

# **Fighting Child Sexual Abuse in Zanzibar through Provision and Sharing of Child Protection Information**

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## **Abstract**

This paper is based on a study that examined the provision of child protection information towards minimising child sexual abuse in Zanzibar. The paper provides a composite and updated picture of child protection initiatives and their challenges and proposes possible measures to be taken to enhance the situation, focusing on information provision and sharing. A survey was conducted in five local and two international organisations that deal with children's affairs. It involved information workers, university instructors, university students, officers from the selected organisations and community members. In all, 128 respondents participated in the study. The results were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings show that information on child protection is available in both print and electronic formats in addition to being conventionally available and documented at the government ministries and other development partners official reports. However, the community's access to this information remains very low, relies on radio and television, which most of the time provides limited information. This makes the majority of community members to remain only partially aware of issues pertaining to preventing, reporting and responding to child protection cases. Although governmental bodies are willing to support child protection, the limited co-ordination between governmental and non-state actors coupled with low direct involvement of the community has led to inefficient use of information as a tool to fighting child sexual abuse in Zanzibar.

## **Keywords:**

Child protection information, child protection, child violence, sexual abuse, Zanzibar

## **Background to the problem**

There has been a global outcry against sexual abuse generally and Zanzibar in particular. World communities are angry and would like to see some efforts made towards ensuring that justice prevails with adequate precautions and preparedness put in place. Yet, sexual abuse against children remains a very complex issue and requires adequate approaches to fight it. Several reports of organisations dealing with children indicate that violence against children is a critical problem in Zanzibar. According to a Violence against Children survey conducted in Zanzibar (VAC, 2011), approximately six percent of females and nine percent of males have experienced some form of sexual violence prior to the age of 18. In Zanzibar, a number of initiatives have been taken to overcome this problem. For example, the Government of Zanzibar has shown strong political commitment to the realisation of children's rights in recent years, with the enactment of the Children's Act of 2011, the adoption of National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children in Zanzibar, the establishment and operation of a Child Protection Unit at the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), the establishment of four One-Stop Centres known as *Mkono kwa Mkono (Hand to Hand)*, three Gender and Children Police Desks, and one Children's Court. However, these efforts have not stopped cases of child violence from increasing. In fact, reports of child violence in Zanzibar are on the upswing.

The findings of JUMIKI report (2014 cited in LHRC and ZLSC, 2014) show that there were 132 cases of rape, 136 early pregnancy cases, 59 gay cases, 26 lesbian cases. The same report observes that in some cases, family members and school teachers are responsible for child sexual abuse, whereby some cases of child sexual abuse are reported to police stations for legal action and some of the them are settled at the family level, thus condemning victims to silence. One of the factors leading to the increase of the problem in Zanzibar could be lack of right and timely information among community members.

The Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) and the Zanzibar Legal Services Centre (ZLSC) report (2013) observe that lack of proper information and the ignorance of people pertaining to handling children violence cases remain a major problem in Zanzibar. Similarly the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF, 2013) report on Children and Women in Tanzania observes that there is so little official information is available on many aspects of child protection in Zanzibar that the true scope and magnitude of child sexual abuse and violence in Zanzibar

remains largely known. At present, however, there are a few institutions offering legal education in Zanzibar such as the Zanzibar University and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which provide legal aid to help people access justice. The ZLSC is one of the most active NGO in efforts aimed to create public awareness on legal issues by conducting radio and television programmes and publishing a number of magazines in both English and Kiswahili (LHRC and ZLSC, 2012).

### **Statement of the problem**

Several studies have noted the existence of violence against children in Zanzibar. To deal with the problem, a number of initiatives have been taken by both governmental and non-governmental organisations. Despite these efforts, the problem remains seemingly intractable and was on the increase. Several studies have investigated the problem, but many of these rarely link the problem with the provision and access to information. Therefore, this in-depth study on the provision of child protection information was conducted to fill this information gap. The findings of this study can form a basis for reminding child protection resource centres of their significant role in the provision of the required information on child sexual abuse and protection. Likewise, the findings may also raise awareness among community members on the importance of accessing child protection information and, hence, help empower them towards proactively responding to child sexual abuse. The study findings may also promote co-operation between child protection resource centres, libraries and other stakeholders in the provision of the required information towards child protection.

