



101828 - Zimbabwe
Project Fact Sheet 2022

Zimbabwe: Empowering mothers of disabled children

Overview

Bible Society Zimbabwe (initially in partnership with the 2020 World Day of Prayer celebrations) are advocating and empowering both children with disabilities and their mothers. This project aims to reduce the stigma and isolation surrounding the carers of disabled children and also to highlight the reality and prevalence of disability in the community.

The Need

7% (approximately 90,000) of Zimbabwe's total population have a form of disability. Despite the prevalence of disability, mothers of children with disability have experienced ongoing marginalization and exclusion, on top of the other challenges of raising a child with special needs.

Many mothers who care for children with disabilities find it difficult to attend church and other social gatherings because of their children's condition, as well as a lack of inclusive practices in their community.

It is still common in communities and churches alike to consider forms of

disability as a contagious sickness. This leads to discrimination and stigma. It is also quite common to hear of fathers abandoning their families if a child with a disability is born.

This places enormous responsibility on women to offer care as well as financial provision for their families. Income generation is made more difficult by the greater care needs of the children. This heightens the difficulty of accessing appropriate assistive devices, healthcare, rehabilitation and professional care.



Project Goals

This project seeks to advocate for mothers' empowerment and inclusion within communities and specifically within churches.

Although the project began in 2020, any activity involving gathering in groups or travelling was postponed by the COVID pandemic. Consequently, these elements of the project only began in 2021 and will continue throughout 2022.

This year, advocacy workshops and special training (including from health specialists, Bible studies and income-generating sessions) for mothers will be

run with interactive presentations and discussions.

Health specialists will help to equip, train and support mothers on how best to take care of their children.

Scriptures will be provided to mothers and their children (Bibles, bookmarks with verses for inspiration and encouragement, and Children's Bibles) so that they can access the word of God as their source of strength and comfort.

Impact

The impact of these activities will be seen in the following ways:

- Mothers will be sensitised on issues of health, social, spiritual and economic development.
- Disabled children and their mothers will be spiritually inspired and encouraged by receiving appropriate Scriptures in their language.
- Children's lives will be more comfortable due to the rehabilitation exercises, life skills and assistive devices provided to them.
- There will be a better understanding in the church of the difficulties facing these women and their children, as well as a better spiritual understanding of disability, and a desire to help.
- Teachers of special classes and parents who home school will be trained to teach literacy to children with special needs such as dyslexia.

Testimonies

"I would like to thank Bible Society of Zimbabwe and their friends for recognising the challenges we face as mothers caring for disabled children. The assistance which have been extended to my family is overwhelming. I pray that let it not end on me but go and touch other families in the same situation as us. To those who have extended their hand to us, may God be with them."

- Mrs. E. Musiyambiri, a mother of a child with disability.

Prayer Needs

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will be at work through the implementation of the project.
- Pray that the women and their children will be empowered by the Scriptures, by the teaching and fellowship, and by the workshops.
- Pray that God will help team members find expert volunteers to train and teach.