



# WOMEN AND LAW IN SOUTHERN AFRICA RESEARCH AND EDUCATION TRUST (WLSA) ZAMBIA

WLSA Zambia is a women's organisation that has put the development of women at the centre of its programming and strategies; and observes strict adherence to gender principles in its work.



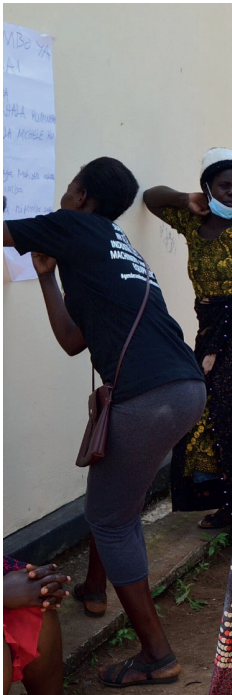
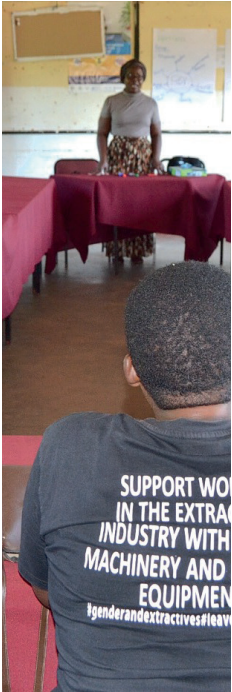


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## 1. THE ORGANISATION

Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) is a regional network operating in seven countries of southern Africa, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The network strives to work towards improving the socio-economic, political and legal advancement of women through research and implementation of specific projects.

WLSA Zambia was established in 1989 by a group of academics, gender activists, and researchers in response to the many socio-legal challenges that women were facing in the region. WLSA Zambia was first registered under the Registrar of Societies Act, Chapter 119 of the laws of Zambia, on 30 June 2004; following a change in legislation in 2009, the organization was registered under the Non-Governmental Organisation Act No.16 of 2009 under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services.

WLSA Zambia focuses on, among other issues, social justice, gender equality and equity; and the law, both customary and statutory. In the continued effort to improve the socio-economic, political and legal advancement of women, WLSA works on issues relating to disability, the environment, education and health, poverty reduction through empowerment of women, all anchored on the law and respect for human rights.

## 2. VISION



A Zambia in which women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development.

## 3. MISSION



WLSA Zambia works towards the socio-economic, political, and legal advancement of women and children by increasing access to justice, undertaking research and lobbying; and advocating for changes to legislation, policies, and practices that discriminate against women.



#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE

WLSA Zambia is a women's organisation that has put the development of women at the centre of its programming and strategies; and observes strict adherence to gender principles in its work.

The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees, comprised by technocrats from different professions who provide technical oversight and organisational direction. The Board is the policy making organ and it monitors the extent to which its policies are implemented by management.

The management team is led by a National Director, supported by a Finance and Administration Manager and a Program Manager; it is responsible for the day to day operations of WLSA Zambia. The management team is responsible for implementation of policies as outlined by the Board. It is also responsible for programme implementation. The staff complement includes an assistant Finance and Administration Manager, programs officers (legal and social), communications, monitoring and evaluation as well as administration support staff.

WLSA Zambia has its offices in Lusaka but also operates through a network of partner organisations at grassroots level in seventeen (17) districts, namely Luangwa, Chilubi, Kasama, Lunte, Lupososhi, Luwingu, Mungwi, Mbala, Mpulungu, Mporokoso, Nsama, Kaputa, Senga, Vubwi, Chadiza, Sesheke and Monze.










