CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) OVC MITIGATION PROGRAMMES IN WARD 18, MAGWEGWE DISTRICT, BULAWAYO METROPOLITAN, ZIMBABWE

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work submitted here is the result of my own independent investigation and that all the sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I further declare that the work is submitted for the first time at this university/faculty towards Master's Degree in Disaster Risk Management and that it has never been submitted to any university/faculty for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

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ABSTRACT

The study was an investigation into children's participation in Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), programmes in ward 18 of Magwegwe District. According to the Zimbabwe National Action Plan (NAP) for OVC, children have the right to participate in all matters that affect them including national policies. The problem was investigated qualitatively using the methodologies of document analysis, focus group discussion and interviews for triangulation purposes. The findings and results confirmed the hypothesis adopted in the study that in spite of the guidelines and policy frameworks about involving children in all levels of programme planning, NGOs still compromise child participation in programmes meant to enhance their welfare and wellbeing. The study revealed the levels of understanding of child participation from the NGOs, the community leadership and the children themselves, which can be used to further help and guide implementation of the NAP for OVC in a way that will enhance children's programme ownership and subsequently benefit. Recommendations to address the situation were suggested for the consideration of the government for policy changes and enforcement, NGOs for guided programming and adherence to national policies, the community leadership and the children. Government should empower child protection committees, NGOs to improve on community leadership and children consultations and communities to be trained on children's rights.

DEDICATION

To my family Everson, Gugulethu, Novuyo and Nondumiso

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ACRONYMS

ACRWC   African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

AHRC   Arts Humanities Research Council

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CBD   Central Business District

CBO   Community Based Organization

CPC   Child Protection Committee

CRC   Commission on the Rights of the Child

DRR   Disaster Risk Reduction

FBO   Faith Based Organization

HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus

MDGs   Millennium Development Goals

NAC   National AIDS Council

NAP   National Action Plan

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NPA   National Plan of Action

NPAC   National Programme of Action for Children

OVC   Orphans and Vulnerable Children

PoS   Programme of Support

UNCRC   United Nations Commission on the Rights of the Child

UNGASS   United Nations General Assembly Special Session

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conceptual Framework of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

The increasing number of orphans and related vulnerabilities in Zimbabwe has seen a sprouting of many humanitarian Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that have initiated programmes targeting these orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). While the country has an estimated 1.6 million vulnerable children because of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, only 5,000 (0.3%) of them are living in institutions with the rest being cared for by their immediate family members, the extended family, foster homes and the generality of the community (Zimbabwe Programme of Support Report 2008). These children are commonly known as Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC), the term used in this study to refer to these orphans and vulnerable children. The vulnerable children are those who may have parents who are unable to take care of them due to various limitations.

The Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy and the National Action Plan (NAP) 1 for OVC define OVC as those children aged between 0-18 years whose parents have died or are unable to take care of them. The OVC include the following: children with disabilities, for example, the visually impaired, mentally challenged, hard hearing, those with severe multiple disabilities; children affected and/or infected by HIV and AIDS; abused children (sexually, physically, and emotionally); working children; destitute children: children living outside a family environment; pregnant/married children and/or child parents; neglected/abandoned children; children in remote areas (who walk long distances to schools, health centres, and other service centres); children with chronically ill parent(s); children in conflict with the law; unaccompanied child migrants; children of school going age, who are not in school (dropouts); children living with very poor/elderly parents/guardians; children of mobile vulnerable populations; children living in very crowded shelter (NAP for OVC1 2006-2010). In view of the socio-economic situation, including the devastating consequences of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and the limited awareness of

children's rights within families, communities and institutions serving children, virtually all children in Zimbabwe are potentially vulnerable (Fanneli & Musarandega 2007:125).

The NGOs' mandate is to alleviate the challenges faced by the OVC while at the same time complementing government efforts in the same direction. NGOs have come in to fill the traditional roles of aunts and uncles, since the family degradation owing to a series of difficult situations like HIV and AIDS, conflict, poverty and displacement. Government has made provision for a conceptual framework to guide the implementation of child-focused programmes by stakeholders. This framework is the National Action Plan (NAP) for OVC. The NAP Phase 1(2006-2010) promotes a broad-based, innovative multi-sectoral approach, which seeks to mobilize and/or harness the collective efforts of key government ministries, UN and bilateral donor agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society, to address the plight of orphans and vulnerable children in Zimbabwe. The vision for NAP 1 for OVC is to reach out to all OVC in Zimbabwe with basic services that positively impact on their lives and its goal is to provide a framework for coordinated implementation of interventions and increase access by OVC to basic social services to improve their protection against all forms of abuse.

NAP1 winding up, necessitated the review of the action plan leading to the planning and adoption of NAP ll (2011-2015). One of the findings during the review of NAP1 was that often children, particularly OVC, were unable to participate in decisions that affect their lives. It was discovered that nowhere was the lack of the children's participation more evident than in the legal and policy issues that affected them (NAP ll Preamble 2010).

The National Action Plan (NAP) II for OVC (Draft Policy 2011-2015) recognizes that while the prevalence of HIV and AIDS among adults has significantly declined, the orphan crisis continues, due to the lagged response of Aids-related mortality. It recognizes that though HIV and AIDS is still a major cause of children's poverty and vulnerability in Zimbabwe, the country must not neglect many other factors at play that are worsening the lives of children.

Zimbabwe subscribes to the fulfilment of the children's rights commitments under national, regional, and international protocols as observed in the UN Charter for Children's Rights (United Nations 1989) and the most applicable for programmers and this research work are:

Article 3 – Best interests of the child: *All actions concerning children should take full account of their best interests. The State is to provide adequate care when parents or others responsible fail to do so.*

Article 12 – The child's opinion: *A child has a right to express an opinion, and to have that opinion considered in any matter affecting the child (*UNCRC 1989).

In view of the above and NAP views, communities need to be actively involved in identifying and caring for vulnerable children, and child participation remains central to the design, implementation and evaluation of interventions.

The study noted differences in the conceptualization and implementation approaches by different stakeholders working with children in disasters, on the importance of child participation in disaster mitigation interventions and how it contributes to their future wellbeing. The question the study wanted to answer was, *"How meaningful is the children's participation and involvement?"* This was based on the common African saying that children should be seen and not heard, which actually reduced children's capacities to face the future and increased their vulnerability levels. The study differentiated between meaningful and non-meaningful involvement as well as the levels of participation.

This study focused on one of the objectives of NAP for OVC, that is, to increase child participation, as appropriate, in all issues that concern them in their community, considering their evolving capacities. It focused on the work done by NGOs working with children in Magwegwe District's ward 18 namely Million Memory Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ), Christian Health Care Services (CHCS) and Zinyangeni Christian Church. MMPZ offered psychosocial support to children who were HIV positive (children living with HIV), CHCS offered life skills to children below the age of 18 and Zinyangeni Christian Church provided nutrition in the form of wet feeding.

1.2 Magwegwe District in Focus

Magwegwe District's ward 18 is in Zimbabwe's second largest city Bulawayo. It had a population of 1,500,000 in 2009 (Zimbabwe Statistical Office 2011). Magwegwe is one of the old urban high-density residential areas in Bulawayo, which is occupied by low-income groups and is characterized by high population densities and high unemployment. It is situated eight kilometres west of the Bulawayo Metropolitan Central Business District (CBD) and the Belmont Industrial area, which is south of the CBD.

Figure 1: Map of Zimbabwe (Adapted from Africa- Collins Maps 2011)
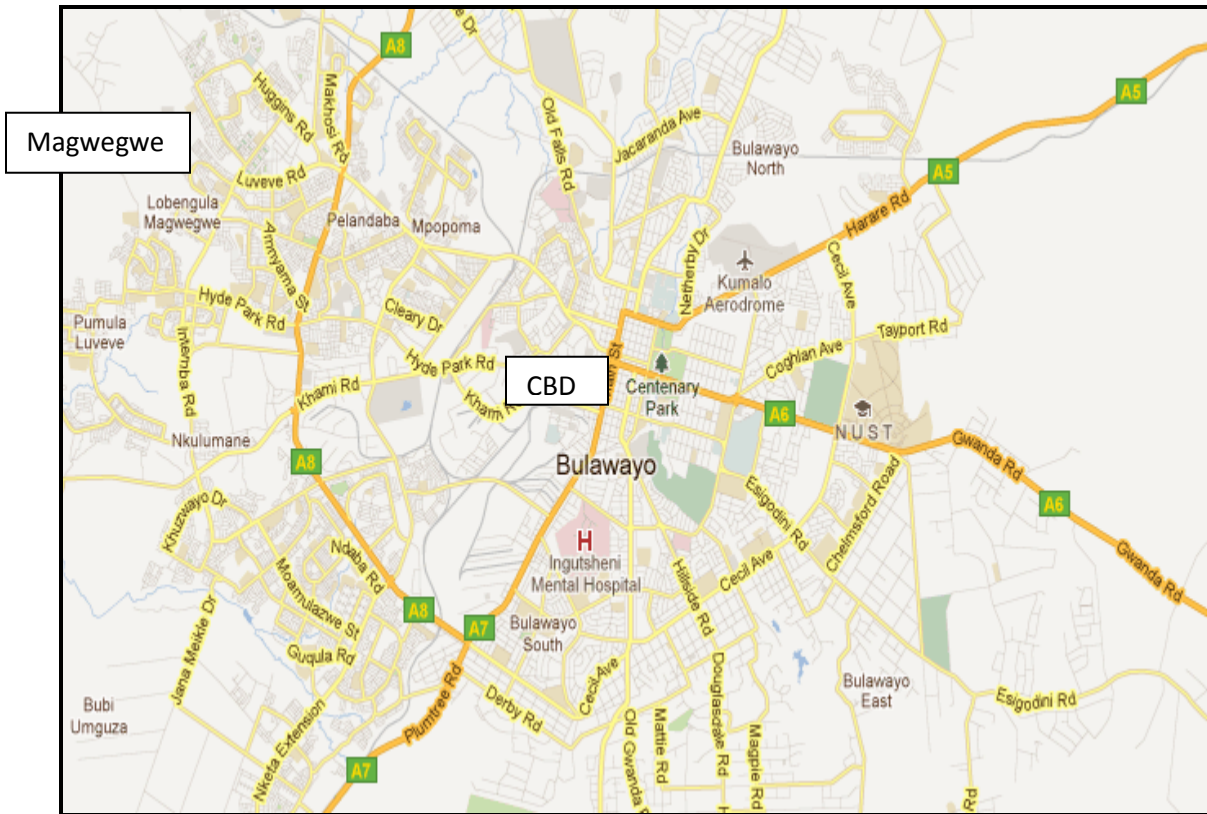
Figure 2: Bulawayo Metropolitan (Adapted from Africa- Collins Maps 2011)

Most residents in Magwegwe are casual workers in the industrial area, and earn below the Poverty Datum Line, which is currently $532, 78 for an average family of five members. Therefore, their incomes fail to sustain their families (ZIMSTAT 2011). Their economic status is such that they walk to and from work. In this district, families` basic needs are hardly met, children drop out of school, youths engage in drug abuse, crime and prostitution are rife, there is high rates of spousal separation and a general exodus of able-bodied people to seek employment elsewhere (outward migration), thereby creating child headed families. Economic and social safety nets have been compromised in the process; they are no longer intact resulting in increased HIV transmission rates. Child abuse is rampant and has exposed children to more risks like character damages resulting in compromised child growth, dwindling future opportunities and societal misfits (Child line Annual Report 2010).

Owing to the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe, since 1999, recreational facilities for children and young people have become obsolete (Magwegwe Youth Centre). This means children have

been deprived of their right to play and socialize. The sports grounds have also been turned into agricultural cropping lands as communities seek to supplement their meagre resources.

According to Social Welfare Department, child protection committee registers (2011), Magwegwe district ward 18 has a total population of 6,390 OVC coming from 4,345 households (Magwegwe Housing 2011). These children have been rendered orphans and vulnerable mainly due to the HIV and AIDS pandemic. This phenomenon has resulted in increased number of child and elderly headed families. According to National Aids Council (NAC) Bulawayo Metropolitan, (Annual Report, 2010), there are 56 child headed and 263 elderly headed households in the ward. The elderly and child headed households failed to pay for electricity and city council rates for the past ten years, given the economic meltdown and lack of alternative sources of income for them. School dropout rates stand at ten per cent (District Education Office survey 2010) and some children have been forced by circumstances to work odd jobs so that they can earn a living. This has promoted child labour and exploitation. Such a scenario has prompted the influx of NGOs into the district to implement mitigatory programmes that are meant to facilitate improved child welfare and wellbeing.

NGOs implementing children's programmes in Zimbabwe were guided by the NAP for OVC monitored by the core-team comprising National AIDS Council and Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare with part of the funding from Global Fund Programme. NAP upheld child participation, that is, children should be involved in decisions that affect them and adults should listen to what children have to say. In other words, children should participate in all stages in the project cycle and adults needed to understand children's issues from children's point of view. To ensure maximum child participation, NAP recommended the formation of Child Protection Committees (CPC) from ward to national levels where children were to be represented by other children (Zimbabwe 2004).

1.3 Problem Statement

In spite of the presence of guidelines and policy frameworks about involving children in all levels of programme planning, NGOs in Magwegwe district, ward 18 still compromised child participation in programmes meant to enhance their welfare and wellbeing. The old adage that

children 'should be seen and not heard' was still a common practice, much to the detriment of child participation and involvement. Most technical applications or mitigatory interventions meant to benefit OVC were crafted in offices without the active involvement of the intended beneficiaries-the OVC. Other programmes were donor prescribed and could not be altered otherwise funding could be withdrawn. This had resulted in programmes being forced on children and failing to yield the intended outcomes and impacts.

The NAP was crafted with the involvement of children representatives from all the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, but its effective application still fell far short of the expectations. The Social Services Department facilitated the formation of Child Protection Committees as NAP implementation watchdogs at ward level, but although these committees were supposed to have child representatives in their ranks and file, no children had been incorporated yet. As a result, advocacy issues did not address the real needs of children, but rather, perceived needs due to generational gaps (Fanelli & Musarandega 2007:124).

In cases where children were seemingly involved, they were only used as fronts for resource mobilization by humanitarian agencies. There was hardly any meaningful participation and involvement by children. NGOs tended to bring in foreign cultures and values in a bid to please donor communities and in the process alienated the children from their own communities.

1.4 The Goal of the Research

The goal of this study was to explore the degree of child participation in programmes of NGOs operating in Magwegwe District's ward 18, and suggest possible solutions to the challenges.

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To explore the nature and extent of OVC involvement in the NAP programmes in Magwegwe.

2. To assess the level of participation of OVC in NGO programmes in Magwegwe

3. To assess the nature of understanding of children's involvement and rights among stakeholders in Magwegwe

4.   To establish the role of children in constructing and implementation of programmes that affects them.

5.   To recommend what can be done to increase facilitation and meaningful child participation in OVC programmes in Magwegwe.

1.6 Research Questions

1.   Are OVC programmers adhering to NAP for OVC in their programmes?

2.   Is there a uniform understanding of child involvement and children's rights by NGOs and other stakeholders in Magwegwe District?

3.   What has been the role of children in the crafting of children's programmes implemented by humanitarian agents in Magwegwe district?

4.   What role do children play in programme implementation?

5.   To what extent according to Hart's ladder of levels of participation, are children involved in programmes meant to benefit their welfare and wellbeing?

6.   What can be done to increase or facilitate increased and meaningful child participation?

1.7 Project Justification

There is need to mainstream disaster management in orphans and vulnerable children programmes as a crosscutting issue to enhance programme ownership and sustenance. Children supported by NGOs in a bid to address the National Action Plan for OVC are not consulted, but used as fronts to obtain funding hence the programmes' rejection and the saying by the Young People's Network that *"Nothing for us without us is for us."* Addressing this problem will help children stand on their own and be able to plan a meaningful future. In order to increase child participation as appropriate in all issues that concern them in their community, considering their evolving capacities, there must be a move from an exclusionary to an inclusionary approach to children and their capabilities.

1.8 Research Hypothesis

There are a lot of journals, policies, guidelines, strategies and legislations supporting children and outlining how children should be treated, their programmes implemented and all point to the importance of child participation for programmes to have desired and sustainable outcomes, but there is no enforcing agent and implementers check for adherence to the guides hence the belief that:

1. Proper perceptions on child participation and child rights by stakeholders working with children at risk will improve the performance of child mitigation programmes, and result in more confident children who have the capacity to withstand challenges.
2. Active participation of children in programmes will address their real needs rather than perceived needs.
3. Listening to children's views and involving them in decision-making will result in children's improved self-esteem and boost their self-confidence.

1.9 Limitations

There was limited literature in circulation. Most literature was online and had no proven credibility. NGOs were not free to give out office literature with in-house information about their organizations, and this reduced the amount of information concerning the running of organizations. The researcher was left with no option, but to depend on the information gathered by the questionnaires. The researcher had limited resources in terms of funding and this compromised the quality of the research time spent with children, because they could not be kept for a long time without food or refreshments.

1.10 Delimitations

The study focused on three out of 15 NGOs operating in Magwegwe District; this was considered a representative sample. Focus was on one out of the five wards of Magwegwe. The entry point was the community leaders who were very helpful in reaching out to the target population without any suspicions of wrong motives. The population sample was representative

of all the stakeholders, and that reduced the chances of leaving out a group with vital information in the ward. The community leaders were very cooperative throughout the study and were willing to go the extra mile by offering to take the researcher to the projects that were running in the ward.

1.10 Conclusion

This study aimed to ascertain the understanding of child participation, and the levels of child participation in OVC programmes meant to enhance their wellbeing. The study was guided by literature reviewed that covered child participation worldwide, and the instruments used to enforce child participation to all nations. It covered some practical examples of efforts to implement programmes that prove the importance of child participation that were carried out by Plan International in various countries and the outcomes. The rights of the children as spelt out by UNCRC of 1989 concerning child participation were evident in the literature reviewed and the application of those rights were clarified.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Definitions of Child Participation

Participation is the fundamental right of citizenship and the means by which democracies should be measured (Hart 1992). Wilson (2000) believes that participation can be classified into two main categories, the first being superficial or tokenistic, the other being "deep" participation or 'democratic play'. Deep participation is an umbrella term encompassing active, authentic and meaningful participation. 'Deep' participation means young people experience elements of citizenship and democracy in their everyday lives, in real and holistic situations with meaningful outcomes or actions.

Children's participation is nothing new as studies show that "children have always participated in life: in the home, in school, in communities, in wars" (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund 2003:3). The seemingly important participation is in the development point of view, and it points out that even though children may be highly involved in the practical aspects of the family and the community, their participation may not always be recognised or when recognised, it is unlikely that children will be included in local decision-making processes. If by any chance, child involvement is considered at the level of the state guided by the right to elect representatives, under 18 of age are not included (Plan 2003:11).

Hart supports the developmental view and defines participation as "the process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives" (Hart 1992:5). With the inclusion of women in decision-making, the children population remains the only group excluded in decision-making. For international NGOs and UN agencies, children's participation is understood as "a means of preparing the young for their future role in a liberal democracy" (PLAN 2003:11). Cited in the same document are some radical practitioners in children programming who argue, "Participation is a process by which children may confront

and overturn practices that exclude them socially, culturally and politically in the here and now". Cussianovich (1995) defines participation as, "a redefinition of power in society, a frontal questioning of power based on the condition of adults. It does not only make possible a new way of rethinking, a new children's culture in our societies, but it demands demolishing and rebuilding a new adult culture." (Cussianovich 1995:60, cited in Ennew 2000:17).

Basing her definition on article 12 of CRC, Judith Ennew defines Child Participation as entailing that "their specific needs and views must be incorporated into a decision-making process within the context of what is possible institutionally and culturally" (Ennew 1998:21).

