Zimbabwe


September 2012
We feel honoured and indeed delighted to submit the Government of Zimbabwe report on the implementation of the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education.

Zimbabwe ratified this Convention and Recommendation in 2006 and this is its first submission. Since the attainment of independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe has enacted various Acts of Parliament with the aim of redressing the imbalances inherited from the colonial regime. We sincerely hope that with the support of non-governmental organizations and United Nations partners, further advances will be made in attaining the provisions of this Convention and Recommendation.

Zimbabwe reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the provisions of this important Convention and Recommendation. The eradication of discrimination in education is work in progress for the Government of Zimbabwe. As long as discriminatory tendencies are identified within the education system they will be addressed in line with the dictates of this Convention.

This report, which we now submit, outlines what the Government has achieved in redressing discrimination in the education sector since the attainment of independence in 1980, notwithstanding the ratification of the Convention in 2006.

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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE
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## I. ACRONYMS

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<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALOZ</td>
<td>Adult Literacy Organisation of Zimbabwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEAM</td>
<td>Basic Education Assistance Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETF</td>
<td>Education Transition Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTE</td>
<td>Department of Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHTE</td>
<td>Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoESAC</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern Africa Development Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFP</td>
<td>School Feeding Programme</td>
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<td>ZIMCHE</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education</td>
</tr>
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</table>
1. Introduction

1.1 Zimbabwe ratified the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education in 2006. This report is the first submitted by Zimbabwe in terms of Article 7 of the Convention.

1.2 Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in the Southern part of Africa with an area of 390 757 square kilometres. It has an estimated population of about 12 million people.

1.3 The country got independent in 1980. It was a British colony formerly known as Rhodesia. Prior to independence, it had two distinct education systems based on race: that is one for whites and the other for blacks. The former was more privileged and resourced than the latter. A very limited number of black children had access to education.

1.4 At independence, the majority government abolished the dual system and created one system of education for all Zimbabweans.

1.5 Today the country has two education ministries, namely the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. The former is responsible for general education from pre-school to high school (Advanced Level or Form 6). The latter is responsible for university, polytechnic and teacher education.

2. Mode of Work in Report Preparation

2.1 The methodology used in compiling this Report was varied.

2.2 A principal form of data gathering was the questionnaire. A comprehensive questionnaire was hand delivered to key stakeholders in the education system and the same was also physically collected from the respondents. The result was almost 100 percent response rate.

2.3 During the consultation process, interviews were sought and conducted with key personages at organisations in the education system. These included senior officials in the two ministries of education. Among organisations consulted were Teachers’ Associations/Unions namely the Zimbabwe Teachers Association and the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe. A key player in the Higher Education Ministry, the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education was also consulted. In the area of adult education, the Adult Literacy Organisation of Zimbabwe (ALOZ) was consulted.

2.4 The desk study methodology involved the perusal of relevant documents such as Acts of Parliament, Statutory Instruments, and policy circulars among others.

2.5 A consultative stakeholders’ workshop was held to verify and validate the authenticity of the Report.
3. The Structure of the Report

3.1 In compiling this report, the articles of the Convention and the guidelines issued by UNESCO in preparing the report were largely and necessarily taken into account.

3.2 Accordingly therefore, the report has sections and subsections in the following key areas:-

- The Constitutional, legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken by Zimbabwe to implement the Convention.
- The implementation of provisions of the Convention from primary education to higher and tertiary education including adult education and lifelong learning.
- Access to and equal opportunities in education.
- Measures to ensure quality education.
- Private education
- Obstacles and challenges encountered in the implementation of the provisions and where applicable remedial measures taken to address the same.

4. Legal and Administrative Measures through which the Convention is Implemented.

4.1 Apart from the national legal framework and the rights enshrined therein, Zimbabwe is signatory to sub regional, regional and international instruments within which human rights are protected.

4.2 Legal framework at the national level.

4.2.1 The Constitution
4.2.2 In Zimbabwe the Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It contains a Declaration of Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
4.2.3 In the Constitution under section 23 subsections (1) and (2) the provisions are very clear with regards to ‘protection from discrimination on the grounds of race etc’. Subsection (1) states, Subject to provisions of this section:-

   a) no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect; and
   b) no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a law shall be regarded as making a provision that is discriminatory and a person shall be regarded as having been treated in a discriminatory manner if, as a result of that law or treatment, persons of a particular description by race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed, sex, gender, marital status or physical disability are prejudicial –

   a) by being subjected to a condition, restriction or disability to which other person of another such description are not made subject; or
b) by the according to persons of another such description of a privilege or advantage which is not accorded to persons of the first – mentioned description;

and the imposition of that condition, restriction or disability or the according of that privilege or advantage is wholly or mainly attributable to the description by race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour, gender, creed, sex, marital status or physical disability of the persons concerned.

4.2.4 Other sections of the Constitution which have a bearing on the provisions of the Convention are sections 19 and 20 which protect freedom of conscience and freedom of expression respectively.

4.3 Legislative Measures

4.3.1 In general the government has enacted a number of Acts which have a direct or indirect bearing on the Convention. Among these are:

- The Education Act of 2006 [Chapter 25:04] which provides for the right to education.
- The Manpower Planning and Development Act 1996 [Chapter 28:02] which authorises the establishment of higher and tertiary institutions.
- The Administrative Justice Act [Chapter 0:28] which allows aggrieved parties to lodge complaints through the administrative structures.
- The Children’s Act [Chapter 5:06] which provides for protection, adoption and custody of all children.
- The Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act [Chapter 9:07] which provides for a victim friendly court to all vulnerable witnesses who are called upon to give evidence in court.
- The Disabled Persons Act [Chapter 17:01] which provides for the welfare and rehabilitation of disabled persons.
- The Legal Age of Majority Act now in the General Laws Amendment [Chapter 8:07] which was enacted to rectify the cultural gender imbalances by giving majority status to women.