### **Objective of the study**

The main focus of this paper is to examine the issue of the provision of child protection information and suggest measures that can be taken to reduce child sexual violence in Zanzibar through information sharing. Interpretation of data for the present study was based on empirical study obtained from questionnaires and interviews crafted in accordance with the following objectives:

1. To examine the awareness of child protection process among students, instructors, information workers and the community;

2. To examine the availability of child protection information in Zanzibar and the usage of the available resources;
3. To find out the range of information sources used to access child protection information in Zanzibar; and
4. To assess the activities undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organisations in the provision of child protection information in Zanzibar

### **Zanzibar profile**

Geographically, Zanzibar consists of the two main Islands of Unguja and Pemba and several smaller adjacent islets and islands with a total area of 2645 km<sup>2</sup>. Zanzibar is separated from the East African mainland by a channel 25km at its narrowest. According to data from the population census released in 2012, Zanzibar is densely populated; its current population is about 1.5 mil. This population is composed of people of diverse racial, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. About 95 percent of Zanzibaris are Muslim. In fact, the Zanzibari society and public life are strongly influenced by Islamic values. The remaining five percent of the population consists of a few Hindus and a number of Christians (Census, 2012). Regarding judiciary matters, there is a dual court system in Zanzibar, namely, a common law system and that of the Kadhi courts, which deals with Muslim personal matters pertaining to marriage, divorce and inheritance in accordance with Muslim law (*Shariah*). Politically, as a semi-autonomous part of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT), Zanzibar has its own government, known as the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. It is made up of the Revolutionary Council and House of Representatives.

### **Current situation of child violence in Zanzibar**

Violence against children has been a pernicious and critical global problem. In Tanzania, as in many African countries, women's and children's rights are affected by some traditions which discriminate against them in matters of inheritance, property ownership, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, child labour and general exploitation (Kijo-Bisimba, 2013). A survey on violence against children in Tanzania (2009) was the first such national level study to be conducted in East Africa. The survey examined all forms of violence including sexual, physical

and emotional violence among boys and girls and provided national estimates of the incidence of violence. The same study, which was carried out in Zanzibar, revealed that children of all ages are at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation at home, at school and in communities. Also, the UNICEF (2010) report of Children and Women in Tanzania came up with a similar conclusion: The abuse and exploitation of children together with the different forms of violence they experience constitutes one of the most challenging problems the Zanzibari society faces today. In Zanzibar, according to LHRC and ZLSC (2013), sexual abuse is often considered to be a hidden crime and families often prefer to deal with cases within the household or community, and police frequently encouraged such cases to be dealt with this way with national, district or *Shehia* (the lowest government administrative structure at the community) authorities rarely involved.

Several studies conducted by governmental and non-governmental agencies dealing with children's affairs in Zanzibar and Tanzania in general have noted the increasing number of child violence in Zanzibar. The joint report of the LHRC and ZLSC (2010), for example, observes that a number of complaints relating to child sexual abuse have been reported in various institutions such as the Zanzibar Female Lawyers (ZAFELA), which received 32 complaints, the ZLSC received 25 complaints and the Women and Children Protection Desks, which received 149 cases. In her budget speech, the Minister of Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children Development, currently known as the Ministry of Empowerment, Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children (MESWYWC) reported that about 1,005 child sexual abuse incidents were reported at the One-Stop Centres between July 2012 and June 2013, which include 480 rape cases, 274 molestation cases, 176 teenage pregnancy cases, 53 sodomy cases and 22 abduction cases. The following table below summarises complaints reported at MoLYWCD:

**Table1: Child sexual abuse cases reported at one-Stop Centres between July 2012 and June 2013**

<b>Type of case</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rape	480	-	480
Molestations	273	1	274
Teenage Pregnancies	176	-	176
Sodomy	-	53	53
Abduction	22	-	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1,005</b>

Source: Budget speech MoLYWCD (2012/2013)

Early marriage is another kind of child sexual violence in Zanzibar. It is reported by the MESWYWC (2012) that the percentage of girls aged 15-18 years who are married in Zanzibar is 18.5 percent. On the other hand, the corresponding figure for boys is a paltry 1.2 percent, hence suggesting that young girls tend to marry older men. The percentage of women aged 15-18 years who are mothers or are pregnant with their first child in Zanzibar is 7.6 percent (Tanzania Commission for AIDS *et al.*, 2008). The marriage of young girls often occurs either as a result of a pregnancy whereby a girl is forced to marry the father of the child irrespective of the nature of their relationship (LHRC and ZLSC, 2013).

