies heavily on the good will and personal investment of the members and beneficiaries - in the case of ZPHCA, on the parents of disabled children who are generally poor, marginalized and in most instances unemployed. Although the principles of self help and self support are admirable and

need to be fostered, they are only practical and realistic in circumstances where the state provides some sort of assistance or social 'safety net'. It is unrealistic to expect that DPOs and NGOs in Zimbabwe to take on the responsibility of the state with the limited resources they have at their disposal, as well as the political repressive legislative framework that they operate within.<sup>5</sup>

ZPHCA is only able, under the circumstances, to assist in facilitating and enhancing the capacity of its members to lobby and advocate for changes to the legislative framework and to put pressure on the failing health and social welfare ministries to provide support where possible to children with disabilities. Murambatsvina (*Operation Clean Up*) provides a case in point where the state forcibly removed its own citizens, irrespective of their personal circumstances i.e. whether they were families with disabled children from the urban and peri-urban areas and relocated them to the rural areas with no shelter, clothing, food or any form of social support. It is not clear what role ZPHCA played during this period, but there were other NGOs with limited financial support that assisted these unfortunate 'refugees' with basic commodities. There is no doubt that without this support many of those forcibly removed, including children would have died. There are no statistics available to indicate how many of the people that were relocated were families who had children with disabilities. But despite this lack of information there would statistically have been a percentage of those relocated who would have been children with disabilities.

Although the primary objective of ZPHCA is not to provide services to its members, such as the ones outlined above, there nevertheless is an expectation that under the circumstances in which Zimbabweans currently find themselves, that

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<sup>5</sup> Humanitarian support or social assistance can easily be interpreted as undermining the weak state structures.



ZPHCA, with the support of NFU, will provide something more than training for lobbying and advocacy work and an understanding of the organisation's Constitution.<sup>6</sup> The organization has a certain responsibility to provide a 'safety net' for its membership, e.g. a small stipend for transport monies for those having to walk long distances to attend meetings and upon arrival at the meetings to have at least a warm meal and refreshments. It is also suggested that through its networks and access to international resources and contacts NFU and its international DPO partners could also assist in sourcing second hand wheelchairs, crutches and various aids for children and young people with disabilities from the developed world to share with those less fortunate in countries like Zimbabwe. Support could also be considered to pay for small enterprise development projects such as the Income Generating Projects. It is understood that this does not fall within the funding parameters of NFU but under present conditions in Zimbabwe it is not possible for any effective lobbying and advocacy activities to take place if parents are desperately trying to find sources of income for themselves and their families.

In summary; under normal circumstances in a developing economy it would be easier for an organization like ZPHCA to manage the expectations of the membership regarding social welfare support, but under the harsh and cruel conditions prevailing in present day Zimbabwe, the demands on ZPHCA are great and if not met could put the organization and its credibility at risk. Not only does the membership expect ZPCHA to empower parents to lobby for the improvement in the quality of the lives of parents and children living with disabilities, but they also expect ZPHCA to assist with basic survival strategies because they have nowhere else to turn. An example of this was experienced at the Harare branch meeting

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<sup>6</sup> The Constitution defines the parameters of what the organization does, can do and will do through its strategic objectives. This is based on one of NFU's policy document that states that "NFU will not support players who are largely service providers" pg 6 Strategy for NFU's work for international solidarity 2006 and beyond.

where parents were not only tabling concerns about their children's wellbeing and their needs, i.e. inclusive education, protection of human rights, as well as protection by the state against abuse - both emotional and sexual. Parents and Care Givers were deeply concerned about the welfare of their children, especially in cases where they would no longer be able to provide support for their children with disabilities because of lack of resources due to poverty and unemployment and HIV/AIDS. They noted that lobbying and advocacy, although critically important, does not assist parents and families survive on a day to day basis. This was repeated at several of the meetings.

It is therefore important for NFU and ZPHCA to seek ways in which additional funding can be sourced to assist branches implement income generating projects to sustain members and their families, so that the parents are able to continue their struggle for the rights of their children with disabilities<sup>7</sup> and to pursue ZPHCA's longer term organizational objectives.

### **3.1 EVALUATION OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Although only a few members of the NEC were able to attend the meeting at the Head Office the discussions were extremely illuminating and productive. The chairperson outlined the structure of the organization and how the leadership is democratically elected by the members at branch and provincial levels. The chairperson reported that the latest count showed that ZPHCA currently had established approximately 61 branches in the 9 provinces. The membership is parent-based but as would be expected in a society that is fundamentally patriarchal, most of the members at branch level are

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<sup>7</sup> Initially the consultant was not convinced that the Income Generating Projects formed part of the core activities of ZPHCA but under the prevailing conditions in Zimbabwe it would be insensitive of NFU and ZPHCA not to respond to this basic need of its membership. The Income Generating Projects can also be a way in which young people can be trained in various vocational pursuits.

women. Interestingly there seems to be more gender parity at the NEC level where several of the senior positions in the organization are held by men. The strength and competency of any organization is dependent on several factors, but one of the most important being the caliber of its leadership. The ZPHCA is a grassroots organization and its members and leadership are drawn from this community. Levels of expertise and competencies may not be at the same level as those of urban based professionals but the commitment and passion of parents to the organization and its objectives is hard to find in other more capacitated NGOs. ZPHCA members/parents only have each other and the organization for support. Their cause is one that is not necessarily of interest to the majority of the population, especially in a society where human rights abuses are tolerated. The sense of deep alienation in the society is reflected in the lack of care for children and youth with disabilities by the broader community, and ZPHCA is the only beacon that there is in terms of support and care. It is for this reason that the organization is evaluated and assessed on its own terms and not those that reflect more capacitated organizations that have access to a broader support base. It is in this context that the NEC leadership is viewed in a very positive light. It provides the nurturing and the care required by traumatized members and parents who deal with the pressures of living on the margins of Zimbabwe society, as well as the responsibilities of looking after children with disabilities. The current leadership reflects qualities and values that the membership/parents need and respect. However for the organization to strengthen its capacity to sustain itself during this difficult period in the history of Zimbabwe it may be necessary for the membership/parents and leadership of the organization to review how it has positioned itself vis a vis the cause of disabled children and youth and make strategic decisions about how it will proceed in the future. These issues were dealt with to some extent in the strategic planning meeting, but because of its sensitive nature and the potential of this kind of discussion to undermine the cohesion of the NEC and the organization, it there seems to be a slight reticence on behalf of some of the NEC members to participate and share their views in an open manner.

But there was no doubt a sense that some members wanted the organization to be more pro-active and elevate its profile to engage more with other NGOs at a national, regional and international level, and to participate at a 'higher' level to lobby and advocate on behalf of disabled children and young people. On the other hand, others felt that the status quo should be maintained and that the current modus operandi had worked well for the organization during its inception period<sup>8</sup> and will continue to do so, irrespective of the numerous changes that had taken place in the society since the establishment of ZPHCA. These issues will be explored further under the section of the Report dealing with the strategic planning meeting.

