



Perspectives on Safeguarding Children in Sustainable Disaster Mitigation in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Natural disasters' pervasiveness in Zimbabwe has had devastating impacts and exacerbated children's vulnerability. Apparently, climate change adversely impacts Zimbabweans' lives and well-being, even reversing social and human development progress that has previously been accomplished. The chapter's objective is exploration of approaches and strategies that enhance the mainstreaming of child protection, child-centred development and safeguarding in Zimbabwe within the milieu of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and disaster management. The methodology used is a rigorous, evidence-focused literature review grounded on principles of a systematic review allowing for innovation and reflexivity, particularly regarding policy implications. The methodology entailed a review of books, technical papers, tacit information and websites to find material on child protection and disaster

management in Zimbabwe to understand the current state of knowledge. Furthermore, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development are interrogated whilst applying children's best interests' lens. Additionally, in the face of natural disasters the chapter catalogues different child protection priority needs within Zimbabwe's milieu of SDGs. These priority needs include food security and enhanced social psychosocial functioning in the context of disasters. The chapter concludes by offering SDGs' grounded pathways underscoring robust disaster and child safeguarding policy frameworks that can be embedded for child protection enrichment in disaster situations. The chapter recommends centrality of mainstreaming SDGs' approaches that emphasise children's psychosocial needs.

Keywords

Children · SDGs · Sustainability · Child protection · Social protection · Disasters

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6.1 Introduction and Background

The aim of the chapter is to interrogate the extent to which harnessing SDGs can galvanise child protection in the context of disasters. Zimbabwe

faces intractable challenges including pervasive disasters and more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. Disasters are arguably taking a toll on Zimbabwe's socio-economic transformation agenda. Robust SDG grounded response mechanisms need to be mainstreamed, as this is vital for realising desired outcomes to be set out in the forthcoming government economic blueprint, the National Development Strategy (2021–2025). The National Development Strategy will be in tangent with the SDGs' time frame. As will be shown later from the outset, Africa is vulnerable to natural and human-induced hazards and disasters which severely impacts lives and livelihood (International Council for Science (ICSU), 2017). To put the severity of disasters into perspective, Reddy & Vincent, 2015 comment that over the last century Southern Africa has been warming significantly and in the period 1961–2014, temperatures have increased at a rate of 0.4 °C per decade. Undeniably, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts, wildfires, pest plagues, air and water pollution cause extensive damage to livelihoods, property losses as well as claiming many lives. On the same note, what makes SDGs' grounded child protection interventions during disasters urgent is how Africa's one billion population estimate in 2014 and 2–4% growth per annum increase the number of people exposed to natural and human-induced hazards and disasters (International Council for Science-ICSU 2017). Pertinently, ICSU notes that the central concern for Africa's sustainable development is preventative measures for disaster risk reduction (DRR). However, the Africa Science Plan observes that most African countries' non-investment in disaster risk reduction makes the continent least equipped and prepared (ICSU 2017).

In Eastern and Southern Africa countries, UNICEF and Save the Children (2017) observe that much rapid unplanned urbanisation, chronic poverty and El Niño shocks result in sustained food insecurity, especially for rural livelihood-dependent populations. Table 6.1 illustrates the scope of some of the disasters that confront Africa.

Moreover, as asserted by the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) (2017), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 1.2 articulates for poverty eradication in all its forms for individuals of all ages. According to CROP, SDG target 1 embodies the global commitment to child poverty eradication. Importantly, on the same note Manjengwa et al. (2014) commented that extreme events like disease, under-nutrition, water scarcity, disasters, public services and infrastructure collapse risks result in children's vulnerability. As Mitchell and Borchard (2014) further assert, despite children's vulnerability to climate change impacts relatively little attention is paid to capacity building them. This would be for them to better navigate climate change impacts they experience now and in future. Of note is the emergence of child-centred approaches in the field of community-based adaptation; however, these approaches are almost exclusively used by child-focused organisations. On the same note through mainstreaming of the current SDGs' discourses, an enabling environment for pro-poor development outcomes is created to potentially mitigate child vulnerability to disasters including their protection and care. Nonetheless, Nhapi and Mathende (2018) opine that in negotiating, responding and coping with social development intervention challenges, adults exclude the experiences and resilience of children.

