

**AN ASSESSMENT OF CHILD RIGHTS AWARENESS AMONG BASIC SCHOOL  
CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED BASIC SCHOOL PUPILS IN  
LUSAKA URBAN**

**By**

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree in Master of Development Studies

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Prosper Mangamu do hereby declare that this piece of work is my own and that all the work of other people has been duly acknowledged and that this work has not been previously been presented at this university and indeed any other university for similar purposes.

**Signature:**.....

**Date:**.....

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation by PROSPER MANGAMU has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of master of Development Studies by the University of Zambia.

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This dissertation explored the level of child rights awareness among children in selected basic schools in Lusaka District. The study was occasioned by the data which showed a considerable low level of child rights awareness among pupils despite progress made by Zambia in signing many protocols and formulating focused laws on child rights related issues. Child rights were defined in the study by drawing on the content of the “United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)” because Zambia is a party thereto. The objectives of the study were to find out if children knew their rights. It also sought to establish sources of information on child rights as well as the importance of children knowing their rights and suggests strategies that would help improve child rights awareness.

**Methodology:** The study was conducted in 08 selected basic schools in Lusaka District. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted in the study. Participants were selected through purposive, simple random and stratified samplings. The data was obtained through focus group discussion and individual interviews with pupils who were the major respondents to the study while informant interview was used to obtain information from selected key stakeholders working with children. Qualitative data was analyzed through content/thematic analysis while quantitative data was analyzed through the use of Microsoft excel.

**Results:** Analysis of field notes and interview transcripts from separate focus group discussions and individual interviews with pupils reviewed that children in upper basic schools knew their rights like right to health, education, food, water and shelter. They also articulated well the content of message covered in the CRC. Equally, the results showed that the main source where children obtained information on child rights was through their teachers. The findings of the study also showed that pupils from middle basic school were unable to articulate well the benefits of them knowing their rights unlike their counterparts in upper basic school whose responses were much better. The study found that the government has widely recognised child rights through various programmes and policies. However, implementations of these programmes and policies have not been adequate.

**Discussion and Recommendations:** From the results shown above, it is evident that the study uncovered a number of dynamics in child rights awareness among children in basic schools. The study concluded that child rights awareness varies depending on the age and grade as well as exposure to a number of factors. Further the study concluded that regardless of the levels of awareness, that ‘awareness’ was not adequate. The study therefore, recommends that child rights information should be accorded more importance and should be better structured in terms of both content and delivery in order to empower children and respond to their needs so that they are able to share in the multi-sectoral opportunities that can help uplift their livelihoods. The study reinforces on the need for the government to prioritize strategies that would assist in opening up various information sources on child rights in order for children to know their rights and responsibilities. The government should consider introducing the CRC document as a teaching material in schools.

## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this dissertation to all those who supported me all along the enduring and toiling academic journey to pursue further studies. Above all, my family will always be appreciated and cherished as they are the reason behind my action to aspire for advanced academic studies.*

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CBOR	Children’s Bill of Rights
CHIN	Children in Need Network
CRC	Child Rights Clubs
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US BDHRL	United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour
VSU	Victim Support Unit
ZCEA	Zambia Civic Education Association