4.4 Parliament

4.4.1 Parliamentarians are vested with power to protect and promote human rights for example through the Thematic Committee on Human Rights. Portfolio Committees come in handy on programmes and policies concerning human rights. Through this vehicle, parliamentarians interrogate and make recommendations to the relevant bodies. There is also the Parliamentary Committee on Education which hears evidence from the public on the conduct of education in the country.

4.5 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission.

4.5.1 The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission was established in 2009. This was through Constitutional Amendment No. 19.

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The following are its functions:

- Investigates any organisation or person where it is reasonably suspected or alleged that any rights in the Declaration of Rights have been violated.
- Recommends to the Legislature ways of promoting human rights and freedoms.
- Promotes human rights awareness and respect for the same among all Zimbabweans.

4.6 The Office of the Protector

This office is enshrined in the Constitution under Section 107. Its functions are:-

- To investigate any authority or individual working for an organisation established under an Act of Parliament. Such a person or authority is investigated on any allegations of injustice in circumstances where there may be no sanction in the courts of law.

5. Sub-regional, regional & international human rights instruments to which Zimbabwe is party

5.1 At the sub regional and regional level Zimbabwe ratified many human rights instruments. These include:

- The Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development which advocates for gender equity and equality.
- The African (Banjul) Charter on Human and People’s Rights whose thrust is the promotion and protection of human rights and basic freedoms on the African continent.
- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which sets out the rights and freedoms of the Child and defines universal principles and norms for the status of children. Article 3 of the Charter guarantees non-discrimination irrespective of the child or his/her parents'/guardians’race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status.

5.2 At the international level among the human rights instruments ratified by Zimbabwe and with a bearing on the Convention are:

- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.

6. Applicability of the Convention in Domestic Law


6.2 The Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education Act [Chapter 25:27] was promulgated in 2006.

6.3 In the Constitution of Zimbabwe the Convention provisions are guaranteed in general terms, for example, under the Bill of Rights in Sections 19, 20 and 23. Other legislative texts that guarantee the Convention are found in Section 4 of the Education Act. Section 4 of the Act – Children’s
fundamental right to education in Zimbabwe is quite specific on the right of the child to education. The following subsections are very clear and illustrate the point.

4(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any other enactment, but subject to this Act, every child in Zimbabwe shall have the right to school education.

(2) Subject to Subsection (5), no child in Zimbabwe shall –

a) Be refused admission to any school; or
b) Be discriminated against by the imposition of onerous terms and conditions in regard to his admission to any school; on the grounds of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or gender.

Subsection (5) referred to above takes as defence in criminal proceedings for a person who contravenes sub-section (2) on the following grounds:-

- Where the school reserves admission of children of one gender and the aggrieved child is the other gender; or
- Where admission is refused in the interests of defence, public safety or public morality; or
- Where refusal of admission is justified in view of physiological differences between children of different gender; or
- On the basis of creed where the school concerned accords preference in admission to members of that religious organisation or adherents of a particular religious belief.

7. Competent authorities having jurisdiction over the rights guaranteed in the Convention.

7.1 The two Ministries of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture and that of Higher and Tertiary Education and the courts of law namely the Magistrate’s Court, the High Court and the Supreme Court are the competent authorities with jurisdiction with regards the rights of the Convention.

7.2 The Ministries regulate the establishment, registration and enrolment at the institutions. They also set minimum standards and fees at the learning institutions.

7.3 The courts of law provide avenues for the enforcement of the Provisions of the Convention for instance perpetrators of discrimination at an institution on grounds prohibited in the Convention will be punished.


8.1 Non-discrimination in Education

8.1.1 Legal Measures

As outlined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, every Zimbabwean has a right to education. Furthermore Section 4 of the Education Act criminalises discrimination on the grounds of race, tribe, place of origin, ethnicity, political opinion, colour, creed or gender.
The Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education Act [Section 6] sets the parameters under which higher education institutions are regulated by Council.

A. 8.2 Other Measures
Other measures adopted by the Government to assist the disadvantaged include the provision of safety nets to children at the school level and to adults at the tertiary and higher education level who would otherwise be discriminated against on account of their socio-economic status.

The safety nets at school level are:-
- The Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM)
- Government Scholarships
- School Feeding Programme
- Sanitary Wear Programme for Girls
- The Cadetship Scheme
- Bilateral Scholarships

Details of these schemes will be discussed later in this report.

8.3 Assistance granted by Government to education institutions is reflective of the historical imbalances in the education system.
The assistance is in form of per capita grants, tuition grants and building grants. The schools are categorised according to geographical location. The categories are three, namely P1, P2 and P3 for primary schools and S1, S2 and S3 for secondary schools. In each case, 1 denotes schools found in the affluent, low density suburbs in urban areas while 2 is for those in high density suburbs in urban areas and 3 is for schools found in rural areas. The most disadvantaged – the rural schools, receive the greatest preferential treatment while those in the 1 category receive the least assistance. This ‘positive discrimination’ is meant to redress the imbalances of the past thus enhancing access and equal opportunities to all.

8.4 Challenges
8.4.1 The challenge in the Constitution with regards non-discrimination in education is that it is not specific. There are no special provisions on education except for the freedom of conscience which is quite specific on education and religion (Section 19 sub-section (2)).
8.4.2 There is no legislation in Zimbabwe that binds the state, parents or guardians to ensure that children must attend school and this is why children of school going age are seen on the streets during school time.
8.4.3 According to the Education Act [Chapter 25:04], there should be no discrimination in the provision of primary education in Zimbabwe. But as the Marist International Solidarity Foundation noted, the Act fails to articulate the provision of education to persons with disability. This is left to be addressed in the Disability Act.
8.4.4 However the new Draft Constitution (2012), if adopted, seems to address some of the concerns raised above.
9 Access to and equal opportunities in education.