### **Child protection initiatives in Zanzibar**

The field of child protection focuses on creating a safe environment for young people in which they are protected from neglect, exploitation, abuse and violence (Boothly *et al.*, 2009). According to a definition endorsed by UNICEF (2010), child protection refers to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children, including child labour, commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. Internationally, all children have the right to protection from violence, mistreatment, exploitation and abuse, including sexual abuse, as enshrined in articles 19, 34, 35 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, some five years ago, there was no clear system identified for dealing with child violence issues in Zanzibar. The UNICEF (2013) report on Women and Children in Tanzania noted that in the past, the child protection response in Zanzibar had been fragmented and unco-ordinated with no clearly identified primary reference point and services stretched across different ministries, departments and national agencies, including the police, hospitals, schools and community organisations. Consequently, this disorganised approach has had significant implications for service delivery for abuse victims.

Today, apart from the existence of the global, continental and national child rights instruments such as the Convention of the Rights to the Child (CRC) of 1989, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990, the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children

in Armed Conflicts of 2000, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children of 2000, the Child Prostitution and Child Pornography of 2000, the Constitution of the URT and the Zanzibar Constitution which protect several fundamental rights of the child including the right to life, the right to privacy, the right to play, the right to education, the freedom to expression and the right to property, there are several significant efforts which have been made by the Government of Zanzibar and other partners dealing with children's affairs to create a society that is free from all forms of violence against children in the archipelago.

These include, according to the National Plan to Respond to Violence against Children in Zanzibar (2011) the establishment of the Children Act of 2011, which delivers a legally binding set of multi-disciplinary procedures that provide standards for identifying, referring and responding to cases of child sexual abuse. Also, the establishment of a specific Ministry, which is responsible for the children's affairs, known as the Ministry of Empowerment, Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children, also saw the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare under it, which in 2011 developed national guidelines and policies for the protection and welfare of children. These guidelines aim to create a clear route of referral for cases of children's abuse in Zanzibar in addition to establishing the Department of Social Welfare as an appropriate body with the mandate for co-ordinating the necessary response and providing support services for children and their families.

Likewise, the Department of Social Welfare has established a Child Protection Unit, which provides a safe space for dealing with specific cases of abuse against children and making follow-up to the cases in different places including the police, prosecution and judiciary. Furthermore, the one-stop centre at Mnazi Mmoja Hospital has been established with the aim of providing a 24-hour health, legal, para-legal and psycho-social services to victims of violence and abuse and strengthening the national capacity for a co-ordinated national response to cases of women and children in need of care and protection.

Other initiatives are the opening of children and gender desk at different police stations, and the establishment of the diploma course in child right and protection at the Zanzibar University, which is intended to impart the concept of child protection, violence against children and child participation to students. The introduction of this diploma course has been coupled with the establishment of the Child Protection Resource Centre in the Zanzibar University Library. In

addition, there is a National Plan of Action to respond to Violence against children 2011-2015 has been developed to establish a national child protection system in Zanzibar, including laws, services and practices that can comprehensively prevent and protect children against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

### **The Zanzibar Child protection System**

According to the MESWYWC report (2013), the formulation of the child protection system began with high level, national and district Child Protection Committees formed to co-ordinate the national child protection response. An effective National Child Protection System involves not only a number of different government ministries, but also local governments, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). Nonetheless, the system required a cultural and attitudinal change on the part of parents and the public accompanied by a new way of approaching and managing child protection on the part of the police, social welfare officers, the judiciary and those working in the education and health sectors for it to work effectively .



