



IMPACT REPORT

Helping Women at risk of Abuse

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to Cecily's Fund. As part of my Supporter Relations role, I am delighted to give you an update and greater insight into one of our current programmes that is supporting vulnerable women living in Chazanga compound, Lusaka. The women in the project were identified as being at-risk and vulnerable to abuse which has wider implications on children in the family.

Lwiza Mulenga

Supporter Relations Officer

Programme Update:

Appreciating The Value of Your Support

Since the project started a year ago, we have made significant progress in achieving our objectives and bringing about a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable women in their community.

Project Objectives:

- To enhance the emotional and financial well-being of 40 oppressed and marginalised women impacted by abuse in Chazanga Compound, Lusaka.
- Foster increased self-esteem and promote a deeper understanding of basic rights and gender equity.
- Cultivate respect for women at risk of abuse among men in the community, and to reduce all forms of abuse and exploitation against women and girls.

Progress to Date:

The project has achieved remarkable outcomes in Zambia in the past year. The interventions Cecily's Fund has put in place have addressed the rising reports of gender-based violence in Zambia, where prosecutions have declined and fewer women were going forward to report incidences of abuse for fear of repercussions. Many Zambian women withdraw their cases, emboldening perpetrators, whilst some women chose not to press charges to protect their family's financial future. Reported cases of gender-based violence in Zambia increased by approximately 80% from



2010 to 2014, according to the National Gender Based Violence Crime Statistics. Considering this, Cecily's Fund aimed to empower women affected by abuse in Chazanga where increased incidences were being noticed by our local implementing partner BISO. The purpose of the project was to encourage financial independence, increase awareness and an understanding of basic rights, and, enable a more secure future for women at-risk and their children.

Outcomes

Increased Demand for Support:



There is an increased awareness and recognition of the importance of reporting concerns and greater understanding of basic rights. The project has empowered women and helped them to feel more secure and obtain support when needed. As a result, women supported by the project have reported a growing number of girls and women seeking information and support concerning issues related to gender-based violence.

Enhanced Victim Support:

In response to the escalating incidences of gender-related abuse, and recognition of the project's impact, the local police force has established a Victim Support Officer based at the local police station near our local partner's offices. This crucial addition provides accessible and immediate assistance to those affected by abuse, and now offers a lifeline to women in distress. This exemplifies how attitudes are changing as a result of the project.



Empowered Women through Tailoring Training:

Twenty women identified as 'at risk' have received comprehensive training in tailoring and how to set up a business. As a result, they have experienced improved self-esteem, financial independence,

and have also gained a deeper understanding of their basic rights. They have since reported positive behaviour changes, including their ability to navigate difficult situations effectively, and provide support to one another.

Economic Empowerment:

The tailoring group formed as part of the project has achieved noteworthy milestones. They have secured a contract with a US NGO to supply reusable sanitary towels, ensuring access to essential menstrual hygiene products for women in need. Additionally, the group has been officially registered by BISO as a cooperative business, providing sustainable income opportunities for the women involved.



Reduction in Gender-Based Violence:



The introduction of 'campfire discussions' facilitated by Cecily's Fund's local implementing partner BISO have also taken place. These gatherings unite community leaders and men who are considered at-risk of abusing women. Their purpose is to engage in discussions about gender dynamics, effective stress management, and other pertinent male-related topics. This has led to a significant decrease in gender-based violence within the community. Through positive male engagement, the discussions have fostered increased understanding and respect for women, and have served as a powerful platform for promoting positive social reform. We are thrilled to share that the next group of discussions commenced in May 2023, building upon the positive momentum generated thus far.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation for your incredible generosity. Your support has played a pivotal role in transforming the lives of vulnerable women, empowering them with knowledge, support, and economic opportunities. Together, we are making a lasting difference and working towards a society where every individual can live free from abuse and discrimination, and this in turn will have a positive impact on the lives of those children in their care.

I hope you have enjoyed reading about the progress of one of our projects and I look forward to sharing more updates with you in the future.

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Lwiza Mulenga
Supporter Relations Officer