This chapter is mainly based on a historiographical approach through a review of secondary sources of data like commissioned action research findings and empirical research outputs by the state and non-state actors. The objective of the study was to: (a) explore ways for enhanced child protection, child-centred development and safeguarding mainstreaming in Zimbabwe within the milieu of SDGs and disasters; (b) explore psychosocial dimensions of disasters whilst applying children's best interests' lens in mitigating disaster impacts on children; (c) catalogue different thematic needs that should be prioritised within the SDGs' milieu and disaster management; (d) unpack how SDGs can complement Zimbabwe's readily comprehensive legal and child protection policy framework to enrich child

Table 6.1 African disaster victims and losses by hazard type

Hazard type	Biological	Climatological	Geophysical	Hydrological	Meteorological	Total
Occurrences	862	303	85	85	244	2419
Deaths	303	697,418	32,114	24,734	5191	914,220
Affected	164,763	373,440,132	69,844,718	2,202,201	17,585,306	478,770,391
Damage ('000 \$)	5200	3,424,593	7,528,723	12,355. 949	4,329,827	27,644,292

Source: International Council for Science (ICSU) (2017)

protection. As will be shown later, this chapter is based on a critical review of literature drawing attention to Zimbabwe child-centred development challenges in disaster and hazardous environment contexts. The chapter expands the child welfare policymaking debates on Zimbabwe by making forays into psychosocial realities of recurring natural disasters in Zimbabwe.

In unpacking how child protection can be robustly embedded in Zimbabwean disaster management dynamics, the chapter is structured as follows: First, I describe the background information on disasters' key patterns and trends in the country, thereby presenting the general vulnerability context of children within which the study was undertaken. A literature review was conducted to assess the dominant narratives that articulate contestations regarding how in different institutional spaces, child protection in disasters has been asserted (or constrained) aided by the SDGs' milieu. Consideration was given to ways of enhancing the social functioning of children and meeting their needs in terms of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpinnings towards galvanising child protection capabilities in disasters. Finally, conclusions are provided.

6.2 Policies, Frameworks and Institutions

This section summarises the key trends in Zimbabwe's disaster management trajectory and analyses underlying drivers of disaster management trends occurring in a volatile economic environment. Firstly, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2019) contended that Zimbabwe's ongoing economic reform induced austerity mea-

sures significantly eroded rural and urban communities' purchasing power. Henceforth, OCHA highlights that in multiple Zimbabwean locations people have already exhausted their asset base and limiting expenditure to food provision. OCHA rightly observes the ongoing macro-economic reforms and the need to put in place support mechanisms to alleviate the plight of these communities. To reinforce OCHA's assertions, the Government of Zimbabwe's (GoZ's) 2016 Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy notes at independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a special type of capitalist social and economic formation. This socio-economic formation according to GoZ 2016 has resulted in the fourfold challenges of structural poverty, inequality, unemployment and under-employment. This was characterised by a small formal sector, co-existing with a highly marginalised poor rural sector that employed about 80% of the labour force, thus creating pervasive economic and social dualism (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016).

Perhaps, it is laudable that in terms of SDG 1: No Poverty, GoZ has prioritised poverty reduction initiatives as follows:

- September 2016 Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) establishment as part of government's international re-engagement efforts for poverty eradication and inclusive growth
- Launch of the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) in December 2016 for strengthened poverty and vulnerability reduction mechanisms

To contextualise socio-economic vulnerabilities induced by disasters, it is important to highlight that the devastating March 2019 Cyclone

Idai was not Zimbabwe's first disaster that followed in the wake of other man-made and natural disasters including droughts, floods, road traffic accidents, disease outbreaks, mining and other industrial accidents, forest fires and stadia stampedes (Chatiza, 2019). Similarly, Manjengwa et al. (2012 p. 58) assert successive droughts (for example, 1997/98, 2001/2002, 2004/05 and 2006/07) and unprecedented cyclones (Eline in 2000 and Japhet in 2003); the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and 50% economic shrinkage between 2000 and 2008 combined to create a situation akin to a 'a web of entangled crises'.