9.3 Early Childhood Development

The majority government that came into being in 1980 regarded education as a right to all Zimbabweans. Initially the emphasis on massive expansion was at school level but with time pre-school education was equally taken on board.

Thus during the period under review, the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture put in place policies on Early Childhood Development (ECD). According to the Ministry’s Statistics Report for 2009, a two phase approach was adopted for ECD. With effect from 2005 all primary schools were to attach one ECD class of 4 to 5 year olds. The children were then to proceed to grade one in 2006. The second phase in 2006 saw an additional cohort of 3 to 4 year olds being added in the ECD programme. This way the two ECD levels became part of the formal primary school system under the mentorship of appropriately trained teachers. The ECD programme however faces a number of challenges.

Among these are:

- The long distance between some schools, especially in the rural areas. The situation is particularly acute in the new resettlement areas where distances from one school to the other can be up to 10 kilometres or more. The situation is further exacerbated by lack of transport and so it is expecting too much to have four or five year olds travel the distance by foot five days a week, let alone 3 and 4 year olds.
- There is also the shortage of appropriate physical facilities, materials and human resources. As a matter of fact, some pupils in satellite schools in the newly resettled areas learn in the open or in rooms where there is inadequate furniture.
- Another area of concern is also the availability of relevant and suitable learning and teaching material.

9.4 Access to primary education

As indicated earlier the greatest beneficiary of the new government policy of education as a right for all was the primary education sector. During the first decade of independence, the government introduced free primary education. This policy resulted in admission rates expanding dramatically in line with the high growth rate in the number of schools which were established to accommodate the majority population which was disadvantaged and discriminated against. Primary education actually doubled from 1.2 million children in 1980 to 2.2 million in 1989. The formal school system was augmented by a flourishing adult literacy programme.

This quantitative and equity approach to education is manifested in the high literacy rate enjoyed by the country. Zimbabwe enjoys the highest literacy rate (over 90%) in Africa. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2003, breaks down the literacy rate as follows:

- Female literacy rate – 87.2%
- Male literacy rate – 94.2%
- Overall literacy rate – 90.7%
Zimbabwe ranked first in male and overall literacy rate and second in female literacy rate in Africa.

The momentum to ensure access to education for all has always been uppermost in government plans. This is partly illustrated by its commitment to the principles of the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All. Further, with the advent of the land (agrarian) reform programme a further 500 satellite primary schools were added to the system.

In the ’90s however, the schools growth rate slowed down as the government’s policy thrust moved from ‘mass’ education to quality education. In addition the departure by government away from the policy of free primary education also tended to adversely affect the disadvantaged and vulnerable children’s access to education. During the ’90s, tuition fees were introduced in primary schools in towns and cities. There was, as a result, a drop in enrolment.

There are also factors that impacted negatively on the drive for access to universal primary education during the period under review (2006 – 2011). The period mainly from the early 2000’s up to 2008 was characterised by:

- Mass exodus of professionals (brain flight).
- Massive hyperinflation.
- Economic restrictive measures imposed on Zimbabwe by some western countries.
- Political instability.
- Ravaging droughts resulting in food insecurity.
- Negative impact to those affected and infected by HIV and AIDS.

These negatives hit hardest the disadvantaged and vulnerable children. The situation was aggravated by the payment by parents/guardians of various school fees, levies and incentives to teachers. Despite this, the demand for education did not reduce. Indeed Zimbabweans can go to any length to ensure the education of their children. The tables and figures below give key access indicators of Gross and Net Enrolment Rates for primary schools for the period 2000 to 2009.

Table 1 Primary School Enrolment by Sex, Percentage and Percentage Change, GER and NER by gender, 2000 – 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Enrolment</th>
<th>% Female</th>
<th>% Change in Total enrolments</th>
<th>Gross Enrolment rate (GER)</th>
<th>Net Enrolment Rate (NER)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,439,131</td>
<td>49.13</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>112.3</td>
<td>117.2</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>2,461,683</td>
<td>49.14</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>113.1</td>
<td>117.9</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>2,480,094</td>
<td>49.17</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>113.8</td>
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<td>2,462,829</td>
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<td>-0.70</td>
<td>113.3</td>
<td>116.7</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>2,464,682</td>
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<td>113.4</td>
<td>116.0</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>2,461,932</td>
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<td>-0.11</td>
<td>111.1</td>
<td>115.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2,445,520</td>
<td>49.35</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>2,478,990</td>
<td>49.88</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>110.0</td>
<td>111.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture
Table 1 shows trends in the key access indicators of Gross and Net Enrolment Rate (GER and NER) for the primary level of education for the period 2000 to 2009. Of particular significance for the purpose of this report is the period 2006 to 2009. Figure 1 shows that there has been an increase in enrolment at the primary school level between 2006 and 2009. The enrolment increased by 1.4 per cent after dropping in 2005 and 2006 by 0.11 per cent and 0.67 per cent respectively. Gender parity has also improved at primary level with a jump of 0.8 per cent to achieving gender parity for Net Enrolment (see figures 1 and 2).

Figures 3 and 4 overleaf show estimated Gross and Net Enrolment respectively. The graphs show a positive trend at this level of education. The graphs show that since 2006 there has been reasonable upward trend in the Net Enrolment Rate. It can be inferred that the greater number of children in school correspond to the correct age for primary school which is 6 to 12 years.
9.4.1 Another commendable avenue to promote universal access to primary education has been the strengthening of the Government Correspondence Primary School. The school is located in Mount Pleasant, Harare and operates from the Education Service Centre. The school, a relic of the colonial past, and originally meant for white pupils in geographically dispersed areas, now caters for pupils of all races.
According to the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (Director’s Circular Number 5 of 2011), the school is there mainly to increase access to education to any children of primary school going age in the following categories:

- Children who live more than five kilometres from the nearest registered primary school;
- Children who live in scattered and isolated communities such as farms, estates, mines, research and training stations and national parks;
- Those in rehabilitation, transit and other temporary centres; children, who for geographical reasons do not have access to a school; children with health problems, namely: disabled persons; children requiring long periods of hospitalisation; children suffering from chronic illness prohibiting them from attending formal schools; children of parents whose jobs make them mobile; and
- Children who for any other reason are unable, in the opinion of the Secretary for Education, Sport, Arts and Culture, to attend a formal school.