Figure 1: Zanzibar Child Protection System  
Source: NPRVACZ, 2011

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted in Zanzibar and involved two international organisations, namely, the United Nations Children’s Fund (Zanzibar Office) and Save the Children (Zanzibar Office) and five local organisations, namely, the Zanzibar Ministry of Empowerment, Social Welfare, Youth,

Women and Children, the Zanzibar Central Library; the Zanzibar Legal Services Centre, the Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association and the Zanzibar University. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were applied in the study. Primary data for the study was collected using a questionnaire-based survey and semi-structured interview schedules. A desk review of existing reports and other information pertaining to child protection in Zanzibar was used to collect secondary data. A combination of sampling techniques was applied in selecting respondents. Stratified random sampling was used to select community members and student respondents whereas purposive sampling was used to select instructors and officers. Community members were interviewed until the theoretical data reached a saturation point. The study population included officers, library staff, instructors/lecturers and students of Zanzibar University, who were selected from three academic programmes, namely, the Bachelor of Law and Shariah, Bachelor of Social Work and Diploma in Child Rights Protection. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed as follows: 100 to students, 10 to library staff and 10 to instructors. The qualitative data were collected using an in-depth interview held with 11 officers of the selected organisations and 35 community members of the Zanzibar Urban. The questionnaire response rate was as follows: six for instructors, six for library staff and 70 for students. The total number of all respondents was 82, with an overall response rate of 68.3 percent, as Table 2 illustrates:

**Table 2: Questionnaire responses by category of respondent**

	<b>Library staff</b>	<b>Instructors</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Questionnaires sent	10	10	100	120	100
Total responses	6	6	70	82	68.3
% of category	60	60	70		
% of total responses	5	5	58.3	68.3	

Source: Field Data (2015)

There were also, 46 respondents who participated in this study through interviews, including 35 community members and 11 officers of the selected organisations which deal with children's affairs. This makes a total of 128 respondents.

### **Research findings and discussion**

The finding and discussion were based on the study objectives.

### **Awareness of child protection process among students, instructors, information workers and the community**

Successful implementation of child protection and social welfare services is dependent upon the availability and access to relevant and up-to-date child protection and social welfare information. Child protection information refers to all data, information and knowledge regarding preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children. One of the targets of child protection system is to create a community which is aware of salient issues pertaining to preventing, reporting and responding to child protection. During interviews, a question was asked to examine the community members' awareness of child protection process, which involves identification, reporting, referring and responding to child protection cases.

Although the data shows that the majority of community members 30 (85%,  $N=35$ ) agreed that there was a problem of child violence in Zanzibar, most of them were still not much aware of the child protection process. This data is congruent with the UNICEF (2010) report on children and women in Tanzania which observes that there is some level of awareness of the children's rights in society and among the children themselves; however, this awareness has yet to be translated into increased protection of the well-being of children in Zanzibar. The present study revealed that the community seems to be unaware of the role of information in fighting child sexual abuse in Zanzibar. Similarly, LHRC and ZLSC (2013) present same argument by underscoring fact that the low awareness and the ignorance of people towards handling children violence cases remained a major problem in Zanzibar. As an indication of limited awareness among the community, the same report points out that the habit of reporting victims of violence immediately after molestation is obviously not done. It normally took long for parents and guardians to send the victims to the hospital or police. Some even chose to settle the matter out of court and when the case was taken to court, people absconded or shied away from adducing evidence. Several factors were mentioned by the respondents as challenges confronting the community regarding the limited awareness. These factors include a poor communication system

within the family set-up, lack of a reading culture and community norms and perspective regarding child rights issues.

Several reports indicate that there was an encouraging sign regarding child protection at the national level as that most of the government officials such as cabinet ministers, directors, senior managers and project coordinators were aware of child protection issues. However, the current study observed that their level of awareness was, in fact, caused by the existence of official child protection system which forces them to participate in a different Child Protection Committees. The problem is at the community level where it matters most as, child protection issues is perceived as a matter which is concerned with governmental organisations and not the community. In this regard, the MESWYWC (2013) reports that there was limited awareness of the system for the reporting and investigating allegations of abuse, particularly at the community/Shehia level. Consequently, the general community remains semi-ignorant about child protection. Apart from the community awareness, the UNICEF (2013) report notes that the majority of welfare officers has received very limited training on the Children's Act and are unaware of their statutory obligations. The present study further found that, although there was a political will on child protection, there was no strong co-ordination and collaboration between and among public and private organs.