On the same note, the World Health Organization (WHO) quoted in Isbell and Krönke (2018) highlighted that Zimbabwe has suffered repeated cholera outbreaks, including one in 2008 that claimed more than 4000 lives and infected more than 98,000 people. Significantly, Zimbabwe's September–October 2018 deadly cholera outbreak which the country struggled to contain owing to under-investment in urban infrastructure maintenance. Henceforth, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2019) notes significant infrastructure deficits for basic services: water and sanitation (water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)), waste management, transport, health services and electricity characterise urban residents' poor living conditions. The UNDP (2019) states that inadequate healthcare infrastructure and medicine, intravenous fluid and protective clothing shortages led to a 2018 cholera outbreak, which by the end of October 2018 claimed 62 lives out of a total suspected case of 10,000 infections. More requirements for sustainable solutions for the WASH and related social services are noted by the UNDP (2019) as requirements to withstand the shocks and stresses of the increasing trend of disease outbreaks in urban settlements.

The World Food Programme (WFP)'s 2017 Global Hunger Index ranked Zimbabwe 108th out of 119 countries. Widespread poverty, HIV/AIDS, limited employment opportunities, liquidity challenges, recurrent climate-induced shocks and economic instability are some of the factors that WFP notes as exacerbating Zimbabwe's food

security situation to 'serious' (World Food Programme, 2019).

As highlighted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2019), one of the most common types of natural disasters in recent years is drought. OCHA notes that drought impacts more than half of the Zimbabwean population living in rural areas, depending on rain-fed agriculture. On this basis, the most severe crises occurred in 2004/5, which affected over 3 million people and coincided with the peak of the HIV/AIDS crisis, therefore heightening vulnerability in the country. Drought events with a significant impact on vulnerable populations occurred in 1991/2, 1997/8, 2004/05, 2007/8 and recently 2012/13, affecting 1.6 million people.

A single season of poor rainfall leads to the need for a government emergency response intervention (Government of Zimbabwe, 2015). Furthermore, UNICEF and Save the Children (2017) noted in years 2015/2016, the El Niño phenomenon characterised by high temperatures and the lowest recorded rainfall in 35 years induced severe drought conditions across Eastern and Southern Africa. Accordingly, UNICEF and Save the Children (2017) raised concern about strained traditional systems of social support and tested response capacities due to unprecedented climatic conditions. Millions of families struggled to meet basic food and nutrition requirements and high numbers of children dropped out of school (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2017).

Understanding the policy architecture governing disasters is vital. The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 required governments to strengthen Disaster Risk Management (DRM) governance, risk and early warning information, disaster education, reduction of underlying risks and emergency preparedness and response. Zimbabwe committed itself to the five priorities and related actions of the Hyogo Framework and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) DRM Strategy 2012–2015, both of which prioritise contingency (Government of Zimbabwe, 2012). It is also vital to unpack the

legislative framework regarding the disaster management policy framework in Zimbabwe which is grounded in the Civil Protection Act of 1989. Furthermore, the Department of Social Services (DSS) in the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MPSLSW), the Civil Protection Directorate in the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development (MLGPWUD) are the two parallel institutional arrangements in Zimbabwe mandated to deal with disasters. Drought mitigation interventions for slow-onset disaster are under the DSS and the Civil Protection Directorate deals with DRR issues such as accidents and flooding (Manyena et al., 2008).

Disaster preparedness programmes are initiated by central government through the Minister responsible for Local Government Rural and Urban Development who is empowered by the Civil Protection Act No. Five of 1989 with the coordinative role. Civil Protection Act No. Five of 1989 provides for ‘... Special powers designed to establish, coordinate and direct the activities of both the public and private emergency services – Guidelines for action and maximum use of resources since disaster mitigation requires a multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary approach...’.