Child participation, according to CRC, is a right which subscribing governments should enforce as a means of child protection, and making community level development more children friendly and more conducive to the realisation of children's rights as a whole. This can be achieved through involving children in community wide development processes referred to as "child centred community development "(CCCD) and "child-focused community development" (CFCD) which are currently being implemented by Plan and its associate organizations in the world (Plan 2003:12).

According to UNICEF, child participation involves encouraging and enabling children to make their views known on the issues that affect them. Put into practice, participation is adults listening to children — to their entire multiple and varied ways of communicating. It ensures their freedom to express themselves and considers their views when coming to decisions that affect them. Engaging children in dialogue and exchange allows them to learn constructive ways of influencing the world around them.

Child participation must be authentic and meaningful. It must start with children and young people themselves, on their own terms, within their own realities and in pursuit of their own visions, dreams, hopes and concerns. Most of all, authentic and meaningful child participation requires a radical shift in adult thinking and behaviour. There should be a cultivation of understanding that the drive to participate is innate in every human being. Promoting meaningful and quality participation of children and adolescents is essential to ensuring their growth and development. Children have proved that when they are involved, they can make a difference in

the world around them. They have ideas, experience and insights that enrich adult understanding and make a positive contribution to adult actions. (The State of the Children's World Report 2002)

Plan International argues that achieving children's full participation in community development is a challenge, which can only be addressed if organizations subscribe to principles that will govern the way they work with children and their communities. After some literature review, fieldwork and conference discussions Plan International came up with the following proposed principles of participatory programming with children:

1.   *Non-discrimination and inclusiveness*

2.   *Democracy and equality of opportunity*

3.   *The physical, emotional and psychological safety of participants*

4.   *Adult responsibility*

5.   *Voluntarism, informed consent and transparency*

6.   *Participating should be an enjoyable and stimulating experience*

   (Plan 2003:14)

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks on Child Participation

Researchers have proven that theories and policies imply that children are social actors in their own right, yet traditionally, they have been denied those rights of participation and their voices have remained unheard (James & Prout 1990; Alderson 1995; Alderson & Morrow 2004). Child participation is not a new phenomenon as Chambers (1983:112) talks about a deprivation trap experienced by children.
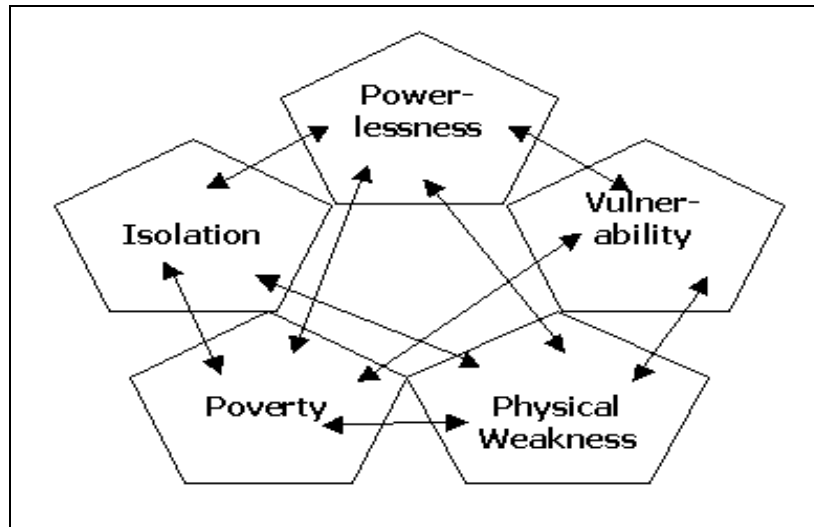
Figure 3: The deprivation trap (Chambers 1983: 112)

The trap consists of poor education, unemployment and illness and these render the child powerless, vulnerable, physically weak, poor and isolated. Reversal of such traps promotes confident children that are well prepared to articulate their needs and guide their future. Communities should value the strength of children. The Zimbabwe NAP for OVC concurs with this, and admits that children are the future and are able to rise above many challenges if well guided. This implies that children need to be treated as partners, future leaders and important community members worth listening to, rather than treated as people waiting to receive services. Children are experts in their own lives, and should be taken seriously. They only need support in their endeavour to escape the various traps they are in.

Max-Neef (Chambers 1983), a development facilitator, writes about nine important needs that need to be met for children to grow well. Adults have a tendency of focusing a lot on the physical needs (subsistence needs) of children, and making sure that the children have clean water, enough food, warm clothes and a good place to live, and forget about the other needs children have. These needs are constant through all human cultures and across historical time periods. What changes over time and between cultures, are the strategies by which these needs are satisfied. He classifies the fundamental human needs as: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity and freedom. Max-Neef further argues that these needs are interrelated and interactive and there is no hierarchy as postulated by the

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psychologist Maslow in Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Maslow (cited in Chambers 1983) states that we must satisfy each need in turn, starting with the first, which deals with the most obvious need of survival. It is only when the lower level needs of physical and emotional well-being are satisfied that we can go on to the next level, which covers the needs of influence and personal development. According to Maslow, therefore, child participation cannot be done concurrently with making sure the children are fed. Their voices are superimposed by physiological needs.
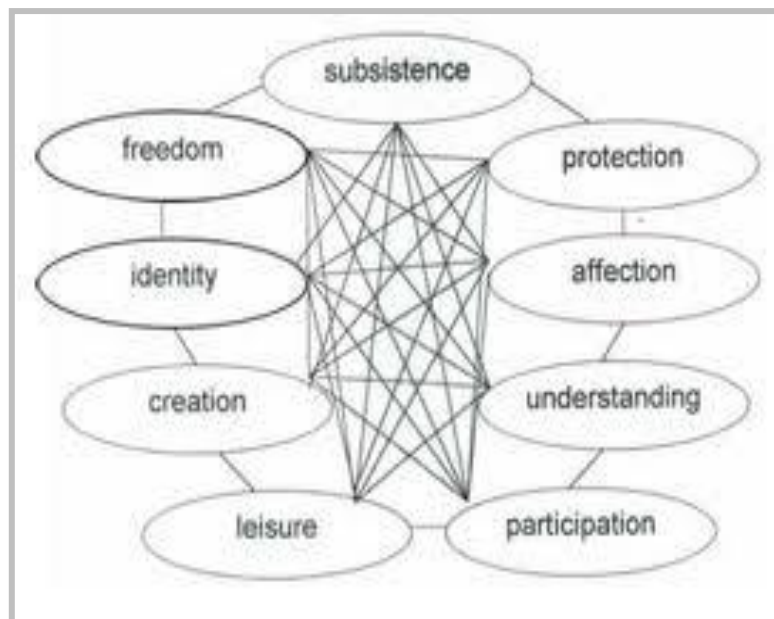
Figure 4: Needs according to Max-Neef et al (1989: 40)
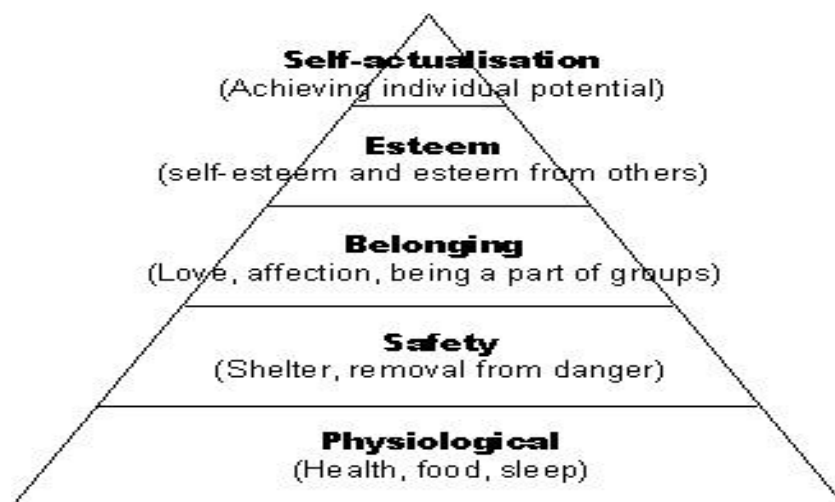
Figure 5: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: 5 stage model (Alan Chapman 2001: 4)

The two schools of thought are agreeable that people have needs, but only differ in their view on addressing the needs. When it comes to children and participation, Max-Neef's theory mainstreams participation as the child grows, for example, he says that during breastfeeding, a child is held close, thereby meeting the child's need for affection and participation (REPSSI; Self Management and Development 2009:24), but Maslow (Figure 5), sees it as a need that comes later in life when they would have gone through some stages of physiological needs and safety needs.

According to Maslow, the five categories cover needs that include the following:

1. *Biological and Physiological needs* - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep.

2. *Safety needs* - protection from elements, security, order, law, limits, and stability.

3. *Belongingness and Love needs* - work group, family, affection, relationships.

4. *Esteem needs* - self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, managerial responsibility.

5. *Self-Actualization needs* - realizing personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences (Chambers 1983).

According to Max-Neef, needs are defined according to existential categories of being, having, doing and interacting. He further explains this in the form of a 36 cell matrix shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: MAX-NEEF'S NEEDS (Max- Neef *et al.* 1989: 207)

NEED	BEING (QUALITIES	HAVING (THINGS)	DOING (ACTIONS)	INTERACTING (SETTINGS)
Subsistence	physical and mental	food, shelter, work	feed, clothe, rest, wo	living environment, socia
Protection	care, adaptability, au	social security, health s work	co-operate, plan, take help	social environment, dwel
Affection	respect, sense of hur generosity, sensualit	friendships, family, rela with nature	share, take care of, m express emotions	privacy, intimate spaces (togetherness
Understanding	critical capacity, curi intuition	literature, teachers, po educational	analyze, study, medit investigate,	schools, families, universi communities,
Participation	receptiveness, dedic sense of humour	responsibilities, duties, rights	cooperate, dissent, ex opinions	associations, parties, chu neighbourhoods
Leisure	imagination, tranquillity, spontan	games, parties, peace (	day-dream, remembe have fun	landscapes, intimate spac places to be alone
Creation	imagination, boldnes inventiveness, curios	abilities, skills, work, te	invent, build, design, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, wo audiences
Identity	sense of belonging, s esteem, consistency	language, religions, wo customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, , commit oneself	places one belongs to, ev settings
Freedom	autonomy, passion, s esteem, open-minde	equal rights	dissent, choose, run n develop awareness	anywhere

Hart (1997:41) in Table 1 discuss Child participation, through the levels of child participation presented in the form of a ladder with eight levels. The first three levels from the bottom (manipulation, decoration, and tokenism) are non-meaningful participation levels where children are used as fronts, for example in demonstrations where they are made to carry placards, and chant recited slogans without their consent. These are therefore, seen as false means of participation that can lead to compromise. The next five levels (assigned but informed, consulted and informed, adult initiated shared decisions with children, child initiated and directed and child initiated, shared decisions with adults) make up meaningful participation. Even though the children might not be the custodians of the programmes, they are consulted and give advice and

they understand how their opinion will affect the outcome of the programme. The most advanced stages are 'Adult initiated' participation, a shared decision-making process with children, and 'Child-initiated and directed' projects in which adults appear only in a supportive, advisory role. This last stage provides children with the opportunity for joint decision-making, co-management and shared responsibility with children and adults accessing each other's information and learning from each other's life experience.

According to Hart, Successful participation is not limited to a single project, but is an ongoing process that contributes to building a culture of participation throughout a child's environment: in the family, in the school, in caring institutions, in the healthcare system, in the community and in society. For both adults and children the development of such a culture of participation can be a very powerful exercise in democracy. The resulting understanding of human rights and the encouragement of active citizenship benefit the whole society (Hart 1997).

The most important precondition of meaningful participation therefore is that adults respect children's capacities to take part in decisions and recognize them as partners. Rather than traditional relationships built on adults' power and control over children, democratic partnerships result in and may lead to sustainable development. Otherwise children's participation is merely tokenism: children may give their opinions, but they have no influence on whether or how their contribution is used.

TABLE 2: HART'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION (Hart 1997: 41)

Examples

Example	Rung	Level	Category
Children identify a problem in their school, initiate a project to solve it and convince adults to run it.	8	Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults	Degrees of participation
Children produce their own school newspaper or radio programme.	7	Child-initiated and directed	
Children are asked to participate in planning a playground.	6	Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children	
Children are consulted by a city mayor about a certain question; their opinions are taken seriously.	5	Consulted and informed	
A group of children is organised to do community work but they are informed of its purpose and feel ownership of the issue.	4	Assigned but informed	
Articulate children are selected to sit on a discussion panel with no substantive preparation and no consultation with their peers.	3	Tokenism	Non-participation
Children sing and dance at an event but have little idea of what it is all about.	2	Decoration	
Children are organised to participate in political demonstration carrying political placards.	1	Manipulation	

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Hart discourages non-meaningful participation, and refers to it as child abuse. He encourages meaningful participation because it builds the child, promotes ownership of programmes and boosts the child's self-esteem. Of the same opinion is The State of the World`s Children Report (2002), which emphasizes hearing the voices of young people, and changing the world for children and with children. Children and young people should enjoy and be afforded opportunities to express their feelings. It is good for children to speak out because in doing so they learn more. Seira (17 years old) from Indonesia is quoted in this report as having said, "We as young people behind our appearances as bad teenagers or good or anything, we still need to let people know that we still have brain and dare to speak that we think it is true." Involvement in decision-making gives children a feeling of cooperation; it makes them feel like grown-ups and gives them self-confidence. Children want to be part of the solutions to the problems they face.

It is UNICEF's belief that if we are to meet the goals of 'A World Fit for Children' attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and if we are to make the world truly fit for all people, we will only do so with the full participation of children and young people (UNICEF 2010). The MDGs are eight international development goals that all 192 United Nations member states and 23 international organizations in the year 2000 agreed to achieve by the end of year 2015. The eight goals provide a framework for the entire international community to work together towards a common end – to encourage international development by improving the social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries.

According to the 2010 Zimbabwe MDGs status report, the continent of Africa is lagging behind in implementation of the programmes. The MDG Africa Steering Group identify six key areas that include MDG 2: Education for children. This goal of achieving universal primary education and is related to the area of this study. The status report states that millions of children from poor backgrounds and rural communities still do not have access to primary education. This has been due to the failure by countries to provide adequate services for their population hence continue to allow school fees and levies, which are discouraging school attendance. Children remain or become more vulnerable in situations that they do not have control over. Their participation

becomes more compromised by lack of education, which also leads to lack of confidence and low self- esteem.

MDG six, which is about combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases, is also of paramount importance when dealing with children issues. The 2010 status report states that Africa is off track to meeting the MDGs on reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child Report 2008 (A/63/41) states that opinions of children and young people are neither sought, nor respected in schools or in state residential care institutions. The societal stereotypes that children's opinions are irrelevant are still strong in the developing countries, causing indifference or discouragement in children and resulting in disempowered and unengaged youth rather than active citizens who strengthen their countries' democratization by their participation.

2.3 Policies and Frameworks on Children

Some international and regional instruments protect vulnerable children. These commitments are not forced on nations, nation's sign of their free will, but once they sign, they are committing themselves and subscribing to the prescriptions and need to adhere to all the requirements without fail.

2.3.1 The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The declaration on the Rights of the Child that came into being in 1959 and was the first United Nations statement devoted to the rights of the child, although it served more as a morally rather than legally binding framework. It took until the 1990s, however, for all of the pieces to come together in the form of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. The Convention has 54 articles that cover everything from a child's right to be free from sexual and economic exploitation, to the right to his or her own opinion, and to the right to education, health care, and economic opportunity (UNICEF 2010).

According to UNICEF, the initiative for the Convention came from the Government of Poland, which worked on and submitted a Draft Convention to the Commission on Human Rights in

1978, prior to the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child during the International Year of the Child in 1979. That led to a decade of collaboration between a small group of non-governmental organizations, including Radda Barnen of Sweden, the International Child Catholic Bureau, and Defence for Children International, and United Nations human rights experts. It was only after a decade of negotiations that the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in November 1989 by a vote of the General Assembly. By September of the following year, the Convention had obtained the 20 ratifications required for its entry into force as international law. By September 1995, 178 countries had ratified the Convention.

The Children's Convention articulates several different aspects of children's right to participate and they include:

1.   *The right to express their views on all matters affecting them and to have their views given due weight (Article 12).*
2.   *Freedom of expression, including the right to seek and receive impartial information of all kind (Article 13).*
3.   *Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14).*
4.   *Freedom of association (Article 15).*
5.   *The right of access to information and material from national and international sources (Article 17).*
6.   *The right to participate in the cultural life of the community (Article 31)* (Miller 2009).

The Convention protects children's rights by setting non-negotiable standards and obligations in health care; education; legal, civil and social services. It also reaffirms the responsibility of the state in the protection of the children's rights, without any discrimination of whatever kind and through the adoption of all legislative, administrative, budgetary and others measures relevant to child protection.

2.3.2 A World Fit for Children (WFFC)

This is an outcome declaration of the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children held in May 2002. It is an international, non-sectarian, non-profit making organization dedicated to

improving the quality of life for children. WFFC implements international developmental projects, provides relief, and advocates for the wellbeing of children worldwide. It sets specific targets for children and young people to be reached by 2010 to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 (Zimbabwe's PoS to the NAP 2010:5). Its plan of action is a commitment by world leaders from more than 180 countries to protect and promote children's rights. WFFC's crosscutting review themes for their round table meetings are: ensuring child participation, mobilizing resources, children and climate change, child-friendly policies and legislation, and the gender equality.

2.3.3 Global Movement for Children (GMC)

GMC is a worldwide movement of organizations and people, including children, uniting efforts to build a world fit for children. It was created as a result of an outstanding success of the "Say Yes for Children" campaign that led to the UN special session on children in 2002 resolving to mobilize citizens of every nation families, communities, civil society, organization of every kind and children with an active united movement. It sought to promote global advocacy campaigns for child rights and accountability of governments concerning their children.

GMC's main objectives are to;

1. *Unite and coordinate a large global constituency of organizations and people to influence the public opinion and organize collective action.*

2. *Promote and support child participation.*

3. *Influence and encourage political commitments and accountability* (UNGASS 2010).

The name Global Movement for Children was coined at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002. The main purpose was to help make visible to the world's leaders the thousands of organizations and millions of citizens, voters and children themselves united in the case at hand.

The former South African President, Nelson Mandela and his wife Graca Machel, are the patrons of GMC and they launched it at the United Nations. Since its launch GMC has brought together thousands of organizations in advocating for children's rights. To date the GMC has focused on

girls' education, children and AIDS, violence against children, child survival and child trafficking. As patrons of the movement, Mandela and Machel have been inspirational leaders who in their service engaged the political, civil society, youth, religious leaders and other leaders in the campaign to improve the lives of children throughout the world. The two have acted as catalysts in moving these leaders to a series of specific commitments, actions and outcomes intended to increase the well-being of children. One of the commitments made by the General Assembly regarding GMC was the following article (UNGASS, 2006:A/S-27/19/Rev.1)

> We hereby recommit ourselves to spare no effort in continuing with the creation of a world fit for children, building on the achievements of the past decade and guided by the principles of first call for children. In solidarity with a broad range of partners, we will lead a Global Movement for Children that create an unstoppable momentum for change

GMC has a convening committee (CC), which comprises a coalition of the largest organizations and networks that focus on children namely ENDA Tiers Monde, Plan International, REDLAMYC, Save the Children, UNICEF and World Vision. At a regional level, the GMC is led by Regional Platforms, which are in turn integrated by national platforms of organizations working with child rights. According to the June 2011 GMC report, the focus of the CC is on the following:

1. *Child Rights-based approach:* the CC focuses on the realization of child rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The recognition of this approach implies that there is no compromise possible on child rights and that the CC is assertive in their defence.

