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# THE RE-ENTRY POLICY AND GIRLS' EDUCATION IN ZAMBIA:

**A CASE STUDY OF READ TO SUCCEED'S LEARNER SUPPORT AND SERVICES!**



## Research Study Report

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SUPPORT & SERVICES**

## **Research Study Report**

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
List of Tables.....	iii
Acronyms.....	iv
Executive Summary.....	1
<b>1.0. CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1. Introduction.....	3
1.2. RTS Technical Approach.....	3
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.4. Purpose of the Study.....	4
1.5. Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.6. Study Questions.....	5
1.7. Study Limitations.....	5
1.8. Significance of the Study.....	6
<b>2.0. CHAPTER TWO (2) LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	7
2.2. Global Trends on Girl Child Education and Teenage Pregnancies.....	7
2.3. Girl Child Education in Zambia.....	8
2.4. Education system in Zambia.....	9
2.5. Sexual reproduction activity among adolescent girls.....	10
2.5.1. The Re-entry Policy and its implementation in Zambia.....	11
2.6. Factors for Impactful Policy on Girl Child Education.....	11
2.6.1. Enabling Policy Environment.....	11
2.6.2. Demand Side of the Re-entry Policy.....	13
2.6.3. Supply Side of the Re-entry Policy.....	14
2.6.4. Quality of re-entry policy implementation.....	15
<b>3.0. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1. Introduction.....	17
3.2. Qualitative study approach.....	17
3.3. Research Sample.....	18
3.4. Data Analysis.....	19
<b>4.0. CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
4.1. Introduction.....	20
4.2. The Re-entry Policy in Zambia Vs Education Efficiency.....	20
4.3. Child Pregnancies and Readmission rates from 2010 to 2014.....	23
4.4. The extent the Re-entry Policy is Impactful on Girl's Education in Zambia.....	25
4.4.1. Enabling Environment for the Re-entry Policy.....	25
4.4.2. Demand Side of the Re-entry Policy.....	29
4.4.3. Supply side of the re-entry policy.....	32

4.4.4.	Quality of re-entry policy implementation.....	33
4.5.	Interventions under RTS towards Enhancing access to Girl Child Education .....	34
4.5.1.	RTS support towards REP and Girl Child Education at National, Provincial and District Levels. ....	40
5.0.	<b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	41
5.1.	Conclusion .....	41
5.2.	Recommendations .....	42
	References .....	48
	Appendices .....	51

## List of Tables

Table 1: Stakeholders Engaged through FGDs and KII .....	18
Table 2: Enrolment by Gender and Group Grade from 2007 to 2014 .....	21
Table 3: Transition, Repetition and Dropout rates in Grades 1-11 from 2013 to 2014 .....	22
Table 4: Pregnancies by Grade Groups from 2010 to 2014 in relation to Female Enrolment .....	23
Table 5: Number of Pregnancies and Re-admissions by Grade Groups from 2010 to 2014 .....	24
Table 6: Pregnancy and Re-Admission in RTS Operational Districts between 2010 and 2014 .....	36
Table 7: A Comparative Analysis of Attendance Rates for Learners Attendance & Other Indicators in Some RTS Supported Schools.....	38

## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AoC	Agents of Change
CAG	Community Action Groups
CF	Community Facilitators
CMOs	Community Mobilization Officers
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DEBS	District Education Board Secretaries
DESO	District Education Standards Officer
DG&CC	District Guidance and Counseling Coordinator
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalist
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalist in Zambia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
G&C	Guidance and Counseling
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human immunodeficiency Virus
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MGDs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOGE	Ministry of General Education
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NGOCC	Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council
PAGE	Programme for the Advancement of Girls Education
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PESO	Provincial Education Standards Officer
PTA	Parents Teachers Education
REP	Re-Entry Policy
RTS	Read to Succeed
SAfE	Learner Alliance for Equality
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNIP	United Independence Party
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic Health Survey

## Executive Summary

Educational attainment in Zambia has been increasing for both males and females over the decades. However, barriers to girl child education have continued, especially with a high rate of teenage pregnancies. In 1997, the Zambian Government through the Ministry of Education instituted a School Re-Entry Policy (REP). This policy officially allowed girls who become pregnant as learners to be allowed to return to school after giving birth. This policy is part of government's efforts to increase education attainment among girls and closing the gender gap in education by addressing one of the barriers to education that many girls face.

