

## Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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### Internal Grant Committee Meeting 18 November 2013

Agenda Item no.: 1

1. Title: The Good School – Zambia  
Christmas Calendar Project 2014
2. Partners: Plan Denmark
3. Amount: 8.86 million DKK
4. Duration: January 2014 – December 2017
5. Previous Grants: N/A
6. Strategies and policy priorities: Strategy for the Danish support to Civil Society in the development countries (The Civil Society Strategy)
7. Danish National Budget account code: 06.33.01.11. Support through private organizations. Strategic initiatives.
8. Desk officer: Grethe Dittmer, HCP
9. Head of Department: Einar Hebogård Jensen, HCP

#### 10. Summary:

*The call for proposals for the project to be implemented for the proceeds of the sale of the DR Christmas Calendar 2014 emphasized that project proposals should form the basis for new and different stories about children's daily life, their opportunities and strengths and thus complement or change Danish children's perception of how it is to be a child in a developing country.*

*The winning project was presented by Plan Denmark who, in cooperation with Plan Zambia and its local partners, will support quality education for girls and boys through participation in school governance in two districts in Zambia's Eastern Province. The project supports participation in decision-making for girls and boys, building their capacity to identify and address various problems in their school (e.g. relationships, behaviours and resources), which may affect their performance and completion of school. Project development has included consultations with children, parents, teachers and communities as well as workshops with the Ministry of Education. The project will be implemented from 2015 onwards, but is being presented to the Committee already now to allow for the preparation of the information campaign to be ready for the launching of the Christmas Calendar in October 2014.*

### Objective and problem formulation:

The objective of the project is to empower children and key stakeholders to fulfill children's rights to quality education through active participation in school governance at local and national level in Zambia where many children leave school lacking general knowledge and basic literacy and numeracy skills. Two major factors influence this situation: Poor accountability in the education sector and negative attitudes among parents, communities and stakeholders towards children's participation. Thus, the key to a sustainable improvement of the quality of Zambian education is active ownership of the schools from children, parents and communities. A transformation of the negative attitudes towards children's participation, including the widespread discrimination of girls, is together with improved accountability mechanisms a prerequisite for this. The project is therefore designed as a two-pronged approach, empowering both the children and the stakeholders who directly influence children's opportunities to demand their rights to quality education.

*School governance and management:* Lack of well-functioning accountability structures and low community ownership leads to ineffective utilisation of resources available for education. Delays in disbursements are common, and although there is little evidence of corruption at the district and school level, stories about financial abuse by district and school staff members are regularly reported in local newspapers. Local area development committees and district education teams have limited capacity and scope to monitor schools' effectiveness. Communities lack critical information and understanding about their role in school governance and how they monitor performance. Schools rarely share information on performance standards and there is little accountability to the communities they serve. When appointed, teachers receive no further training and often lack management and supervisory skills. Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) are important in raising resources for the schools but are mainly focused on providing hardware and take few initiatives to engage parents in the day-to-day learning of the students. Parents, children and the wider community have few opportunities to voice their opinions to influence decision making, planning, budgeting and monitoring, due to a lack of adequate forums.

*Attitudes towards children:* In general, children in Zambia are deprived of opportunities to participate in forums where issues affecting them are decided. There are few social amenities for children at community level and very few spaces for children to express themselves through play and association with others. According to deep-rooted cultural and social norms, children are expected to be 'quiet' in the presence of adults and to participate only when asked. This is even more so for girls than boys. Thus, many children lose out on skills and resources they might have gained from positive child-adult partnerships. Knowledge about children's rights by both children and adults is limited. Girls are often discriminated against from the earliest stages of life. Therefore, parents and communities do not always prioritise or value education for girls, and in addition schools often lack adequate facilities for girls. There are few female teachers to provide support and role modelling to girls, and especially at the higher levels girls begin to drop out due to early marriages, traditional practices and poor implementation of the re-entry policy for girls who get pregnant. Bullying (from teachers and other students) and corporal punishment by teachers also affect attendance rates and performance.

### Resource efficiency:

The project follows the general guidelines for Danida support to civil society organisations. Of the total grant, DKK 1,560,134 will cover costs in Denmark, primarily for administration in Denmark (max. 7 per cent) and information activities which for Christmas Calendar projects can go up to 10 per cent (as opposed to the normal 2 per cent).