2. *Children's participation:* child participation is at the heart of the activities of the CC. The best advocates for children are children themselves. Those who are marginalized, vulnerable or living in poverty are better able to understand how this affects their daily lives, and should be able to participate fully in planning and implementing solutions. Children have an active role in the GMC, mainly at the local and national levels but also at the international level, thus ensuring their involvement in the governance of the GMC as well as in its activities.

3. *Gender equity:* girls and boys have the same rights and the CC works for the attainment of such principle. This implies an approach that is gender sensitive and that pays particular

attention to the rights of girls. In addition, the CC pays special attention to the respect of diversity, pluralism, tolerance and the search for conviviality, in an approach focused at eliminating all forms of discrimination.

4. *Multisectoral and holistic approach:* these organizations integrate very different constituencies in order to promote a movement aiming to build a far-reaching constituency in favour of children. The group seeks to build partnerships with those existing national, regional and international coalitions advocating for children's rights. It has a holistic approach, avoiding adopting partial viewpoints and recognizing the indivisibility of children rights.

5. *Institutional and long-term reform:* these organizations collectively pay particular attention to advocacy. In this sense, they focus on lobbying for institutional change to create the conditions for the full implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

6. *Locally rooted and globally relevant*: the CC is participatory in nature and considers the impact it can have at the local and national levels as the basis for its global relevance. This is why the work of the CC starts at the community level and builds on it to impact globally.

2.3.4 The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The African member States of the African Unity agreed to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), in July 1990. This Charter was the first regional child rights treaty. It came into being in 1999, and was then, ratified by 37 out of 53 nations of that time. The African Charter was written less than a year after the CRC and only a few African countries, namely Algeria, Morocco, Senegal and Egypt took part in writing the CRC (Miller 2009).

The CRC and the ACRWC share ideas on non-discrimination, the best interest of the child, participation of children, and the survival and development of the child. The articles representing the above in the ACRWC are:

Article 4: Best Interest of the Child

1.   *In all sections concerning the child undertaken by any person or authority the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration.*

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2.   *In all judicial or administrative proceedings affecting the child who is capable of communicating his/her own views, an opportunity shall be provided for the views of the child to be heard either directly or through an impartial representative as a party to the proceedings, and those views shall be taken into consideration by the relevant authority in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate law.*

Article 7: Freedom of expression

Every child who is capable of communicating his or her own views shall be assured the rights to his or her opinions freely in all matters and to disseminate his opinions subject to such restrictions as are prescribed by laws (CRC 1989; ACRWC 1999).

The charter established the African Committee of experts on the right and welfare of the child, which was meant to monitor states efforts in respecting the rights of the child.

2.4 Scope and Level of Child Participation

A number of researches on child participation have been carried out worldwide, and the results point out that child participation is never a standalone phenomenon. The scope and level of participation are discussed effectively against the children's rights, particularly article 12 of the CRC.

Article 12 states that:

1.   *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*

2.   *For this purpose the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law* (UNCRC 1989).

Article 12 of the CRC articulates the same issues as the ACRWC article 4, which is about the best interest of the child and article 7 about freedom of expression hence its use nationally and

internationally taking into account that Zimbabwe is a signatory of both charters. It can be used as a measure to the success and or failure of the NAP programmes.

2.4.1 The Scope of child participation

The scope of child participation is "the range of mechanisms available to enable the participation of children" (Catholic Relief Services Zimbabwe 2010). The NAP review and other literature reviewed, base their arguments on three concepts from article 12 to describe the scope of participation and they are:

1. *Children's capacity to form a view point.*

2. *All matters affecting the child and any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child.*

3. *Due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child* (Fanelli & Musarandega 2007).

These three concepts can be linked to Piaget's cognitive development theories and Max-Neef's basic needs as determinants of the level and magnitude of participation. Max-Neef's school of thought argues that children participate even during breastfeeding, whilst Piaget's school of thought argues that children's participation depends on their cognitive development (Piaget 2001).

The first point about children's capacity to form a viewpoint, according to NAP review, is a generalized assumption which cannot be relied upon. It should be noted that participation could be a further development in the child that can make him or her gain capacity to participate even more and better, and that children need information for them to form viewpoints (Chawanda, *et al*. 2007:126). The concept gives an assumption that age can be used as a yardstick for capacity, and the assumption that all children pass through certain standard stages of biological and psychological development. Although children gain capacity to participate as they grow older; age is an unreliable determinant for capacity, mainly because it does not take into consideration the individuality of each child (Woolf 2000); the possibility that a child may have competence in one area and be weak in another; the fact that even children in early infancy have been found to

express preferences (Hart 2002); the effects of intra-cultural differences such as class and educational levels (ECPAT International 1999). The children who are made to skip classes at school are proof enough for differences in competences.

Children are moulded by societies they find themselves in, together with the physical and social environment, culture, and parents or guardians beliefs and values, and these counter uniform child development (Lansdown 2004). This has been proven in Africa where children, due to the HIV and AIDS pandemic, have assumed roles that were dubbed adult roles like raising their siblings in child headed households (Nemapare & Tang 2003). It can therefore be deduced that understanding a child's capacity is critical to ensuring that the time, emotional commitment and effects of participation are appropriate.

Lansdown argues that when children use their existing capacities to participate, these capacities are further developed, the quality of their participation improves, and their decision-making confidence increases. ChildPro, Plan's child centred programme findings concur with this discovery as proved by the improvement of child participation in Cabanas (PLAN 2010). Lansdown adds that "the most effective model for developing competences is one where children work collaboratively, each serving as a resource for others, and taking varying roles and responsibilities according to their understanding and expertise"(Lansdown 2004: 6). This means that in order to take care of children's evolving capacities, it is important that a range of roles be available for children's participation, and if possible children's capacity be built to prepare them for these roles.

Article 13 states that children have freedom to impart information and ideas through media of their choice. This opens up various ways of communication that can be used besides verbal and written communication, and these include art, drama and music. Facilitating and observing these forms of expression is particularly important when working with children in difficult situations like war torn countries, who may be silent, unresponsive or withdrawn (Tolfree & Woodhouse 1999). REPSSI, psychosocial support tools in the Journey of Life manual were designed to gather information from such children (REPSSI 2008). Children in some traditional African societies have unique social spaces through, which to communicate with adult, even though it is culturally inappropriate for children to talk to adults in public. In Zimbabwe the "spaces" may be

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created through traditional household and livelihood apprenticeships for children, which can be in the form of plays, games, folk telling sessions and joint community projects that bring together children and adults.

International Save the Children Alliance (ISCA) emphasizes the importance of children having access to relevant information prepared in child friendly ways in order for them to form their viewpoints to the fullest extent of their capacities (ISCA 2003:13). Zimbabwe has a national plan of Action for the OVC child friendly version, which was meant to "promote understanding leading to meaningful participation by children" (NPA for OVC child friendly version foreword). Article 17 of the CRC clarifies the need for children to be afforded their right to accessing information, and article 13 outlines children's freedom to receive information and ideas of all kinds. This then means that children's ignorance about some topics should not be mistaken to mean they do not have capacity; it is the responsibility of the adults to make sure children have information they need to participate meaningfully.

With reference to the clause about "all matters affecting the child", Hart (2002:253) states that, "the task of defining all matters affecting the child is best handled by taking the default position that the standard is met unless convincing evidence to the contrary is presented". Of great importance is the idea of when children should begin participating in a certain matter. Should it be when the project is conceptualized, planned, implemented or evaluated? According to reviewed literature, participation should be encouraged in all stages of the project (Smale 2000; Ackermann, *et al.* 2003).

The concept of due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child makes it clear that a child who simply expresses his or her viewpoint is not truly participating until this viewpoint is given consideration (Hart 2002). Determining the sort of consideration can be dependent upon the child's culture and the environment, but generally it may be taken to mean that the weight of the viewpoint increases progressively in accordance with maturity and /or exposure. Firelight Foundation(2004) states that programmers should value the strength of children whether young or living with disabilities, they have the capacity to form a viewpoint as long as they have access to accurate, understandable, child friendly information. NAP1 review concurs with this statement and adds that organizations and institutions should facilitate and

observe the expression of viewpoints through a variety of media and also, "assume that all matters affect children either directly or indirectly; thoughtfully consider every viewpoint expressed by children; and emphasize individual evaluations of maturity over objective decisions based on age in determining the due weight" (Fanelli & Musarandega 2007:128). In contrast, if organizations and institutions have strict guidelines on which children have capacity to form a viewpoint, they tend to withhold useful information for forming a viewpoint, and limit the media available to children for expression of the viewpoint (PLAN 2010).

2.4.2 The level of participation

The level of participation is defined as "the depth of children's engagement in initiatives, organizations and institutions" (Fanelli & Musarandega 2007: 128). To determine the level of child participation in a project, it is important to consider the decisions that have been made, consciously or unconsciously, about how "freely" children can express their views and the extent of their "the opportunity to be heard" (CRS Zimbabwe 2010). The concepts commonly identified from article 12 that are critical in determining the level of participation are:

1.   Children' rights to "express those views freely."
2.   "The opportunity to be heard."

Lansdown (2001:2) analyzes the statement "express those views freely" as meaning that children should not be forced to express their views, and that adults have an obligation to ensure that children are enabled and encouraged to contribute their views. ISCA(2003:12) believe that the freedom given to children might include enabling children to freely negotiate their participation to reflect their preferences and working methods, and building self-esteem and self-confidence in children so that they feel they are able to contribute and have opinions which are worth listening to. The concept of an "opportunity to be heard" indicates that adults must listen to children and must clearly explain what this opportunity means so that children understand the possible extent of their influence (ISCA 2003:13). Some authors developed frameworks for the levels of participation as shown below:

TABLE 3: SHIER'S (2001) PATHWAYS TO PARTICIPATION *(Howard 2002)*

Levels of *Participation*

Openings>Opportunities>Obligations

⇓

5. Children share power and responsibilities for decision making.

| Are you ready to share some of your adult power with children? | Is there a procedure that enables children and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions? | Is it a policy requirement that children and adults share power and responsibility for decisions? |

4. Children are involved in decision-making processes?

| Are you ready to let children join in your decision-making processes? | Is there a procedure that enables children to join in decision-making processes? | Is it a policy requirement that children must be involved in decision-making processes? |

This point is the minimum you must achieve if you endorse the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

3. Children's views are taken into account.

| Are you ready to take children's views into account? | Does your decision making process enable you to take children's views into account? | Is it a policy requirement that children's views must be given due weight in decision-making? |

2. Children are supported in expressing their views.

| Are you ready to support children in expressing their views? | Do you have a range of ideas and activities to help children express their views? | Is it a policy requirement that children must be supported in expressing their views? |

1. Children are listened to.

START HERE

| Are you ready to listen to children? | Do you work in a way that enables you to listen to children? | Is it a policy requirement that children must be listened to? |

Shier (2001), offered a useful alternative to Hart's ladder of participation (Howard 2002). The model consists of five levels of participation. At each level, individuals and organizations have different degrees of commitment to the process of empowerment. The model tries to clarify this by identifying three stages of commitment at each level - openings, opportunities and obligations. Shier argues that "youth participation is a process rather than a specific event or project" (Shier 2001). Shier's Pathways to Participation model is useful in assessing organizational readiness and commitment to youth participation beyond individual projects (Kohn 1993).

TABLE 4: THE SIX STAGES OF WESTHORP'S (1987) CONTINUUM

1	2	3	4	5	6
Ad hoc input	Structured Consultation	Influence	Delegation	Negotiation	Control

In 1987, Gill Westhorp of the Youth Sector Training Council of South Australia identified a six stage continuum of youth involvement as seen in Table 4. This continuum does not imply that more or less control is better, just that the options exist and that some will be more appropriate in some situations than others. A variety of different strategies and approaches will ensure that a variety of different young people can participate (Lansdown 1995:47).

It should be noted that the continuum poses a series of questions which must be answered to ensure genuine participation by young people. These questions focus on the mechanics of participation and emphasize the level of participation necessary. The questions include articulation of aims, framing the level of participation, selection of target group/s, delineating participants' support needs, exposing barriers and the execution of evaluation strategies (Westhorp 1987: 19).

TABLE 5: ROCHA'S (1997) LADDER OF EMPOWERMENT

	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Rung 5	Political empowerment
Rung 4	Socio-political empowerment
Rung 3	Mediated empowerment
Rung 2	Embedded individual empowerment
Rung 1	Atomistic individual empowerment
	Individual involvement

Adapted from Rocha (1997, 34)

Rocha (1997) took a different approach. She uses the term "empowerment" in the community's role and she devised a ladder where the intended arena of change shifts from the individual, through to community based on classification of power experiences including the source of power and its object or target. In this model, activities are not "evaluatively arranged along an axis that characterizes one as less beneficial and one as more beneficial. They are arranged on the ladder based on the intended locus of their outcomes: from individual to community empowerment "(Rocha 1997, 34). Rungs four and five reflect the notion that participation can lead to political action.

In the Global Citizen Journal of 2005, Ausland discusses ladders portraying some levels of participation that could be used when working with children. The three ladders of participation (Arnstein, Hart & Pretty 1969:191), are based on the opportunities children and communities have to express their views and be heard.

Arnstain (1969)
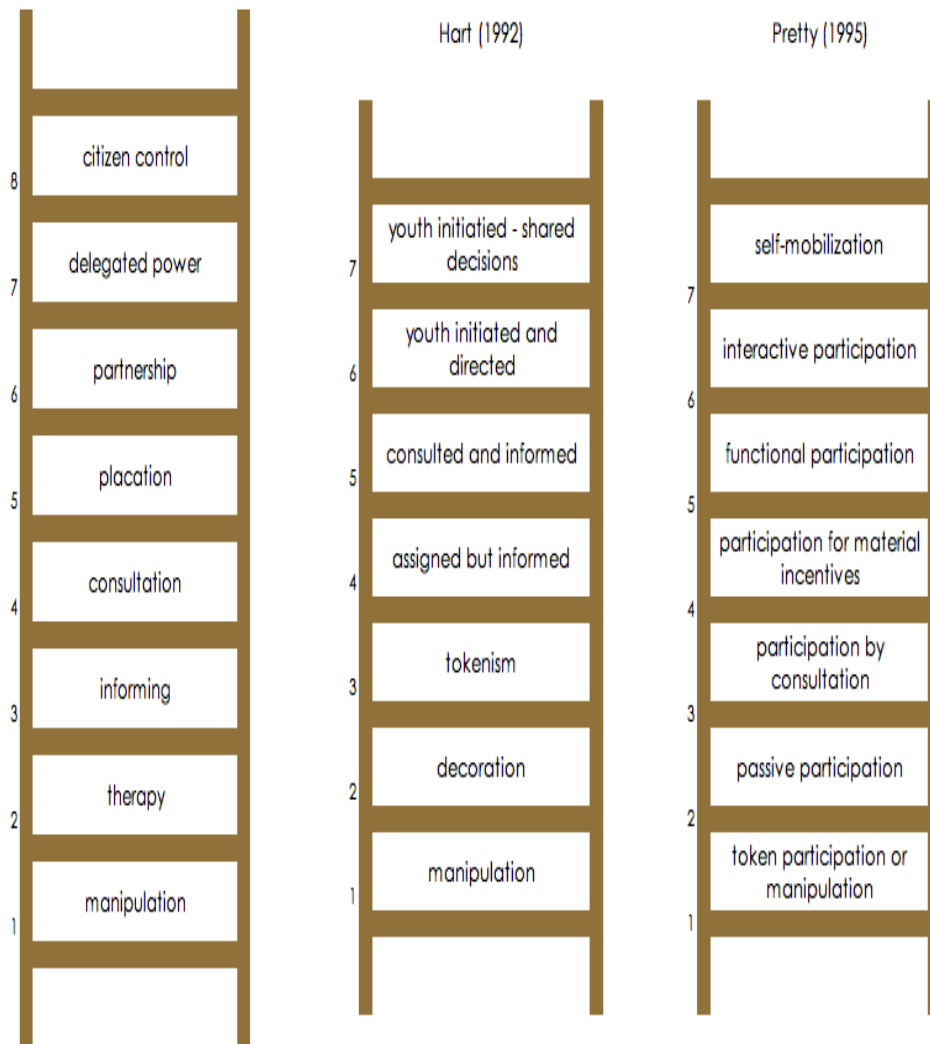
Figure 6: The three ladders of participation that were analyzed by Aaron Ausland

In Figure 6, the first ladder is from Sherry Arnstein. Primarily concerned with power, Arnstein created her ladder in 1969 to illustrate how citizens could be included in political and economic processes from manipulation to citizen control (Ausland 2005). Therefore, the emphasis here is the degree of participation, but set in a framework of the relationship between the state and citizen – or for our purpose, the development organization and the community. According to Arnstein, the bottom two rungs are actually non-participation. Rungs 3 -5 are degrees of

participation that represent "Tokenism" while rungs 6-8 are degrees that represent "Citizen Power". Thus Arnstein suggests that the ladder might be used as a framework of inquiry into the nature of the relationship the programmers have with the communities in which and for whom they work. It should answer the questions like, "Is their relationship primarily one of consultation? Do they have a partnership?" Perhaps the relationship exists across several rungs of this conceptual ladder depending on the activity we are engaged together on – annual planning and budgeting may be closer to rungs 3 and 4, while preparation of a community event closer to 6 and 7 (Reed, cited in Global Citizen Journal 2005).

The second ladder is from Hart, and it also emphasizes degrees of participation. Hart is a professor of Environmental Psychology and is concerned about how children experience place and how spaces are designed for free play. Given that most urban design does not often really think from a child's perspective, he is also concerned about how children are enabled to participate in community development and environmental care (Lansdown 2004). The ladder he developed for UNICEF in 1992 had been used widely by development organizations that worked with children and youth.

The third ladder is based on the work of Pretty whose work mostly focuses on sustainable agriculture. Again, his ladder focuses on degrees of participation from manipulation or token participation to self-mobilization. Pretty's ladder uses words that make us consider the nature of the participation (the incentives and purposes behind it.) For example, rung 3 – participation by consultation sets the organization's needs up as the incentive to participate – it needs to consult with the community before moving ahead on its agenda. Rung 4 – participation for material incentives recognizes that one can generate incentives for the community to choose participation, but then does this not weaken the legitimacy of it (Lansdown 2004:7).

With all the frameworks/typologies' lowest levels, children are not encouraged to express viewpoints. At times, children face active resistance to their participation (Reddy & Ratna 2002) or manipulation to their contributions. It was be noted as well that as children's levels of participation increases, they become more involved in decision-making processes, hold increasing amounts of power, responsibility and authority, and are so well integrated into a

project's operational structure that they become critical in its success or failure. At the highest level children are in equal partnership with adults, but leading their own initiatives (Global Citizen Journal 2005).

2.5 Child Participation in selected countries

Child Participation has been experienced throughout the global world, but the acceptance levels differ due to the local understanding of the concept.

2.5.1 Nepal

Plan International is an international organization that is so much into improving children's lives, and works in partnership with other local NGOs to achieve its goals and enhance teamwork. In Nepal from 9th to 13th May 2011, Plan Benin hosted training for 28 participants from NGOs affiliated with the Central Office of Technical Assistance (BCAT) on Child Participation through the Child to Child Approach. The training was facilitated by Plan Benin Rights of the Child Advisor and others from local NGOs with support from Global Excel International (Plan international report, July 2011).

The training was presented through themes: Rights of Child, Child Participation and Child to Child. Participants learned theory, but also practised the six steps of this approach: problem identification, research, discussion, action plan, action and evaluation. Children living in the Centre Magone of Don Bosco's Home in Porto Novo, where the training was held, participated in the practice sessions, and even performed sketches on corporal punishment.