In terms of child protection framework, as a state party to key child rights’ instruments Zimbabwe has enacted laws and policies ensuring respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights enshrined in the CRC, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, (SOS Villages International, 2013). SOS further note that a robust legal framework exists for child protection. This is grounded in legislation as the Children’s Act, the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, Guardianship of Minors Act, Domestic Violence Act, Education Act and the Births and Deaths Registration Act. Again, policies such as the Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy have also been adopted.

In 2011, a team at the Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Zimbabwe sampled 16 Zimbabwean districts in a study titled Moving Zimbabwe Forward Wellbeing and Poverty Survey. Table 6.2 illustrates their findings in

Table 6.2 Probability of experiencing shocks in the community during past 12 months in 2011 by severity of shock

Type of shock	Probability			(x) Severity of shock (%)	
		Low-minor	Medium-moderate	High-major	Row total
Food shortages	0.452	13.9	35.1	51.0	100
Inflation	0.441	14.3	34.7	51.1	100
Drought	0.429	9.3	32.1	58.7	100
Family sickness	0.350	18.0	37.0	45.0	100
HIV and AIDS	0.332	15.5	34.8	49.7	100
Decreasing government assistance	0.305	16.5	39.2	44.4	100
Chronic illness	0.269	14.6	33.2	52.2	100
Crop pests	0.215	12.9	37.6	49.5	100
Labour shortage	0.127	14.4	46.5	39.2	100
Floods	0.086	19.2	29.1	51.7	100
Fire	0.085	23.3	41.1	35.3	100

Source: Manjengwa, Feresu and Chimhowa (Understanding poverty, promoting wellbeing and sustainable development: a sample survey of 16 districts of Zimbabwe 2012)

terms of shocks experienced in the districts they sampled.

Furthermore, the February 2014 flooding of the immense Tokwe-Mukosi Dam basin following heavy rains was a significant episode in Zimbabwe’s disaster management trajectory. The 1.8 million cubic litre dam is intended to provide irrigation and electricity to communities in the semi-arid southern Masvingo Province. Flooding affected about 2514 households living upstream of the Tokwe-Mukosi Dam in Masvingo Province. UNICEF noted that enrolment at the Chingwizi Camp (Mulali) primary and secondary schools increased to 2930. A partnership between UNICEF, Plan International Zimbabwe programme, Ministry of Public Works and National Housing resulted in the setting up of temporary learning spaces and accommodation for 20 teachers at the Mulali School (UNICEF Zimbabwe Country Office 2014a, b).

In declaring the floods a national disaster, the late former president Robert Mugabe appealed to the international community for US\$20 million for relocation and provision of humanitarian assistance for the affected. Furthermore, shortly after the flooding the Zimbabwe National Army and the Civil Protection Unit (CPU) relocated over 20,000 people (around 3300 families) from the flooded Tokwe-Mukosi Dam basin to Chingwizi Camp on Nuanetsi Ranch in Masvingo's Mwenzezi district. In August 2014, the government shut down the camp attempting to permanently relocate the families on a different part of Nuanetsi Ranch where each family was allocated a one-hectare plot of land. The families would have had significantly less land than they previously owned when they were in Masvingo (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

At least 15,000 women and girls were at risk of gender-based violence due to March 2019 Cyclone Idai linked disruptions and Masiyiwa (2019) reported that in Chimanimani a 14-year-old girl suffered a sexual assault. Concerns of women and girls being asked to provide sex in exchange for access to aid are elaborated by the Zimbabwe Flash Appeal 2019's highlighting the lack of privacy and lighting in displaced person camps increasing violence and transactional sex risks for female storm victims.

Chatiza (2019) observed that experiences of and responses to the cyclone showed that many Zimbabwean disaster risk management (DRM) institutions lack adequate technical, financial and logistical capacities. Understandably, the unprecedented scale of Cyclone Idai's impact on Zimbabwe's already fragile humanitarian situation resulted in the granting of a \$72 million by the World Bank Board of Directors as part of the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP). It is important to note that hazards do not necessarily transform into disasters rather, they become disasters when affecting highly vulnerable communities with limited capacity to deal with the hazards. Differing vulnerability levels make hazards not to affect all societal groups in a homogeneous manner due to different political, social, economic and physical orientations. Sillah (2015) cautions about viewing the same kind of disaster

risk reduction initiatives, disaster response and disaster recovery ideals as applicable to every member of an affected community as not being practical.

