



**Republic of Zimbabwe**

**Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises  
Development**

## **UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN RESOLUTIONS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

### **ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

1. The Constitution of Zimbabwe in section 80 (3) outlaws all laws, customs traditions and cultural practices that infringe the rights of women. Further, Section 26 of the same Constitution prohibits forced and child marriages. One of the objectives of the proposed Marriages Bill is to criminalise child marriage.

As part of the implementation of the Constitutional provisions outlawing harmful practices and provisions of the Domestic Violence Act on the same, a National Action Plan and Communication Strategy on ending Child Marriages was developed and currently being costed to facilitate resource mobilisation for its implementation. Further, the State Party is engaging with Faith Based Organisations and traditional leaders to raise awareness on Child Marriage. Traditional Leaders have come up with their own communiqué on ending Child marriages in which they commit to

take the lead in ending child marriage in the country. Continuous awareness raising on child marriage through community level dialogues, the multi-media and road shows are being implemented by the State Party.

2. The State Party is also implementing the National Case Management System (NCMS) for the Welfare and Protection of Children in Zimbabwe as one of the main multi-sectoral strategies for community engagement, awareness raising and elimination of child marriages within various hot spot areas across the country. It also seeks to address social norms underpinning violence against children, especially the girl child and enhances comprehensive service delivery to children in need of care and protection in a systematic and coordinated manner. Through the NCMS, a number of child marriage and sexual abuse cases were identified and handled by the State Party together with its partners.

**Table 3: Child marriage and child sexual abuse cases**

| Year         | Child marriage |              |              |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
|              | Male           | Female       | Total        |
| 2018         | 30             | 616          | 646          |
| 2019         | 4              | 386          | 390          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>34</b>      | <b>1 002</b> | <b>1 036</b> |

3. In order to make the provisions of the National Gender Policy implementable, the State Party developed an Implementation Strategy and Action Plan for the National Gender Policy. The Implementation Strategy identifies the specific activities to be

implemented and by different actors and the specific timeframes for implementation.

4. The Constitutional Court in 2015 outlawed the arrest of women found loitering on the streets “for purposes of prostitution”. This was a landmark case in promoting women’s fundamental rights to protection under the law. Over the past years, women’s rights to freedom of movement had at times been misconstrued as acts of soliciting which led to their arrest. Such misconception was not only illegal and discriminatory, but was a sign of inequality as men and women are supposed to be equal before the law.

### **Gender Based Violence against Women**

5. The Domestic Violence Act section 3 categorises the following as criminal offense: physical abuse, sexual abuse, intimidation, harassment and stalking, malicious damage to property and abuse derived from cultural or customary practices. Section 4 of the Domestic Violence Act provides that psychological abuse, emotional, verbal and economic abuse will not form part of criminal offenses.
6. The Government of Zimbabwe is in the process of amending section 64 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23]. The proposed amendment provides for “minimum mandatory sentencing for rape and sexual offences”. The minimum sentences proposed range from five (5) years to 30 years depending on the gravity of the offence.
7. The Victim Friendly Unit (VFU) has been established at every police station with victim friendly spaces designed to make the environment

conducive for women to make gender-based violence reports. A total of 1 123 VFU officers have been trained and deployed across the Country to man the Victim Friendly Units. In terms of financial resources, the VFU is funded through a Government budget to the Zimbabwe Republic Police.

8. Currently the Government of Zimbabwe with support from United Nations Agencies under the Spotlight Initiative are providing material resources to the Victim Friendly Unit where Victim Friendly Units will get office equipment including furniture and computers. Some stations which do not have spaces are going to have prefabricated offices to facilitate delivery of the mandate of the unit. Police Officers in the Victim Friendly Unit continuously receive training on how to respond to Gender-Based Violence and on Human Rights. In 2019, 44 refresher courses in the management of Gender-Based Violence were conducted for the Victim Friendly Unit countrywide.
9. In relation to statistics on the instances of Gender Based Violence against women and girls, please refer to annexure 1 and 2 from the Zimbabwe Republic Police
10. The Anti-Domestic Violence Council is an entity under the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development and its budget is provided through the Budget of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community Small and Medium Enterprises Development. In 2019, The ADVC received a total of ZWD143 000 from the national budget. Government resources are further complemented by financial support to the ADVC from development partners.

11. The State Party is implementing the One Stop Centre Model for GBV response. Resources allocated towards the establishment and running of the One Stop Centres since 2018 are as follows;

**Table 4: Financial Resources allocated towards the establishment of One Stop Centres for survivors of GBV**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Government Contribution</b> | <b>Development Partners</b> |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2018        | –                              | USD63 000                   |
| 2019        | ZWD200 000                     | USD97 940                   |
| 2020        | ZWD1 000 000                   | USD75 919                   |

12. One Stop Centres and Community Based Shelters are manned by specially trained personnel. Continuous on the job-training for staff is done covering survivor friendly approaches and referral pathways.

13. There exists a National Referral pathway for GBV Services. The Multi-Sectoral Protocol on the management of Sexual Violence and Abuse sets out the referral pathway and defines the role of each service provider within the referral pathway. The referral pathway prioritises health care first followed by Psycho-social support and then legal assistance and justice. Under the Multi-Sectoral Protocol, each and every service provider has an obligation to refer survivors to the next service provider based on their assessment.

14. The State Party has made efforts in integrating Gender Based Violence (GBV) training in the Pre-service training curriculum for the

Police, Nurses and Judiciary. Pre-service training curriculum has been developed and so far incorporated in the training curricula of Nurses and the police.