This training was the result of the partnership between the BCAT and Plan Benin for NGOs working on the European Union funded Project 2 that combats child trafficking. This training of participants comes from field based NGOs that frequently work with children. They now have an increased understanding of the benefits of child participation and how to facilitate the participation. The participant's representative, in his closing remarks commented:

> We are very happy with this training. We are now more confident in our work with children thanks to Plan Benin and BCAT. We understand that children have the right to participate and how to facilitate their

participation. There is so much more to learn, we hope other trainings will soon follow (Plan International 2011).

Save the Children Norway is working with the Hatemalo Child Club in advocacy work at the national level. It raises issues based on the experiences and views of the children's clubs at the grassroots level. The Hatemalo Child Club's media group is involved in raising issues concerning children for public debate through radio broadcasts in central and other regions of Nepal. It raises general public awareness using posters and street drama (Tear Fund Roots 7: 24)

2.5.2 Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is an international organization promoting cooperation between all countries of Europe in the areas of legal standards, human rights, democratic development, the rule of law and cultural cooperation. Founded in 1949, it has 47 member states.

Participation is an important area of the Council of Europe's work, especially regarding youth. In a unique manner the Council of Europe has introduced a co-management system into its youth sector, where representatives of European youth organizations and governments decide jointly on the Council's youth programme and budget. In cooperation with the Congress for Local and Regional Authorities, a European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional life was produced in 1992 and revised in 2003. This unique tool not only promotes participation of young people, but also presents concrete ideas and instruments that can be used by young people and local authorities. A practical manual with further ideas, 'Have your say!' was produced in 2007 (Council of Europe 1992)

2.5.3 Tajikistan (Asia)

Child participation was viewed as a threat to the Government which felt participation could lead to the nation's children becoming radicalized (The Guardian June 28/2011). The move to ban the religious freedom came into being in the Lower House of Assembly discussion, which led to the house almost unanimously passing the anti-faith bill. The proposed bill, if passed into a law could prevent parents from allowing their children and teenagers to attend church or participate in religious activities. This move was breech of article 31 of CRC which stated that children had "*the right to participate in the cultural life of the community*."

2.5.4 Bangladesh

The Child Brigade in Bangladesh is a very active group of street-working children that is organized and led by the children themselves. They have developed their own literacy materials to help other children like them to learn to read and write. They also help children who have been arrested or harassed by the police (Tear Fund Roots 7:24). In the same country, Save the Children Australia supported children in forming a children's parliament in Bangladesh. The Children's Parliament is a national forum of children, which allows children to tell their concerns to the members of the Bangladesh Parliament. The purpose of the Children's Parliament is to influence policy makers to develop pro-child policies and consider the development of Bangladeshi children. Before deciding the national budget, the finance minister often receives many studies, reports and requests from special interest groups. Children's concerns are rarely heard, as a result, the needs and priorities of children are not always reflected in the national budget. The Children's Parliament Preparatory Committee organized a Children's Budget Discussion Session in June 2003 during the budget planning session of the Bangladesh Parliament. A total of 68 children from all over Bangladesh participated in the budget discussion, where the children called for an appropriate budget allocation for their survival, development and protection (Tear fund 2004)

2.5.5 Sri Lanka

In war-affected eastern Sri Lanka, a children's club developed in a small community trapped between the armed resistance movement and the government forces. It developed slowly in order to be sensitive to the local culture. The club has been responsible for bringing friends back into school, expanding the school building, and involving government in providing access to education (Stephenson 2004)

2.6 Plan Child Participation Programmes and Their Impacts

Plan International, which is an international, humanitarian, child focused development organization, has a vision of a world in which all children realize their full potential in all societies. This organization developed two projects called Children in Programming (ChildPro) and Child Media, which were pilot tested in Honduras and El Salvador. Child Pro was first

introduced in 1999 with an objective "to enhance adult understanding of child rights and to include children's voices and participation in all stages of programming, as a standard practice in the community development processes" (Plan 2001).

2.6.1 ChildPro programme

ChildPro approach has the conviction that children, according to their age, can and should participate together with other members of their communities in a collaborative way to advance their development and empowerment. Its purpose is to highlight the value of children's participation in improving programme quality (Stegman 2002:15). Plan believes that children's proactive participation will prepare them to be the future owners of their communities. Below are the findings and comments on the programme:

- Through participation in matters that affect them, children develop stronger identities and self-esteem, they understand the need for trust and compassion toward others, they also develop a sense of responsibility, and learn to communicate, cooperate, and negotiate and to make decisions. These factors are vital in the process of building citizenship among children and in the formation of a more democratic society. Participation not only promotes development, participation is development (PLAN 2001).

  This comment was passed after a successful forum on child labour and the maltreatment of children that was organized by a group of children who were part of a project of ChildPro in Honduras. The children hosted the forum, and managed the sound system in an enthusiastic and professional manner.

- Although child-centeredness has always been a part of PLAN, adults continue to decide what is best for children without even consulting them: as a result when we go more deeply, maybe indirectly children are receiving benefits from the projects, but not directly…… although people and the front line staff claim they know about children's rights and they work with the concept of rights, further probing often leads to the realization that many people don't actually know what they are talking about.

  Debora Cobar, regional Rights of the Child Advisor for the Caribbean and Central America in charge of the ChildPro and Child Media programmes argued that a culture of "machismo" prevailed in Central and Latin America, and made it difficult for

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women and children to participate. Political conditions discouraged participation and it was previously very dangerous to speak out especially in El Salvador and Guatemala where community leaders and students were killed for voicing their opinions thereby rendering people passive and reluctant to speak out. Cobar, therefore, recommended a culturally and politically sensitive approach for participation to take place (PLAN 2001).

- In our assessments, children raised their unique perspectives and identified very different needs and priorities than did adults. The adult participants, whether community members or outsiders, were constantly surprised by the new insights raised by children and they respected the strength of their claims on resources. Often, we understood the problem, but not the importance for children. Sometimes, a child's critical issue was not even on our list (Iyer and Goldenberg 1997:16). This discussion with the children and adults (separately) was conducted by the Habitat programme in a bid to build institutional mechanisms for a sustained participation. The findings led to a way forward of "creating children' councils, placing children on the community committees, holding regular assessments and discussions especially for children and creating and monitoring and evaluation systems which assess measurable improvements in the lives of children." (Iyer & Goldenberg 1997:16).

2.6.2 Child media

PLAN (2010) states that PLAN is implementing close to 60 youth and child led media projects worldwide. This support of information and communications technologies is meant to empower youth with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence to make their voices heard and bring about positive change in their communities (ROCCA 2001). Some of the projects on record are:

1. *Senegal* − Kids Waves also known as Radio Gune Yi was the first Plan radio project worldwide in 1995 but was followed by was followed by 9 countries before 2006 year end. The show informs parents, children and authorities on their roles and responsibilities to respect the UNCRC. Dramas and sketches are produced with children and professional comedians. Interviews, debates and radio contests are also included in the shows. The show has won international awards(Lee 2001)

2. *Malawi* − Rights of the Child radio programme works in partnership with Malawi Broadcasting Corporation and is funded by UNICEF. Children produce radio shows about their rights (UNICEF 2010).

3. *Philippines* – Children, in partnership with a local radio station prepare, manage and produce one hour weekly shows on children's rights (Woll 2000).

2.7 The Benefits of Child Participation

The development of a culture of participation can be a very powerful exercise in democratic nations. There are benefits that go along with children's free participation in programmes that affect them, as Dewey (Dewey, cited in Kohn 1993:12) states that, 'the essence of the demand for freedom is the need of conditions which will enable an individual to make his own special contribution to a group interest, and to partake of its activities in such ways that social guidance shall be a matter of his own mental attitude, and not a mere authoritative dictation of his acts." Howard, who acknowledges the truthfulness of Hart and other levels of participation by pointing out the existence of surface and deep participation, argues that " the reasons for participation can be categorized as pragmatic, educational, human rights and democratic" (Howard, *et al*. 2002).

1. *Pragmatic reasons* − children or young people being involved in a project for practical reasons like being the key source of information. The implementing organization in this case is benefiting from children's participation.

2. *Educational reasons* − it has been noted that reports on projects where young people have taken leadership roles highlight the benefits for those young people in the form of skills and knowledge they develop as a result. Miller and colleagues argued that the students in their research project developed new skills such as "facilitating interviews, framing open-ended questions, probing for depth, and listening, analyzing, and interpreting data through active participation in real-life research projects". Successful collaborative experiences may also increases high school students' self-efficacy and give them confidence that they have something to contribute to their peer group and the adult community (Miller, *et al.* 2001:23). Plan's findings on Child Media programmes were that, "many children had no problems

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improvising on air. Through their participation in the programme, they have learned how to convey information to others in a friendly, enthusiastic and entertaining fashion" (Stegeman 2002:52)

3. *Human rights reasons* − this may be summed up by a young person's response when asked about being not involved in decisions affecting his life. He said, "Decisions that involve me are basically my life. This is my life. Why are you talking about it as if I don't exist?" (NSW Child Protection Council 1998:53). UNCRC challenges power systems to advance children's opportunities for participation especially through having their voices heard (UNCRC 1990).

4. *Democratic reasons* − democracy can be seen as apolitical system for running the country. Howard argues "mechanisms which will allow the voice of ordinary people to be heard are an essential part of our democratic system" (Howard, *et al.* 2002). Pateman (1970:35) argues that for a democratic society to exist, "the necessary qualities in individuals can only be developed through the democratization of authority structures". Participation is, therefore, the means of such democratization.

Lansdown (2002) argues that denying children a voice encourages impunity for abusers as evidenced by the documented physical and sexual abuse cases in UK that revealed that the abuse had been able to continue, because children were denied the right to challenge what was happening to them. Their stories were not believed and they were denied access to any channels to help them articulate their concerns (The Leicestershire Inquiry 1992).

Children's participation leads to better decisions. Stegeman states that children have a body of experience and knowledge that is unique to their situation, and they have views and ideas as a result of that experience (Stegeman 2002). In many countries in the European Union during the structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s, children suffered due to economic policies that failed to prioritize their needs (Barnen 2000). Bangladesh is now creating appropriate education for children in all types of work through participatory workshops with groups of children from every occupational category (Lansdown 2002:6).

Despite a number of positive practical experiences of child participation, there are still arguments that challenge child participation. These believe that children lack competence to participate; children must learn to take responsibility before they can be granted rights; giving children rights to be heard will take away their childhood, and it will lead to lack of respect for parents (Lansdown 2002:8). These are, however, at a small scale and children are protected against them by the CRC (Plan 2000).

Child participation contributes to the successful implementation of Child-centred Disaster Risk Reduction thereby reducing children vulnerability (Plan 2001). Child-centred Disaster Risk Reduction is " an innovative approach to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) that fosters the agency of children and youth, in groups and as individuals, to work towards making their lives safer and their communities more resilient to disasters" (Plan. Children in a changing climate-3). It is empowering for children, and respectful of their views and rights as well as their vulnerabilities. Child-based DRR is a flexible rights based approach combining child-focused and child-led (by children) activities with interventions geared towards bringing about change in community, local and national duty bearers. It applies strategies such as awareness raising, capacity building, group formation, institutional development, research and influencing and advocacy across a range of arenas (Plan 2000). The activities interlock as shown in Figure 7.
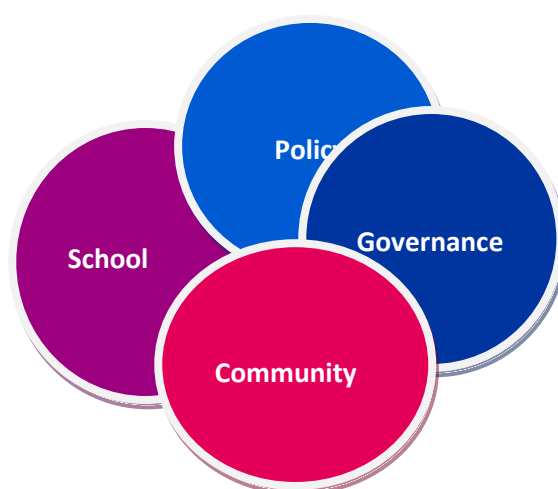

Figure 7: Child based DRR [Building resilience through participation (2008:3)] *(Plan UK 2010).*

This programme is also in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) through promoting and supporting children's rights, enhancing early warning, building a culture of safety and resilience at all levels because children are the future, and strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels (Plan UK 2010).

2.8 Zimbabwe and Commitments to Children

Zimbabwe is a signatory of two documents on children's rights and these are The African Charter on the rights and welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989. Besides these international and regional documents Zimbabwe has its own commitments, namely the two key national policies and a legal framework that supports children. The laws that apply to children include the *Children's Act* (Chapter 5:06), the *Guardianship of Minors Act* and the *Child Abduction Act.* In addition to these are some statutes relevant to children like health, birth and legal age of consent. The two national policies are the National Orphan Care Policy and the National AIDS Policy, which were both adopted in 1999.

The National Orphan Care Policy was the first of its kind in the region, and it established a partnership between government ministries and the community, faith based organizations, the traditional institutions and non-governmental organizations. The policy emphasized that grassroots implementation was the responsibility of communities, local government and non-governmental organizations. It put the Department of Social Welfare in charge of leading the coordination, implementation, monitoring and information sharing through Child Protection Committees at national ward levels.

The implementation of these laws and policies is supported by the National Action Plan (NAP) for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) through mobilizing human, material and financial resources.

2.8.1 National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

The United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) produced a declaration committing states to develop and implement national OVC policies and strategies (UNGA 2001). An OVC working group comprising Government officials, NGOs and Donors called for a

stakeholders' consultative conference to develop the draft NAP. This conference was named "Children at the Centre". It incorporated 50 children comprising the Child Parliamentarians, the peer educators and the OVC. These children lobbied for the inclusion of child participation in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of the NAP. The final NAP document was adopted by the Government in July 2004; the Government then held the children's summit in August 2005 and launched the document in September of the same year (NAP for OVC report 2007).

The NAP's vision "is to reach out to all orphans and other vulnerable children in Zimbabwe with basic services that will positively impact on their lives" (Zimbabwe 2004:5). The NAP, according to the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) 2004 publication, has seven strategic objectives that include "to increase child participation as appropriate in all issues from community to national level". The guiding principles state:

1.   *Children have the capacity, as well as the right, to participate in decisions that affect them.*

2.   *Children are not a homogenous group and diversity of approaches and instruments need to be adopted in promoting their rights.*

3.   *Children are resilient and have great capacity for self-reliance.*

4.   *Non-discrimination in the provision of essential services to children.*

5.   *The need to promote gender equality, or pay equal attention to the roles of girls and boys.*

6.   *Orphan-hood, though a critical driver of poverty and vulnerability, is not the only major driver. There is need to build on existing structures, and pay attention to family ties and traditional capital.*

7.   *Effective coordination of human, material, and financial resources at all levels to make maximum use of local resources and avoid duplication.*

8.   *Close collaboration between government, civil society, and private sector.*

9. *Mainstreaming of cross cutting issues such as HIV and AIDS, child participation, disability and gender in all programmes, strategies, and approaches.*

10. *Harmonizing development partner support for NAP II, in line with the Paris Declaration Principles on Aid effectiveness.*

Adapted from NAP for OVC (2011: 29-30)

The implementation strategy states that it will promote child participation by prioritizing the participation of children in planning, implementation and monitoring interventions that affect them as well as working with existing youth participation structures (GoZ 2005:11-12).

2.8.2 The Programme of Support (PoS)

This programme as a funding mechanism supports the Government in the coordination and management of the NAP. According to Zimbabwe (2008) report, the programme of support is administered by UNICEF, and the working procedure is that donors practise pool funding whereby resources are put in a single account (UNICEF account), and to access the funds, civil society organizations make applications. A technical review committee, which is made up of the Government, National Aids Council, UNICEF and donors, then decide who are qualified to get the grants. Tripartite agreements are then signed between the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, UNICEF, and the organizations outlining their responsibilities. UNICEF also signs contracts with individual organizations before disbursing the funds. The benefiting organizations report to the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and UNICEF. UNICEF then prepares one annual programme report and financial statement, which is then given to all donors.

The major goal of the programme is to reach as many children as possible by spreading resources among a wide group of organizations. The eligible beneficial organizations only qualify if their projects address at least one of the seven strategic objectives of the NAP for OVC but preference is given to projects that provide a holistic package of services and address a broad range of needs (Programme of Support 2008:12).

The PoS has a component for capacity building which covers the seven key areas namely with key area 3 covering child participation: Improving knowledge of key approaches for use in project design and implementation, in particular: child participation, rights based approaches and community centred capacity building (NAP 1, 2006-2010).

2.9 Coordination of Children's Programmes in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe ratified the African Charter in 1995 and it was among the 189 Heads of State and Governments that agreed to the Millennium Declaration, which established common development goals that included universal primary education for all girls and boys. At the 1990 World Summit for Children, Zimbabwe pledged to develop a National Programme of Action for Children (NPAC) (NAP11: 20). The Ministry of Health and Child Welfare using NAP11 as the key vehicle of implementation coordinate the NPAC. According to Fanelli (2001), the NAP for OVC supports the implementation of existing laws and policies and strengthens coordination by mobilizing necessary human, financial, and material resources.

The Government has adopted a collaborative approach to care and support for OVC with programmes coordinated through the Child Protection Committees (CPC) at district, provincial and national levels. OVC programmes include the following:

1. The Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), through which tuition fee, levy, and examination fee assistance is provided to vulnerable children.

2. Tuition fee waiver for children enrolled in rural primary schools. Only levies are charged and they are paid through BEAM if the child qualifies.

3. The Education Trust Fund (ETF), which supports all schools in Zimbabwe with teaching and learning material.

4. Government assistance to vulnerable families, with basic living costs, through programmes like Public Assistance, Drought Relief, Assisted Medical Treatment Order, and Public Works Programme. A conditional cash transfer programme for vulnerable groups is currently being reviewed.

5.   Children in Difficult Circumstances national budget line through which the government resources for children in both government and non-governmental institutions and children in foster care.

6.   NAP1, managed and coordinated by government with support from development partners through PoS. The PoS to be reviewed so that it is in line with NAP II. It is also supported in coordination and targeting though Global Fund round eight, which will continue with NAP II.

7.   Street Children Fund (STF), which provides for the needs for children living in the streets. It supports reintegration of these children with their families and supports for families to ensure smooth and sustainable reintegration.

NAP for OVC also provided a framework for coordination of OVC programmes conducted by Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and NGOs. Some of these organizations receive support from international NGOs to provide care and support to OVC.

2.10 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the systematic collection and analysis of information as a project progresses. It is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of a project or organization (Shapiro cited in PACT 1984). Evaluation is the comparison of actual project impacts against the agreed strategic plans. It looks at what you set out to do, at what you have accomplished, and how you accomplished it (Shapiro cited in PACT 1984). Monitoring and evaluation is geared towards learning from what you are doing and how you are doing it, by focusing on: Efficiency, Effectiveness and Impact (Save the Children Sweden 2008).