Finally, through Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare led coordination GoZ has underscored 10 SDGs' implementation. Pertinently, Zimbabwe's SDGs' implementation challenges include the lack of financial resources, poor infrastructure and services, lack of skilled manpower and capacity, poor resource base, weak economy and climate change (Haritatos, 2018). It is noteworthy that the WFP Zimbabwe Country Programme is complementing GoZ towards achieving SDG 2 on ending hunger, and SDG 17 on global partnerships by strengthening and forging new partnerships with non-governmental organisational (NGOs), academia, donors, private sector, UN agencies and communities (World Food Programme, 2019).

6.3 Literature Review

Reflecting on the available literature, this section begins by noting how Haritatos (2018) reiterates the need for incorporation of a wider range of economic, social and environmental objectives that require a coordinated multi-sectoral approach in implementation.

On another note, Melber (2017) asserts,

The UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002) were indeed among the more recent relevant markers in a series of top-level global meetings, which were continued in other forums all over the world with a focus on development. They created normative reference points such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change in order to meet the challenges – with little to no effect in stopping the environmental deterioration and the approaching collapse of our basic minimum requirements for reproduction such as water and air.

However, the danger of the 17 goals according to Scoones (2019) is how the country-led process and bureaucratic box-ticking exercise have numerous targets and voluntary indicators. It is

worthwhile to note that a full range of children's rights and welfare issues are addressed by SDGs amounting to a strong commitment to the CRC. In making and measuring progress towards the SDGs, every child counts (UNICEF, 2018). It is commendable that in 2017 along with 43 other countries, including seven African countries, Zimbabwe reflected its SDGs' achievement commitment by volunteering to undertake a national review of SDGs. The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) seek to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges, opportunities and lessons learnt with a view to accelerating the 2030 Agenda implementation (Government of Zimbabwe, 2017). In debates around climate change and disasters' research, advocacy on child protection has been relatively marginalised and there is a growing body of research on disaster events and gradual climate change impacts on children, especially child health (Children in a Changing Climate, n.d.).

In Scoones' (2019) observation, SDGs need to be rescued from a graveyard of technocratic-bureaucratic approaches. This graveyard is conceptualised by Scoones as being where goal-specific indicators, monitoring and impact assessment take over, locked into a sectoral view of the world, where the politics of interactions, connections and negotiations are ignored. Therefore, this chapter contends that SDGs' achievement in Zimbabwe is hinged on a greater allocation of the National Budget on social services, for sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth. Moreover, this will galvanise responses to disasters, which in turn ensure children's best interests are upheld during disaster responses.

To buttress the foregoing notion, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) (2019) notes that Africa's quest to achieve all the 17 SDGs by addressing global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice, can be seriously impeded by climate change. In their analysis of Zimbabwe, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) (2014) notes that besides the agriculture sector, groundwater systems, surface waters,

environment and the economic sectors will be affected by climate change. Vulnerability to climate variability and climate change is place- and context specific and people are affected differently within- and/or between countries (United Nations Country Team (UNCT), 2014).

Reddy and Vincent (2015) provide another twist by commenting that limited access to livelihood opportunities by the poor makes them particularly vulnerable as disasters hit the poorest the hardest. Poor people are not only more vulnerable to climate-related shocks, but they also have fewer resources to prevent, cope with and adapt to disasters. On the same note, Vidili (2018) observes the poor tend to receive less support from family, community and financial systems, and even have less access to social safety nets.

Melber (2017) asserts that the pseudo-omnipotence of the anthropocentric arrogance of power meets its limitations in the face of the unleashed forces of nature. As observed by Melber (2017), the grand ideas of rationality, seeking to create a world of its making, have – despite the latest technological advances manipulating the biological diversity and turning it into a global monoculture – to ultimately capitulate when nature rebels or collapses. Manyena et al. (2008) also emphasise that public services and infrastructural collapse due to extreme events makes children an especially vulnerable group at increased risk from disease, under-nutrition and water scarcity disasters. Children are familiar icons of disasters as they are the first people to be publicised when a disaster strikes (Manyena et al., 2008). To reinforce the foregoing assertions, Sillah (2015) notes,

Different groups in a society have different levels of vulnerability to hazards and subsequent disasters owing to different political, social, economic and physical orientations. It would therefore be inadvisable to approach disasters with a view that the same kind of disaster risk reduction initiatives, disaster response ideals and disaster recovery ideals apply to every member of an affected community.