#### Challenges and underlying reflections:

Throughout the implementation of previous projects, Plan Zambia has experienced good support from national and local authorities in the education sector. Should this change, it would be a challenge for the project. To counteract this, considerable consultation has taken place during the project preparation with various levels of government. Another challenge lies in changing the cultural and social norms related to the role of children in order that they become more participatory and influential. Plan Zambia's experience from related projects will be used to break such norms.

#### Project description:

The project **strategy** combines capacity building of the target groups with advocacy at local and national levels. The focus is on addressing governance and accountability gaps for improving the quality of education for girls and boys, taking into account gender specific and child protection issues. The strategy is to empower children as rights holders to participate in school governance and to strengthen the responsiveness and accountability of the duty bearers (parents, teachers, school management and District Education Boards). The inclusion of children's perspectives will lead to more effective decision making, resource allocation, and service delivery in education, as well as reduce mismanagement and corruption. The strategy also strengthens the local partners' potential for advocacy on improved child participation in school governance.

The ultimate **target group** are the 20,000 pupils of the 36 participating primary schools in poor communities in the districts of Vubwi (16 schools) and Chadiza (20 schools) in the Eastern Province. The primary target group is 5,000 children (girls 60 per cent, boys 40 per cent) aged 7-15 years. Through a recurring community and school scorecard approach rooted in school clubs and pupil's councils, the primary target group will assess the performance of their school, identify and either advocate for or implement (with support) actions to make schools more girl and child friendly and thereby participate in school management. The secondary target group include, among others, parents and community members who will participate in social accountability and school monitoring sessions, and teachers in the 36 schools who will be trained in school governance, facilitation of scorecard processes and in inclusive and gender sensitive pedagogy. The two project partner organisations, Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC) and Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA), will be supported to further strengthen their legitimacy, transparency, and accountability. The project involves interventions to ensure the inclusion of excluded children. Project indicators are specified in Annex 3.

The key social accountability methodology used in the project is a child-friendly **community scorecard** approach, adaptable for the use of children from different age groups. The scorecard process will enable girls and boys to identify and raise their chief concerns with their duty-bearers. The scorecard approach provides a space for girls and boys to consider their priorities separately thereby improving **gender sensitivity** and to draw out different needs. Trained mentor teachers in each school will facilitate the scorecard process and will assist in establishing or strengthening of girls' and boys' school councils or clubs, e.g. girls' safe clubs or clubs with both girls and boys. Once the scorecards have been completed, the members will analyse the results and prioritise the identified problems. This will be followed by identifying possible solutions and making an action plan for how to share and feed the suggested actions into decision making processes. Findings will be shared with parents, teachers, representatives of the school management committees and village leaders and joint action plans with milestones and commitments from the stakeholders elaborated. School notice boards will be used to promote

transparency and accountability in decision making and effective use of resources, to publish results and to share information on other project related activities.

The score-card process will take place within the first six months of the project in six pilot schools and then be rolled out to all participating schools. The process will subsequently be repeated every six months, with new children participating each time. FAWEZA will be heavily involved in facilitation of this process in the beginning of the project, with the intention of **building the capacity of the schools** to run the process independently over time. Training will be conducted for teachers in participatory governance to ensure that schools improve not only in terms of education indicators but also on the active participation of children in improving the schools. Teachers will also be trained in inclusive, gender sensitive and child-friendly teaching methodologies. The **capacity of PTAs** will be strengthened in order to facilitate stronger school-community partnerships, thus ensuring that parents are well informed and responsive to the project, and that communities are provided an opportunity to participate in school governance. Schools and PTAs will be trained in using scorecard information and budget tracking to influence district planning and resource allocation structures. Children will be supported to participate in the annual school planning and budgeting meetings. To further strengthen the **capacity of District Education Boards** to monitor school quality as well as institutionalising participatory school governance, the project will facilitate a consultative process in each district. The purpose will be to review existing monitoring tools and identify how the boards can integrate indicators to monitor participatory school governance. This will include the priority areas identified by the scorecard process, both for the purpose of the project itself, but also to act as a pilot from which to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education on integration of participatory school governance. Documentation and dissemination of data and recommendations provided by the children through the scorecard processes will be used by ZANEC for **advocacy at the national level** to engage government officials in influencing education policies and guidelines.

The **phase-out strategy** for the project will be intensified in the last year of the project where ZANEC and FAWEZA will complete the gradual change of their supervision and support to focusing on developing plans for how the processes can continue within the existing school set-up and District Education Boards. During the last year various dialogue meetings will also be held to analyse which activities will continue after the project ends and how best to support this. The project has been designed with sustainability in mind. No new institutions or bodies are being created, and the project does not contain any direct service delivery elements. The concept and its positive results will be scaled up by Plan Zambia as well as by other Plan programme countries working with children's right to quality education and participation.