There is need for a reliable means of evaluating and demonstrating the positive changes, that participatory programming with children can bring. Monitoring and evaluation are very important to both the implementers and beneficiaries of projects. Lansdown argues that monitoring and evaluation should be done with children throughout the project cycle (Lansdown cited in Hart 1997). Of the same opinion were practitioners and academics at Plan's March 2003 seminar who, however, cited a lack of systematic procedure for capturing the positive changes in

a "rigorous and replicable manner" (Plan 2003 – Children changing their world). Indicators were identified as the fundamental component of all monitoring and evaluation procedures done in the developmental field, but finding uniform indicators for children's participation against the CRC worldwide was a challenge due to different ideologies and practices of children's participation (Plan 2003). Indicators should therefore need to be developed within countries to reflect local circumstances. The indicators should be meaningful to participants and the whole monitoring and evaluation process, including the establishment of projects objectives, which should reflect the concerns and aspirations of participants directly and be of use to them. All project stakeholders should partake in the project cycle presented in Figure 8.
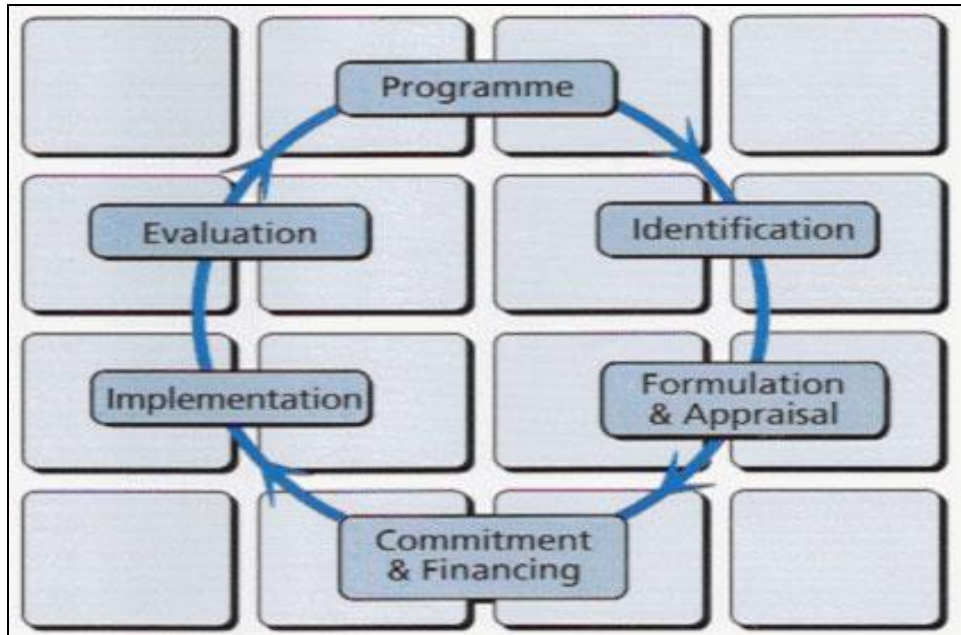
Figure 8: Project Cycle Management stages (Paul 1986)

Each phase of the project leads to the next as shown in Figure 9. This involves carrying out a needs assessment to identify what the project will focus on, carrying out further research into the people affected by the problem and how they are affected by it (the stakeholders) and identifying the risks to the project and how the project's performance will be measured. During the implementation phase of the project the progress of the project should be monitored. Reviews

should be carried out at regular intervals. Once the project is completed, an evaluation should be carried out in order to assess its long-term impact and sustainability (UNICEF 2003).

The planning tools used during the project design phase should be repeated throughout the life of the project. This ensures that any changes that might affect project success are accounted for. Findings from monitoring, reviewing, and evaluation exercises should be documented to benefit organizational learning in order to improve other projects (Fanelli & Musarandega 2007).
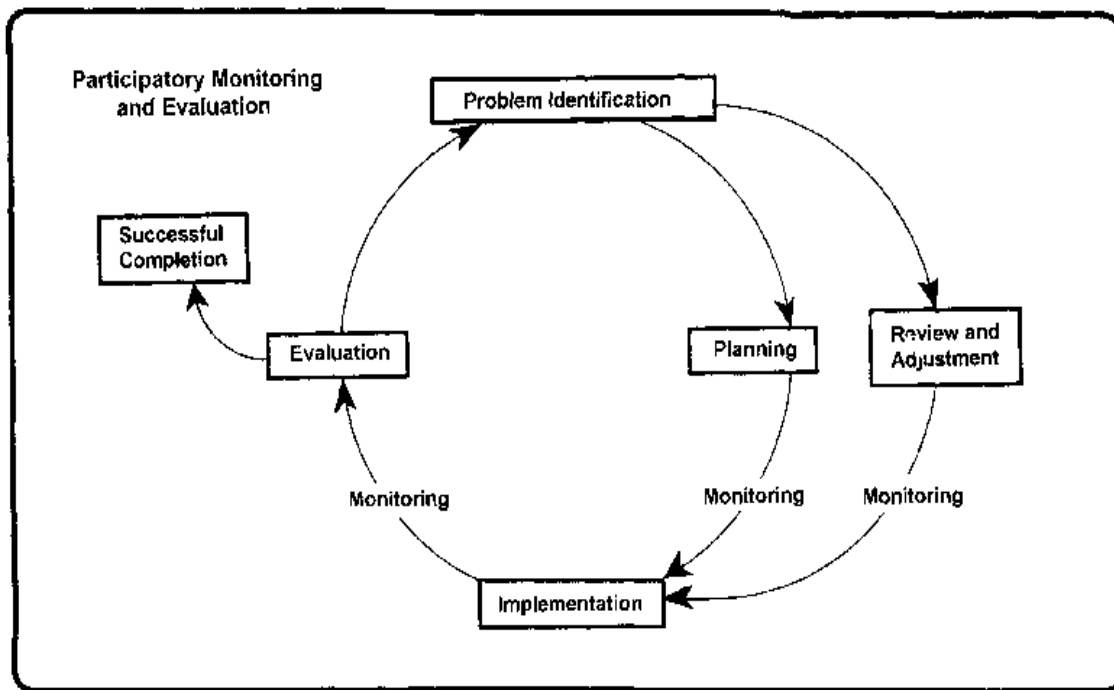
Figure 9: Monitoring and evaluation within the project cycle (Adapted from Woodhill 2000)

Plan International (2003) report argues that it is through monitoring and evaluation of activities that children gain a better understanding of strengths and weaknesses of their activities, identify the procedures and practices of the project that are beneficial and those that are obstructive or redundant (Children Changing their world 2003:14).

2.11 Conclusion

All the reviewed literature has a common view of child participation and the conclusion drawn can be summarized by findings from Asia Regional Working group on Child Labour (2003) cited in Tear fund Roots Resources (2004) presented in table form, namely Table 6.

TABLE 6: WHAT CHILD PARTICIPATION IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

CHILD PARTICIPATION	
INVOLVES:	DOES NOT INVOLVE:
1. **Recognizing the value of children's knowle contributions.** 2. **Sharing experience and expertise with children.** 3. **Learning from children.** 4. **Finding ways to make it easy for children decisions and implement them.** 5. **Helping children and adults to understand th and responsibilities.** 6. **Sharing power with children.** 7. **Working towards respect for the rights of citizens.**	8. Suggesting to children what they should think or s 9. Thinking adults have nothing to learn. 10. Devaluing adult's experience and expertise. 11. Using children to do adults' work 12. No rights for adults and no responsibilities for chi 13. Handing over all power to children. 14. Keeping things the way they are now.

Plan International: Children changing their world (2003)

It has also been noted that the basis of arguments on child participation is the children's rights, particularly the United Nations Commission on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989. The articles, which are referred to regularly, are:

1. *Article 5 – parental provision of direction and guidance in accordance with respect for children's evolving capacity.*

2. *Article 9 – non-separation of children from families without the right to make their views known.*

3. *Article 12 – the right to be listened to and taken seriously.*

4. *Article 13 – the right to freedom of expression.*

5. *Article 14 – the right to freedom of conscience, thought and religion.*

6. *Article 15 – the right to freedom of association.*

7.   *Article 16 – the right to privacy.*

8.   *Article 17 – the right to information.*

The positive impacts of child participation can be realized at the children's personal level, family level and community level. At personal level, children have been found to have self-confidence, useful knowledge, personal development, social development, and positive channel for energy and creativity. At family level, they gain greater parental support and less abuse, enhanced status within the family, and at community level, they develop greater social freedom.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation of the methodology applied to the research study. The focus of the study was to investigate the levels of child participation in OVC programmes undertaken by NGOs in Magwegwe District ward 18, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

3.2 Research Methods

This component specifies research methods used for addressing the research questions, issues, and problems. The methods used seek to answer the questions, address the issues or solve the problems.

Qualitative research design with a minimal use of quantitative research design has been adopted for this study. Qualitative research entails the use of words rather than numbers as compared to the quantitative research design. In qualitative research, Merriam (1998) states, a researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon. According to Mouton (2006:169), "in a qualitative research, the investigator usually works with a wealth of rich descriptive data, collected through methods such as participant observation, interviewing and document analysis." A qualitative approach to research brings about reality, and it also "brings home the experience to those who have not experienced it" (Walker 1995). The quantitative aspect has only been used to quantify closed types of responses and work out percentages.

In descriptive survey, approach a small group or sample is collected from a population under study for data collection purposes. The selection criteria is such that the selected group represents the characteristics of the whole population as Babbie (1991) cited in Chikoko and Mhloyi (1995:63) states that representativeness "is that quality of sample of the same distribution of characteristics of the population from which it is selected". In this study, the

descriptive design facilitated the gathering of relevant information on child participation, and how both the community and the implementers of OVC programmes understood children's rights.

3.3 Study Area

The study concentrated on the levels of child participation in Magwegwe District, Bulawayo in Zimbabwe as affecting the future wellbeing of children. Magwegwe is one of the very old residential areas in Bulawayo and characterized by a population of very old people taking care of many orphans to HIV and AIDS (NAC 2007). The few able- bodied groups' economic status is such that they walk to and from work. In this ward, families` basic needs are hardly met, children drop out of school, youths engage in drug abuse, crime and prostitution are rife, there is high rates of spousal separation and a general exodus of able bodied people to seek employment elsewhere (outward migration), thereby creating child headed families (Magwegwe Welfare 2010). This then leads to the influx of humanitarian agencies coming to assist the OVC. According to the Social services records (January 2011), Magwegwe had the highest number of OVC implementers in Bulawayo, but it had been noted that the plight of those children was not improving, hence the need to investigate.

3.4 Research Techniques and Data Collection Methods

Data was collected from three groups of people, namely the implementing NGOs, field officers; ward 18 community leaders comprising the resident councillor, the residents association and child protection committee, teachers, police officer from the child friendly unit, health staff, parents/guardian, and a youth club patron. Children benefiting from the NGOs projects made up another group for data collection. Three data collection methods were identified for triangulation purposes, and were the structured interviews, the focus group discussions, and the questionnaires.

3.4.1 Structured interviews

According to Lindlof and Taylor (2003), "structured interviews are a means of collecting data for a statistical survey". In this case, the data was collected by an interviewer rather than through a

self-administered questionnaire. Interviewers read the questions exactly as they appeared on the survey questionnaire (Parton 2005 cited in Christensen 2008:28). The choice of answers to the questions was often fixed (close-ended) in advance, though open-ended questions could also be included within a structured interview. Structured interviews standardize the order in which questions are asked of survey respondents, so the questions are always answered within the same context, thereby minimizing the impact of contextual effects, which may arise, especially when dealing with children (Lindlof & Taylor 2003). Child participation structured interviews were used as a qualitative research methodology. There were three types of structured questions for implementing organizations, for community leaders and for children.

3.4.2 Focus group discussions

A focus group "is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging" (Henderson and Naomi 2009 vol1:28). A trained moderator among a small group of respondents conducts it, preferably between 10 and 12 respondents. The interview is conducted in an unstructured and natural way where respondents are free to give views from any aspect. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members.

The advantages of a group discussion is that it produces data and insights that would be less accessible without interaction found in a group setting—listening to others' verbalized experiences stimulates memories, ideas, and experiences in participants. This is also known as the group effect where group members engage in "a kind of 'chaining' or 'cascading' effect; talk links to, or tumbles out of, the topics and expressions preceding it" (Lindlof & Taylor 2002:182). Group members discover a common language to describe similar experiences. This enables the capture of a form of "native language" or "vernacular speech" to understand the situation (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:182). Focus group discussions are also low in cost, results are relatively quickly, and they can increase the sample size of a report by talking to several people at once.

In this study, the group discussions were held with the community leadership comprising the councillor, the residents' association and the child protection committee members, local school

teachers, parents/ guardians, health personnel, police officer from child friendly unit and the youth club patron. Children had their own discussion and their group comprised two primary school children, the children CPC representative, the child parliamentarian, a school dropout, and a kids' club representative. In this study focus group discussions served as an important tool for acquiring feedback regarding the implementation and impact of OVC programmes in Magwegwe district ward 18. The understanding of the concept of child participation with regard to the children's rights and Hart' levels of participation was determined for both the children and the community leaders who were expected to represent the views of other parents not in the committee.

This data collection tool also allowed the interviewer to study the groups in their natural setting than on a one to one interview. In combination with participation observation, the focus group discussions were used to gain access to various cultural and social beliefs that had a stake in child participation levels in the ward under study. This was made possible by the fact that focus groups had a high apparent validity- since the idea was made easy to understand, the results were believable.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

A questionnaire, according to Christensen (2008)," is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents." Questionnaires have been chosen as a research instrument in this study because they are cheap and have standardized answers that make it easy to compile data. The researcher was aware that questionnaires were sharply limited by the fact that respondents must be able to read the questions and respond to them hence the plan to administer to the three OVC programmes implementing organization in ward 18.

There are four ways of administering questionnaires and below are the four ways together with the advantages and disadvantages that are applicable to the area under study:

- *Face to face-* This kind of personal interview has an advantage of an interviewer establishing rapport with the people interviewed. The interviewer can direct the attention of the respondents to the material and motivate them to answer the questions carefully. The

interviewer may be able to notice when the respondents seem not to understand a question and explain its meaning and can probe for answers that are more complete when respondents give brief answers or answers that do not respond to the question. The challenges or disadvantages with face to face administered questionnaires the interviewer may create a social situation that may result in biased responses and that the respondents may say what the interviewer wants to hear in order to have the session ending quickly (McBurney & White 2004: 244).

- *Written responses* − these questionnaires can take several forms: they may be administered to a group, they may be dropped off at a particular location, or they may be mailed to the respondents (McBurney & White 2004: 245). Group administration saves money and time and can be very efficient if the group members attend and participate well. Drop off administration involves dropping off questionnaires to be collected after a period. Mail administration involves distributing questionnaires through mail. Advantages with the written responses are the low costs involved and respondents can complete the questionnaire at their leisure. It also gives opportunity for consultations thereby allowing completeness. The major disadvantage is the response rate; some questionnaires may not come back. The questions that are not clear may be left unanswered.

- *Computerized responses* − Internet accessibility and popularity improved very fast in the past years and now it is accessible to areas that used to be out of reach. This has then improved even the rate at which researches have been done. The computer can check for invalid responses and prompt the interviewer to recheck implausible answers (Azar 2000). Computerized responses may get meaningless data due to completion by illiterate and uncooperative participants but Chang (2002: 62) argues, "Internet data has higher predictive validity than data collected by telephone without sacrificing measurement reliability.

- *Telephone responses* − Like internet surveys, telephone interviews can be conducted rapidly, without having to wait for interviewers to set dates and respondents to mail back their completed surveys. The advantage with this type of questionnaire administration is the fact that it is more difficult to ask open-ended questions over the telephone than with the written

questionnaire. It is also difficult to judge the respondent's degree of seriousness over the telephone (McBurney & White 2004: 245).

In this study, six written responses targeting the organizational directorate and field officers separately were gathered and respondents gave authentic information about their programming in relation to children's rights and participation levels. This type of questionnaire administration was chosen because it allowed the researcher to gather information from staff members independently from organizations administrators and did not give room for collaborative responses. It saved as a checklist for impact measurement and the responses were as close to being accurate as possible since the researcher and the targeted implementers work in the same district (working with the same people using a consolidated district plan.)

3.5 Population

The population under study comprised the orphans and vulnerable children, the community leadership and three non-governmental organizations (staff members) that implement OVC programmes.

3.5.1 Sample size

The researcher dispatched nine questionnaires to three organizations namely Million Memory Project of Zimbabwe Trust (MMPZT), Zinyangeni Christian Church, and Christian Health Care Services (CHCS). The targets for questionnaires were two field officers per organization and the directorate of those organizations. The focus group discussion for adults targeted thirteen people comprising the resident councillor, two members of the residents' association executive committee, and two adult child protection committee members, two primary school teachers, two secondary school teachers, two parents/guardians, one police officer from the child friendly unit, and one youth club patron. The children targeted for both focus group discussion and interviews were 32, which were 0,035% of their population of 900 assisted OVC, and they were separated according to age groups, that is, under 12, 13-15 and 16-18 years old. This was the age group, according to Demetriou (2010), that could understand concepts, analyze issues and make decisions. For the focus group discussion, the first group of children under the age of 12 was a group of ten; 13-15 a group of ten and the last group had 12 children. Two children per age

group were interviewed. The adult focus group discussion team was also interviewed individually.

3.5.2 Sampling procedure

According to Thompson, a sample is a representative of a target population (Thompson et al 1986). In other words, apart from random error, the information derived from the sample is expected to be the same had a complete census of the target population been carried out. The procedures used to select a sample require some prior knowledge of the target population, which allows a determination of the size of the sample needed to achieve a reasonable estimate of the characteristics of the population. Most sampling methods attempt to select units such that each has a definable probability of being chosen. Methods that adopt this approach are called "probability sampling methods." Examples of such methods include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling (Thompson, *et al.* 1986).

McBurney and White argue that, "Surveys differ greatly in value according to how the respondents are sampled" (McBurney & White 2004:247). This study used systematic sampling, which is classified under probability sampling methods, so that all concerned groups are fairly represented. Children were grouped according to age, and then systematic sampling of participants done to get informants.

3.6 Data Collection Plan

The researcher used the resident councillor as an entry point into the ward. The councillor, the residents' association chairperson, and the child protection committee chairperson were interviewed first in order for them to understand the project and be free to release the other members of groups to be interviewed. All interviews and focus group discussions were conducted within ward 18 in the community's own locality to avoid a feeling of intimidation of particularly children. The interviews were conducted by two people and responses were recorded using an audio recorder to allow the interviewer to run through all responses for verification of facts. The youth centre was identified for this purpose. Non-governmental organizations were given questionnaires to complete at their offices to allow them opportunities to consult their proposals and memorandums of agreement with the donors and local authorities. The Social

Services Department of Bulawayo provided the researcher with one officer who assisted in the interviewing of children.

3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data collected was presented in the form of tables, graphs, charts, and photographs in order to give a visual picture of the levels of child participation in the area under study.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994:10), data analysis is used to discover patterns and relationships in the data collected. Smit (2002), states that data analysis involves organizing data that has been collected so that you make sense of it. He further argues that data analysis is a two-way process, first it involves the selection of relevant data and secondly the categorizing of data. Once data has been categorized through the application of codes analysis then begins.

The analysis started by reading raw data to identify perceptions, experiences, feelings, and attitudes. Responses that were important for the study were categorized into themes that were commonly used by participants. Categorizing also covered words and phrases, which held particular meaning in the answering of the research questions. Words and phrases with similar meanings were coded into themes thereby reducing responses to manageable units as suggested by Smit (2002).

The statistical package that was used to analyze gathered data was Excel. Various tables and graphs were employed to tabulate and represent various findings. Conclusions were made based on the findings with recommendations focusing mainly on improved and sustainable involvement of children in disaster mitigation interventions.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought clearance to interview children from the Social Welfare department, which was a core team in the implementation of NAP for OVC with National AIDS Council. The community leaders comprising the ward councillor, the resident associations and the child protection committee were notified about the research and their informed consent sought. The aims and objectives of the study were explained to all mentioned stakeholders, and the

researcher guaranteed confidentiality of all information gathered and promised to use the information gathered for this research only.