The Correspondence Primary School, which follows the Grades 1 to 7 primary curriculum in use in the formal education system, uses distance teaching and learning materials, radio programmes and any approved means available. The learning materials are written by trained teachers and the school is also run by qualified teachers.

The advantages of the Correspondence school are numerous. It mitigates the distance factor and allows for children to learn within a secure and familiar environment. Children from the school can transfer to the formal system if and when their circumstances change.

9.5 Secondary education

Access to secondary education is theoretically available to all. This is on the basis that the Grade 7 examination that children write at the end of the primary level is not terminal. Every child is expected to proceed to secondary education up to ‘O’ level. Reality on the ground so far shows this is not tenable.

The secondary school cycle generally caters for children between 13 and 18 years of age. The cycle can be divided into three phases, namely the junior phase (2 years), the middle phase (2 years) and the senior phase (2 years). These phases correspond to forms one and two, three and four, five and six respectively.

The curriculum at the junior secondary level is broad based and provides the basis for channelling pupils into the various strands of the middle secondary school level. As is expected, the children are exposed to a wide and varied subject spectrum. The idea is to give them the opportunity to help place themselves in an area where their intellectual activities, aptitudes and interests can be fully exploited. The curriculum is all inclusive and covers languages, the sciences, the humanities, business and commercial studies, technical and vocational education and computer studies. Though the level is not terminal, the pupils write the Junior Certificate Examinations in year two. This examination provides the basis for selecting areas of specialisation initially for forms three and four and ultimately for forms five and six where the students write the Ordinary and Advanced examinations respectively.
At the middle secondary school level, the curriculum is broadly divided into three areas namely:

- Academic;
- Commercial/Business and
- Technical and vocational.

The choice of what area a pupil pursues is guided by his/her ability, interest and the performance in the Junior Certificate examinations. At the end of year 4, the pupils sit for the Ordinary level examinations.

Upon completion of ‘O’ level, the majority proceed to embark on different courses at polytechnics, teachers’ colleges and other tertiary institutions. The smaller percentage of ‘O’ level graduates proceed to ‘A’ level on the basis of merit and ability to pay fees. Pupils who proceed to senior secondary would normally be preparing for university studies. However because of the limited available places, some ‘A’ level graduands find their way into polytechnics, teachers’ colleges or pursue other avenues in life.

Figures 5 and 6 below show enrolment trends at the secondary school levels for forms 1 to 4 and forms 5 to 6 respectively.

![Secondary school enrolment trend (forms 1 to 4) 2000 – 2009](image)

**Figure 5 Secondary school enrolment trend (forms 1 to 4) 2000 – 2009**

*Source: Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture*
Both figures show that there has been a decrease in pupil enrolment at the secondary school level. This is possibly explained by the parents’ inability to raise fees for their children.

While academic and commercial/business programmes are readily available in most schools, technical and vocational education is not. This is generally because technical and vocational education is more expensive than academic and commercial education. Besides, many parents prefer their children to embark on academic education in line with the highly theoretical examination oriented curriculum. The situation is worsened by the absence of the availability of suitably qualified teachers of technical and vocational disciplines.

10 Safety nets to enhance access to education at the primary and secondary school level.

The following factors (among others), namely the severe economic hardships, the ravages of drought and the lack of free education had a negative impact on the educational needs of the poor, economically and socially marginalised and vulnerable children. Cognisant of this fact, the Government in conjunction with some intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations introduced safety nets to afford the poor access to education, particularly at the primary school level. These are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

10.1 The Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM)

The Basic Education Assistance Module was launched by government to ensure that vulnerable children had access to education and were retained in the system. The programme, which temporarily ceased to function some years after its inception in 2000, was revitalised in 2009. Government sought and entered into partnership with the United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the international donor community. The Ministry of Labour and Social
Welfare administers the fund together with the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC). BEAM assists disadvantaged children with the payment of tuition and examination fees and levies. According to MoESAC, the four education categories of people who receive assistance are:-

- Children in school but failing to pay or having difficulties in paying levies and fees.
- Children who have dropped out of school due to economic reasons.
- Children of school going age who have never been to school due to economic reasons.
- Other types of social vulnerability for instance child-headed families, children living on the streets and children with special needs.

While BEAM was initially meant to assist children at the primary level of education, in 2010 the programme was extended to cover children at the secondary school level. In 2009 the number of targeted schools was 5,407 and the number of schools that benefited was 5,055 with the number of children benefiting at 527,330 out of a target of 560,000. The guiding principle is that 50% of the beneficiaries should be girls.

In 2011 donor support for the programme was USD 10 million for primary and special needs schools. Government support for 2011 was USD 13 million for secondary schools. This fell short by USD 7 million from the USD 30 million wanted for the programme.

10.2 Scholarships

10.2.1 Government Scholarships

The Government through Treasury allocates money for scholarships to help the disadvantaged children. Thus in 2011 Treasury allocated USD80,000 for scholarships covering forms 1 to 6. The scholarships cater for the complete educational cycle of the beneficiary, that is, 4 years for form 1 students, 3 years for form 2 students, 2 years for students in form 3 and 1 year for those in form 4 while those in form 5 have 2 years and those in form 6 have 1 year. According to MoESAC students who qualify for the scholarship should:-

- Have good academic performance.
- Have parents/guardians from a poor background.
- Consistently show good behaviour and conduct.
- Be day scholars only, that means children attending boarding schools do not qualify.

In addition any other circumstantial factors admissible to the scholarship committee will be considered.