This study was aimed at documenting the implementation of the Re-Entry Policy (REP) in Zambia with respect to Read to Succeed's (RTS) contribution to policy intervention and efforts to improve girls' education. This study assessed RTS' range of Learner Support & Services which are aimed to address challenges girls face in education attainment, such as school dropout due to teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS prevention, and Child marriages. In Zambia specifically, females who have become mothers during adolescence, suffer many challenges, many of which are socially and culturally entrenched. Despite the policy being in place, it is clear that the majority of adolescent mothers are not returning to school after giving birth (Mutombo & Mwenda, 2010).

This was largely a desk review of related data and statistics, then validated by a field study of two (2) of RTS' project districts (Mongu and Sesheke) in Western Province. Stakeholders that were met during the field study included: school teachers and administrators, PTA members, parents, MOGE districts and provincial officials, guidance and counseling officials and teachers, learners that have re-entered and learners that have not re-entered in school after falling pregnant.

The findings of the study showed that implementation and activities of the REP was varied from RTS schools to non-RTS schools. Through the Learner Support & Services, RTS schools have been able to galvanize their efforts through the Guidance and Counseling (G&C) Teachers to provide necessary support and sensitizations around the REP. Results further showed that the work of RTS Project at school level has helped to create an enabling environment, create demand for the policy, help meet the supply and enhance quality policy implementation for both policy makers and implementers. This has, therefore, led to RTS schools to effectively developing impactful responses towards the REP.

Through literature study, it was also observed that although the REP has not scored a 100%re-admission rate, there is adequate awareness of the policy among all sections of people involved in policy administration and users (learners).Poverty and lack of financial support was cited as one of the challenges girls who fall pregnant face in returning to school. It was also noted that Government, as the main stakeholder in policy implementation, needs to provide deliberate interventions to enhance quality policy implementation which will meet



the available demand for the policy. The REP, like any other policy, requires deliberate government planning and budgeting for it to be effective.

Furthermore, the analysis of both M&E data and the MOGE data through Educational Statistical Bulletin by the MOGE shows an almost stagnant pregnancy and re-admission rates to a large extent. However when these statistics are reviewed in relation to the growing number of enrolment in schools, one would argue that this stagnation could imply that learners who fall pregnant re-enter over a period of time, perhaps one to two years. Additionally, the stagnation and decline seen in the statistics could also imply that in actual sense, there is an increase in the number of the girls coming back to school as those that fall pregnant have to wait until their maternity leave has expired. Also, the task with the MOGE and Schools is to put in place systems to inquire of learners who are re-admitting in schools especially after a transfer is essential to track the actual girls that re-enter.

Although there are many models and approaches that are being used by different organizations in supporting girl child education, in particular the REP, RTS' approach through the Learner Support & Services offers an opportunity for real gains in promoting girl child education in schools.

## 1.0. Chapter 1: Background and Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction

Read to Succeed (RTS) is a five-year early grade reading improvement project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Creative Associates International, in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) through the Ministry of General Education (MOGE). The project aims to improve learner performance by improving school effectiveness in such a way that schools provide the environment and services for learners to acquire essential academic skills, with a particular focus on reading. The main outcome of the project is improved learner performance in early grade reading. Working closely with the MOGE, USAID/RTS Project supports teachers and head teachers to deliver quality reading instruction and assessment in early grades in government primary schools. The project also provides comprehensive skills set and support towards policy implementation aimed at improving education effectiveness from the local to the national level.