3.9 Conclusion

This part was mainly the discussion of how data was collected, and why the researcher chose the data collection tools used. The sampling that was done gave an allowance of a representation that cut across the types and cognitive levels of children in the ward. The presence of a social worker made it easier for the children interviewed, because of the way she paraphrased the discussion questions and probed for detailed answers. The questionnaires were emailed to the targeted individuals who printed, and then completed them thereby reducing time for dispatching. The community leaders were a fair representation of the community, because it catered for all stakeholders in the children's lives. The findings presented in the next chapter are guided recommendations for the success of future programmes.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of presentations and analysis of data. The data collection process was successful as all the selected participants attended the interviews, and focus group discussions held at Magwegwe Youth Centre, a central place where residents, food distributions, support group and kids' club meetings are held. The mood at all meetings was relaxed due to the councillor's welcome remarks that highlighted the importance of free and effective participation in order to pave the way to the meaningful and sustainable interventions by NGOs. All three NGOs and their field officers completed their questionnaires.

4.2 Overview of research findings

The findings pointed to four views on child participation, namely the view of the NGOs directorate, field officers, the adults in the community and the children.

4.2.1 Questionnaires

The targets for the questionnaire administration were three organizations working with the OVC, namely MMPZ, CHCS and Zinyangeni Christian Church. The organizational information confirmed that all three organizations were working with the OVC in ward 18, and had been working with OVC for over three years on average. Their target age groups (4-18years) were in line with the NAP for OVC definition of a child.

They were all familiar with the Nap for OVC and were using the NAP Indicator report returns book, which had 23 indicators on the seven areas of activity comprising child participation, birth registration, formal education, social services (psycho-social support; water and sanitation; health, nutrition and hygiene education; shelter), extra-curricular education, livelihoods support and child protection.

4.2.2.1 Organizational and field officers' responses

Responses from the nine respondents operating from Magwegwe ward 18 were as shown in Figure 10.
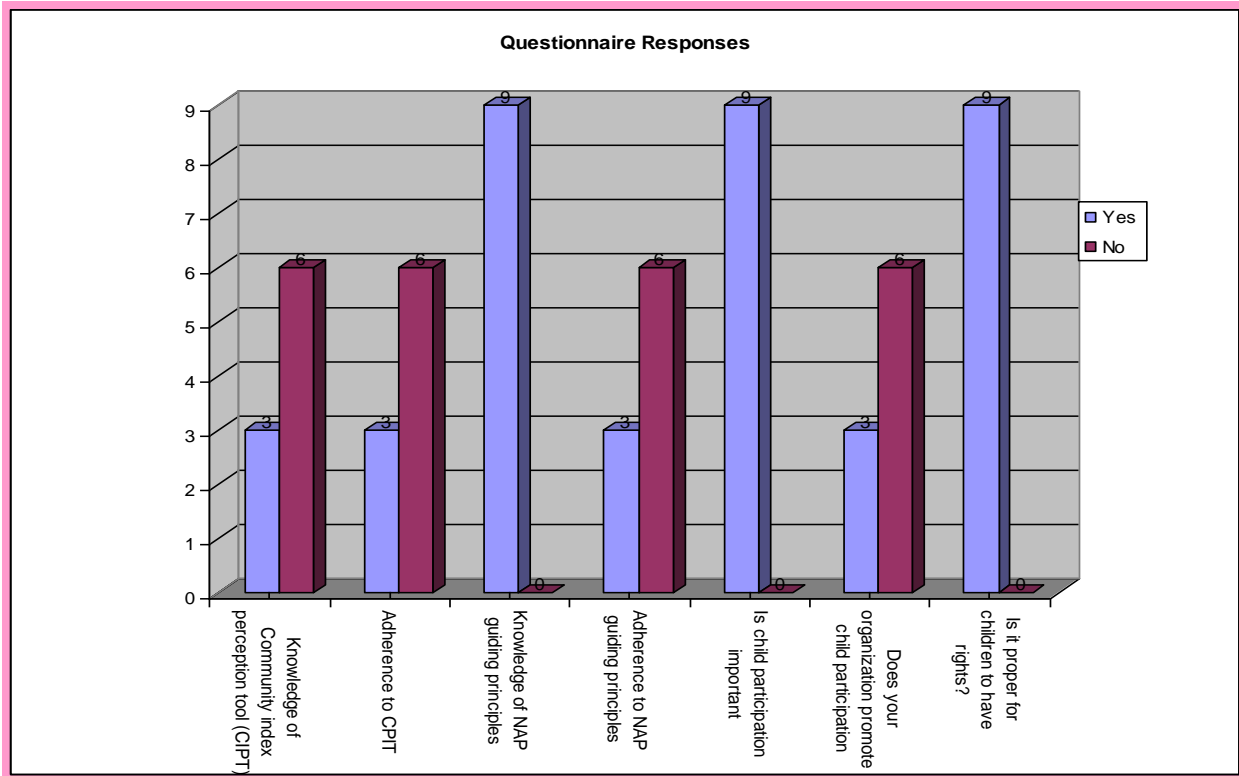

Figure 10: Questionnaire responses

The directorate knew the Community index perception tool (CIPT) and they all claimed using it as a checklist for their programmes in monitoring and evaluation. The entire group of field officers said they had never used it for community assessment, because they were not conversant with it themselves. The officers evaluated the programme by interviewing the councillor and parents of the child beneficiaries.

The three directors listed the guiding principles as they appeared in the NAP for OVC document, and claimed adherence to them whilst all their field officers could not name even one, hence could not ascertain whether there was adherence to them.

The organizations, directorate claimed understanding of the importance of involving children in decisions that affect them because, they claimed that children were interested parties, and their involvement meant programme ownership was enhanced and there were higher chances of its success. On the other hand, the field officers argued that even though they believed in involving children, there was no room to involve them in choosing what they wanted, because the funding proposals that they wrote in most cases would be responses to the calls for proposals for prescribed activities. Once they went out of the proposed areas, they risked missing the funding. The officers highlighted that children had varying needs and perceptions of the things they wanted in life, hence the difficulty of accommodating all their needs and desires in a single project. In the levels of involvement in the project cycle, all field officers concurred that participation was easy at the implementation level, because that was the only time, they went out to mix with their project beneficiaries. The monitoring and evaluation exercise only involved children when donors came for verifications of funds acquittals, and when directors did field visits.

All organizations felt that children's rights were important, and it was proper for children to have them and be taught about them so that they could use them as defence where there were possibilities of abuse. They highlighted that the rights be enforced because children were vulnerable and exposed to all sorts of risks, and knowing their rights helped them to make necessary moves towards addressing their plight. They have to know what they could tolerate and what to tell whom in terms of referrals. Non-recognition of the rights, according to some respondents, widened the gap of understanding between parents/caregivers and children, hence more conflict and abuse.

4.2.3 Community leaders interview findings

All the 13 targeted community leaders (seven males and six females) were interviewed in a space of three days and Figure 11 indicates the responses received.
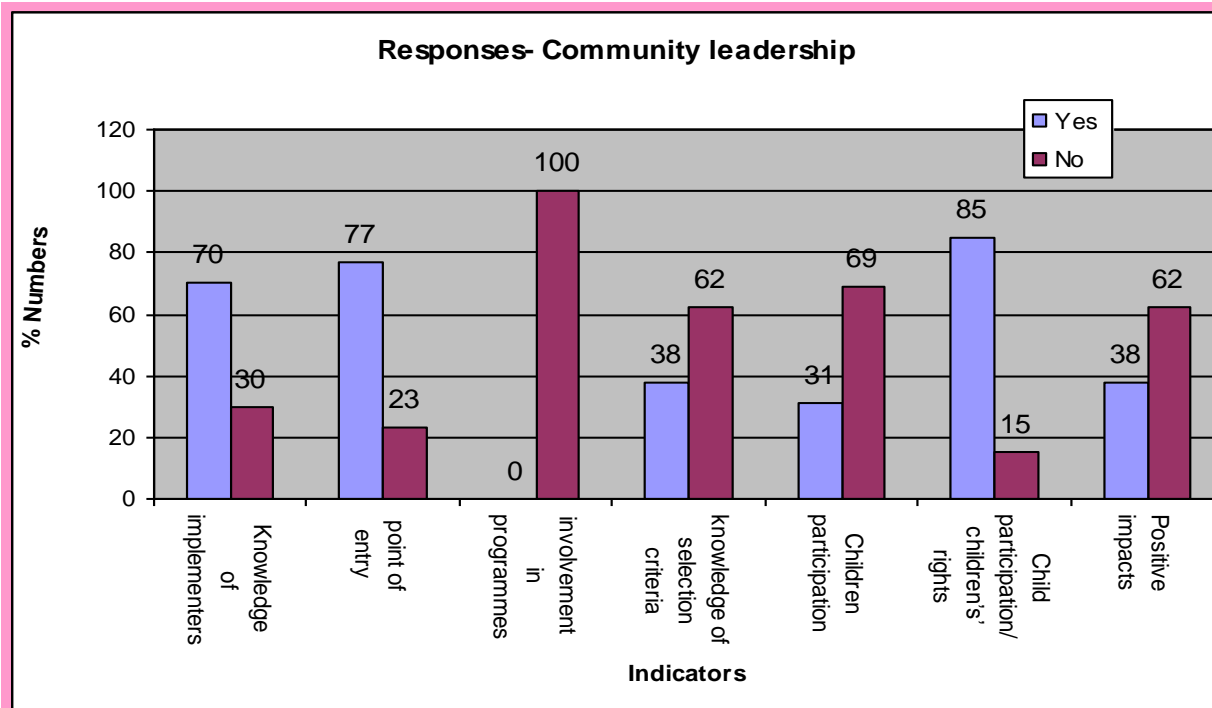
Figure 11: Community leaders' interview responses

The majority of community leaders (70%) knew the implementers in the ward, and only 30% were not sure of the total number. Close to three quarters of the group (77%) knew the right procedure followed by implementers when they came to the ward to carry out some intervention programmes. The procedure followed was: they registered with the Social Services Department and then reported to the resident councillor who then referred them to the residents association and the Ward AIDS Action Committee to assist in reaching the intended beneficiaries and general community awareness. All participants claimed non-involvement in the programmes, whilst only 38% knew the selection criteria used by the organization currently carrying out OVC programmes. The rest explained that the organizations just came in, and worked with a few volunteers who usually made sure their dependants benefited from the projects despite the serious needs some orphans and vulnerable children had. The resident councillor (a retired school headmaster) raised concern over the NGOs who chose their own beneficiaries, yet there was an OVC register with all the criteria they could wish to work with.

Of the 13 respondents, only four acknowledged children's participation in the programmes, and the rest complained that NGOs involved neither the children nor the adults. They suspected that

was a way to avoid accountability to their project beneficiaries. The child protection committee members reported that the NGOs in question did not involve the children at any level, because they never planned in the community, but came with complete plans.

The professional respondents (teachers and the nurse) saw children's rights as good because they empowered children and guided the parents and guardians on the parenting skills for the upbringing of children with high self-esteem and confidence. They also explained that children's rights protected children from abuse and encouraged children's voices and inputs in decision-making.

The importance of child participation was acknowledged by 85% of the respondents, whilst 15% thought children needed to depend on what the parents saw fit for them because they were young and could not make concrete decisions. The secondary school teacher cited a certain Constance Kamii who argued that the way a child learned how to make decisions was by making decisions, not by following directions. The teacher went on to explain the benefits of child participation by saying, "*We cannot expect children to accept ready-made values and truths all the way through childhood and then expect them to suddenly make choices in adulthood.*" The councillor had the same sentiments. He said that the only way we could have a democratic world was to help children acquire skills of decision making and how to use them by participating in things that affected them. By so doing, we would have prepared them for a democratic culture. The youth centre patron emphasized the importance of participation of children in matters that affected them, and cited the benefits of participation as the development of stronger identities and self-esteem, and the understanding of a need to trust and have compassion towards others. The child protection committee members commented that participation did not only promote development, it was development, because it built citizenship, a move towards a democratic society. The police officer described denying children their participation rights when it came to maltreatment and abuse, because one would be forcing children to be what they are not.

The residents' association chairperson believed that children should follow decisions made for them by adults. He gave an example of garden and chicken projects that the adults initiated and then incorporated the young ones at Magwegwe High School. They were doing well because of the guidance from elders. His argument was that adults know what is good for the children and

they had a cultural mandate to lead by example. He also explained that the youth had been trained in home gardening by CHCS and that decision of training in these skills had been made for them by the NGO and now was yielding positive results. Figure 12 and Figure 13 are photographs of the youth vegetable and chicken projects.

Figure 12: Youth showing off his cabbage bed at Magwegwe High School

Figure 13: Youth chicken project

Impact of the programmes was described as positive by 38% of the respondents, whilst 62% thought the interventions were just a way of accessing funds from some donors, and using the communities as fronts to squander the funds. The positive results seen by the teachers and other professionals were the improved self-esteem of children who underwent life skills training with CHCS, and reduced self-stigmatization of children who got psychosocial support from MMPZ during Kids clubs sessions. CHCS positive programme results were evidenced by the above pictured youth project in Figure 12 and Figure 13. The police officer, however, commented on the Magwegwe youth project as a poor or bad way of involving children. He said that youth involved participated not because they loved the project, but because of material gains and fear of being labelled rebels by adults. Such projects were described as unsustainable.

Male participants seemed to be biased towards having youths fend for themselves claiming it trained the youths to provide for families once married. They argued that empowerment was letting the children experience and endure hardships so that they were prepared to face challenges. It was a different case with the female participants, who all seemed to concur that exposing children to hardships made children find easier ways of earning a living, which was usually criminal in nature. One of the female teachers pointed out the fact that patriarchal communities had problems relating to their children, let alone discussing issues. Hence, there were the continued abuse of children and bitterness generation after generation.

The interviews revealed that the community leaders were not happy with how NGOs were conducting their programmes in the ward, and blamed social welfare for not guiding the implementers during registration. The councillor referred the interviewer to the council by-laws that stated that all organizations should use the councillor as the point of entry, and could only implement the programmes if the councillor was agreeable to their projects viability. He then suggested that these by-laws be made effective by adding a clause that gave the councillors power to expel the non-adhering organizations. The resident association chairperson suggested that all organizations first met the community and shared their plans before implementing, and should involve the community in beneficiary selection or use community OVC registers for transparency purposes. The community health nurse suggested that all stakeholders be involved because they could have various roles to play, for example, the health department could assist

especially in the nutrition, and health related programmes. That, he said was to avoid a scenario of feeding children with expired foods and even foods not prescribed for child growth or with negative hormonal effects.

The interviewees who saw it proper for the NGOs to facilitate participation of stakeholders in the community including the children, who were directly affected by the projects, concurred that if programmes did not involve the community, children could boycott whatever assistance, and that could ruin the organization's reputation. In the process, children would lose trust in organizations' genuineness in helping.

4.2.4 Community leaders focus group discussion findings

The adult group for a focus group discussion comprised the councillor, two members of the residents' association executive committee and two adult child protection committee members, the community health nurse/sister, two primary school teachers, two secondary school teachers, one youth club patron, a police officer and two parents/ guardians. The chart below shows the proportions of the interviewees.
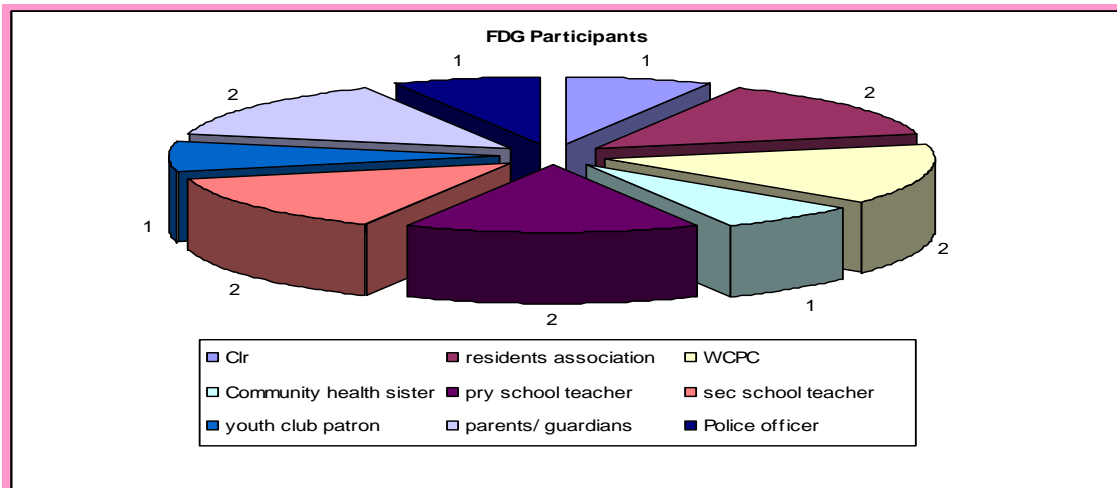

Figure 14: Focus group discussion - adult composition

All the participants had heard about children's rights and could explain some of them, but the issue of the rights led to a heated argument on whether it was proper to involve children in

decision-making or not. The issues that raised eyebrows were the CRC articles, which stated that children had the following rights:

1.   *Article 3- All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.*

2.   *Article 12-Children have the right to give their opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.*

3.   *Article 13-Children have the right to find out things and share what they think with others.*

4.   *Article 16- Children have the right to privacy.*

5.   *Article 37- No one has the right to punish children in a cruel or harmful way.*

   (CRC 1989)

The parents and the residents' association members felt that whilst they always had the best for their children at heart, it was very unfair to expect them to be accountable for their actions to their children, and it could encourage disrespect. The other group felt this right was fair because decisions were part of life and once a mistake was made it was the child who suffered consequences of adults' decisions hence the importance of considering the children's views. At first the participants were divided on the fact that children's opinions should be taken seriously, but after the secondary school teacher explained this right in the form of benefits that go with it (building the child's character and training the child to be a responsible adult), they accepted it. They explained that there could be parameters depending on the relevancy of the opinion to the issue at hand.

The right about finding out things, was said to be very dangerous as children would then dig into adults' privacy and publicize bad things in order to coerce adults into succumbing to the children's unimportant whims. The group, except for teachers, believed that children had no privacy as long as they were less than 18 years of age. They argued that privacy could cover mischievous and harmful acts. Article 37 was dismissed by the group as referring to teachers who were usually culprits of corporal punishment. After a debate, the group saw it fit that

children be given fair punishment that equalled the types of offences because corporal and other harmful punishment hardened children to the extent of making them hard-core rebels. They also agreed that letting children find out things was a noble thing to do because it allowed children to understand the reason why some things were done in one way rather than the other, for example the dangers/consequences of drug abuse.

The schoolteachers, the nurse, the youth centre patron and the police officer were very clear on the rights of the children and the binding laws and policies. They believed that those rights helped children by enhancing participation in the programmes and activities that encouraged growth, maturity, confidence and boosted self-esteem. The teachers argued that the difference between the children whose rights were observed and participation in important issues that were discussed at home encouraged them to do well in debates and general class discussions. They could articulate issues well and were confident of their opinions. On the other hand, those sidelined and not given such privileges, were withdrawn and no matter how intelligent they could be, they lacked self-confidence and matured slowly.

The rest of the participants argued that generally, children's rights were there to instil the spirit of rebellion in children and to turn the children against their parents and guardians. They believed that the rights were foreign, hence not applicable to their culture. They lamented the loss of the culture that kept children out of sight unless summoned by adults to be sent on errands. They believed that type of distance-instilled respect and not the rights that talked of children being heard, their opinions taken into consideration in decision-making, and even encouraged that the adults sit at a round table with children to discuss issues.

The first group felt it right for organizations doing OVC programmes to involve children in everything done towards improving the well-being of children. That, they said could be done bearing in mind the age group and level of maturity, for example the under 12 years of age should choose the games they wanted and the type of toys they would like bought for them. The group believed by so doing the organizations would be doing children a lot of service, because it would help them feel empowered and believed they were part of improving their own lives.

Although there were different opinions on how the children were participating in NGO programmes, what was evident in the end was that the adults had little knowledge of NGO activities. The participants commonly agreed that the Government of Zimbabwe was very serious about the children's rights, and that was evidenced by the kind of sentences that were given to child abusers, especially rapists.

