

Civil Society

Supporting basic education in Zambia

Parents of pupils gathering for the election of the Parents' Committees. The project's aim is to strengthen their school management skills in all 11 community schools targeted in provinces of Kafue, Siavonga and Chirundu as well as in the peripheral areas of Lusaka.



EC Partners

Centro Laici Italiani per le Missioni

4 Zambian Parishes

Facts and Figures

- Project duration: 2009-2012
- EC contribution: 766,741 € (75% of the total)
- 1 community school constructed and 10 refurbished

Context

Community schools are community-owned and community-managed learning institutions that meet basic education needs of pupils unable to attend public schools due to distance or inability to pay school fees. Volunteer teachers and staff, often with little formal training, are supported by donations from the community. These collective efforts aim at making basic education available to vulnerable and marginalized children. However, the quality of education delivered in community schools is often lower than in public and private learning institutions.

Objective

- To provide quality basic education for marginalized children in Southern provinces of Zambia and in the peripheral areas of Lusaka
- To increase access of disadvantaged children and orphans to quality basic education
- To improve teachers' professional teaching skills

Impact

- Marginalized children gain access to quality basic education
- Community schools infrastructure is developed and improved
- Teaching qualifications of teachers are improved
- Managerial and financial sustainability of community schools is strengthened



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In practice

The project aims at strengthening the resources and improving the quality of education in community schools. To ensure schools' sustainability, seminars are organized for community members on how to promote fundraising and stimulate external donations to cover future expenses once the project is finished. Income generating activities (IGA) are equally promoted for this purpose. The project intends to associate students in IGAs management to learn new, useful skills, in addition to the main subjects studied in class. The programme's aim is also to engage parents committees in schools' management in order to improve their sustainability.

In line with the idea of a holistic education, besides following Zambia Basic Education Curriculum (ZBEC), children also learn practical skills through extra-curriculum activities such as IT, gardening, art and crafts, singing etc. This increases both their skills and cohesiveness among one another. Artistic activities also help children, especially vulnerable ones, to express their feelings. Counsellors for students are going to be established among the teaching staff, and peer counsellors will be subsequently formed among the students. Some literacy courses will be organised for all adults, particularly for pupils' parents.

Another important component of the project is teacher professional development. After a baseline survey, school-based continuing professional development is going to be conducted. Internal workshops and seminars for teachers are going to be organised in partnership with the Ministry of Education to enhance the quality of education delivered and to promote a learning environment through the application of child-friendly and participatory learning methodologies. This way, teachers will be awarded certificates required for admission into public colleges for further education. In addition, selected teachers are going to be sponsored to teacher-training colleges, in order to effectively teach the upper grades. These trained teachers will afterwards be given incentives to remain working in the community schools to guarantee good quality basic educations in these institutions.



Students in the third-grade classroom are eager to learn