The role and responsibilities of the NEC were discussed at the meeting and there were various interpretations as to what was expected of the members of the NEC. This ought to be clear before elections for office bearers take place so that the voters are fully apprised as to why they are voting, what positions they are voting for and who the most qualified and eligible members are for these positions. It might be useful in future for there to be an extensive voter education campaign about the roles and responsibilities of the NEC, the kind of leadership that is required to fill the various portfolios on the NEC and the qualities that are necessary to be an NEC member. It is not sufficient that branches and provinces vote in their favorite persons – it is important that the organization resolve firstly the issues noted above i.e. what direction the organization wants to take in the next 4 years and what kind of leadership is required to help drive this process. The members may unanimously agree that the current leadership is appropriate to take the organization to the next level

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<sup>8</sup> In terms of the developmental life of the organization the period from when it was established to present day is conceived as the Inception period and once some of the strategic planning recommendations have been accepted and systems and processes have been refined the process of organizational consolidation can be said to have taken place.

because they reflect the values the organization and have a track record of being responsive to and nurturing of the members. But there may be additional skills and expertise required to support the current direction of the organization which the present leadership may not have within their collective. For example, ZPHCA has identified funding as one of its crucial challenges. It has the experience of working with NFU but may required further support in terms of sourcing and accessing other bi-lateral and regionally based donors. It may therefore consider taking on board the skills and expertise of a fundraiser who has experience in the field and can assist in accessing and sourcing new funders from across the region.

These are strategic decisions that the NEC needs to make in collaboration with the Secretariat and where appropriate with the NFU.

In keeping with good corporate governance the NEC has established sub committees to deal with various focus areas and NEC members are deployed to staff these sub committees. Annual General Meetings are held every 3 years and NEC meetings are held 3 times per year. At Head Office the staff, the Chairperson of the NEC and other members meet on a regular basis to evaluate progress being made in different programmes and projects. The Programme Officer accompanies the Chairperson of the NEC to visit branches to monitor and evaluate their activities and to provide support and advice, where necessary and appropriate. The NFU Regional Co-ordinator also provides this function from time to time to establish the efficacy of the lobbying and advocacy training that has been provided.

The chairperson will also visit newly established branches and provide encouragement and explain the rationale and methodology of the Manifesto and the Constitutional review process. Where there is a need to mobilize new parents and

encourage them to establish a branch, the Chairperson, the Programme Officer<sup>9</sup> and the relevant Provincial Co-ordinator will travel to the area to meet with the prospective parents to explain how the organization functions.

The role of the NEC needs to be clearly understood throughout the institution. The Constitutional formulation process has to a large extent ensured that the membership are clear about what the NEC is expected to do, but this needs to be continually reinforced throughout the organization. The NEC is primarily a policy making body that provides direction to the organisation by formulating various policies to guide its activities and programmes. It should not under normal circumstances be involved in the daily management of the institution. This is the responsibility of the Secretariat. However because of the lack of capacity presently at the Secretariat level, some members of the NEC have generously provided of their time to assist in the management of the organization. Once ZPHCA has sufficient funds to employ additional senior staff in the secretariat the NEC members will no longer have this added responsibility and will be able to **focus more on their policy formulation activities, the funding of the organization and monitoring and evaluating the overall progress being made by ZPHCA**. Currently the members of the NEC have, to all intense and purposes, a solid working relationship and a good rapport with the members. But as a preventative measure it may be useful for them to **receive conflict management and conflict resolution training** in order to deal with any disputes and tensions that inevitably arises in organizations.

To ensure that the NEC members perform their functions and duties it is recommended that a **performance appraisal system be implemented**, based on the tasks that they set themselves. There is already a process of reporting back to

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<sup>9</sup> It is not clear whether the Programme Officer attends the meetings as the driver or because it is part of his responsibilities as the Project Officer.

NEC meetings but it is necessary that a more systematic approach be employed where NEC members are able to be evaluated and assessed according to their performance by the NEC Chairperson and the membership. The notion of holding the office bearers accountable is a crucial aspect of any democratic dispensation that ZPHCA wishes to promote in the organization. Performance appraisal systems are one way of putting in place consistent processes to ensure accountable and transparent good organizational governance. In addition it is recommended that the **NEC consider a Code of Conduct for NEC and branch committee members**. The integrity and reputation of the organization rests on the performance and behavior of the leadership of the organization. It is therefore incumbent on the NEC to ensure that all its office bearers take their responsibilities seriously and ensure that the integrity and reputation of the organization is upheld at all times.

### **3.2 EVALUATION OF HEAD OFFICE**

***The current staffing capacity of the Head Office in Harare is not sufficient to be able to manage and facilitate the various follow up meetings to branches, implement the projects and programmes and engage with the stakeholders, including the relevant ministries regarding ZHPCA's lobbying and advocacy strategies.*** The staffing complement at the ZHCA offices in Harare basically consists of a Programme Officer who is supported by a Secretary/Receptionist. The rest of the staff employed are a security guard, a care taker and a Office orderly. The Programme Officer's responsibilities not only includes the administration of the office and the management of the various programmes but it would seem that he is also required to double up as a driver and messenger at times. This may be due to the fact that this was what he did in his previous position in the organization. However it is critically important that the ***Programme Officer is given a job description that outlines clearly and succinctly his duties and responsibilities.*** It

would also be useful for the Finance and Administration sub committee of the NEC to confer on the Programme Officer a title that is more fitting with the actual job description, i.e. that of **Manager or at least Project Co-ordinator**. It is also important that the Finance and Administration sub committee put in place performance **appraisal processes based on the job description to manage the performance** of the Project Officer/Project Co-ordinator. This will also assist the Finance and Administration sub committee determine his annual wage increase, based on his performance. This process needs to apply to all other staff in the organization. **The lines of accountability need to be made clear i.e. that the Programme Officer/Co-ordinator is accountable to the NEC, whereas the staff in the office is accountable to the Programme Officer/Programme Co-ordinator. These principles are also to be applied at branch level, including the Harare and Bulawayo offices.**

At present the **staffing capacity at the head office in Harare needs to be strengthened**. The role and function of the secretariat is important in the general management of the Project at a national level. With its current capacity it will not be able to successfully implement its mandate. The responsibilities of the Head Office go beyond just the administration and management of the office and the co-ordination of the AGM and the various NEC meetings. The responsibilities include the co-ordination and monitoring, at national level, of the provincial and branch activities, as well as facilitating meetings with various ministries and stakeholders as part of the organisation's lobbying and advocacy activities. The primary function of head office is to ensure that the policies and programmes agreed to at the AGM and at the NEC meetings are successfully implemented at national, provincial and branch levels. Without a well capacitated and competently structured management there is the possibility that the organisation's ability to reach its goals and effectively transcend to the next level of competence will be compromised. It is important that the Head Office **staff are well-trained, professional and capable of consolidating the activities of ZPHCA to ensure that it is able to take the organization forward.**



In order to achieve this it is recommended that the number of Secretariat staff be increased to include the following; **a Manager (or Project Co-ordinator), an administrative assistant/receptionist, 2 field officers to co-ordinate, monitor and support communication, through field visits, collecting reports, providing information and support between Head Office and the Provincial Co-ordinators and branch chairpersons.** The recommendation to engage the services of field workers was not well received at the Strategic Planning meeting, but in order to ensure that there is effective communication between the branches, the provinces, the Secretariat and the NEC it is recommended that this take place.