As climate instability leads to more weather-related disasters, UNICEF and Save the Children (2017) contend that traditional systems of social

support will be strained and will test response capacities. Finally, as noted by UNICEF and Save the Children (2017), SDGs have recognised social protection as a leading strategic response to chronic poverty, vulnerability and supporting development. Certainly, for UNICEF and Save the Children (2017), social protection systems are efficient and cost effective in reaching the most vulnerable households and supporting those living in chronic poverty as well as at times of crisis.

6.4 Methodology

Secondary sources of data, including a review of policy and research documents, were used for this chapter. A review of documents related to disaster management and child protection, in particular, was carried out. This included published peer-reviewed articles, official government documents, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations (UN)/non-governmental organisational (NGO) documents/evaluation reports and academic publications, as well as online newspaper articles retrieved from various journals and internet sources. Moreover, tacit information and websites were accessed to find material on child protection and disaster management in Zimbabwe to understand the current state of knowledge.

6.5 Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The issues highlighted so far provide an example of the interplay between child protection policy and current disaster management paradigms. In the remainder of the chapter, the discussion focuses on dominant themes on the narrative of a greater integration of child protection approaches and robust disaster management theory and practice. The following sub-section makes an analysis within the realm of the SDGs' architecture on how child protection desired outcomes can be achievable when confronted with disasters which are becoming more prevalent in Zimbabwe. This

is done by following categorising specific domains of child protection and disaster management.

6.5.1 Guaranteeing Food Security for Children

According to a UNICEF Zimbabwe Humanitarian Situation Report (2019), the 2019 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment report findings suggested that the January–March 2020 peak hunger period was to require urgent humanitarian assistance. This requirement would target nearly 5.5 million people, including 2.6 million rural Zimbabwean children. Furthermore, the Zimbabwe Flash Appeal, a United Nations compiled situation analysis report for sourcing Cyclone Idai disaster recovery international funding, highlighted that in year 2017, a marked improvement in Zimbabwean children's nutrition status was noted. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates the Zimbabwe Flash Appeal noted, reduced to 2.5% and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) to 0.2%. However, the Zimbabwe Flash Appeal cautioned that the confluence of risks is likely to reverse some of these gains, especially in 25 drought-prone districts identified by the nutrition humanitarian programming sector.

6.5.2 Child Malnutrition

In the context of disasters, child malnutrition risks become more pronounced. Save the Children (2019a) reports that since Cyclone Idai disaster affected Chipinge district, Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) has been recorded. Save the Children notes SAM attributes as being lack of knowledge, poor feeding practices, poor hygiene and limited food sources since Cyclone Idai swept away community nutrition gardens (Save the Children 2019b).

A valid observation is made by Mapepa and Ephraim (2019) when they insist that due to the 2018/19 drought and Cyclone Idai floods, overcoming Chipinge district food insecurity necessitates more sustainable projects' rollout.

Twenty-one out of 30 rural wards of Chipinge were ranked in the red category implying high food insecurity, whilst three were in the orange category (food insecure). The other three were in the yellow (partially food secure) and only three were in the green category (Mapepa & Ephraim, 2019).

6.5.3 Psychological Well Being

Undoubtedly, stressful times increase child protection risks of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse and social protection can play an important child protection role by addressing the very vulnerabilities placing children at greater risk (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2017). Doherty and Clayton quoted in Mitchell and Borchard (2014) distinguish three levels of psychological impacts of climate change as: acute and direct impacts (for example, trauma from directly experiencing extreme weather events or the loss of family members during a disaster); indirect and vicarious impacts (for example, intense emotions associated with observation of climate change effects at broader scales) and psychosocial impacts (for example, of violence over increasingly scarce resources and trauma of climate-induced migration). In the same vein, a qualitative study by Sillah (2015) aimed at illuminating children's vulnerability to hazards and showed that children's special physiological, psychological, emotional and economic stature categorises them as an inherently vulnerable group.