Children will participate in a workshop with the aim of producing simple, easy-read and cartoon-illustrated pamphlets to **create public awareness** not only on the issues identified, but as much on presenting children's views in their own right. In order to reach a wider range of communities, information and debate campaigns on gender equality in education as well as quality education and school governance in general will be conducted through radio phone-in programmes on local FM stations, e.g. based on the scorecard processes representing children's own views with participation of children from all 36 schools involved in the project.

The **information campaign in Denmark** will emphasize that Danish children can relate to and identify themselves with issues affecting children in Zambia. Plan DK will include Zambian children from content development to production of materials, showcasing challenges and

potentials. The primary target group is 7-10 year Danish students. Scorecards are a key element in the project and a cross cutting element in the information campaign and will be used as a development education tool and method to engage Danish students and invite them to go through the same process as the students in Zambia. Plan DK will plan and arrange the communication activities in cooperation with Danida who produces educational material for primary school students aged 7-10 centered round a narrative about child life in Zambia. The material links closely to the educational goals in the Danish primary school, and integrates online learning trough tools at the website u-landskalender.dk. Plan DK's information activities include: **School Link:** Danish classes can through films and other materials follow a class in Zambia through the scorecard process. **School visits:** 100 Danish schools signed up for the Danida school material can receive a visit in October–December 2014 by Plan DK's Youth Board who has visited Zambia. The visits will supplement the educational materials from Danida.

#### Previous results:

The project builds on the experiences from Plan Zambia's involvement in the education sector, especially with a School Improvement Programme (2003-09) and a Girls Get Ahead Project (2011-14). The School Improvement Programme worked on enhancing the capacities on school management and promoting children's and parent's participation in monitoring school improvements, while the on-going Girls Get Ahead Project works to increase enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of girls. As part of its programmes, Plan Zambia has supported children's and school councils as well as community monitoring groups.

#### Special considerations and priorities:

The project is in line with the overall Danish Development Strategy "The Right to a Better Life" as it has a distinct rights-based approach related to the education sector which promotes social progress. In addition it is in line with the Strategy for the Danish support to Civil Society in the Developing Countries (The Civil Society Strategy) in so far as it promotes advocacy and capacity building on many levels on the demand as well as supply side.

#### Budget and finance plan:

	Budget DKK	Danida	Others
1. Activities	5,133,562	5,133,562	0
2. Investments	459,980	399,980	60,000
3. Local staff and administration	1,162,812	1,162,812	0
4. Monitoring	209,480	209,480	0
5. Evaluation	155,296	155,296	0
6. Development education in Denmark	922,886	705,386	217,500
7. Budget margin (max. 10 per cent)	475,000	475,000	0
<b>8. Project expenses</b>	<b>8,519,016</b>	<b>8,241,516</b>	<b>277,500</b>
9. Audit	40,000	40,000	0
<b>10. Subtotal</b>	<b>8,559,016</b>	<b>8,281,516</b>	<b>277,500</b>
11. Administration (max. 7 per cent)	578,484	578,484	0
<b>12. Total DKK</b>	<b>9,137,500</b>	<b>8,860,000</b>	<b>277,500</b>

In addition to a contribution from Plan DK of 217,500 DKK to information activities in Denmark there is a contribution from one of the partners of the equivalent of 60,000 DKK.

#### Significant risks:

There are no significant risks connected to this grant.

## Annex 1 - Partners:

The project has been planned and will be implemented in close cooperation between the following partners:

**Plan Denmark** (Plan DK) was established in 1997 and is one of 20 independent national organizations of Plan International. Plan Int. works in 50 countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas. In 2012, the total income of Plan Int. was € 634 million including € 153 million from donors such as Danida, SIDA, Norad, Finland MFA, DfID, CIDA, USAID, EC, ECHO and WFP.

The core activities of Plan DK include child sponsorship, development education, program work, campaigns as well as fundraising. Plan DK has approx. 18,000 sponsors and contributors. In 2012, the annual turnover was DKK 44.4 million. Plan DK has 18 staff members. The organisation has project experience from working in Africa with children's participation in social accountability, excluded children's access to education, as well as strengthening of inclusive civil society actors. Plan DK's approach to children's participation and active citizenship has been identified as good practice within Plan Int. These competencies are utilised in the cooperation with country offices of Plan Int., such as Plan Zambia. The National Director of Plan DK will be the overall responsible for the present project. The responsibility is delegated to the Program Director, and the daily bilateral cooperation with Plan Zambia is handled by a Program Coordinator.