### **Availability and accessibility of child protection information**

Through a questionnaire, respondents were asked to mention the particular places from where they acquired child protection information. Multiple answers were given as indicated in Figure 2:

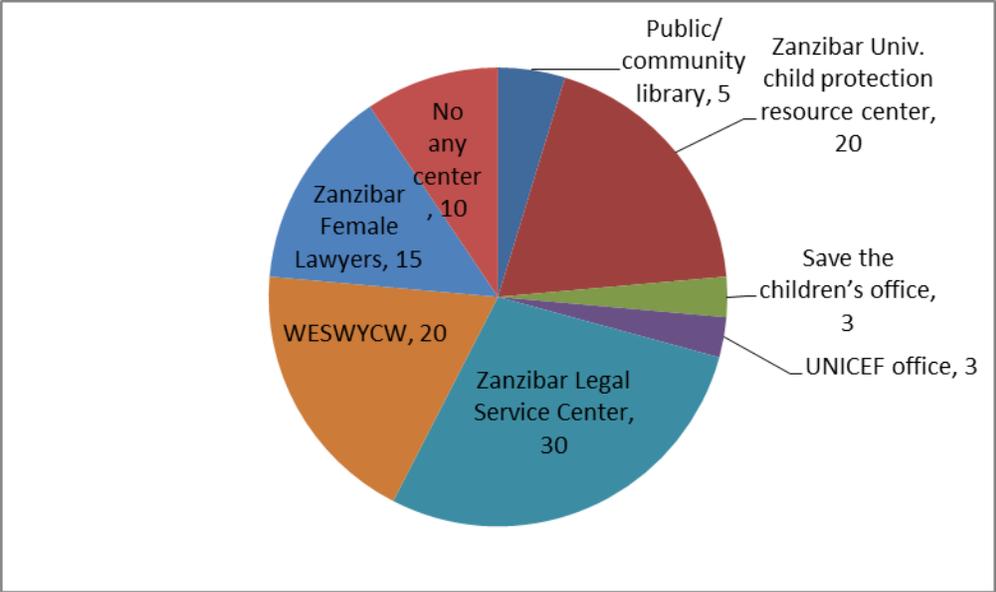


Figure 2: Centres of provision of child protection information (N=82)

Source: Field Data (2015)

Figure 2 indicates that the mostly used centre by the students was the MESWYCW (30; 36.5%) followed by the ZLCS (25; 30.4%) and Zanzibar University Child Protection Resource Centre (ZUCPRC) (20; 24.3%). Public library, ZAFELA, Save the Children and UNICEF - Zanzibar Offices were all accessed by only three (3.6%) of the respondents. The current study revealed that the MESWYCW played a significant role of disseminating child protect information. However, it was also observed that the acquisition of information among students was based on their study programmes. The majority of those who acquired information from the MESWYCW were students who undertook a Bachelor of Social work whereas those who accessed information from ZLSC were students undertaking a Bachelor of Law and Shariah. The Zanzibar University Child Protection Resource Centre was accessed by diploma students of the Child Protection Programme.

It was expected that the ZUCPRC could be the most accessible centre for all students; however, the data from interview shows that the ineffective utilisation of its resources was largely due to both unawareness of its existence among students and the shortage of information materials at

the centre. In this regard, MESWYCW (2014) reported that insufficient children and community oriented communication materials for children is one among the problems undermining efforts aimed at creating community awareness. The internet was found to be a major factor that contributed to the respondents' failure to visiting child protection resource centre accordingly. In fact, about 10 (12%) respondents said that they no longer visited any information centre to acquire child protection information probably because they acquired such information from the internet. The current study's findings concurs with those from a study by Omar (2014) which noted that today's students tend to rely more on online information than on physical information resources.

Data from interview shows that the majority of community members were not aware of where they could find child protection information. This scenario may lead one to conclude that despite the existence of a significant number of reports and other documents on child protection which can be used to promote awareness among community members, the resultant utilisation of these documents remained largely unsatisfactory.