After a long debate on the discussion guiding questions, the group agreed that child participation was important and for it to be meaningful it should start from a home environment during the children's formative years, continue at school and at youth centres and other community gatherings. The participants expressed a wish that NGOs work with all the community stakeholders including the children and the government to line up ministries to improve the life of children. They argued that the projects carried out should be the real needs of the community and should come from the community. The teenagers could be asked for their opinions for projects acceptability purposes and easy impact assessments. Their conclusion was that children should be helped to shape their future correctly and independently, and adults should be made aware of rights, laws and policies about children so that they did not come to loggerheads with the Government, but supported its efforts to assist children.

4.2.5 Orphans and Vulnerable Children interview findings

Children interviewed were six in all and they comprised three girls (primary school, kids' club representative and a school dropout) and three boys (primary school, child led CPC and child parliamentarian). Figure 15 reflects the respondents' representation.
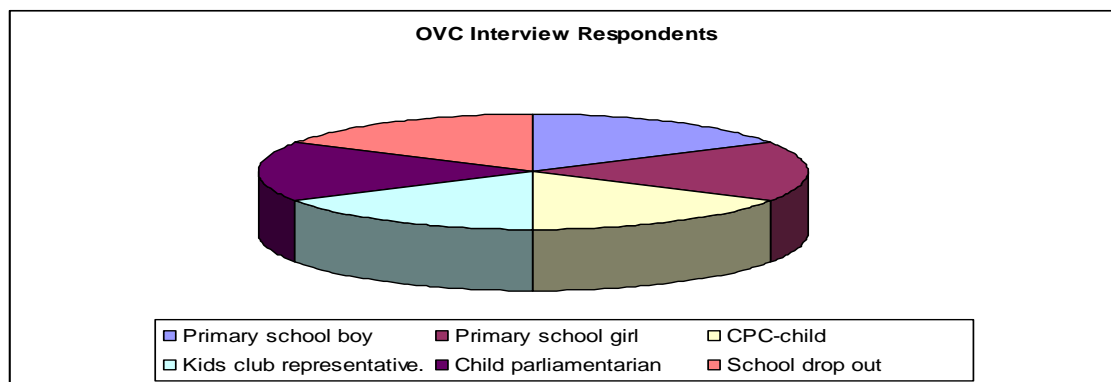

Figure 15: OVC Interview respondents

The assistance received by the respondents from the NGOs operating in the ward covered wet feeding in the form of porridge from Magwegwe youth centre and prepared by Zinyangeni Christian Church community volunteers, life skills trainings by CHCS and MMPZ psychosocial support sessions conducted through kids' clubs weekend sessions at the youth centre.

The terms child protection, children's rights and child participation definitions were attempted by all children with the younger ones taking time because they claimed they could not get the right words. Children argued that the terms had something in common such that the attempt to describe one ended up encroaching onto the next definition. However, the older children believed that all three the terms had to do with the well-being of children. It should be noted that children aged between 13 and 18 years were exposed to the terms by virtue of being on child committees and working with organizations that were into OVC programming.

Below is the table of the summarized definitions presented per age group:

TABLE 8: ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF TERMS

RESPONDENT GROUP	TERM	DEFINITION
Below 12 years	Child protection	Making sure the children are safe at home, protecting children from rape sure teachers do not beat children and making sure children are not taker killers.
	Children's rights	What children should be allowed to do, what children want and what childre
	Child participation	Children doing things, children acting and children working at home.
13-15 years	Child protection	Adults making sure the children get fair treatment at home, school ar community. Creating a safe place for children to live in.
	Children's rights	What the children can do without being punished for it or what children are to do.
	Child participation	Children taking part in issues that involve them: "nothing for us without us" to be the child led CPC motto. Children's opinions taken seriously by adults.
16-18 years	Child protection	Making sure children are safe from abuse, which may be physical, emo spiritual. Making laws to protect children.
	Children's rights	They are declarations that guide the children's treatment; they are binding children activities, duties of adults concerning children or laws and declar favour of children's growth and freedom.
	Child participation	Children taking part in things that affect them- making decisions ab wellbeing, giving opinions that are considered by adults in decision-making a involved in evaluation of programmes.

The programmes were described by children as relevant to their lives, although the age group of 15 and upwards explained that although relevant, the programmes did not cover much ground and therefore their impact was insignificant compared to the number of OVC and their needs. The child parliamentarian lamented that Magwegwe did not have big NGOs that had proper funding and that was a disadvantage to the OVC because their needs were not holistically covered.

All children were not involved in the creating of the projects, and had never been consulted for such involvement in all the programmes that had been carried out in the ward. Although the children in the 13 - 18 age group were aware of NAP principles, they explained that they had no

platform for airing their views on how things should be done. The parliamentarian noted that even at the child parliament session adults listened to what the children said, but there was no clear evidence that their views were taken into account. Hence, the children no longer attached value to the meeting sessions.

The children argued that given opportunities to change how things were done, their first point of call would be proper consultations before the organizations were allowed to work in the ward. The older children concurred that organizations should bring in meaningful programmes/projects that would change life significantly and should not come with perceived needs. They should determine real needs from the would be beneficiaries, that is, the children with the assistance from community leaders. The younger children wanted organizations to come with video games in the place of dolls and toy cars claiming that those were for babies. In a way, they wanted to choose the toys for their clubs.

4.2.6 Children's focus group discussion findings

The children's group composition comprised three age groups as shown by Figure 16 below.
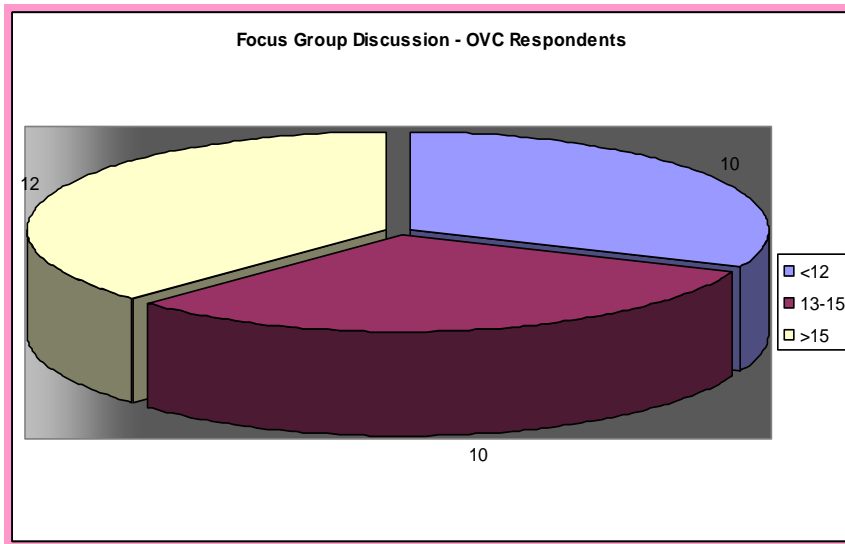

Figure 16: Focus Group Discussion – OVC respondents

➢ **Group A- under 12**

This group comprised the kindergarten to primary school going age. They had a flimsy understanding of programmes carried out in the ward, but could explain the feeding programme carried out by

Zinyangeni Christian Church and the kids club sessions (by MMPZ) they attended during weekends, and how they viewed the two. The children explained that they gathered every day to eat the porridge which they called "ipoyoyo" and translated it to mean funny porridge. They did not know the reasons why they were fed with porridge in the afternoon, the meal that under normal circumstances was taken in the morning instead of proper lunch. They described the kids' club sessions as "boring."

The children aged 10 to 12 years had an idea about children's rights and the rights that they could articulate were;

1. *The right to education* − they pointed out that going to school would help them assume positions of teachers and headmasters when they grew up. They believed that people driving cars were educated and therefore if they went to school they would afford to drive nice cars.

2. *The right to play* − the group claimed that children staying with both their biological parents could play at will, but the orphans had no time to play because they were doing some adult chores like cooking and taking care of siblings.

3. *The right to be heard* − this was explained by the school going group as the time the adults should give to the children to talk about issues that affect them, for example, what they wanted for lunch, the clothes they preferred for Christmas and when they wanted to tell the adults interesting stories from their experiences at school or on their way home. They wanted adults to pay attention.

4. *The right to freedom* − freedom, according to the children, was being able to do what one wanted without adults' interference. They believed free people enjoyed life. In relation to the way, they would like to be treated by adults and NGOs, the children expressed that they wanted to be treated like normal human beings with feelings, and like every child with living parents. They needed to be loved, hugged, and given presents by their family members. They also wanted Christmas presents from NGOs because of the role of the significant others whom they lost to death.

Figure 17: The power of love in the journey of life - REPSSI (2004)

The children under the age of 12 highlighted that they needed more than playing with dolls, toy cars and indoor games, they wanted to go out to visit places like game parks and airports. They wanted to be consulted concerning the refreshments given after the clubs' daily activities. They did not want porridge, but preferred being given dry rations to take home and eat with their families and good clothes to wear during civvies days at school. They needed to be respected even at boreholes (adults do not queue when they find children on their own). NGOs should sink small boreholes for children alone.

➢ **Group B- 13 to15**

This early teen age group understood children's rights better than the previous group. They understood the situations they were in, and knew what they wanted in life. They knew all the organizations that were into OVC programming and the selection criteria was painful for them to articulate as they explained that the NGOs constantly reminded them of their predicament by always referring to them as OVC and introducing them as such to visitors who usually worsened their pain by grouping them for pictures. They argued that this was a constant reminder that they were poor or their parents died hence the assistance given. They described the selection criteria as "stigmatizing, labelling, degrading, and inhuman". They did not believe in registers because they attached them to their vulnerability and hated NGOs because they stigmatized them on the pretext that they were helping.

These children named and explained the relevance of the following rights in their everyday lives;

1. The right to play and rest

They explained that NGOs were not supportive because they did not assist with improving playgrounds, but were eager to facilitate income-generating programmes. They gave an example of CHCS training them in gardening and then monitoring the work in the gardens. The community was turning playgrounds designated for children's use to agricultural land, which meant that they did not value playing. The adults use them as vendors and minders even when it is time to attend their school assignments/homework. This claim was proved when the interviewer attended a children's life skills workshop. Some children could not play because they were selling snacks.

Figure 18: Children selling frozen super cools and some snacks during a workshop.

2. The right to have their opinions listened to and taken seriously by adults

Their argument was that even though they were allowed to express their needs and priorities at certain times, the organizations never came back with their requests, for example sports kits and camp fees for August 2010 school holidays requested from CHCS in July 2010 was never honoured to date. The children pointed out that they then saw no need to continue giving their opinions for nothing.

3. The right to education

Children referred to Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), which they described as helping only those with parents or caring guardians who could convince the BEAM selection committee that they deserved the assistance. The deserving children were said to be sidelined. A form 3 girl who was a double orphan testified that she submitted all the necessary papers to the committee for consideration well in time for the selection, but was shocked to discover that she had been struck off the beneficiary register. She, however, was reinstated with the assistance of her class teacher who made a successful follow up. They also blamed NGOs who did not give holistic education assistance, but chose one component like school uniforms when the child did not have school fees. They argued that education was a package of school fees, uniforms, stationery, and food.

4. The right to privacy

Some organizations made it public that they were helping the OVC, and it made the children feel their right to privacy infringed. For example, an announcement at assembly, "All those who are paid for by World Vision should meet the Headmaster in room 5." They also pointed out that they were not allowed to go for testing and counselling on their own, even though they were orphans, the service providers wanted them to be accompanied by adults, and to have strong reasons for wanting the services.

5. The freedom of choice

They argued that they should be left alone to choose friends; churches; what to wear and what projects they feel are working towards a better future. The examples they emphasized were; being denied to put on what is fashionable and being forced to do projects, which are not in line with what they want to be when they grow up. The children pointed out that the adults did not know much about children's rights hence the constant breech of those rights.

About the relevance of the programmes, the children claimed that the only relevant programme was the TEENSTAR training by CHCS. The explanation about this programme was that STAR was an acronym for Sexual Teaching in the context of Adult Responsibility. The age groups were 12-13, 14-16 and 17-24. The curriculum differed according to age

group and was more of behaviour formation to prevent early sexual debut, and helped those who did not get information until they fell victims to work towards secondary virginity. Topics covered were fertility, media and behaviour, dating, courtship, how to choose partners and for the already parents the teachings covered how to reform and do the right thing. There was a group called Families for Life that worked with the unaccepted in families and helped them find their way back into the families. Although the children liked these teachings, their complaint was that there was too much of teaching and less of games and it made the programme biased more towards school than general development.

The MMPZ kids' club members were grateful that the organization was counselling them individually and memory work was an effective way to allow healing after bereavements, but they thought the weekend club session was monotonous. The children would have preferred a variety of activities like going out to game parks and having games tournaments than playing indoor games and drawing all the time. To them, what was currently being done was kids' stuff; the level, which this group felt, was past.

> **Group C- 16 to 18**

This was the upper teenage group, which was very sensitive, critical, and reactive. They had an almost full understanding of their rights, and could do anything possible to make sure they adhere to them. The interviewer was told that they could prioritize issues or even boycott what they did not want.

During the discussion, the children, amongst other rights, mentioned the right to freedom of choice and speech, education, being listened to and opinion taken seriously, life, fair treatment, and protection by both the community and the government. They expressed the pains of knowing rights and being treated otherwise by the same custodians of the rights like the government, which does not enforce the right to free basic education like what was happening in Botswana, the neighbouring country.

The teenagers argued that they wanted to be treated as if equal human beings, hated constant reminders that they were OVC, which they claimed, defeated the whole idea of healing from pains of losses of loved ones, and actually increased vulnerability since most children opted

out of projects and even contemplated suicide. Their concern about the freedom of choice was the denial by organizations to choose projects based on individual capabilities, and argued that being under one umbrella name of OVC did not mean they wanted to grow up to be the same stereotyped adults. Some community leaders discouraged them from pursuing music and drama claiming that it had no future in Zimbabwe yet the children hated the idea of being confined to Zimbabwe for life. The children wanted to be part of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation of OVC programmes, which currently were just prescribed by organizations.

They criticized NGOs wrongly prioritized projects and gave an example of repairing roads when the raw sewer was flowing all over the residential area and even blocking pathways into homes. They would rather have pressing issues like a clean environment that is safe with installed water tanks in the inadequately water serviced area of Magwegwe.

Figure 19: Youths trying to pass by a burst manhole in Old Magwegwe (*Source IRIN Africa 2008*)

Figure 20: Flow of raw sewage in Magwegwe *(Source- IRIN Africa 2011)*

The youths believed that if they were involved in decision-making they could assist in the choice of projects that were developmental in nature rather than projects like food aid that were neither sustainable nor empowering. Such projects, they said, encouraged a dependency syndrome within communities. They pointed out that they did not want to live a life of begging, but wanted to be assisted out of poverty because they were able to earn their own income given opportunities.

They also pointed out that in relation to being able to testify in court, there was a gap because this right applied only in cases of physical abuse and not in cases when relatives looted their property. The youth wanted NGOs to advocate for a policy that gave children below the age of 18 powers to testify in all issues affecting their well-being and safety.

They expressed displeasure in some organizations offering fragmented interventions and argued that some gaps determined the effectiveness of interventions. For example, a child whose school fees had been paid, might still not go to school without a birth certificate, a school uniform, and food at home. Helping one child in a family was just a drop in the ocean because vulnerability to other life issues could remain the same. Families needed to be enabled to take care of the OVC with sustainable projects like gardening and small livestock rearing. The youth, however appreciated the TEEN STAR programme and the reason was that it dealt with their experiences and gave them opportunities to correct their mistakes through the secondary virginity skills training.

The discussion on changing the way things were done, they argued that they needed their opinions to be taken into consideration in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes. They described a scenario of mentorship that would in the end, allow a hand-over take-over situation. They highlighted that if the projects were prescribed for them, sustainability could be compromised because one possibly pursued only that which one was happy doing.

4.2.7 Analysis and interpretation

The survey, therefore, revealed four levels of understanding and implementation of child participation. Non Governmental Organizations have the knowledge about the NAP for OVC

and its guiding principles, but are not adhering to them. They did not involve children in their projects and although the projects had been running for more than three years, the impact was still not visible to many in the community, and the children who were supposed to be benefiting did not see much value in the projects because they claimed they were not involved. It was not really, what they would have preferred given an opportunity to decide.

It can be concluded that two out of three NGOs in the study did not involve children in their programmes and from the children's discussions, their programmes added insignificant value to the children's well-being and future. Only one organization CHCS, was described as adding value to the children's well-being by both the children and the community leaders since its programmes equipped children with life skills for possible life challenges like what happened when one had made a mistake like having a child before marriage. The programme was about secondary virginity and reunited rebellious children with their families. It taught conflict resolution and other useful skills. About involving children in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation was not very clear to some community leaders, but the fact that children were helped to make decisions concerning things like reuniting with families and deciding to rebuild their lives after mistakes was evidence of participation and respecting opinions.

The community leaders, although not very conversant with the rights of the children and the principle of child participation, had the success of the children at heart and only needed sensitization to achieve common understanding of the benefits of child participation. Involving youth in the gardening and poultry projects and the plan to revamp Magwegwe Youth Centre had a component of children's rights of participation and playing. According to Hart (1992) and Pretty (1995), they were at level 5 of the ladder of participation and were unknowingly practising meaningful participation. They only needed a proper understanding of both the children's rights and meaningful participation for them to assist children to realize their goals in life as is stated by CRC article 5.

"Families have a responsibility to help children learn to use their rights, and to make sure that children's rights are protected."(United Nations Cyberschoolbus, 2002)

The children in Magwegwe's ward 18 were very dependent on the adults in the community and the NGOs initiatives. They could not do anything unless they were given opportunities to partake in improving their well-being by participating in decision-making. These children were aware of the hazards in their lives, their family circumstances, and had answers and possible solutions, but they lacked support from the adult community. They were not given credit for the awareness and not given opportunities or encouraged to participate in discussions, yet they believed their participation might even bring about a better understanding between them and their parents or guardians. According to them, meaningful participation was the answer to addressing their real needs and a successful future.

The Government of Zimbabwe, a custodian to the NAP for OVC (2006-2011) has a mandate to ensure the implementation of programmes according to the NAP guiding principles, which put the OVC at the centre of programming. The study showed that although the plans were child friendly, they were not being enforced, and there were no effective enforcement tools for use by the monitoring and evaluation body- the Social Services Department.