***The Head Office is responsible, in conjunction with the NEC, to raise funds for the organization, manage the funds and report to the donor. From the documents there seems to have been several difficulties in this regard. One being that there is only one donor, namely NFU and the other relates to the reporting and management of the funds. In several of the reports recommendations have been made on how to improve the reporting and management processes and an auditors firm has been engaged to assist in this regard. However it would seem that some of these difficulties persist. It is crucial that the NEC sub committee mandated to deal with the finances of the organization put in place stricter measures for financial reporting, and seek additional support to be able to effectively manage the finances. Without these prescriptions the organization puts itself at risk in terms of future funding from both NFU and other potential international donors.***

It is also important that the NEC and the Head Office agree on the process for fundraising i.e. whose responsibility it is, how funding reports are to be prepared and who does the presentations to the donor community. It would be useful if both

the Head Office and the Chairperson and / or the Vice Chairperson and the Treasurer develop relationships with the international donor community in Zimbabwe.<sup>10</sup>

### **3.3 EVALUATION OF BRANCH COMMITTEES**

Even although only 3 branches were visited during the evaluation it became clear that there are common challenges and opportunities that confront, to a lesser or greater degree, the branches of the ZHPCA. These will be outlined more systematically in the report of the Strategic Planning meeting. However it was established that the ravages of poverty, unemployment, hunger, marginalization, stigmatization within the communities themselves, mistrust, polarization and an unresponsive state has created an environment that is unconducive to optimal performance of any organization dealing with supporting parents of children with disabilities. The legislative framework may be in place but the political will and lack of resources militates against any real substantive improvement in the conditions of the lives of families living with children with disabilities. The successes and failures of the branches are evaluated against this background. It is very difficult to make an objective evaluative judgement about the impact of the organization and its effectiveness in terms of meeting its objectives, especially at branch level where the pressures of the economic melt-down are especially felt. The most that can be done in a process of this kind is to identify where the institutional weaknesses lie and seek ways in which these can be improved upon to empower the parents to fulfill the objectives of ZPHCA, and to make the organization more attractive to other donors to ensure its long term sustainability. It is within this framework that the comments and recommendations are to be considered.

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<sup>10</sup> This is however dependent on whether the capacity is available within the organization to engage senior donors who would be interested in supporting grassroots organizations.

The effectiveness of the branch committees in terms of implementation and impact is dependent on the quality and commitment of the branch leadership – irrespective of whether there are sufficient financial resources for branch activities. In all of the branches visited and at the strategic planning meeting the commitment of the branch committee members was admirable, given the context in which they are operating. The Committees have, to varying degrees, managed to implement income generating projects, raised funds from local donors for small dedicated projects, lobbied local authorities on issues relating to the organizational advocacy strategy, contacted their members of parliament and familiarized him/her with the objectives of ZPHCA, and have also managed to find support to integrate some of the young disabled adults into sporting activities such as the Special Olympics. Other branch committees have been incapacitated by lack of leadership, capacity, access to local authorities and MPs, internal committee conflicts and tensions, and a sense of total hopelessness due to the fact that there are no real tangible outcomes from the personal efforts that have been invested in the branches, albeit on a limited scale.

The branches and provinces are required to report on a regular basis to the head office in Harare. This has proved to be problematic because of a lack of technological systems and support in the provinces and the branches. It is recommended that It would be of great benefit to the organization and strengthen the capacity of the provincial coordinators and branch committees if computers were provided and email installed at provincial and branch levels. Practically though, it would be an expensive exercise but one that could be aimed for as part of the long term strategic objective of the organisation.

Presently however reporting from branches and provinces is sporadic, but under the circumstances not much more can be expected. The provinces, branches and sub branches play a critical role in the organizational structure and its short to long term sustainability.

The NEC is elected at the Annual General Meeting and performs its duties and responsibilities on sound democratic governance principles. These are found in the ZPHCA's Constitution. The NEC has a mandate from the parents i.e. its membership to implement projects and programmes that will promote the needs and aspirations of disabled children and young adults by empowering their parents and care-givers. The various activities at national and branch levels have been informed by the ZPHCA Manifesto which is the guiding framework for any of the organization's activities. Since the initial writing and development of the Manifesto and the Constitution, training programmes have been developed by the NFU Regional Co-ordinator to familiarize members at branch level on how to lobby and advocate government structures and ministries, as well as key stakeholders such as chiefs and tribal authorities about the objectives of the organisation. This has been a lengthy consultative process. Most members are familiar with the contents of the document and how to use it strategically in their own activities at branch level.

The Constitution, on the other hand, has provided the 'legal' framework and has guided the formulation of policies and activities for the organization. All members of newly established branches are trained in both the Manifesto and the Constitution as two of the fundamental documents of the organization.

It is recommended that ZPHCA make the strategic decision for the next 4 years move beyond the training of the Manifesto and the Constitution, and that programmes and activities are developed to actively engaged members/ parents to provide tangible outcomes that will impact favorably on parents and children with disabilities.

There are several generic projects that have been developed at national level and implemented at branch level. Some of these include skills training, Youth Development programmes (including training for the Special Olympics), Infant Stimulation programmes, Early Detection programmes, Income Generating Projects, lobbying for crèches, clinics and housing for parents with children with disabilities, advocacy initiatives for the entrenchment of a free and inclusive education system and the effective implementation of the BEAM policy, which seems to have been applied in an ad hoc and unsatisfactory manner in different parts of the country. These are all innovative and important initiatives and provide the substantive content that is needed to improve the conditions in which families with children with disabilities find themselves, even although the Outcomes of these initiatives may seem illusive at times.

Effective implementation of these projects, despite no immediate tangible results, will provide the credibility and track record to profile the organization as a major role player in the area of parents support and focus on the needs of children and youth with disabilities. It is however questionable whether the majority of the branches have the capacity to implement these activities. It is therefore recommended that sufficient capacity is developed at head office to assist branches where appropriate and necessary. ***One way in which this could be achieved is the facilitation of exchange visits where more capacitated branch committees share their experiences and expertise on how to best manage branches with those that do not have the necessary capacity. Provision needs to be made available in the annual budgets for visits of this nature.***

The conditions in which the branches operate also contribute to whether they are effective. In some instances the committees meet outdoors. At other branches a clinic generously offered space for a day centre where the parents brought their children. In yet another branch, a school provided space for the committee to meet. There was however no 'ownership' of any space where a ZPHCA branch office could be set up for the committee to meet and new parents to visit for advice and information. It is recommended that this issue be taken up by the NEC with clinics, schools, churches, municipal offices etc etc to establish an operational infrastructure for ZPHCA branch committees. The impact of the institutionalization of the organization at branch and provincial levels will go a long way to strengthening the organization and create a strong institutional platform from which the advocacy and lobbying strategies are implemented. The Bulawayo and Harare branch offices are a case in point. They may not have all the necessary equipment to effectively communicate with their sub branches, the Provincial Co-ordinator and the Head Office, but the fact that they have an office is part of the process of institutionalizing their presence and profile in the areas where they are active. It also creates the perception of sustainability. But most importantly it is a place where the parents/members can seek much needed support and advice. ***An office indicates an institutional presence which is not bound to individual personalities. This is especially important when profiling the organization as a sustainable, key national grassroots organization that boasts as its membership base the parents of children with disabilities. This is a critical differentiator from other DPOs in Zimbabwe and across the sub region. It is also an issue that needs to be used to its fullest advantage when seeking financial support from international donor agencies and whatever state funds are available to parents who have children with disabilities.***

In order to support the process of institutionalization of ZPHCA it is important that the branch committees, the parent trainers and volunteers are provided with essential skills training. The training will by necessity vary depending on who is being trained. For example, for branch committee member's skills training in the following areas need to be provided:

- How to manage meetings<sup>11</sup>,
- Conflict management and conflict resolution skills,
- Report writing,
- Basic financial management skills,
- HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health information;<sup>12</sup> and
- How to Manage and Implement Income Generating Projects

This will be in addition to the training already offered by the NFU Regional Co-ordinator in advocacy and lobbying skills and information about the Manifesto and the Constitution.