### 1.2. RTS Technical Approach

Improving learner performance requires systemic changes on how schools are managed and supported, and on creating incentives and accountability structures that ensure the delivery of quality education. RTS deals with the dual challenges of improving student learning (raising assessment scores in reading) within five years while simultaneously strengthening Zambian schools and support systems so that learning improvements are sustained.

To improve reading skills among early grade learners, RTS takes a whole school, whole teacher, whole child approach which views schools as centers of learning, care and support, and addresses five key elements common to the school effectiveness model: learning, teaching, management, parental/community participation and responsiveness to children's needs.

The project operates around the main objective of “***Improved Education Achievement in Reading.***” This objective is supported by four intermediate result (IR) areas, these are:

- ❖ **Intermediate Result 1:** Decentralized education management practices to improve teacher accountability and sustained learner performance modeled
- ❖ **Intermediate Result 2:** Performance assessment tools and their uses strengthened
- ❖ **Intermediate Result 3:** School-based HIV/AIDS mitigating and equity enhancing learner support and services improved
- ❖ **Intermediate Result 4:** Increased engagement of universities and other higher education institutions in MOGE and RTS research activities.

Intermediate Result area three focuses on the component of Learner Support & Services. RTS strongly espouses the value of girls' education by promoting equality between boys and girls

in accessing quality education. As such, RTS has particularly focused to providing a clear understanding of how policy interventions such as the REP support girls' education.

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

Since the mid-1990s, Zambia has made strides in the attempt of improving quality education for all children, with a particular emphasis on girl child education. Gender inequities in the Zambian education system still persist and is largely manifested by disparities between boys and girls with regards to access to education, retention and completion rates. These challenges are deeply entrenched in the social norms and traditional cultural practices and to some extent the education system that has not eliminated all the barriers a girl faces during her education life.

Efforts to bring about both gender equality and equity between boys and girls in the school system have been advanced through both the local and international demands through the women's rights movement and the International conventions which the country has signed. For instance, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Declaration, and the Education for All Dakar Declaration, all point to the fact that children should have equal access to education opportunities, regardless of whether they are males or females. In Zambia, this agenda has been further advanced on the local level following commitments by women's organizations such as FAWEZA<sup>1</sup>, NGOCC<sup>2</sup>, and YWCA<sup>3</sup> etc, that advocated, especially, for equal education opportunities for both girls and boys. The REP is one of the efforts the Zambian Government has come up with to reduce gender inequalities and encourage girls who fall pregnant to remain and continue with school.

### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to document the status of implementation of REP and Girls Education in Zambia with respect to RTS' effort to improve learner support and services in target schools. Through this project, a range of support services on issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention, learner care and support and promotion of basic life skills have been provided at school level. In all project supported schools, implementation strategies have been aimed at avoiding early pregnancies and when they occur advocating for improved school and community support towards pregnant girls, and preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) among others. All these strategies hinge on the MOGE's REP for Girls Education.

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<sup>1</sup>FAWEZA stands for Forum for African Women Educationalist in Zambia

<sup>2</sup>NGOCC stands for Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council

<sup>3</sup>YWCA stands for Young Women Christian Association

## 1.5. Objectives of the Study

In conducting this assignment, the study responded to the following specific objectives:

- i. To document RTS' contribution towards intentions of the REP,
- ii. To review the policy implementation processes and data generated by MOGE and other government agencies,
- iii. To analyse data from any other source for purposes of responding adequately to the work of RTS in schools.

## 1.6. Study Questions

To the extent possible, the study endeavored to review the contribution of RTS interventions to the effectiveness of the REP (retention and completion of education among girls) in areas where Read to Succeed is operating. The following questions were answered:

1. **What** enabling environment has been created for the successful implementation of the REP?
2. **What is** the level of use of and demand for the policy among the learners who fall pregnant?
3. **What** is the manner in which the schools are implementing the policy (supply side) as a way of promoting girls education?
4. **What is** the level of the quality of planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that exist for more impactful policy implementation? What monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been employed by the MOGE and the school in order to ensure quality policy implementation?