10.2.2 Non-governmental scholarships

The corporate world also chips in with scholarships to assist needy students. The sponsorships are channelled through approval authorities to avoid abuse of the funds.
10.2.3 School feeding programme (SFP)

The school feeding programme is targeted at primary school level. The programme is meant to feed all children from disadvantaged schools. Over the years, SFP was mainly funded by intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations including the World Food Programme, Christian Care, Catholic Relief Services, Red Cross and World Vision. The Government stepped in, in 2009. In 2009, the Treasury allocated USD 100 000 for the purpose while in 2011 it allocated USD 1 million. The allocated moneys are released to the MoESAC depending on availability of funds. The scheme cushions children who would otherwise miss out school on account of poverty and the ravages of drought. The Ministry (MoESAC) prefers wet to dry feeding. Wet feeding is where the food is prepared and consumed at school. Dry feeding is packaged food which may be taken home and consumed by the wrong people.

10.2.4 Sanitary wear programme

This programme was born out of an identified need. It was observed that during the menstrual cycle, girls from disadvantaged homes did not turn up for school because of lack of sanitary wear or they used unclean cloths and other materials. In 2010 the MoESAC with help from UNICEF and other cooperating partners provided more than 5 000 girls with sanitary pads. The programme has seen more girls attending school daily. Plans for the programme include requesting Treasury to make funds available for this purpose and also to train girls to make clean sanitary pads for themselves as part of their life skills programme. Girls who have benefitted from the programme are said to have attended class regularly.

10.2.5 The National Action Plan (NAP) for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

The National Action Plan (NAP) falls under the auspices of the Child Protection Fund whose objectives go beyond the education sector. However, one of the Child Protection Fund’s main objectives is to ‘facilitate improved access to basic education for poor orphans and other vulnerable children.’ To this end therefore NAP can be regarded as promoting access and participation in education to the poor and vulnerable children.

11 Access to Higher Education

In Zimbabwe higher and tertiary education falls under the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education (MHTE). Higher and tertiary education in this country refers to university education, teacher education and polytechnic education.

Access to higher education largely depends on an individual ability in class and capacity to pay fees. Deserving children from poor backgrounds may fail to proceed to university or college because of economic hardships unless government steps in.
11.1 Access to Teacher Education

There are fourteen teachers’ colleges in Zimbabwe. Anyone who has the requisite qualifications and aspiring to be a teacher is free to apply to a college of choice. Selection is done by individual colleges and this is largely based on results obtained at either ‘O’ and or ‘A’ level.

Table 2 Enrolments in Teachers’ Colleges by year and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3 539</td>
<td>8 035</td>
<td>11 574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3 604</td>
<td>8 154</td>
<td>11 758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>4 549</td>
<td>9 247</td>
<td>13 796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 692</td>
<td>25 436</td>
<td>37 128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education

From Table 2 one can deduce the following:

- That access to teacher education has been on the increase from 2009 to 2011. This is welcome news after a sharp decline especially from 2007 to 2009. The decrease was largely due to the economic hardships that hit the country and loss of esteem for the teaching profession.
- Between 2009 and 2011, 68.5 per cent of students enrolled in teachers’ colleges were female and 31.5 per cent of them were male. This shows that more women are taking up teaching as a profession than men.

11.2 Access to Polytechnic Education

There are 13 polytechnics including Danhiko, Msasa, Mupfure, St Peter’s Kubatana and Westgate.

Table 3 Enrolments in Polytechnics by year and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>7 364</td>
<td>5 853</td>
<td>13 217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9 337</td>
<td>4 855</td>
<td>14 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11 523</td>
<td>7 189</td>
<td>18 712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28 224</td>
<td>17 897</td>
<td>46 121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education

Table 3 shows that:

- Between 2009 and 2011, 61 per cent of students enrolled in polytechnics were male and 39 per cent of them were female. Therefore more males had access to polytechnics than females.
- While there is a drop in 2010, enrolment picks up again in 2011.
The reason why there are more males than females could be attributed to girl children going for the ‘soft’ subjects while boy children go for the ‘hard’ subjects during secondary education. The ‘hard’ subjects include mathematics and the sciences which form the basis of technical education.

11.3 Access to University Education

The country boasts of 13 universities of which four are run by private organisations. One of the four, the Women’s University in Africa has a strong bias for women though it also enrols men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>30 024</td>
<td>19 621</td>
<td>49 645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30 536</td>
<td>23 011</td>
<td>53 547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>33 927</td>
<td>25 911</td>
<td>59 838</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education

- As in other arms of higher and tertiary education, there has been an increase in enrolments at Universities from 2009 to 2011.
- There are more males than females entering university education.

The reason for the general increase in enrolments in higher and tertiary education could be a reflection of the stabilising economic situation. According to the M.H.T.E. by far the largest numbers of students enrol in public institutions than in private ones. The reason is because fees in government institutions are subsidised whereas those in private institutions are quite steep. In order to assist students who may be high-flyers but without the means to access higher education, safety nets have been put in place.

11.4 Safety Nets in higher and tertiary education.

There are basically two safety nets in higher and tertiary education. These are:-

11.4.1 Scholarships – there are two types of scholarships on offer, namely, the Presidential Scholarship Scheme and the bilateral scholarships. The presidential scholarship scheme targets bright children from economically disadvantaged rural families. Under this scheme, the same number of students is selected per province and sent to study in universities in South Africa. The first university of choice was Fort Hare University because of its links with the patron of the scheme – President R.G. Mugabe who did undergraduate study at the university. Selection of the beneficiaries is done at provincial level through a committee chaired by the Governor of the Province.

Bilateral scholarships are those between Zimbabwe and friendly countries. Applications are invited through the media and the international scholarship committee selects deserving candidates. Some of the countries where students have gone include Cuba, Algeria and Egypt.
11.4.2 Cadetship Scheme
The scheme is an initiative of the government which is meant to cushion students in public institutions who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The scheme is run by the M.H.T.E. but students apply through their institutions where they undergo a means test. Successful candidates receive tuition fees from the Treasury.