The reports documenting the visits to branches by the Regional Co-ordinator, NFU staff and a number of consultants indicates the progress that has been made by the ZPHCA and its branches. It is admirable that during the period that the organization has been in existence it has managed to establish branches across the country and mobilize a significant number of members. The challenge for the organization is not only to increase the number of its branches and membership but to ensure that those parents that have invested their hopes and aspirations in the organization are not

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<sup>11</sup> TARSC can provide training in How to Manage Meeting, Report Writing, Basic Financial Management and How to Manage and Implement Income Generating Projects.

<sup>12</sup> CWGH and SAYWHAT can assist in providing HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health training

disappointed, despite the inability of the state to provide the basic services and support for parents and children with disabilities. Although a quantitative analysis is useful to keep track and monitor the extend of ZPHCA's membership, the numbers in themselves do not necessarily provide an indicative assessment of how well the organization is doing. A qualitative assessment provided by regular monitoring and evaluation processes will provide a more substantive analysis of what is required to strengthen branches. It is recommended that ZPHCA consider a policy of consolidation over the next 4 years, where branch capacity and capabilities are significantly enhanced through skills support and development. It is further recommended that in addition to the national projects branch-specific programmes and activities be developed. This does not mean that there is no need for the national projects to be implemented at branch level, but in order for effective impact to take place it is necessary to consider the specific needs of the different branches. These activities will nevertheless remain within the framework provided by the Manifesto and the Constitution.<sup>13</sup>

To sum up: ZPHCA's differentiator from other DPOs in Zimbabwe is that it is a grassroots, community based advocacy organization that seeks to create a conducive environment where children with disabilities are accorded the same rights and respect as those who participate in mainstream society. The organization is also fundamentally democratic in the way that it elects its leadership and consults its member. Despite the many challenges that ZPHCA faces internally and externally, the organization relentlessly lobbies and advocates on behalf of children with disabilities and have made some strides in this regard. Without ZPHCA disabled children in Zimbabwe will remain unprotected and their parents continue to feel disempowered. The organization provides the skills and training to enable:

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<sup>13</sup> **The organization is guided by democratic values and principles such as accountability, transparency, inclusivity and representivity at all levels in the organization which are outlined in its Constitution.**



- parents at branch level to mobilize, advocate and lobby on behalf of children with disabilities;
- staff at Head Office to co-ordinate, manage and fundraise on behalf of the parents at branch level; and
- the NEC to provide the direction required to meet the institutional objectives agreed to at all levels of the organization.

### **3.4 EVALUATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NFU AND ZPHCA**

NFU was instrumental in the setting up of ZPHCA and has been the prime donor since its inception. The relationship between ZPHCA and NFU is supportive and based on a sense of familiarity because of the length of time that the parties have been interacting and engaging around issues of children with disabilities. NFU has recorded, in many of the Project reports prepared by NFU staff and consultants that they want to have an equal partnership between the two organizations. In real terms, even although the personal relationships are on an equal footing and there is a sense of collaboration between the staff of both organizations, there is nevertheless the fact that the one 'partner', namely NFU is the donor (and at the same time provides technical assistance to ensure that the projects are implemented according to the agreements) and has the ability to influence ZPHCA's objectives and the way in which it delivers its programmes and activities. ZPHCA, on the other hand, is the beneficiary, the implementor and recipient of both donor funding and technical support provided by NFU. This should not be a problem for the relationship between the two organizations as they have managed to cement personal connections between the staff and leadership of both organizations. But it would be totally unrealistic of NFU to expect more from the relationship than it currently provides. Any further expectations could

compromise the current balance of the relationship and impact on the ability of NFU to objectively monitor, evaluate and constructively criticize ZPHCA's activities.

It is however important that NFU continue its open discussions with ZPHCA about the length of time that funding will remain available and, together the two organizations should develop an alternative resource mobilization strategy to ensure that ZPHCA's programmes are not compromised by the withdrawal of NFU funds. This is important not only for the sustainability of ZPHCA but also because NFU has made a substantial investment in the institution over the years, which will only be realized in the mid to long terms – especially given the current conditions in Zimbabwe. If funding is withdrawn or restricted sooner than expected there should be no doubt in the minds of the ZPHCA NEC that NFU will continue to provide technical<sup>14</sup> and moral support to ZPHCA to ensure that it is able to continue beyond the support provided by NORAD. This is the signature of partnership, despite all the inequalities noted above.

NFU has also in all the reports of visits to Zimbabwe and ZPHCA emphasized the need for ZPHCA to have 'ownership' of the organization, its programmes and its activities. From the observations there is no doubt that the members of ZPHCA 'own' their organization and the direction that it is going. But the concern is well founded and NFUs response is appropriate given its role as technical advisor and funder. Both functions bring with it a set of conditions and prescriptions. These need to be strictly observed by ZPHCA. Non compliance could result in, at best, technical support and advice from the NFU Regional Co-ordinator and Project Officers, or at worst a limitation placed on the funding period or the grant amount. Even although ZPHCA, like many other NGOs, may find the conditionalities imposing and

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<sup>14</sup> Here technical support could include assisting the organization source bridging funds to ensure that it is able to continue with its programmes.

prescriptive, in reality it would be irresponsible of NFU as the donor agency not to provide guidelines for project activity and sanctions for lack of delivery. From a more positive perspective the framework developed by NFU for the delivery of ZPHCA's projects and activities creates a level playing where both donor and beneficiary have a common understanding of the rules of the relationship.

From all accounts, NFU has been extremely sensitive in this regard and have been very careful to ensure that the relationship between themselves and ZPHCA is on a strong footing and that the funding prescriptions and requirements are understood and discussed in an open and transparent manner.

It is also encouraging that technical support and training skills are made available to ZPHCA on a consistent basis by the NFU Regional Co-ordinator, who is based in Harare. The NFU Project staff, even although located in Oslo are accessible and provide assistance when and where required by ZPHCA. This is an important aspect of the collaboration between the two organizations because technical support has direct impact on how ZPHCA succeeds in achieving its goals and objectives. Funding remains crucial for the survival of ZPHCA but without skills training, capacity building and experience (personal and/or institutional) the organization will not be able to sustain itself for the next 4 years.