**Plan Zambia.** Plan Int. established its country office in Zambia in 1996. The country office is lined-managed by Plan International Regional Office in Nairobi. Plan Zambia has three field offices, located in the Eastern, Central and Luapula provinces. The organization has 120 staff members. The last annual turn-over was € 8 million, including grants from donors such as USAID, EU, AusAid, SIDA, Norad and Barclays Bank.

Education is one of four components in Plan Zambia's strategic plan for 2011-15, the other three being health, economic empowerment, and child protection & participation. Among the goals for the education component are increased access to quality primary education for girls and boys as well as increased stakeholder participation in the governance of primary schools. Key intervention strategies focus on increasing access to affordable learning opportunities for all children and promoting inclusive, safe, healthy and child-friendly learning environments. Plan Zambia has supported children's and school councils as well as community monitoring groups. Plan Zambia will be responsible for the overall administrative coordination of the project partners, including assessing their capacities, and quality assurance of the activities.

**The Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC)** was established in 2003 by education civil society organisations and trade unions which came together to ensure that the government, partners, communities and other stakeholders effectively contribute to achieving the Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals on education by 2015. ZANEC's core mandate is to be an advocate for delivery of and access to quality education for all. ZANEC's research based policy advocacy targets government, primarily the Ministry of Education, Members of Parliament, international donors, and other civil society organisations. ZANEC has registered several advocacy achievements, including increased budgetary allocations to education.

ZANEC has 60 members among civil society organisations through which a platform for joint advocacy is created and local level school monitoring, data collection and sensitisation are implemented. Activities are coordinated and managed by a secretariat in Lusaka currently with a staff of eight. Member participation in activity implementation is coordinated through thematic committees. The committees also act as platforms for cross learning and best practice sharing. Over the last three years, ZANEC has received financial support from Irish Aid, UNICEF, UNESCO and several international NGOs amounting to DKK 8.5 million.

**The Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA)** is a membership based civil society organisation whose mission is to promote the transformation of the Zambian education system and the socio-cultural environment to be more responsive to specific education needs of girls and women. FAWEZA was registered in 1996 and operates within the National Education Policy document. FAWEZA is affiliated to the Nairobi based Pan-African NGO, the Forum for African Women Educationalists, and is a member of ZANEC. The organisation is engaged in policy dialogue, and influences gender responsive educational policies and plans. At community level, FAWEZA members build capacity on gender equity and stimulate parental response to existing policies and programmes. FAWEZA also actively addresses negative cultural practices and sexist attitudes that perpetuate the disadvantaged position of girls and women in society. FAWEZA intervenes by implementing school level innovations targeting specific constraints, such as the cost of education, teachers' gender insensitive pedagogy, lack of learning materials etc., as well as having proven results in accelerating the participation rates of females in education, at basic and high school levels.

The General Assembly constitutes the supreme authority of FAWEZA. The National Executive Committee comprises members elected by the General Assembly. A Joint Steering Committee is made up of National Executive members and local and international partners who provide financing for the organisation. FAWEZA members with specialized skills participate in working sub-committees. These members participate in the implementation of national level interventions and give technical advice. FAWEZA has expanded from 12 staff in 2005 to 28 in 2012, including provincial focal point persons in all nine provincial chapters and other provincial project staff. Over the past three years, major donors were Danida, the Netherlands and World Vision International. The funding acquired in this period was equivalent to DKK 46 million.

## Annex 2 - Background facts:

Zambia is ranked number 163 out of 186 countries in the Human Development Index (UNDP 2012 Human Development Report). According to the Zambian governments' 2012 budget address to the National Assembly, the country's poverty levels have consistently remained above 60 per cent with rural levels ranking higher at 78 per cent. Out of a total population of close to 14 million, of which approx. 7 million are below the age of 18, many are living in rural areas. The HIV prevalence is 14.3 per cent with approx. 90,000 people dying of AIDS per year, leaving behind a growing number of children who have lost one or both parents (estimated at 600,000 children and youth aged 0-17). Literacy levels are low at 67 per cent for female youth (15-24 years) and 82 per cent for males within the same age group.

Despite the challenging global economic environment, Zambia's domestic economy has been relatively resilient and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth remained at above 6 per cent in 2013 as projected in 2012. This is on account of favourable performance in the mining, construction, manufacturing and transport and communication sectors. By September 2013, the inflation rate remained above target at 7 per cent.