Table 5 Number of Students on the Cadetship scheme by year and type of institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Polytechnics</th>
<th>Teachers’ Colleges</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3,486</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,428</td>
<td>5,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8,714</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>3,572</td>
<td>14,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7,843</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>3,214</td>
<td>12,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20,043</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>8,214</td>
<td>32,857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education

There has been a general increase in the number of students who access higher and tertiary education with assistance from the cadetship scheme. The number has risen from 5,714 in 2009 to 32,857 in 2011 marking a staggering 575 per cent increase in just 3 years.

11.5 Challenges – The safety nets are not without challenges. Among the challenges are the inadequacy of funds and the timeous release by treasury where such funds are from government coffers. A more serious challenge with regards the cadetship scheme is that it is extended to those students studying in public institutions only and naturally students from private institutions are unhappy about the situation. With the availability of resources there is no reason why the scheme should not cover students in private institutions.

12 Gender Equity

12.1 The historical imbalances inherited from pre-independence education, cultural and religious practices by some denominations have for long disadvantaged the girl child. From independence in 1980, government has made huge strides in addressing gender equity in education in Zimbabwe. The following facts bear testimony to this assertion.

- There are almost equal numbers of female and male pupils in grades 1 to 7 (primary school level).
- Primary school completion rates are currently pegged at 68% for girls and 69% for boys.
- In forms 1 and 2 there are more female pupils than male ones.
- There are by far more female students than males in teachers’ colleges.

12.2 Challenges with regards gender parity is the decline in female enrolments at the secondary school level as one progresses from form 3 to form 6 and the higher dropout rates for girls generally. The decrease in female students is also noticeably high among female students in polytechnics and universities. Remedial measures have been taken through affirmative action and various
initiatives to bring the historically and culturally disadvantaged girl child at par with the boy child. At the higher and tertiary level the ever increasing number of female students is a positive and encouraging sign.

13 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

13.1 Prior to independence in 1980, the discriminatory policies of the government meant that many Africans failed to access education. Those fortunate enough to be enrolled in the formal education system faced a high attrition rate because of the numerous bottlenecks in the system. In the seventies however, a number of correspondence schools and evening school classes came into being largely through the efforts of religious and private sector organisations.

At independence, government sought to redress the situation by formulating policies and putting in place structures to implement them. The government recognised the importance of adult and non-formal education as a viable alternative mode of providing basic education to all Zimbabweans. It created the Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education in MoSACTo spearhead the drive to capture illiterate adults and those who had prematurely dropped out of school. Adult literacy programmes were meant chiefly to eradicate illiteracy and improve the quality of life of those affected Zimbabweans. Measures were thus put in place to ensure a vibrant adult and non-formal education system. These included:

- The establishment of study groups and independent private colleges.
- The provision of teaching and learning materials.
- The launch of a three year primary school equivalent course of adults known as the Zimbabwe Adult Basic Education Course.
- Launching of a campaign to encourage employers to open literacy classes at the workplace.
- Observing and celebrating the International Literacy Day each year.
- Monitoring teaching and learning at the various centres.

As indicated earlier government efforts were buttressed by Non-Governmental Organisations. One such organisation is the Adult Literacy Organisation of Zimbabwe (ALOZ). The organisation whose motto is, “Literacy – a tool for Development and Empowerment” tackles illiteracy, poverty alleviation and the empowerment of women. ALOZ’s programmes are community based. The organisation trains adult literacy tutors from the community and then continues to monitor, supervise and support the literacy classes it runs countrywide. Those who are totally illiterate are taken through their mother tongue and gradually use English for their lessons. ALOZ links functional literacy to daily life of the community it operates in. The subjects taught include health, childcare, disease prevention, sanitation, and clean water. To alleviate poverty, ALOZ encourages its members to engage in sustainable income generating activities such as bee-keeping, peanut butter making, market gardening, sewing, soap-making and making insect repellent creams. ALOZ infuses aspects of record keeping and management skills in its programmes to ensure viability of the projects. In recognition of its sterling efforts, UNESCO awarded the organisation with the UNESCO International Reading Association Literacy Award in 2000.
Zimbabwe’s gains in adult education and lifelong learning were severely negatively impacted upon during the country’s economic meltdown (2000 – 2008) such that the literacy rate dropped from its peak of 97% to 92% (MoESAC; 2005). However with the formation of the Government of National Unity in 2008, the situation started to improve in 2009.

MoESAC has revitalised its Division of Adult and Non-Formal Education. The Public Service Commission has, through P.S.C. circular (ref B/C/33/2010/4) provided for allowances for part time teachers who run Part Time and Continuing Education classes. Treasury also allocated the education ministry funds to support literacy programmes.

13.2 The Integrated Skills Outreach Programme (ISOP)

The integrated skills outreach programme had its beginnings in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. Now it is a multi-ministry programme involving four ministries. It was officially launched by Vice President Mujuru in 2006. The new look ISOP is a direct response to a cabinet directive instructing the ministries of Higher and Tertiary Education; Youth, Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment; Small and Medium Enterprises Development and; Labour and Social Welfare, to design and recommend an appropriate comprehensive skills training programme for youths who fail to progress to institutions of higher and tertiary learning.

The skills taught at the various centres scattered throughout the country are demand driven. Communities in a given centre identify skills shortages in that locality and out of school youths would be selected to undergo training in the various trades. Training was conducted by lecturers from MHTE’s polytechnics. In their training programmes the polytechnics incorporated personnel from the local community with expertise in the various trades. This move had a number of advantages, namely:-

- Ensuring sustainability of the programme.
- Augmenting staff complement.
- Enhancing ownership of the programme.

The programme uses existing infrastructure such as District Development Fund Workshops, Vocational Training Centres, Youth Centres, Polytechnics, Rural and Urban Council Workshops and Community Centres.