In summary; NFU and ZPHCA have a strong relationship, based on a common understanding about the need to empower parents of children with disabilities to advocate and lobby on their behalf for equal human rights and access to opportunities, which have been accorded to all citizens. Both NFU and ZPHCA have created, over a period of time, an environment for open and transparent communication allowing difference of views and opinions to be expressed and resolved in an amicable manner. Without this two-way process of interaction the relationship would not have grown and

developed, and most of all would not have been able to deal with the challenges provided by a complicated social, political and economic environment. One of the fundamental principles of the relationship has been the respect shown by both parties for the differences in the environments in which each organisation operates. They have managed to bridge the differences and engage in a constructive way with each other about what the appropriate strategies are for project implementation in Zimbabwe. This is commendable and is both staff and the leadership of the organizations need to be congratulated for their foresight and sensitivity in this regard.

#### **4. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

A three day strategic planning meeting was convened for the period from 2007 to 2010. NEC members, provincial coordinators, branch committee members, Head Office staff and three representatives from NFU attended. It was emphasized that the outcome of the meeting was to be a strategic plan for the next 4 years, and that in order for this to happen it was essential that all present participate optimally to develop this plan. It was also reiterated on several occasions that the plan that would evolve from the meeting was a roadmap created by the participants on behalf of the organization and because of this the responsibility to ensure the success of the plan rests with the various structures of the organization. The motivation for a strategic planning meeting was for the organisation evaluate the successes and challenges that faced the organization during its inception period and then to outline the best way forward in terms of how to consolidate the organization in the next 4 years ie from 2007 to 2010. In order to do this a series of processes will be followed to systematically interrogate how the organization has operated and how it intends to reach the objectives that it sets itself for the next four years.

## 4.1 Participants' Expectations

The participants individually shared with the plenary their expectations of the meeting. These are noted below for the record.

1. the organization helps to fulfill the needs of disabled children
2. that the partnership with NFU is consolidated
3. to seek other donor partners
4. children are the beneficiaries of the organization
5. achieve goals in a short period of time
6. learn more about means of sustaining themselves
7. working structure to be agreed on
8. advocacy and lobbying activities to continue more effectively
9. how to encounter problems and challenges
10. how children can be provided with wheelchairs and crutches
11. preparation of NFUs withdrawal
12. sustainable projects for the development of the organization
13. organizational direction for the future
14. future donor to have children at heart
15. ensure that the organization remains a grassroots organization
16. NFU provide support directly to beneficiaries

17. change
18. policy makers / local authorities /society at large to accept disabled children
19. strategic planning
20. no conflict about plans and their implementation
21. best practices to empower grassroots organisations' challenges:
  - policy lobbying – not sure what the purpose is
22. partners to be developed and consolidated. Change brings risk.
23. Common understanding of partnership ie the role of the donor – is there truly an equal partnership. Important to find common ground and understanding
24. Evaluate and assess the impact/results that have been achieved
25. Help the Youth (adult children) to stand for themselves

#### **4.2 POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL (and Technological) PEST ANALYSIS**

The sharing of the group's Expectations was a further mechanism to understand what they wanted to have as Outcomes of the Strategic Planning meeting. But before these issues could be explored it was necessary to investigate the external environment in which the organization operates by doing what is known as the **Political, Economic and Social** analysis.<sup>15</sup> The responses from the participants are captured below:

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<sup>15</sup> PEST analysis also includes a Technological review, but in the case of ZPHCA this was not a relevant variable

<b>POLITICAL</b>	<b>ECONOMIC</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• donors vetted by government</li> <li>• centralization – donors are urban focused</li> <li>• local donors problematic</li> <li>• not stable</li> <li>• tension</li> <li>• lack of responsiveness, unpredictable, not inclusive policy formulations</li> <li>• failed state</li> <li>• no representative at local level</li> <li>• member/parents divided due to political affiliation</li> <li>• no response to disability issues</li> <li>• Govt vetting NGOs – discrimination against some</li> <li>• Unpredictable situation</li> <li>• Exclusionary</li> <li>• Donors put org at risk through political agenda</li> <li>• Lack of inclusive policies eg national HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• MDGs not mentioned in policy framework</li>   <li>• Poor implementation of Disability Act</li> <li>• Censorship</li> <li>• No openness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food shortages</li> <li>• no money</li> <li>• funding problems</li> <li>• education expensive</li> <li>• poor health facilities</li> <li>• dead</li> <li>• very unstable</li> <li>• killing the poor</li> <li>• retarding development due to hyper-inflation</li> <li>• failed state</li> <li>• foreign currency devalued</li> <li>• no food, no drugs, no hospitals, hospital fees too high</li> <li>• high cost of living – high inflation</li> <li>• transport costs too high</li> <li>• devices unaffordable</li> <li>• shortage of basic commodities</li> <li>• medicine (drugs) too expensive</li> <li>• wheelchairs too expensive</li> <li>• no fuel</li> <li>• too little/no funds</li> <li>• school fees for disabled children</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• punishment from God</li> <li>• sex with disabled cure for HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• disabled looked down upon</li> <li>• no social grants/funds</li> </ul>	

- need promotions in workplace
- illiterate parents
- exclusivity
- marginalization target group
- unsupportive community
- unclear policies – don't spell out systems
- unco-operative policy makers
- UN Standards and rules not adhered to
- Lack of communication in Braille & sign language
- Transport not suitable
- No mainstreaming
- Sex and possibility of HIV/AIDS
- Negative attitudes
- Patronization of people with disabilities
- Legal framework unsupportive
- Not on social and political agenda
- No equal representation
- Abuse of especially girl children
- No relocation after govt 'clean up' campaign
- Lack of access to disabled children, especially in rural areas
- Disintegration of social fabric due to poverty
- Shortage of ARVs
- No gender parity
- Minimum funds available due to demand of HIV/AIDS
- Community willing to change



The responses were extremely candid and clearly articulated the threats in the external environment. The exercise also provided some indication of the opportunities that are available in the external environment, which with the appropriate resources can be exploited for the benefit of the organization. These would however need to be carefully and strategically analyzed in terms of how the opportunities can be leveraged through lobbying and advocacy. The list also provides some key indicators that need to be included in the advocacy policies.

### 4.3 SWOT ANALYSIS (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

Once the environment in which ZPHCA had been assessed and evaluated through the PEST analysis the NEC members participated in a SWOT process. This group identified the Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization, as well as the Opportunities provided by the external environment and the Threats that exist both internally and externally to the organization.

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large membership</li> <li>• democratic organization</li> <li>• good care for the children</li> <li>• commitment &amp; transparency</li> <li>• parent to parent support</li> <li>• knowledge about disability issues</li> <li>• parents' communication with children</li> <li>• good org structure</li> <li>• publicity &amp; awareness programmes per annum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication between national office and branches</li> <li>• lack of feedback to members</li> <li>• poor self-sustainability at branch level</li> <li>• no Youth Programme</li> <li>• 1 donor dependent</li> <li>• Insufficient equipment ie computers, cell phones</li> <li>• Lack of monitoring of established offices in Bulawayo/Harare</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• united</li> <li>• national</li> <li>• unique with a focus on Children with Disabilities</li> <li>• consultative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor leadership/gossiping is rife and unmanaged</li> <li>• No website</li> <li>• Linkage between disabled in Zim and NFU</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income generating projects for members</li> <li>• Quite flexible donor</li> <li>• Pre-judgement of doors and their agenda</li> <li>• Youth Programme – linkages between other orgs</li> <li>• Commitment of members</li> <li>• Training/exchange of info</li> <li>• Marketing locally, regionally and internationally (African Network of Developmental Disabilities)</li> <li>• Solidarity with international orgs</li> <li>• National exhibitions to expose activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents over-protective of their children</li> <li>• Competition from other organizations focusing on the disabled</li> <li>• No resources which undermines commitment</li> <li>• HIV/AIDS could result in an organization without parents</li> <li>• Lack of unity/co-operation with other orgs dealing with disabled</li> </ul>

#### 4.4. VISION AND MISSION

The outcome of the SWOT process was extremely interesting and members participated actively in identifying the critical issues. These issues create the environment in which the Strategic Objectives of the organization need to be conceptualized and the Vision and Mission statement needs to be reviewed. It was understood that the current Vision and Mission statements had been agreed by the General Assembly and any amendments or revisions will have to be endorsed by the same body. An amendment to the Vision and Mission Statement was explored as part of aligning the activities of the organization for the period between 2007 and 2010.