### **Range of information sources used to acquire child protection information**

Today, several sources in different formats can be used to acquire information. Based on this fact, different sources of child protection information were listed and respondents were asked to select them according to their level of awareness and preferences. The results are as summarised in Figure 3:

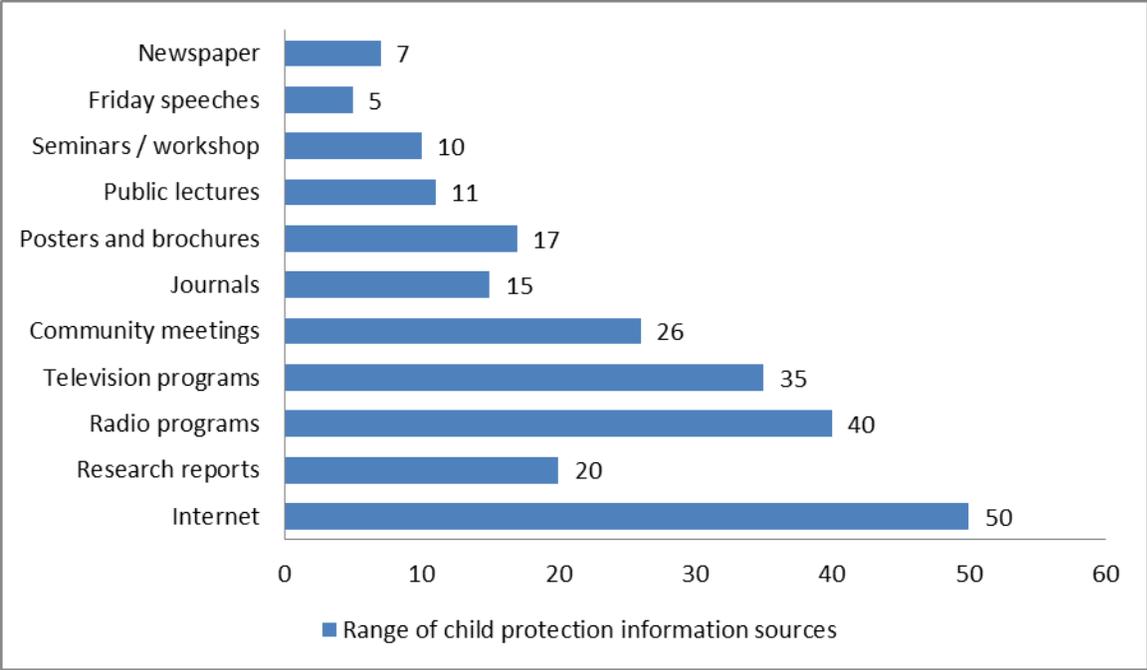


Figure 3: Information sources used to acquire child protection information (N=82)

Source: Field Data (2015)

Figure 3 shows that the internet was the most preferred source of information on child protection. Findings show that 50 (60%) of respondents, especially students, mentioned internet as their preferred source of information. This was followed by radio programs 40 (48.7%) and TV programs 35 (42.6%). Most of the local community members mentioned radio and television as their preferred source of information. Other sources such as community meetings, research reports, posters and brochures, journals, newspapers, public lectures, seminars and workshops, Friday prayer speeches and newspaper were varyingly deployed. The findings show that with the availability of mobile networks promotions and open Wi-Fi networks in Zanzibar town, the internet, as a leading source of information was used by many people, regardless of the source of information such as social media, blogs, e-journals and other online publications, which seemed to be accessed almost everywhere by many respondents. The current study further observed that the majority of students and community members accessed the internet through smart phones. Indeed, mobile phones can play a significant role in the provision of information, especially in reporting emergency cases. The findings are strengthened by the findings by Hollow’s (2012)

study on mobile technology in emergencies which noted that mobile phones are increasingly accessible to those affected by crisis and can play a strategic role in the delivery of rapid, cost-effective, scalable humanitarian assistance.