### **The education sector**

The delivery of education in Zambia is guided by the Education Act of 2011 with provisions for the right of a person to education from early childhood to high school education, the right to free basic education, and compulsory school attendance for a child of school-going age. Education is widely acknowledged as a human right in Zambia, although the right to education is not contained in the Bill of Rights in the constitution. The current government has stated that education would remain among their four core priority sectors. In 2012, the sector was allocated 17.5 per cent of the national budget. The main policy document is "Educating our Future".

Significant progress has been registered in the sector over the recent ten years, mainly due to the declaration of free education for grades 1-7 as well as efforts to develop infrastructure. This has resulted in an increase in enrolment, completion rates, and the Gender Parity Index. No significant progress, however, has been registered in quality indicators such as the pupil/teacher ratio. In recent years, there has been a decline in dropout rates, although they remain high, with UNESCO's Education for All Monitoring Report 2011 estimating that 11.8 per cent of Zambian children will not complete primary education. Poor children are more likely to enrol late, have poor attendance and have a tendency to drop out early. The same report shows that a child from the poorest quintile of the population has ten times higher probability of dropping out. Girls are twice as likely to drop out. Basic education often does not provide pupils with the necessary life skills as the teaching and learning pupils acquire are disconnected from the challenges they face after school and in adult life. In a recent learning assessment test by the Southern and East African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality, Zambia was one of the lowest scoring countries, with over a third of grade 6 students unable to read fluently, and only a quarter of them being able to read and interpret a text.

The administration and management of education at the district level is the responsibility of the District Education Office, headed by a District Director of Education. To strengthen decentralisation, each district has a District Education Board responsible for preparation, review and adoption of annual budgets for the schools, monitoring of the management of the schools and ensuring that education standards are met. Parent-Teacher Associations act as a liaison between parents, teachers and the school administration, and are usually responsible for fundraising, prioritisation, and allocation of funds.

The government recognises the importance of improving the management and governance of institutions and enabling greater community involvement as identified in the Sixth National Development Plan for 2011-15.

Denmark's support to the education sector through the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education goes back several years, and has since 2000 been financing the sector through a Sector Wide Approach in collaboration with other cooperating partners. The Sector Pool established then was jointly financed by the Netherlands, Irish Aid and USAID, and included funds provided from the Education for All (EFA) Fast Track Initiative. Denmark has provided funds to this pool through 3 phases from 2000 to 2013. A total of over DKK 400 million has been disbursed over this period. The sector support was moulded on the 2015 MDGs and the EFA goals. Some of the significant achievements included the ministry's restructuring undertaking, revision of teacher education curriculum, and expansion of school infrastructure. In particular, children with special education needs were addressed, and planning and implementation responsibilities were devolved to the Education Board Services. In addition, Denmark has provided support to educational civil society organisations, namely FAWEZA (DKK 24.5 million) and Zambia Open Community Schools (DKK 1 million). The support focussed on girls' education safety and students with disabilities.

## Annex 3 - Indicators:

**Development objective**

Quality education for all girls and boys age 7 to 15 years old is ensured in the districts of Vubwi and Chadiza in Eastern Province in Zambia.

**Immediate objective 1**

By the end of 2017, 5,000 children participate actively in the development of their schools and of their education.

*Indicators*

- 75 per cent of participating children express confidence in their abilities and opportunities to influence decisions.
- At least 3 suggestions (on average) by children to improve the quality of their education have been adopted by the school management at each of the 36 schools.
- 50 per cent of children in the 36 school express awareness of opportunities to influence decisions.

**Immediate objective 2**

By the end of 2017, the capacity of local school, area and district authorities, community members and parents to improve and ensure quality education is strengthened in 36 Schools.

*Indicators*

- 75 per cent of 36 participating schools have functional procedures for including children's views in their annual planning and budgeting.
- 50 per cent of parents in the 36 schools express that they experience increased influence on matters concerning school governance and their children's education.

**Immediate objective 3**

By the end of 2017, the position of ZANEC and FAWEZA to promote participatory governance is strengthened.

*Indicators*

- 75 per cent of local schools, area and district authorities, parents and participating children express that ZANEC and FAWEZA legitimately represent the voices of school children.
- Evidence from ZANEC monitoring and evaluation system and scorecard findings acknowledged as credible and cited by CSOs, NGOs and district and national level government authorities in at least five reports/policy papers.