In order to review the Vision and Mission statement it was necessary for the participants to identify what they perceived the *Values* and *Identity* of the organization are.<sup>16</sup> These would inform the review process i.e. whether changes need to be made or whether the current Vision and Mission statement still reflected the goals and objectives of the organization as set out during the inception period.

VALUES	IDENTITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unified</li> <li>• Inclusiveness</li> <li>• courageous</li> <li>• respectful</li> <li>• truthful /honest</li> <li>• hardworking</li> <li>• openness</li> <li>• responsible</li> <li>• awareness</li> <li>• solidarity</li> <li>• collective</li> <li>• loving (caring)</li> <li>• transparent</li> <li>• vigilance (watchful)</li> <li>• kind</li> <li>• sensitivity</li> <li>• accountable,</li> <li>• available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Unified</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Children-focused</li> <li>• Grassroots/community-based</li> <li>• Parents-driven</li> <li>• Youth</li> <li>• Lobby/advocacy</li> <li>• Zimbabwean</li> <li>• organisation</li> </ul>

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<sup>16</sup> The Vision and Mission statement needs to reflect both the Values and Identity of the organization. The following issues were noted

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• humble</li><li>• committed</li><li>• supportive</li><li>• empathy</li><li>• tolerance</li><li>• proud</li></ul> |  |
|---|--|

The current Vision is as follows:

***Create a society for all cognizant of the rights and needs of children with disabilities.***

The revised Vision reads as follows:

***Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children Association is an organized collective of parents aiming to create a society in which children with disabilities are embraced and integrated as full members of their communities in Zimbabwe society.***

The current Mission statement reads:

***Promoting the welfare and rights of children with disabilities as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of the rights of children.***

The revised Mission statement is:

***The Association achieves this through:***

- ***Children's rights advocacy programmes on behalf of the children who cannot represent themselves to secure basic children's rights as enshrined in the UN Declaration of Children's rights.***
- ***Supporting the delivery of quality care programmes for children with disabilities.***

The Vision and Mission statement provides the goals and strategic objectives that the organization would like to reach in the strategic period outlined i.e. 2007 to 2010. However in order for these goals and objectives to be reached interdependent relationships need to be developed and structured. With each relationship that is created there inevitably will be a concomitant risk. The next exercise identified some of these strategic interrelationships with their respective risks. These are noted in the table below:<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> All the responses have been recorded verbatim to capture the real essence of the participants' views and contribution.

<b>Interdependencies</b>	<b>Risks</b>
<b>NFU</b>	Could pull out
<b>ANDDt</b>	No unity, could disband
<b>Govts</b>	Come and go – unresponsive
<b>African Decade</b>	Collection of people with self interest
<b>UN institutions ie UNAIDS, UNICEF</b>	Don't focus on disabilities
<b>CARE</b>	Don't include DPOs in their focus
<b>Children</b>	Death, failure to deliver their needs
<b>Parents (members)</b>	Drop outs, withdrawal of membership. Failing to deliver material benefit. Disaffection. Failure to manage expectations.
<b>Donors</b>	Reduce/Cut support. Failure to support goals. Fail to deliver on donor objectives. Widen agendas. Conditions too rigid. Dictate programmes. Conditional funding; attention diverted from the org Vision and Mission; withdrawal; failing to account for funds.
<b>Policy Makers , Local Authorities (MPs)</b>	Fair-weather friends, empty promises, political interference, de-registration of organization, misunderstanding regarding the role and function of ZPHCA
<b>Ministries</b>	Changing of policies; foot dragging; unsettled economy – affect budget; failing to implement existing policy; lack of funds; lack of sympathy.

<b>DPOs</b>	Competition; leadership weak at national level; power struggle between orgs; poor marketing strategy at an international, regional and national levels; use ZHPCA for their own benefit; fronting; donor dependency; unaccountability of branches, poverty, inadequate knowledge.
<b>Inclusion International</b>	Lack of resources for fee & attendance at conferences
<b>Community</b>	Discrimination, marginalized, patronized
<b>Local Business</b>	Economic environment, inflation
<b>Sister Regional orgs</b>	Political situation; competition for donors
<b>Political Parties</b>	Press ganging (pressure)
<b>Government</b>	Political differences between the government and some international donors
<b>Ministries (Rehabilitation, Caregivers, Justice, Police)</b>	Use ZPHCR manifesto to lobby and campaign

The participants were very clear about the relationships that need to be developed but after the exercise they understood the amount of caution that is required when creating these partnerships. It is crucial for ZPHCA's survival that these inter-dependencies are made but it is also very important that they are made on the terms set by the NEC and the Secretariat. The track records, history and reputations need to be clearly investigated and understood. Any negativity related to the potential partners could put ZPCHA at risk and undermine its ability to take the organization forward. The partners, as well

as the risks associated with them, have been succinctly identified and provides a clear framework for engagement with others.

It is important that the organization realize that it needs to create relationships with other DPOs and NGOs in order to consolidate itself as a non governmental organization, which is part of the non governmental community. Although there may be risks associated with this, especially in the context of Zimbabwe, it also can provide a support base to be drawn on for capacity building, training, skills development and other forms of institutional development. Donors also favour organisations that work collectively and collaboratively with other non governmental actors. ZHPCA could also, through these partnerships, mobilize support for the organisation's objectives and encourage them to assist in advocating on behalf of children with disabilities and the parents.