Findings from the interview show that most of the community members used radio and television programmes to acquire child protection information. The Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) Hits FM and Zenj FM were mentioned to be the most famous radios in the provision of child protection information. The situation was quite similar to the observation of Haji and Omar (2014) to the effect that radio programmes were the most powerful means of information dissemination in Zanzibar.

The researcher found that radios were the most widely used sources of information for acquiring child protection information because the media serve both literate and illiterate people and can be reached by a large number of people. They can also be accessed via smart phones. In this regard, Haji and Omar (2014) argue that radio programmes could be used to create greater awareness of the information society and serve as a tool for media practitioners, especially radio broadcasters to engage with various groups in debating the role of information in the development process. Regarding the provision of child protection information through mass media, the report of MESWYCW (2013) observe that media in Zanzibar have limited capacity in understanding child protection issues and best practice in terms of child protection reporting. This observation indicates that, listening to the radios reflects a good understanding of how to identify, report, refer and respond to child protection cases among the community members.

The community meetings play a significant role in the creation of awareness on child violence and child protection in rural areas. This was acknowledged by an officer of ZAFELA who commented that “community meetings are the most effective method of creating awareness in rural areas whereby people have enthusiasm on learning new things. This situation enables programme officers to convey the message successfully”. Moreover, findings from interview provide evidence that the rural community’s attendance to meetings is much better than in urban areas where the people were too busy with urban engagements, with most of them believing they knew things better than anyone else. As a result, few people cared about the meetings.

### **Activities undertaken by stakeholders in the provision of child protection information**

The MESWYWC has an important role to play in co-ordinating the child protection system. However, data from interviews shows that there is a fair collaboration in terms of the provision of child protection information to the community between and among the ministry and some other actors in the system. The current study observed that the MESWYWC in co-operation with UNICEF and Save the Children Zanzibar Offices have published a number of reports on child violence and child rights protection, training manuals and other information resources, which are distributed to a number of stakeholders, including the Zanzibar University Save the Children Resources Centre. The common publications are the report on Violence against Children in Zanzibar (VAC) (2011), Stopping Violence against Children, National Plan to Respond to Violence against Children in Zanzibar (2011-2015), and Children and Women in Tanzania published by UNICEF (2010). Despite the availability of those publications, the study found that the documents were not that well known by the majority of the community members and, as a result, the accessibility of information available in the documents was very limited. Moreover, Save the Children in partnership with the European Union, launched a campaign dubbed '*Baba Bora*' (Better Father) aimed at creating awareness and motivating men to get involved in the formation and defending of the rights of children and women.

To get more information, officers from the selected organisations and information specialists were asked to indicate the level of collaboration between child protection actors in sharing and the disseminating child protection information. The findings indicate that seminars and workshops were the most commonly applied means for disseminating and sharing information among the actors. This was followed by the provision of reading materials such as magazines, journal articles and survey reports. Television and radio programmes were another way some stakeholders deployed to disseminate information on child violence and child protection to the community. This finding is consistent with the LHRC and ZLSC report (2013), which notes that the ZLSC and ZAFELA are the leading and active NGO in creating public awareness on legal issues by spearheading radio and television programmes. ZLSC, for example, runs weekly programmes on TV and radio which cover justice and legal issues, civic education and general

human rights. However, there was no specific weekly programme discussing child protection issues.

In addition, the ZLSC with assistance from UNICEF and Save the Children Zanzibar Office runs several projects, programmes, and training workshops for the community at the district level especially for paralegals, school teachers, students and most vulnerable children. These programmes include the *Tuseme Clubs* (Let's Talk Clubs) and *Baraza ya Watoto* (Children's Council). The aim of all of these programmes is to provide legal aid services and to create awareness among ordinary people. Apart from ZLSC, a number of NGOs and CSOs are in way one or another involved in child protection matters. These include ZAFELA, the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) and Pamoja Tuwalee Programme. ZAFELA acts as a forum for providing legal advice to governmental and non-governmental institutions dealing with the women and children. It also provides counselling and guidance in addition to spreading awareness to women at all levels to ensure that women and children are no longer the victims of any form of violence. It does so by educating them on their civic and social rights. Programmes organised by ZAFELA, which directly deal with child protection, are *Mabaraza ya Watoto wa Kike* (Young Girl Students Councils), a project sponsored by the Global Fund, Life skills trainings, which are provided to students, community meetings and TV and radio programmes.