## 5. STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OBJECTIVES

The work of WLSA Zambia is anchored on five strategic pillars, namely;

1. Access to Justice
2. Policy and Legislation
3. Gender and Governance
4. Research
5. Organisational Development

**WLSA Zambia has set itself the development objective of improving the legal status of women and children in Zambia, through the following specific objectives:**

|   | Pillar                                                                                                            | Strategic Objectives                                                                                                                                   |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <br>Access to Justice            | To provide legal aid and support to marginalised groups, especially women and girls, to ensure their access to justice and protection of their rights. |
| 2 | <br>Policy and Legislation       | To lobby for the development of and implementation of evidence based and gender-sensitive policies and legislation.                                    |
| 3 | <br>Gender and Governance        | To advocate and lobby for an increase in the number of women in decision-making positions at all levels of governance.                                 |
| 4 | <br>Research                   | To conduct gender sensitive research particularly related to citizens (especially women and girls) legal rights.                                       |
| 5 | <br>Organisational Development | To strengthen WLSA's internal governance and technical capacity to plan, implement, manage, monitor, and report progress on achieving its objectives.  |

## 6. PAST AND CURRENT PROJECTS

WLSA Zambia has been engaged in various research studies and programmes since its establishment. Research has been conducted on maintenance, inheritance, women's access to resources, the justice delivery system and women's access to justice; gender based violence and women's sexual and reproductive health rights; and trafficking of women and girls. WLSA Zambia has participated in a number of law reform processes that advance women's right to participate in governance and decision-making processes. It has conducted training under various thematic areas, all aimed at empowering communities through women. Below are a few of the notable projects on which WLSA Zambia has been a lead or co-implementing partner in the last ten years.

| PILLAR                        | PROJECT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | FUNDING SOURCE                                                              |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Access to Justice</b>      | Prevent! Sexual and Gender Based Violence Prevention and Survivor Support (Natwampane Project 2019–2023). In partnership with World Vision Zambia, Catholic Medical Mission Board and Sport In Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | European Union                                                              |
|                               | Stamping Out and Preventing Gender-Based Violence Programme (STOP GBV 2012–2018)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | DFID and USAID                                                              |
|                               | Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality in the Extractives Industries and Natural Resource Governance (2023)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Ford Foundation through WLSA Zimbabwe                                       |
|                               | Poverty Reduction Begins with You: (2019 –2021)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | New Zealand High Commission Fund                                            |
|                               | Enhancing Access to Justice of Adolescent Girls, (2019 –2020) partnership with Equality Now                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | GIZ<br>Oak Foundation                                                       |
|                               | Change Project – Programme for the Legal Empowerment and Enhanced Justice Delivery (PLEED)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | GIZ                                                                         |
| <b>Policy and Legislation</b> | Hear Our Voices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Save the Children                                                           |
|                               | <b>18+:</b> Fighting Child Marriage in Zambia (2017–2019) in collaboration with Plan International                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | NORAD                                                                       |
|                               | Widow Destitution and Dispossession: How Zambian Inheritance Law Infringes On A Woman's Right to Own and Use Property – Human Rights Report (2022) WLSA Zambia and the National Legal Aid Clinic for Women                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | International Women's Human Rights Clinic, Georgetown University Law Centre |
|                               | Equity and Equality Framework Reformation Project (2016–2018) WLSA and NGOCC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | European Union                                                              |
| <b>Gender and Governance</b>  | Women in Leadership: A Key to Sustainable Development Project (2018 – 2020)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | African Women's Development Fund                                            |
|                               | Promoting Legal Empowerment of Women; Working Towards Legal Reforms for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Women's Participation in Decision Making (2014)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Norwegian Church Aid                                                        |
| <b>Research</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Mind of a Perpetrator of Gender Based Violence Crimes Research Report (2018).</li> <li>▪ A Gendered Analysis of Social and Economic Laws in Zambia: Exploring Women's and Girls' Economic Rights, 2013–2014</li> <li>▪ A Situation Analysis for Female and Juvenile Prisoners and Circumstantial Children, 2014</li> <li>▪ Women's Economic Empowerment, 2010</li> <li>▪ Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights and HIV Transmission in Zambia, 2007</li> <li>▪ Inheritance in Zambia</li> <li>▪ Gender Violence – The Invisible Struggle, 2001</li> <li>▪ Women and Justice: Myth or Reality, 1999</li> </ul> |                                                                             |



## 7. METHODOLOGY AND OUTCOMES

As we embark on another cycle through the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, WLSA Zambia will re-invigorate its networking activities, conduct more research on current issues in the legal and socio-political spheres with a view to produce publications. This is in recognition of the fact that information is an empowerment tool; much has been done for the promotion and protection of women and girls but this is insufficiently documented for use by parliamentarians, judicial officers, practitioners, scholars and researchers, policy makers, and CSOs, at home and abroad. WLSA will seek to increase the body of knowledge around social and legal issues affecting women in Zambia.