An important dynamic regarding child protection and disaster management is noted by Sillah's (2015) study who observes,

A weakness is that the child protection system in Zimbabwe largely conceptualises the need to protect children against child abuse. The system focuses on preventing child abuse in its physical, spiritual and emotional form, with emphasis specifically on sexual abuse. This focus is seen in practice by the growth of the Victim Friendly System in Zimbabwe, of which the major aim is to protect women and children from physical abuse,

and sexual abuse in particular. It is estimated that there are 267 Victim Friendly Units in Zimbabwe. However, children's vulnerability with regard to hazards and disasters are not addressed by this system.

This chapter notes an innovation whereby Childline, a non-governmental organisation, partnered with the Department of Social Services in deploying field counsellors. As psychosocial response to affected Chingwizi children, Childline intervened by offering community counselling and setting up systems for gender-based violence and child abuse management systems. This field counsellors' deployment targeted 300 children at the Chingwizi transit camp who were without a stable home environment and education after fleeing their homes due to flooding (UNICEF Zimbabwe Country Office 2014a, b). Following Cyclone Idai, the Zimbabwe Flash Appeal (2019) noted that due to being either deceased or missing, a number of children were separated from their caregivers. The Zimbabwe Flash Appeal (2019) noted that some caregivers have been injured and have been evacuated without the children being informed and many children are being cared for by spontaneous fostering. Cyclone Idai left at least 90,000 people in immediate need of psychosocial services. Furthermore, adults are noted by Sillah (2015) as forming an indivisible psychosocial support system for children which when disturbed leads to psychosocial distress in children. However, during hazards and possible disasters, there is real risk that parents and guardians may succumb, leaving children in distress.

Additionally, as reported by Kokai and Brown (2019), some former pupils of St Charles Lwanga Secondary School in Chimanimani were still to fully recover from the harrowing March 2019 Cyclone Idai experience. The pupils were transferred to several schools after it was recommended that the school be relocated (Kokai & Brown, 2019). The parents were reported by Kokai and Brown (2019) as stating that their children were still experiencing nightmares and their academic performances had deteriorated.

6.5.4 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

As noted by the University of Zimbabwe's Institute of Environmental Studies, access to clean safe water is crucial for good health and development of children. It is disconcerting that exposure to waterborne diseases' contraction risks in many Zimbabwean schools is due to intermittent municipal water supplies and collapse of many toilets and pit latrines. Furthermore, as noted by Bande (2019) climate change makes access to clean water and sanitation facilities more difficult, thus making diarrhoea, one of the biggest killers of young children, harder to tackle. In disaster situations, another adverse effect of water shortage is that children may have to travel further to collect water, as streams and water sources dry up (Bande, 2019). SDG number 6 aims for the achievement of universal, sustainable and equitable access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030. Thus, based on SDG targets that prioritise WASH outcomes, state and non-state actors' programming needs to be imaginative on overcoming the perennial WASH access challenges in Zimbabwe to avert disasters like cholera epidemics.

6.5.5 Harmonised Social Cash Transfers (HSCTP)

In 2011, the government launched the HSCTP collaboratively with UNICEF. In HSCTP implementation in Zimbabwe's 10 provinces, a total population of approximately 231,657 labour constrained and ultra-poor households are targeted. Eligible households receive bimonthly unconditional cash payments ranging between USD10 and USD25 per month based on the household size (Government of Zimbabwe, 2015). Nonetheless, Save the Children (2019a) argues that in almost every Eastern and Southern Africa country's humanitarian response efforts and social protection systems, external donors are relied on for financial support. This creates challenges and UNICEF and Save the Children (2017) contend that for many years the ad hoc

appeals' system used to generate foreign assistance was activated only once a shock has turned into an emergency. This approach is neither timely nor equitable and human lives may be lost, family assets sold or depleted and harmful coping strategies impacting children may be deployed (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2017).