It was hoped that in focusing to respond to the status of policy implementation and its influence on girls' education, this study also sought to have a clear understanding of policy intervention that support girls' education through the RTS project. The research assessed whether there is an indication that the REP in Zambia is contributing to its intended goal of increasing girls' educational attainment.

## 1.7. Study Limitations

The study could not be carried out in all project sites and throughout the country due to time and resource constraints. Being a qualitative study in nature and the need to document case studies, it used a limited sample size and research methods which included Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).As such, while the study can provide valuable information, given this limited sample, the findings may not be representative of the general picture in the country, especially in those schools where RTS interventions are missing.

## **1.8. Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is that it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the implementation of the REP and the contribution of RTS' interventions under Learner Support & Services in addressing the challenges of girl's education in Zambia. The findings may be found useful by various stakeholders in learning about the status of the implementation of the REP and its influence on girl child education in Zambia.

## **2.0. CHAPTER TWO (2) LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter is a literature review of existing body of literature in the subject under discussion and is aimed at enhancing the understanding and the literature gaps of the problem under investigation. Through this literature search, the study focused on bringing out the Impact of the REP on girl child education in Zambia, and the contribution of the USAID funded project, Read to Succeed (RTS) to the REP in its implementation through its efforts of *contributing to enhance Learner Support & Services*.

As such, literature review emphasizes review of the REP itself, assessing the enabling environment that exists in providing for the successful implementation of the REP; assessment of the Demand side of the REP by understanding the level of access, use and demand of the policy among the learners and parents in the schools; Assessment of the Supply Side of the policy, that is the manner in which the schools are administering the policy; and Quality aspects of policy implementation aiming at determining the level of quality policy monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that exist for more impactful policy implementation.

### **2.2. Global Trends on Girl Child Education and Teenage Pregnancies**

Since 1990, substantial progress has been made towards closing the gender gap in education. This is largely attributed to concerted local and international efforts in demanding the enrollment of more girls in schools. The Education for All movement, spearheaded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1990, established a set of international educational goals, including free and compulsory primary education for all children, and achieving gender parity in education by 2005 and gender equality by 2015 (Hanushek, 2008). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), established by the United Nations (UN) in 2000, included an explicit goal to “Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women”, as well as specific targets aimed to address gender disparities by eliminating gender gaps in education (UN Millennium Project, 2005).

Across the world’s developing nations, the primary school net enrollment rates increased from 80 percent in 1990 to over 90% in 2012 (United Nations [UN], 2014). However, regional and national gender disparities remain. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the primary net enrollment rate in 2012 was 78% (UN, 2014). Throughout the Sub-Saharan region, girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school at all grade levels, and less likely than boys to transition from primary to secondary school (Plan, 2012). One factor that contributes to this phenomenon is teenage pregnancies among learners in schools. In many sub-Saharan African countries for a long time, the norm, at times codified in school policies and/or national laws, was for girls to leave school once their pregnancy becomes visible or after giving birth (Plan, 2012). In many places, they are banned from returning, either by law or in practice (Chilisa, 2002).

Over the past two decades, several Sub Saharan African countries, including Botswana, Cameroon, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia, have instituted a variety of policies intended to address pregnancy-related school dropouts by giving adolescent mothers the legal right to return to school after giving birth (Chilisa, 2002). Some of these countries have policies or pilot projects to provide additional support for adolescent mothers. For instance in South Africa, logistical and financial support is supposed to be provided to help adolescent mothers continue attending school (Maluli, 2014). Re-entry Policies (REPs) are considered a critical component of promoting girl's education by international institutions (McCadden, 2015) although there is often opposition to such policies at the local level.