#### **4.5 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

In order to achieve the high level strategic goal of the Vision, and the programmatic objectives of the Mission Statement the following Strategic Objectives were identified:



<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<p><b>Strategic Objective One:</b> An Efficient Organisation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clear role definition between the Sec and the NEC</li> <li>2. Sec staff to be capacitated and job descriptions confirmed</li> <li>3. Performance Assessments to be put in place to assess Manager/Project Co-ordinator's performance by the NEC.</li> <li>4. Project staff performance to be assessed by Manager/Project Co-ordinator</li> <li>5. Clear Organisational Policies ie recruitment procedures,</li> <li>6. Code of Conduct for NEC members and Secretariat;</li> <li>7. Clear finance and administration regulations and oversight mechanisms by the NEC. NEC to review, with an independent auditor, the present financial systems and put in place good financial practices that reflect good corporate governance principles. Sec to upgrade administration systems.</li> <li>8. training provided for NEC, secretariat, branch committees: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8.1 leadership and management training</li> <li>8.2. team building</li> <li>8.3 Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution training</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>NEC, Secretariat, Provincial Co-ordinators, Branch Committees</p>	

	<p>9. Effective communication is established between NEC and the Secretariat, the Secretariat and the provincial co-ordinators, the Secretariat and the provincial co-ordinators and the branches.</p> <p>10. The infrastructure needs to be enhanced at national, provincial and branch levels where possible. This includes computers for each member of staff, email connectivity, fax, copiers, cell phones etc etc</p>		
<p><b>Strategic Objective Two:</b> Effective Organisation</p>	<p><b>1. Advocacy and Lobbying</b></p> <p>1. All branches have been familiarized with the Manifesto as the framework for all lobbying activities. Training has been provided to the branches and parent support groups. Lobbying and Advocacy activities to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Inclusion Education,</li> <li>b. support for parents that have children with disabilities ie housing, the effective implementation of BEAM</li> <li>c. Monitoring of the advocacy and lobbying programmes to be undertaken. The NFU Regional Co-ordinator could be assigned this task.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Care Support</b></p> <p>The following were identified as areas that fall within Care Support. Programmes need to be confirmed for each one of these issues and where necessary lobbying and advocacy strategies to be developed</p>	<p>NEC, Secretariat, Branch Committees to work with organizations and health care facilities that may exist</p> <p>NFU, Secretariat</p>	

	<p>and key ministries at national and local level to be identified. Monitoring and Evaluation processes to be developed as an integral part of the programmes.</p> <p>The programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Youth self advocacy programmes</li> <li>b. Children and young adults with HIV/AIDS and the pressures on the parents ie a dual stigmatization effect</li> <li>c. Respite &amp; Stimulation programmes to ensure that children are more comfortable</li> <li>d. Early Identification &amp; Intervention initiatives</li> <li>e. Parent Support and Counselling which is critical. Financial support to be found to send a number of parent counselors to a training institution called Ububele in Johannesburg.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>f. Psycho-Social Support (parent &amp; children) to be able to come to terms with the condition of the children</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Strategic Objective Three: Effective Stakeholder Relations</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategic partners have been identified and need to be followed up</li> <li>2. Leverage churches, NGOs, DPOs, schools, municipal offices etc for office and meeting space for provincial co-ordinators and branch committees.</li> <li>3. Training resources accessed from other DPOs and NGOs (list provided in Annexure B)</li> <li>4. Relationships need to be established with:</li> </ol>	<p>NEC, Secretariat, Provincial Co-ordinators, Branch Committees &amp; NFU</p>	

<sup>18</sup> Ububele conducts training programmes for lay teachers, counselors, parents etc in pscho-dynamic therapy to provide support for parents who have children with HIV/AIDS, disabilities, learning difficulties etc etc It is a not for profit organization and relies on donor support.

	<p>4.1 Ministries, Local Authorities, traditional authorities need to be engaged  local donors, corporates, bi-lateral donors, smaller Aid agencies, Foundations, regional institutions ie SADC Secretariat, NEPAD focal point in Zimbabwe, African Union, Commonwealth &amp; others  national, regional, continental and international organizations dealing with children with disabilities and the empowerment of their parents  5. Consolidate exiting members/parents</p>		
<p><b>Strategic Objective Four:</b>  Resource Mobilisation</p>	<p>A detailed funding proposal to be developed for the strategic planning period between 2007-2010. The proposal to be supported by a year by year budget which includes all the Strategic Objectives;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. relationships need to be established with appropriate bi-lateral donors in Zimbabwe. NFU to assist.</li> <li>2. Donor meeting at ZPHCA offices to be arranged for a presentation. Basket fund approach to be suggested</li> <li>3. parent orgs dealing with children with disabilities to be contacted in other SADC countries and joint programmes/campaigns developed. These regional initiatives are to be presented to regional donors based in Pretoria, South Africa with the consortium partner.</li> <li>4. Despite the economic situation in Zimbabwe the various relevant ministries to be approached for support for parents.</li> </ol>	<p>NEC, Secretariat, Branch Chairpersons and NFU</p>	

	<p>5. Funding policies need to be developed by NEC for the organization. It needs to clarify who is responsible for institutional funding and the processes involved and to what extent the branches have a mandate to fundraise and from whom. It is critically important that this policy is developed as there must not be a duplication between what the branches are doing and the donors that the national office is approaching. The policy should be based on the view that the branches can fundraise at a local level but may not approach bi-lateral international donors without consultation with the Secretariat. Branches need to inform the Secretariat about their funding activities and who they have fundraised from and for which projects.</p>		
<p><b>Strategic Objective Five:</b> Public Awareness Strategy</p>	<p>Public Awareness initiatives are in effect marketing initiatives as well. These need to focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rights-based issues re the need for Inclusive Education, protection of children with disabilities,</li> <li>2. Training of the public and the community to reduce stigmatization and conscientise them about the plight and challenges facing parents with disabled children</li> <li>3. HIV/AIDS &amp; *Disability Training for parents to educate children and young adults. This training to take place at national, district (provincial) and</li> </ol>	<p>NEC, Secretariat, Branches, NFU</p>	

	<p>branch levels. A draft policy and programme has been prepared by NFU to adaptation to Zimbabwe. Action plans need to be developed for HIV/AIDS training. Appropriate clinics and health workers need to be involved in the implementation plan.</p> <p>4. An Awareness Campaign about the support needs of children with disabilities ie wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, need for translation into sign language and Braille.</p> <p>6. Not only national Public Awareness initiatives to be convened but also regional and with the support of NFU to furthermore start an international campaign about the challenges faced by parents of disabled children in Zimbabwe.</p> <p>7. A theme for an annual Advocacy Campaign to be identified and implemented at national, provincial and branch levels within the organization eg a Reproductive Health campaign, including a focus on HIV/AIDS and the Youth could be identified for the strategic period between 2007 and 2010</p>		
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The table above outlines the Strategic Objectives that were identified at the Strategic Planning meeting. These have been elaborated upon in terms of Deliverables, Responsibilities and the supporting Budgets. The latter to be completed by the Secretariat. It is important that once the organization and its various structures have agreed to the Strategic Objectives

that a log framework structure be prepared that focuses on the deliverables, the activities and the outcomes. This will assist the Secretariat and the Branches in planning their activities as well as being able to monitor whether they are meeting their targets, their time frames and whether they are having the desired impact. The NFU Project Visit Report of the 20 to 27 February 2006 notes the importance of ZPHCA using a report writing format that emphasizes impact and outcomes rather than only on activities. This will be an important shift in the reporting structure and one that the ZHPCA should start using as soon as possible.

The issue of who reports on ZPHCA activities seems to have been an issue. At the Strategic Planning meeting it was agreed that instead of NFU preparing the reports that in future ZPHCA would be responsible for this activity.