WLSA Zambia conducts research for action, which informs and influences action to improve the status of women. The research is used to advocate for change to the legal and policy environment in respect to women. The information generated is used to lobby the government to make legal changes for the benefit of women and to promote gender equality.

Our approach focuses on the empowerment of women through knowledge-sharing to enable them claim their rights. WLSA Zambia endeavours to give women greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that promote their human rights. We also work towards increasing the ability of gatekeepers and leaders to recognise and respect the rights of women.




In its community-based interventions, WLSA Zambia acknowledges the diverse needs of women across the rural and urban divide; recognition is also given to the different needs of the elderly, adolescent girls and persons with disabilities, to ensure equal and equitable participation. WLSA Zambia employs participatory and evidence-based methodologies to achieve its objectives and the information gathered through the research is processed using the applicable human rights standards. Where gaps are identified, WLSA uses lobbying and advocacy strategies to influence law reform which eliminates inequality and reflects human rights standards as set out in treaties and conventions to which Zambia is a State Party.

Where the gaps and shortcomings identified during research point to weak enforcement of laws and structural barriers to women and girls claiming their rights, WLSA engages affected communities through legal and human rights awareness



raising, sensitisation and training. WLSA uses its comparative advantage of legal expertise to empower communities by easing access to justice at community level through training of community paralegals as well as key rights holders and duty bearers.

Where the research indicates failure by duty-bearers to respect, protect and promote rights, WLSA engages them to build their capacity on knowledge of the law, procedure and human rights. As part of monitoring, WLSA conducts human rights audits of institutions as a way of making them accountable to rights holders. We produce position papers and information fact sheets on emerging issues; conduct gender analysis and tracking of the national budget; develop issues papers on topical issues; we participate in the advocacy activities of like-minded organisations; network and collaborate with organisations dealing with socio-political issues; analyse policies from a gender and women's rights perspective and disseminate findings thereof.

For the period 2024 – 2028, WLSA will apply the methodology towards the following outcomes

|   | Pillar                                                                                                        | Outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <br>Access to Justice      | <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Increase in the number of women and children accessing legal and other support services.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Improved quality of services being provided by different service providers.</p> <p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Communities in WLSA's areas of operation have increased capacity to report cases of injustice/abuse.</p>                                    |
| 2 | <br>Policy and Legislation | <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Gender sensitive policies and legislation being developed and implemented.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Increase in the number of gender sensitive by-laws at the community level.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3 | <br>Gender and Governance  | <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Increase in the number of institutions both public and private promoting women in decision-making positions at all levels of governance.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Community actors (traditional and church leaders) are supportive of women in leadership.</p> <p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Political parties have engendered their party manifestos and constitutions</p> |



|   |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | <br>Research                   | <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Research by WLSA being used by Government to inform policy and legislation development and implementation.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> New methodologies and perspectives for the study of gender and the law developed.</p>                                      |
| 6 | <br>Organisational Development | <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> WLSA has strengthened capacity to plan, implement, manage, monitor and report progress.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> WLSA is sustainably running its programmes.</p> <p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Strengthened networks at national, regional and international level.</p> |

## 8. The FUTURE AND BEYOND

WLSA Zambia commits to continue working towards its vision of a Zambia in which women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development.

We shall endeavour to deliver on our mission – to contribute to the socio-economic, political and legal advancement of women and children in Zambia, being the core beneficiaries of our work. WLSA Zambia looks forward to more collaborations and partnerships in this regard.



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