Although REPs are cited as a best practice in promoting girls' education by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE, 2004) little large-scale quantitative research has been done to assess the impact it has on girls' education or meeting the unique needs of adolescent mothers. Most research on REPs focuses on the implementation process (Mwansa, 2011; Sampa, 2010; Samati, 2013) or presents qualitative data on the educational experience of adolescent mothers (Bhana, & McAmbi, 2013; Mutombo & Mwenda, 2010). Such a quantitative study can be conducted against the internal education efficiency measured by the cohorts of repetition, transition and dropouts ((Ministry of Education, 2013 Educational Statistical Bulletin , 2014).

### **2.3. Girl Child Education in Zambia**

#### ***2.3.1. Development of Girl Child Education in Zambia***

From the pre-colonial times, Zambia's education system has evolved from the traditional non-formal educational system of learning where boys and girls were taught different life skills for survival at household/community level by elderly men and women to a formal structured classroom education by qualified teachers in a modern sense.

The coming of Missionaries in the late 1800s introduced Zambia to the Western mode or modern form of education. The primary thrust of the missionary education provided for by the missionary was to teach Africans to learn how to read and write for Christianity purposes (Evangelism). However, over time this mode of education slowly evolved into formal education institutions up until the post-colonial era (Snelson; 1974, Mwanakatwe, 1971). Mwanakatwe (1971), has urged that the western education provided in the colonial era to Africans was a favor and not a birthright. As such at the advent of the introduction of this education, males were largely preferred to be the main recipients of the western education and not females. Carmody (2004) observed that as far back as the missionary education, gender imbalance persisted in the education system, and he further points out that most of the pioneers [of education] were men, [perhaps this explains] as such education was largely dominated by men, thereby creating a gender gap and inequality in education.

Snelson (1974) further observes that parents contributed heavily to the gender imbalance that existed in that they remained generally unconvinced of the value or [and] relevance of education for their daughters.

The independence of Zambia from the British government in 1964 came with a shift in the education sector. The UNIP<sup>4</sup> Government then, slowly began integrating education and addressing the gender imbalance in education that existed since the colonial times. For instance, in the 1980s, government introduced a policy of selecting girls for grade 10 [Form Three then] at a lower cut-off point than boys (Sitali 2009) as a way of having more girls qualify to Grade 10. Later in the 1990s, government (MMD)<sup>5</sup> became more committed to international frameworks on education such as the Education for All and Educating Our Future. During this time, the government initiated the Program for the Advancement of Girls' Education (PAGE) aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education by focusing on the girl learner (Kelly, 1999). Specific interventions through the PAGE program were directly focusing on access, retention and progression of girls in schools in the country; for instance, building of more girls' schools, and in some co-education schools, creation of girls exclusive classes. This was in the belief that girls would be freer to participate with their fellow girls than with boys.

In an attempt to further mitigate gender imbalance, one of the issues the MOGE had to deal with was the low retention, completion and progression rate of girls in schools due to the fact that although many girls were being enrolled in schools, they often dropped out of school after reaching puberty because they fell pregnant. Measures taken included the introduction of the Re-Entry Policy (REP). Kelly (1999) said that the REP was in line with the general policy to ensure the education for all people, without abstract progression and completion. The REP provided an opportunity to education for a girl who falls pregnant to return to school after giving birth. Kelly, Musango and Subulwa (1999) pointed out that in Zambia before the introduction of the REP, girls that fell pregnant were expelled from school together with the boy who was responsible. However, in 1996, it was revealed that in Southern Province of Zambia, 242 girls were expelled for being pregnant against 6 boys for causing the pregnancy, while in Northern Province in the same year 205 girls were expelled against 4 boys for the same reason (Kelly, Musango and Subulwa, 1999). These trends, therefore, placed a girl-child at a disadvantage of equally accessing and completing education to a boy-child.