The current study identified limited and ineffective data collaboration and data sharing as a common challenge in the information co-ordination process among child protection actors. In this regard, data from interviews shows that the majority of information workers claimed there was poor co-operation and involvement of information specialists in the provision of child protection information process. This reality corresponds well with the situation in Indonesia where Boothy *et al.* (2009) found that there was a variety of actors engaged in child protection programmes, but a limited mechanism exists for formal collaboration on data sharing. Instead, information was shared on an ad-hoc basis.

## **Conclusion**

The study has presented a number of issues on the provision of child protection information in Zanzibar. Generally, there is a significant willingness at the governmental level to support child protection issues; however, the limited co-ordination between government and non-state actors plus low direct involvement of the community lead to inefficiency in the dissemination of such crucial information much to the detrimental of the welfare of the child. A number of documents and reports on child protection are available at several ministries, NGOs, CSOs and other development partners, especially UNICEF and Save the Children, Zanzibar Offices. However, the community's access to this information remains low and is largely dependent on radio and television programmes, which most of the time provide limited information on the issue. Furthermore, the majority of community members are still semi-aware of preventing, reporting and responding to child protection issues. In this regard, the Zanzibar University Child Protection Resource Centre is an important source of child protection information for university students, though it was underutilised. Apart from limited access to child protection information and ignorance of the people in handling sexual abuse cases, the problem of sexual abuse faces a number of challenges as noted by the LHRC and ZLSC (2013). These challenges have to do with the prosecution of sexual violence cases, poor police investigation, corruption, shortage of Deoxyribo Nucleic Acid (DNA) and shortage of medical experts at one-stop centres. To conclude, it can be said that despite the positive aspects pertaining to the child protection initiative in Zanzibar, the dissemination of child protection information must be given the priority it deserves.

### **Recommendation**

It is well known that no one sector or profession has the skills, ability, knowledge or resources necessary to meet comprehensively all the requirements of a child protection needs. As such, a strong and serious multi-sectoral task force is needed to combat sexual abuse and child violence in general in Zanzibar. The present study has revealed that several sectors including the judiciary and the police, health, education, social society, social welfare and community in general have been involved in the child protection system in Zanzibar. However, not much emphasis has been placed on the provision of child protection information. Based on the study findings the following recommendations regarding the provision of child protection information in Zanzibar have been made;

Direct involvement of the communities through public talks, Friday prayers speeches, TV and radio programmes should be emphasised. Proper and up-to-date information should be provided to all stakeholders at all levels, particularly, ordinary community members, including primary and secondary school teachers, parents and children themselves.

Improvement of the existing Zanzibar University Child Protection Resource Centre in terms of information resources and capacity-building to staff, and the establishment of extra child protection centres with at least one in each district can further boost efforts geared towards consolidating the rights and protection of the child..

An integrated web-based child protection database should be introduced. The database should integrate a set of processes for the routine collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The system should also be used for the dissemination of timely information to those who can undertake effective prevention and response activities. It should also be used to keep records of all child violence cases, research reports, training manuals as well as policies and guidelines on how to respond to child violence.

There is a need to establish the official child protection social network for the Zanzibar community. An official Facebook page should be introduced for the purpose of facilitating interaction between child protection actors and the community. The page content should be in Kiswahili so as to make the community comfortable with the page.

Public libraries and child protection resource centres have a vital role to play in collecting, storing and disseminating information; however, there is pressing need to collaborate with other child protection centres. The libraries should collect the required information from those organisations and get involved in its dissemination. Such collaboration would effectuate wider dissemination of relevant and up-to-date child protection information.

The MESWYWC in collaboration with telecommunication companies should establish an interactive mobile-based service for delivering rapid and cost-effective child protection assistance, especially in reporting emergencies.

The Zanzibar Ministry of Education in liaison with MESWYWC should develop guidelines for pre-primary and primary school and madrasa teachers in urban and rural districts on the

prevention, reporting and response to sexual abuse and child violence in addition to reinforcing the teaching of child protection and safeguarding of such rights in official curricula using modern information resources.

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