6.5.6 Child Protection

Mitchell and Borchard (2014) provide a useful insight by noting that for reasons related to their physical, mental development and exclusion from decision-making processes, children broadly are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Following years of socio-economic turbulence, GoZ with support from development partners has been endeavouring to revamp the ailing social services sector. In children's social services re-establishment, the country's fiscal capacity is not what it once was, yet public demand for improvements is high and GoZ faces several challenges. Faced with such a tension, it may be tempting for GoZ to try doing everything at once, regardless of the consequence with temptations to try to re-create the fondly remembered earlier decades' social service system (Munro, 2012). Cyclone Idai seriously affected children, as 139 schools had structural damages to classrooms and losses of learning materials and four schools had to be used as reception centres for displaced families. Interventions will be required in the aftermath of the cyclone to ensure that children in affected communities resume educational activities and return to normality in a child friendly environment (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2019).

6.5.7 Cultural Dynamics

A study in Muzarabani district in Mashonaland Central Province by Manyena et al. (2008) demonstrated that children have a desire to contribute to building community resilience. The study observed that the local cultural context can either

be a major barrier or major opportunity, depending on how the community characterises the role of children. Results of the study showed that children represent invaluable assets and partners, although in most instances they play a subordinate role to adults. This subordinate role is based on the typically well-founded argument that adults have greater experience, greater capacity, greater responsibility, greater commitment of the whole family and the legal status or traditional authority of parenting. Most importantly, any participatory action research endeavours targeting children affected by disasters should be children led through peer research. An example is the 2014 Institute of Environmental Studies (IES)-University of Zimbabwe/UNICEF collaborative study on children's vulnerabilities to climate change and climate variability, and their interaction with children's social and physical vulnerabilities. The study sampled 575 children from rural-based schools, whilst 423 were from urban-based schools and solicited children's views, knowledge and experiences on the impacts of climate change, for incorporation of special needs of children into national policies, planning and practices. Additionally, development at all levels is needed of national disaster risk and resiliency preparedness plan in education sector strategy to not only focus on preparedness, but institutionalise the culture of safety and resilience of all school communities on disaster and climate change (Masiyiwa, 2019). To illustrate modalities for an effective resiliency preparedness plan, Mulala School with 1017 children enrolled from ECD (Early Childhood Development) to Grade 7 has been able to partner with Save the Children and European Union Humanitarian Aid funding to be able to robustly step up efforts to prepare and respond to any disaster that may strike (Save the Children 2019b).

Accordingly, it is vital that cultural roles of children and adults are reframed when it comes to community resilience building in disasters. This enabled embedding a wider child participation in disaster management mechanisms. Under the SDGs' mantra of 'Leaving No One Behind' (LNOB), state and non-state actors' advocacy is required. This can target programmes of support

ensuring children without parental care and at risk of losing parental care are looked after informally by relatives or others and protected in such informal arrangements.

6.6 Conclusions

The previous sections highlighted milestones, gaps and constraints in frontline efforts by state and non-state actors in child-focused disaster risk reduction and recovery interventions. The chapter has shown that disasters are going to be increasingly pervasive in Zimbabwe. The chapter has illuminated how pro-children disaster risk reduction is achievable if grounded on the SDGs' mantra of LNOB. In harnessing LNOB alongside targeting other vulnerable groups in society, child protection desired outcomes will be emphasised when designing proactive disaster management initiatives. The chapter has demonstrated that for the disaster management sector, a greater synthesis with the socio-economic, political and SDGs' domains galvanises the quest for scaled-up child protection service provision in disasters. The chapter has demonstrated that for any effective disaster risk reduction intervention, it is vital to embed nutrition, WASH and children's psychosocial needs. This is achievable by using SDGs' targets as benchmarks to achieve these outcomes. Future research pathways need to focus on the current ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which arguably is also another disaster for child safeguarding and well-being. Conclusively, continuous knowledge management grounded on SDG targets enriches the robustness of future child protection interventions aiming for desired outcomes of enhanced social functioning of children affected by disasters.

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