ISOP, like most programmes in the country suffered from the effects of the economic recession but with the situation stabilising, the programme is once more up and about.

13.3 At the higher education level the Zimbabwe Open University affords the opportunity to those who want to embark on diploma and degree studies through distance learning. In addition other universities run departments of Continuing Education for the same purpose.
14 Quality Education

14.1 Quality education at the school level.

In Zimbabwe there are public schools run by government and private schools run by religious organisations and other groups. In the interest of the child, the country government has put in place measures to ensure equivalency and comparability of standards in all schools. The measures are:-

- Developing the curriculum used in schools by the Curriculum Development Unit of MoESAC and distributing to all schools.
- Setting standards for teachers who operate at various levels, that is, their qualifications and the experience thereof.
- Setting the pupil – teacher ratio at each level. Currently the recommended level is 33:1 for primary schools, and for secondary schools:
  - 33:1 for forms 1 and 2
  - 30:1 for forms 3 and 4
  - 20:1 for forms 5 and 6.
- Providing pre and in-service training for those aspiring to be teachers and those already in the service. This helps to improve teacher qualifications and competencies.
- Monitoring and evaluating the system through the education inspectorate. There are education officers and inspectors in each province.
- Sitting for the same examinations from the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council.
- Participating in initiatives such as the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) and Education Management of Information Systems (EMIS).
- Providing teaching and learning materials to improve the pupil to textbook ratio. One of the greatest initiatives to improve quality education was the launch in 2009 of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) by the MoESAC. The fund aimed at providing essential teaching and learning materials for primary schools. The textbooks were provided in the core subjects of Mathematics, English, Shona/Ndebele, and Science. In these subjects the pupil – textbook ratio is now 1:1. As a result of savings made during this first phase, the programme was extended to secondary schools again in the core subjects stated above with additional ones namely, History and Geography.

14.1.1 There are challenges that make it difficult to achieve equivalent conditions relating to quality of education in all institutions. The establishment of satellite schools in areas opened up through the land reform means that some infrastructure used by pupils is below standard and unsuitable for a conducive learning environment. Besides, the country lost large numbers of teachers, particularly in Mathematics and Science to neighbouring countries. Schools in remote rural areas tend to be manned by untrained teachers as trained personnel shun them. Government has however taken measures to encourage the teachers abroad to return.
14.2 Quality education in higher and tertiary education

As stated earlier, higher and tertiary education in Zimbabwe comprises teacher education, polytechnic and university education.

14.2.1 Teacher education

There are fourteen teachers’ colleges in the country. Three of them offer courses for the Diploma in Education for aspiring secondary school teachers while the rest offer the Diploma in Education for primary school teachers. All fourteen are associate colleges of the University of Zimbabwe. Under the scheme of association, the University through its Department of Teacher Education (D.T.E.), examines and awards diplomas to successful students. According to the University (2012), the quality assurance processes are seen through by the Department of Teacher Education, Board of examiners and the Board of Studies that report to the Senate Sub-Committee on Affiliate and Associate Status. Among the functions of the various boards are:–

- To monitor the work of all associate colleges with emphasis on library, teaching and learning facilities and student services.
- To approve courses of study syllabi, and the conduct of examination.
- To appoint examination assessors and external examiners.

14.2.2 Polytechnics

Quality assurance in technical education is regulated by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. There is a division within the Ministry called Standards Development and Quality Assurance which superintends the process. It does this through the Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO). The Department of Standards Development and Research Unit develops occupational standards while the Industrial Training and Trade Testing Department focuses on skills development and testing. Assessment in technical education is done by the Higher Education Examinations Council (HEXCO) while skills for the various trades is tested by the Zimbabwe Skills Testing and Certification Services (ZIMSTACS). It is important to note that at college level there are examination committees whose work is assisted by the College Advisory Council or Board. The membership of the councils/boards is mainly from industry and commerce. The idea is to ensure relevance of the curriculum and acceptability of the products by the end user.

To further strengthen quality assurance the Ministry is advised by the National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO). According to the Manpower Planning and Development Act [Chapter 28:02] Council may advise the Minister in the following:

- Measures to improve national manpower development and training programmes.
- The standard of facilities to be provided by employers for apprenticeship and skilled worker training.
- The standardisation of training programmes and examinations for the purposes of any trade or industry.

Currently the Ministry is working on a bill to establish the Zimbabwe Qualifications Authority which would provide the qualifications framework, inter alia technical education.
14.2.3 University Education

The overall board responsible for quality assurance in universities is the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE). The Council is empowered by the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education Act: 2006 [Chapter 25:27] to:

- Recommend to the Minister the institutional quality assurance standards that will govern the performance operations and general conduct of all institutions of higher education.
- Evaluate the performance of institutions regularly in the light of standards set.
- Issue or refuse to issue a certificate of accreditation to an institution.

The issuance of a certificate of accreditation to an institution is dependent on, among other factors, its ability to demonstrate achievement of acceptable standards in relation to physical, human, financial and material resources, management and operational procedures and an acceptable standard of academic life focusing on teaching, research and public expert service. Individual universities have various academic committees and boards which ensure quality standards set by the University itself and by ZIMCHE.

In order to further enhance quality, MHTE has introduced the Zimbabwe Human Capital Website whose main objective is to mitigate the effects of brain flight. The initiative was launched in 2009 and links up highly skilled Zimbabwean professionals abroad with institutions at home. The professionals either come on a permanent or short term basis or assist the country from wherever they are.

15 Teaching profession

Training for the teaching profession in Zimbabwe is open to all who meet the requirements. All teacher education colleges enrol on the basis of academic results obtained at ‘O’ or ‘A’ level examinations depending on the programme being pursued. Applicants compete on the basis of the results regardless of race, colour, creed, political affiliation, gender or whatever.