#### **4.6 MEETING EXPECTATIONS**

At the end of the two day session the participants discussed whether their initial Expectations had been met. Participants noted that they had learnt the following and that in terms of these issues their expectations had been met:

1. careful planning is required to take the organization forward
2. the importance of planning
3. the need for a Youth Programme
4. self sustainability needs to be an important priority
5. future relationship with NFU needs to be consolidated
6. important to relook the Vision of the organization, the Mission Statement and the Vehicle by which these will be achieved

7. explored donor relationships and the risks involved
8. capacity required to strengthen the branches at grassroots
9. risks associated with relationships and interdependencies important to be aware of
10. the development of equal partners with NFU in process but donor needs to be more hands-off
11. the importance of communication between national, provincial and branches
12. HIV/AIDS and disabilities a critical issue for the organization
13. important to discuss the Way Forward in order to reach the 2010 objectives
14. important to identify the Values of the organization, especially in lieu of 2010
15. appreciated issues raised in the SWOT analysis – will assist the organization with the Way Forward
16. better performance from the organization is to be expected
17. knowledge sharing, staffing and motivational strategies will assist the organization reach its goal
18. Zimbabwe for All – to achieve this the organization needs to be strengthened
19. the Way Forward is clearer
20. strengthen the organization for example the secretariat

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The Evaluation section of the Report has outlined recommendations about how to improve the ability of ZPHCA to deliver on its institutional mandate. The mandate has been provided by the members of ZPHCA at branch and provincial levels to the elected leadership for the benefit of both the parents and the children with disabilities. Some of the key issues that have identified by the Evaluation process and the Strategic Planning meeting include:



## 1. Institutional Capacity, Competency and Capability

In order to ensure that the institutional basis of the organization is sound and capable of providing the platform effective advocacy initiatives, appropriate **capacity and competency** is required at all levels of the organization. This includes the leadership at NEC level, staffing at Head Office, provincial co-ordinators, branch committee members, the resource people available to the organization, parents who are not represented at any of the institutional levels and finally, the youth involved in self advocacy initiatives. This requires skills development in capacity building, effective leadership, conflict resolution and lobbying and advocacy. In addition open, accountable and transparent decision making processes need to be in place and the right people are elected to lead the organization at all levels of the organization. The **capability** of the organization also needs to be addressed. This includes ensuring that the appropriate organizational structures are in place; that there is an effective performance appraisal process to ensure that staff have the necessary abilities to implement projects i.e. project management skills and to manage the organization. That there are sufficient number of staff employed to deliver on the range of programmes and activities agreed to at national and branch levels and finally that there is a clear understanding of the roles and functions of the NEC as opposed to the Secretariat.

## 2. Long Term and Sustainable Funding

The need for long term, consistent **funding** and institutional sustainability is fundamental to the survival of ZPHCA. In order to be able to provide a sustainable funding base for the organization the NEC, Secretariat and branch committees need to collectively strategise how best to resource the organization. NFU has given notice that it will at some stage within

the next couple of years not be able to provide funding to NFU. In order to anticipate this eventuality it is critically important that the leadership put in place resource mobilization strategies sooner rather than later;

### **3. Strategic Objectives**

Five strategic objectives have been identified as key for the sustainability and survival of the organization during the next strategic period between 2007 to 2010. These have been outlined above. In order to facilitate their implementation it is essential that the amended Vision and Mission statement be adopted by the organization as soon as possible so that project planning can be done at national and branch levels for submission to NFU.

### **4 Social, Political and Economic Environment**

The environment in which the organization is currently operating is not conducive to delivering results on lobbying and advocacy strategies. It is therefore important that ZPHCA develop contingency strategies to achieve their organizational objectives and goals. The environment also creates an additional threat to the organization, namely that with no real tangible results from the lobbying and advocacy strategies there is the risk that members may become disillusioned with the organization. This could impact on the membership and ability of the branches to operate effectively which will have a domino effect on the rest of the organizational structures. It is recommended that the organization consolidate its relationship with its structures and membership to try and mitigate against this possible 'fall-out'.

### **5. Strategic Alliances and Interdependencies**

There is a great need now, more than ever before, given the current circumstances in Zimbabwe that the ZPHCA develop strategic alliances with:

- international partners such as Atlas Alliance and other similar organizations,
- regional organizations that focus on issues of disabilities,
- the SADC Secretariat,
- the Africa Union,
- the NEPAD nodal point in Zimbabwe and South Africa,
- NGOs, churches, schools, government ministries, local authorities, tribal leaders etc etc in Zimbabwe.

These are all key organizations and institutions that could provide strategic support for ZPHCA to prevent it from becoming more marginalized and vulnerable because of the current political climate in Zimbabwe. ZPHCA's ability to create relationships with support structures will contribute substantially to its ability to face the serious challenges of Zimbabwe society.

## **6. Processes, Systems and Information Technology**

ZPHCA needs urgently to put in place effective systems and structures to strength its internal capacity to improve communication between the various structures and the members, as well as with NFU. It is very important that communication is kept open and at an optimum between all members, stakeholders and decision makers.

This may require the installation of information technology systems such as email, a website, skype and cellular phones (sms). In order for the branches to be able to correspond and communicate with the Head Office and the NEC this aspect of capacity building should be considered a priority. Without effective, consistent communication misperceptions can prevail, ill conceived notions of accountability can become institutionalized and members will not have the opportunity to learn from each others strengths and ultimately wont meet the organizational objectives. Technology is one mechanism that needs to be seriously considered as part of institutional capacity building.

In addition to technology ZPHCA may wish to consider sourcing additional funds to ensure that its members' mobility. As has been reported it is very difficult for members to attend meetings if they have to walk long distances and have to bring their children with them because there are no child-minding facilities. Consideration needs to be given to how transport can be provided for branch members to attend their meetings. This will go a long way to ensuring that the members continue to participate in ZPHCA activities.

In conclusion, ZPHCA is a strong organization with a visionary leadership, participating branches and a membership that is recording its need to be more than just part of a collective. There is no doubt that the social, political economic conditions are having a dramatic impact on the ability of the organization to organize its members and to promote its objectives. But despite these conditions there seems to be a strong will and commitment to the cause of children with

disabilities. ZPHCA has an interesting institutional construction because not only is its mandate children with disabilities but it seeks to provide support for the parents who have children with disabilities. This is a wholistic conception of the problem that children with disabilities face not only in Zimbabwe but throughout the world. However it has great relevance in Zimbabwe because of the impact of the environment on families in general and specifically those who have children with disabilities.

Although the issue of HIV/AIDS has not been explored in the report it was noted as a major concern by most of the meetings that were attended. It was also reported that the government had demonstrated its concern for the spread of the epidemic but had not in any way been sensitive to approaches made by parents with disabled children. It is yet another issue that the organization will have to develop a strategy for to ensure that the children are protected against abuse because of the mythology around cure and because young adults with disabilities will at some stage also become sexually active. These are some of the additional challenges that the organization will need to deal with in the next strategic period.

There are many obstacles and challenges facing ZPHCA but if it is committed and the will to move to the next level of institutionalization it will take on board some of the issues that it discussed at the strategic planning meeting. It may not be possible for the limited staffing capacity of the organization to realize most of these objectives within the next 4 years but with prioritization and support from its partners (those already consolidated such as NFU and those that still need to be made) it will be able to meet at least some of these commitments.

The onus for taking the organization to the next level lies with the NEC leadership and there is no doubt that with support they will be able to meet their obligations. It will require a certain amount of change in the way that things have been done up until but with any form of development and growth, change inevitably needs to take place. It does not necessarily have to be threatening to any individuals or sectors of the organization. The primary objective and interests of the organization is to ensure that ZPHCA consolidates its programmes and activities during this strategic period to ensure its long term sustainability.

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July 2006