The levels of participation were clearly linked to the observation and practice of children's rights. Participants identified some benefits in child participation, which were, however, not confined to children alone but the whole community and the nation at large. Below is a summary of the benefits of child participation in programmes:

1. *Improved self-esteem and self-confidence.*

2. *Social freedom and social development.*

3. *Greater understanding of issues affecting families.*

4. *Acquisition of useful knowledge.*

5. *Acquisition of life skills.*

6. *Personal development.*

7. *Positive channel of energy and creativity.*

8.   Greater family support and less abuse.

9.   Improved family relations.

10.   Enhanced culture of democracy and

11.   Reduction in harmful behaviours.

In Figure 21 is a summary of findings on the levels of children participation in ward 18 in relation to Hart and Pretty ladders of levels of participation.
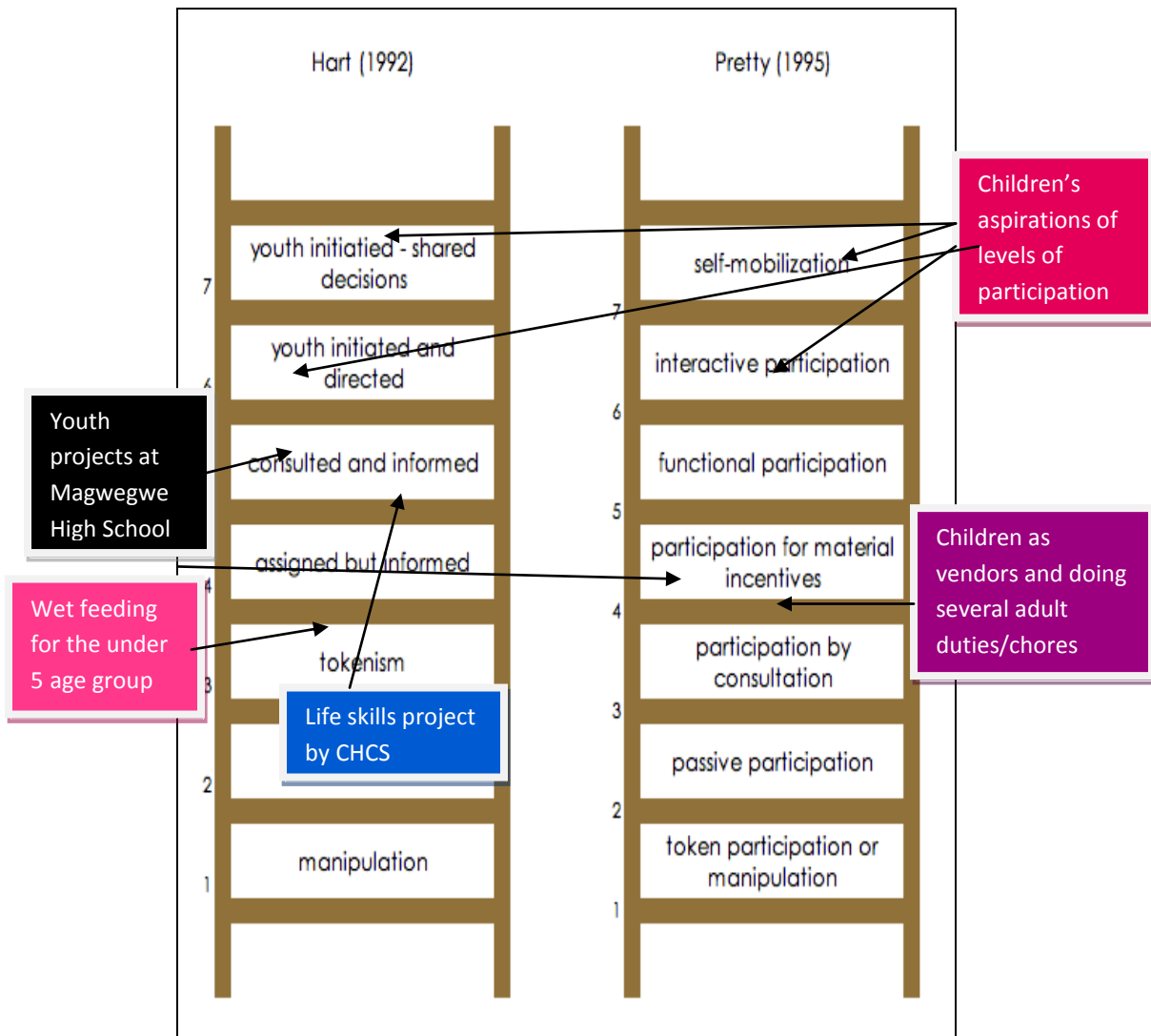

Figure 21: Levels of child participation in Magwegwe ward 18.

4.3 Conclusion

The definition of participation from the children's point of view can now be understood as being informed about a project or deciding the project and becoming involved in it. It is a process of getting the children's buy in and working with them throughout the project's life cycle. Participation entails giving the children a right to make choices and decisions about their needs. It has been learnt that the best advocates for children are children and therefore the child led child protection committees are the best consultants for children's programmes. It is now clear that participation of children in day-to-day family activities is not meaningful participation because children have no input in the decisions of what needs to be done, but they just find themselves entangled in the daily routines. Meaningful participation is developmental in nature and it involves the children's rights as prescribed by the UNCRC of 1989.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The Government is the custodian of NAP for OVC and all NGOs implementing in the country join in to complement the efforts of the government in assisting its people. The recommendations that follow below are meant for the government, NGOs and the local communities. The government has to guide the NGOs in their interventions in order to achieve the national OVC goals.

5.1.1 Findings

Research findings point to meaningful participation as developmental in nature. The efforts of NGOs works should, therefore, aim at developing children for the future, but this study has proved that child participation in Magwegwe is still a long way from being developmental in nature. Children are being manipulated because they are not consulted and totally involved in decision making. This has been mainly due to lack of knowledge as shown by both NGO field officers and community ignorance of the true nature of child participation. The Government, although it has good action plans and child protection structures from national to community level, has no enforcement tools to support the plans and empower structures. The recommendations below will, therefore be addressed to all child welfare concerned parties.

5.1.2 Recommendations

- **Government**

The government should consider improving transforming structures like social welfare, education and the law enforcing systems. It should consider resuscitating the private sector by providing tax incentives to allow for gains that may motivate them to plough back into the community by improving facilities like playgrounds and adopting some OVC. Some laws

and policies concerning OVC programming should be enforced through an introduction of quality assurance tools, and the supply of supervision resources from the Social services department down to the Ward Child Protection Committees to improve adherence to the NAP principles.

Child led child protection committees should be put in place and their opinions taken into consideration so that real children issues are addressed instead of assumed issues. This move could create an enabling environment for the success of OVC programmes, and pave the way for an improvement in the well-being of the children and the community in the end. Both the child and adult led committees should do the selection of beneficiaries. The committees should be refreshed regularly to keep them up to date with the changes in policies and other emerging issues.

Some children drop out of school because of fragmented assistance offered by NGOs, yet the MDGs specify the need for free basic education for all not in the rural areas only as if it is in Zimbabwe at present. The orphans who are stuck in cities and are school dropouts do not have rural homes to go to in order to access free education. The government should consider extending the offer to all OVC. Article 28 of the CRC states that, "*all children have the right to education and this right should be achieved progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity*" yet in Zimbabwe, the opportunity is given to rural schools children. The state should assume its duty to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory.

The Government should consider making it a policy that before any project begins, three groups comprising NGOs, guardians and parents of OVC and the OVC undergo workshops on children participation, then regularly meet, and plan. Together they can then help children through the journey of life and release them when they can stand on their own as shown by Figure 22.
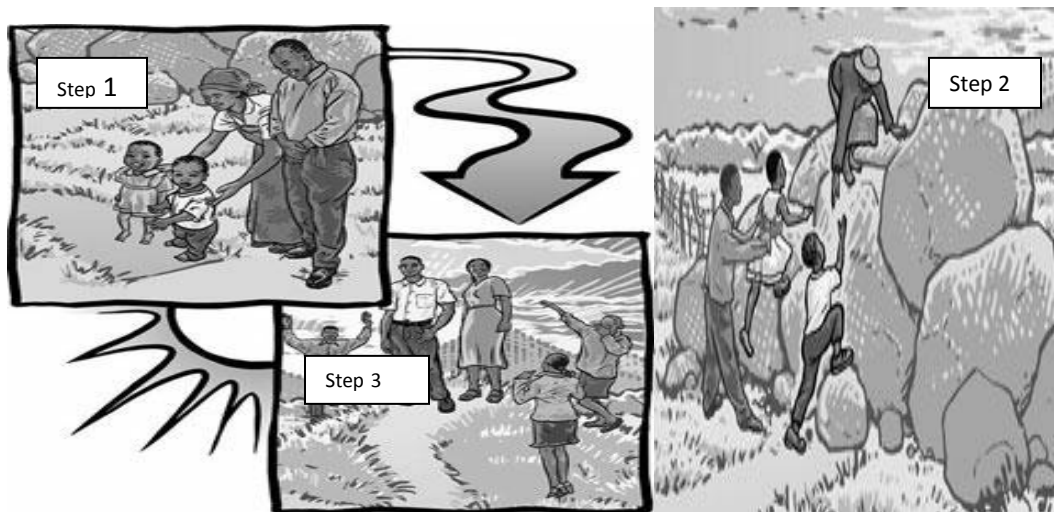
Figure 22: Children being assisted through the journey of life – (Source: REPSSI 2004)

The local social services department should take the OVC programming organizations through an orientation exercise on how to work with all stakeholders, including children and this could be done before beneficiary registration.

The state, through the Social Services department in Bulawayo, should ensure the application of the following articles (in Magwegwe ward 18 programmes) that may improve the children's self-esteem, boost their self-confidence, and allow them opportunities to take part in decisions that affect them. Below are the rights that have been identified through an analysis of research findings as applicable to Magwegwe:

1.   *Best interest of the child in decision-making(Article 3)*

2.   *The right to express their views on all matters affecting them and to have their views given due weight (Article 12)*

3.   *Freedom of expression, including the right to seek and receive impartial information of all kind (Article 13)*

4.   *Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)*

5.   *Freedom of association (Article 15)*

6. *The right of access to information and material from national and international sources (Article 17)*

7. *The right to parental and government support (Article 18)*

8. *The right to participate in the cultural life of the community (Article 31).*

- **Non-Governmental Organizations**
  a. NGOs should work with all stakeholders in the community to identify the OVC vulnerability context that needs to be addressed by the project under plan. Together they should identify the available livelihood assets that could be used to sustain the project and these could be human, natural, financial, physical, and/or spiritual as specified in the sustainable livelihoods framework by DFID (2004). This could help identify sustainable projects.
  b. NGOs should also work towards identifying viable livelihood strategies to address the issue of poverty and improve family livelihoods. By so doing the gap created by the individual child targeting approach, which does not support family livelihoods for holistic, effective and sustainable child care and eventual graduation out of poverty will be addressed. They should mainstream child participation in all their programmes.
  c. All field officers should be trained in the administration of the Outcome Monitoring and Community Perception Index tools before they are deployed so that they are able to gather information about the successes and failures of their programmes.

- **Community leaders**
  Community leaders should seek training in children's rights and child protection in order for them to have an understanding of child participation as a benefit to the whole community. They should then mainstream the importance of child participation in all community meetings agendas. They should also recognize the existence of Child Protection Committees and support them with the updates of OVC registers in the ward in order to facilitate identity gaps in OVC programming. Once gaps have been identified, the registration of implementers could be done to address the holistic needs of OVC.

- **Families**
  Families should treat children like important members of the family with inputs in the running of the family and encourage openness to boost children self-confidence from a tender age. The

children's opinions should be considered in decision-making and if they are not being taken, reasons should be given. Families should develop a culture of teaching children about their rights.

- **OVC**

  Children should participate in the shaping of their lives, and in the end should able to celebrate their own victory and adults should be there only to help children achieve their goals by assisting in overcoming life obstacles.

5.2 Conclusion

It can be concluded that successful participation is not limited to one project, but an ongoing process that contributes to building a culture of participation throughout the child's environment. It could start from family level with children participating in family activities from a tender age, in the school, in care institutions, in the healthcare system, in the community and finally in the society. For both adults and children the development of such a culture could be a very powerful move towards democracy and a benefit in terms of societal growth out of poverty. Participation should be separated from child abuse and levels of participation linked with children's maturity and cognitive development. NGOs should help children with physical needs and concrete goals and at the same time, help them grow to self-reliance, happiness, fulfilment, and eventually human dignity. The government, as the legally responsible body for the national and international commitments, should respect, protect, and fulfil the rights by mainstreaming them in laws and policies and by so doing will have mainstreamed child participation in development.

Children, particularly the youth, are very sensitive when it comes to their private life. They want to be champions of their own future; they do not like prescriptions and would rather go without assistance if it comes with publicity. They hate being forced into living a prescribed life; adults deciding and then asking them to own a project they had no input in. All programmes, therefore, should ensure their incorporation at all levels and stages of the project life cycle. It should be noted that investing in them now is the best hope of breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty and inequity and laying the foundation for a more peaceful, tolerant and equitable world.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:1

Questionnaire for Organizations Working with Children in ward 18 Magwegwe

Questionnaire ID:.........................   Date of completion……………

Introduction

My name is Patience S. Ndlovu, a student at the University of the Free State doing a Masters Degree in Disaster Management. I am currently carrying out a research on the participation of children in humanitarian programmes meant to assist them. You are invited to participate in this research by providing your views on participation in NGO's OVC programmes. Your contribution will help in the completion of this study. The information you provide will only be used strictly for academic purposes. Participation in this research is voluntary and your confidentiality will be preserved as the analysis will only focus on the patterns in the data over a number of informants.

(**NB** Tick where applicable)

A. Organization information

1. Name of Organization _____

2. Programmeme area of the Organization _____

3. Target group of the Organization _____

4. Operational area _____

96

B. Research Questions

5. For how long have you been working with children? _____

<1yr ☐   1-2yrs ☐   3yrs+ ☐

6. Do you think it is important to involve children in programmes that seek to benefit them?

1. Yes ☐   2. No ☐

7a. If yes, give reasons _____

_____

_____

7b. If no, give reasons _____

_____

_____

8. Do you know the Community Perception Index Tool?

1. Yes ☐   2. No ☐

8 b. If yes, have you ever used it?

1. Yes ☐   2. No ☐

9. Are you aware of NAP for OVC guiding principles regarding OVC programming?

1. Yes ☐   2. No ☐

9 b. Are you adhering to them in this organization?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

10. Of what benefit is NAP in the organization's OVC mitigation programmes?

_____

_____

11. At what levels of the project cycle do you involve children?

1. Identification ☐ 2.Formulation ☐ 3. Implementation ☐ 4. Monitoring and evaluation ☐

12. There is a concern amongst states, governments and civic groups for recognition of children's rights. Do you think, as an organization it is proper for children to have these rights?

   1. Yes ☐   2. No ☐

16. if   yes,   explain   _____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix A: 2

Focus Group Discussion guide for Community leaders

Introduction

This gathering is to discuss child participation in NGO supported programmes in your ward. Its purpose is to establish the levels of child participation and involvement in programmes meant to enhance their wellbeing. Your free and genuine contributions will be appreciated. There is no wrong and right answer and everyone is entitled to his or her opinion.

Discussion Procedure

My companion will be recording the discussion and everything we are going to discuss with be treated with confidentiality. We are expected to share and also respond to others opinions in an orderly manner. We expect the discussion to last for an hour.

Rapport Building

Your contributions are very important and we would like each of you to share their views concerning issues being discussed.

Discussion Questions

1.   Have you ever heard about children's rights? If so, can you explain some of these rights that you know?
2.   According to your understanding, what is child participation and how does it affect child growth and maturity?
3.   Are children in your ward participating in NGO programmes? If so how can you describe their participation?
4.   What is the position of the government of Zimbabwe on the rights of the children?
5.   In your point of view what could be done to enhance meaningful child participation by the community and NGOs in programmes meant to benefit OVC?

Appendix A:3

Focus Group Discussion guide for OVC (13-18 years old)

Introduction

We are here to discuss the implementation of OVC programmes in your ward. The purpose of the discussion is to establish how involved you are in the programmes that are meant to improve your wellbeing. We are not going to give you information but we want you to freely share your experiences and thoughts about the implementations of these programmes. Your inputs will be treated with confidentiality and we are expected to give our opinions and also respond to others' opinions without any hard feelings.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the OVC programmes implemented in your ward and how they are being implemented?
2. Explain the beneficiary selection criteria used to select beneficiaries into the OVC programmes.
3. Name the rights of the children that you know and explain how they affect your everyday life.
4. How would you like to be treated by the adults in your community and the NGOs that implement your programmes?
5. Are the programmes implemented relevant to your needs or you would like them to be handled in another way?
6. Suggest the ways in which you would like your programmes to be handled.

Appendix A:4

Focus Group Discussion guide for OVC (4-12 years old)

Introduction

We are here to talk about NGOs and what they are doing to help you in this ward. We want to find out how you feel about them and how you would like them to treat you. We expect you to respect each other's views and to give each other opportunities to talk. The discussion is going to take 20 minutes.

Discussion Questions

1.   Name the activities the NGOs are conducting for the children in this area?

2.   Do you like the activities that you do during kids' club meetings and what exactly do you like or you do not like?

3.   What do you understand by the terms child protection. Children rights and child participation?

4.   Were you asked to choose the things that you wanted done for you?

5.   What other activities would you prefer given a chance to chance and why would choose the activities you have chosen?

Appendix A: 5

Interview guide for the Community Leaders

Introduction

We are here to interview you on the OVC programming done by NGOs in your ward. The information you are going to give and your identity will treated with confidentiality. The interview is going to last 45 minutes and you are free to opt out of the interview any time you feel like and to choose not to answer some questions. Your answers will be audio recorded so as to reduce time taken capturing.

Interview Questions

1.   Do you know OVC implementers that are operating in the ward?
2.   When organizations come into the ward for implementation of programmes, who is their entry point and why?
3.   Who chooses OVC programmes to be implemented in your ward?
4.   Are you aware of the selection criteria used by NGOs implementing in your ward and do you take part in the selection of beneficiaries?
5.   Do the children participate in these programmes and at what levels- identification, implementation or monitoring and evaluation?
6.   What do you think of child participation and children's rights?
7.   Do you think children should be allowed to participate in the projects that are meant to improve their wellbeing? Give reasons.
8.   How effective are OVC programmes in the ward?
9.   Are there any positive changes that you have noticed in the lives of children that are being assisted by NGOs?
10.   What do you think should be done to improve the programming in this area?

Appendix A: 6

Interview guide for the OVC

Introduction

We are here to interview you on the OVC programming done by NGOs in your ward. We would like to hear your genuine views on the programmes since you are one of the beneficiaries and have been identified as one of the important informants. All the information you are going to give us will be given its due confidentiality and you are free to choose not to answer some questions you are not comfortable with.

1.   What assistance are you getting from the NGOs that are operating in your ward?
2.   What do you understand by child protection, children rights and child participation?
3.   Are the programmes relevant to your life?
4.   Were you consulted in coming up with the programmes you are involved in?
5.   Are you participating in any way in the OVC programmes- whether at inception, implementation or evaluation?
6.   Given a chance to change the way things are done in the projects, what would you wish to change or how would you like the project to be run?

Appendix B: Levels of Child participation photographs

Masotsha Secondary School resting after a game with Njube Secondary School

The Skills Team watches children playing a team building game.

Children selling frozen super cools whilst others are playing

Children undergoing team building training during a life skills training workshop conducted by Grass Roots Soccer in Magwegwe District. Some children fail to get involved because they have to sell and finish their wares before the end of the training session.

Young men showing off they ready to slaughter chicken

Youth slaughtering chicken for sale

APPENDIX C: RESEARCH CLEARENCE TO INTERVIEW CHILDREN

3256 Nkulumane

P.O. Nkulumane

Bulawayo

03 July 2011

The Provincial Social Welfare Officer

Ministry of Labour, and Social Welfare

Bulawayo Metropolitan

Bulawayo.

Dear Sir/Madam

REF: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW CHILDREN

I am Patience Sibongile Ndlovu, a student with the University of the Free State. I am currently conducting research for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements for obtaining a Masters degree in Disaster Management. In my research study, I investigate the degree of children`s participation in NGO-OVC mitigation programmes in ward 18 (Magwegwe District).

To achieve my research objectives, I will be grateful if your office would allow me an opportunity to interview children participating in NGO programmes. My target group will be children supported by NGO`s and whose names appear in the district OVC register. The

interviews would approximately take four days. Responses will be recorded on tape and some written in my notebook. Participation in this exercise will be voluntary and strictly confidential. I will keep the children`s views and information confidential and will use the information for academic purpose only. Children will be notified of the legal rights concerning this exercise and no names will be quoted on the production of the document.

I will be grateful if your office would grant me the opportunity to carry out the said research study in Magwegwe district.

Yours Faithfully

Patience S. Ndlovu (Student Number: 2009126414)