The conditions under which teachers are operating are generally good. However there is need to improve the salaries which are still below the poverty datum line. The reason for this state of affairs is because of the poorly performing economy which sees the country failing to secure enough financial resources to meet decent salaries for teachers who contribute more than 67 per cent of government employees. Currently the salaries of all government civil servants with the same qualifications are generally the same. Differences occur when one gets a post that is promotional or when one is a teacher at university.

There is room for improving the conditions of work for teachers living in rural areas with regards to such issues as infrastructure and housing. The construction of more schools to remove the phenomenon of double sessions or ‘hot sitting’ would also go a long way to improve the conditions of teachers in the affected schools. This is mainly in urban areas.
Measures being taken to improve the living and professional conditions of teachers are:-

- Paying housing and transport allowances.
- Affording loans to teachers so that they can build or buy houses and cars.
- Reviewing teachers’ salaries in line with the performance of the economy.

16 Respect for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

As stated earlier, Zimbabwe is signatory to several human rights conventions and protocols both at regional and international levels. It also has national legal framework to guarantee and protect human rights.

At school level, human rights education has been infused into social studies whereas the rights of the child as enshrined in the Convention are part of the Human Rights Education curriculum. At the secondary school level human rights education is taught in subjects such as History, Geography and Religious Studies.

The challenge however is that not many parents, particularly in rural areas, and teachers are wholly conversant or even aware of these rights.

17 Private education

There is provision for the establishment of private education institutions in Zimbabwe from preschool up to university level. All organisations or individuals that want to establish private institutions must apply for registration with the respective authorities. The legal parameters upon which these institutions are registered or accredited are found in the following Acts of Parliament:

- The Education Act: 2006 [Chapter 25:04] Part V sections 15 to 25. This applies to schools.
- The Zimbabwe Manpower Planning and Development Act: 1996 [Chapter 28:02] Part II Sections 8 to 13. This applies to vocational and technical institutions.

18 Religious and Moral Education

Parents in Zimbabwe have the right to choose schools where their children get education and no child is compelled to attend religious education of a denominational nature contrary to their will. The situation with regards religious and moral education is best captured in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Section 19 sub section (2) which states that:

Except with his own consent or, if he is a minor, the consent of his parent or guardian, no person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in or to attend any religious ceremony, or observance of that instruction, ceremony, or observance that relates to a religious order other than his own.
19 The Rights of National Minorities

The national minorities can carry out their own educational activities provided such activities fall within the parameters of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the relevant Education Acts and any statutory instrument or policies issued by the respective Ministry or Authority. While the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture provides that English, Shona and Ndebele should be taught in all schools on an equal basis, minority languages are also taken on board and children can be taught in their mother tongue from grade 1 to grade 3. Syllabi and books for minority languages are currently being developed by the Ministry which intends to have them taught up to ‘O’ and ‘A’ level.

20 Summary of Difficulties Encountered in Implementing the Provisions of the Convention

20.1 During the period under review (2006 – 2011) the Government of Zimbabwe faced numerous difficulties that hindered the full implementation of the Convention as indicated in the following paragraphs.

20.2 There was a serious shortage of resources both human and material at least up to 2008 because of the devastating effects of the economic hardships and hyperinflation that gripped the country. A large number of teachers left the country in search of “green pastures”. There was a scarcity of funds to buy teaching and learning material and to build or maintain infrastructure.

20.3 Some cultural and religious practices favour the boy child at the expense of the girl child. For example, where school fees are difficult to come by, efforts would be made to find money for the boy child instead of the girl child irrespective of the child’s ability to do well at school. Some religious groups encourage girls to marry at an early age thus compromising their ability even to complete the primary level of education.

20.4 The lack of a free and compulsory education policy enforced by law.

20.5 The above cited difficulties are issues that need to be attended to, to promote equality of educational opportunities in the country namely, availability of resources, making education free and compulsory at least at the primary school level, narrowing the gap in living conditions between rural and urban areas and high and low density suburbs and lobbying for equal treatment between boys and girls especially among rural folk and also some religious groups.

21 Activities Undertaken by the National Commission for UNESCO to Promote the Convention

The activities undertaken or supported by the Commission include the following:-

• The Commission was instrumental in bringing the attention of the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education (Chair of the Commission) on the need to ratify the Convention. Subsequently the Minister put in place measures to have the Convention ratified. This was done in 2006.
• Engaging various ministries, for example, MoESAC, the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs and that of Foreign Affairs on the modalities of ratifying the Convention.
• Carrying out advocacy work at such fora as the EFA National Committee meetings.
• Lobbying for funds and engaging jointly with MoESAC for the observance of International Literacy Day.
• Informing stakeholders about the ratification of the Convention.

22 Conclusion

Both the Government and people of Zimbabwe have an unparalleled passion for education. This is shown by the fact that the budget allocated to education by Treasury is always among the top three ministries. Despite the economic and other challenges discussed in this report, the country has continued to make impressive strides to make education accessible to all at every level. Among key achievements are the following:

• The Constitution, the Supreme Law of the Land, upholds the right to education for all.
• Zimbabwe has the highest literacy rate in Africa at over 90%. Also, disaggregated literacy rates for males and females are again still the highest and second highest in Africa respectively.
• There is near gender parity at the primary school level. In teachers’ colleges, the historically and traditionally disadvantaged females now outnumber male students at 67% to 33% respectively. The ever increasing and impressive enrolments across all levels of education (except for the secondary school sector in 2009).
• The thirst for quality as shown by the established standards control and quality assurance boards and councils across the education system.

With the stabilisation of the economy and the political situation one can only hope for a very bright future with the total implementation of the provisions of the Convention.
23 References

2. Constitution of Zimbabwe (Revised) 1996.
3. Education Act 2006 [Chapter 25:04].
6. Manpower Planning and Development Act 1996 [Chapter 28:02].
10. Shadow Report to the CEDAW Committee, Zimbabwe Civil Society, 2012