#### **2.4. Education System in Zambia**

School education in Zambia is currently governed by the Education Act of 2011. The current structure of education in Zambia is described as a 7-5-4 education system with the academic learning consisting of Primary Education (Grade 1 to 7), Secondary Education (Grade 8-12) and tertiary education (usually 4 years involving college and/or university education). The

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<sup>4</sup> United National Independence Party

<sup>5</sup> Movement for Multi-Party Democracy



main policy document that guides education system in Zambia is the 1996, *Educating Our Future*. Currently, there are a total number of 8,754 Primary schools, and 9,548 Secondary schools in Zambia (MOGE, 2015). Other than improving the education facilities, Zambia, through the Ministry of General Education, has further made strides aimed at improving education access for all children, with a particular emphasis on girls. For example in 2002, the government eliminated school fees at primary schools under a free basic education policy (McCadden, 2015).

## **2.5. Sexual Reproduction Activity among Adolescent Girls**

The Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) of 2013/2014, indicates that 29% of adolescent women aged 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child. Further the ZDHS survey of 2014 indicate that more than one third of women give birth by 18 years of age and more than half are giving birth by age 20 years of age. The 2010 Population Reference Bureau revealed that young people start having sex as early as before 15 years in Zambia. The (MOGE and UNICEF, 2014) highlight that young people, especially girls start having sex at an as early as 12 years of age, mostly with partners who are much older than themselves. This entails that girls in primary schools probably from grades 4 are likely to already be having sex in Zambia.

Closely related to the consequence of teenage pregnancy is Child marriage. Mann, Quigley and Fischer (2015), in their Qualitative study of child marriage in Six Districts of Zambia asserted that marriage is a common response to teenage pregnancy, it is widely accepted that if a girl becomes pregnant then she should marry the father of the child. In addition, the study revealed that other social and cultural patterns and trends such as poverty, rural children, children from poor households, children not attending school, children without adequate supervision or social support, Difficult or 'hard-to-manage' children (deviant children), Orphans and stepchildren from the survey were perceived as vulnerable to child marriage (Mann, Quigley and Fischer, 2015). These trends are not too far from the factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy, thereby leading to high school dropouts especially among girls.

Related to sexual activity among the adolescent young girls is knowledge, attitudes and information of HIV and pregnancy prevention. An HIV KAP Survey conducted in 6 provinces for RTS by Siamwiza et al in 2015, reviewed that nearly half (48.7%) of the respondents indicated they do not have enough knowledge to protect themselves from HIV, STIs and pregnancy, and would like more information. It was discovered during this study that the preferred source for obtaining the information is the classroom in school at 49.1% and 38.9% of learners indicated that TV and radio was the main source information about HIV/AIDS (Siamwiza and Et al, 2015). This therefore can denote gaps on having wider sources of information dissemination and the need for school to especially manage this demand.

### **2.5.1. The Re-entry Policy and its Implementation in Zambia**

This research and literature review was approached by analyzing the enabling policy environment on the supply and demand side, like Sunderland-Addy (2008) has considered that the gender disparity of education at the global level is on the demand and the supply side.

The REP being grounded in the outcomes of the Beijing Conference of 1995, a conference at which the Women's Movement drew up its own priorities and action plan towards providing a second chance of education to girls that fall pregnant. The conference demanded that girls who dropped out of school because of pregnancy should be readmitted. Limited research has been done in analyzing the obstacles girls face to be re-admitted into school after falling pregnant in Zambia (Mutombo and Mwenda 2010) and even less on success factors regarding those that get re-admitted. The following sections of this literature review provide an analysis of the available research that indicate the implementation of the Re-entry Policy with regards to; (1) Availability of an Enabling Environment for policy implementation; (2) Demand side of the Re- entry, by understanding the level of use and demand of the policy among the learners in the schools; (3) Supply Side of the REP, that is the manner in which the schools are administering the policy; and (4) Quality of REP implementation, by seeking research that determine the level of quality policy planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that exist for more impactful policy implementation.

The UNICEF and MOGE study on the Global initiative on the Out of school children (2014), related the root cause of gender disparity in education to other social and economic challenges such as poverty, division of labor at household level affecting the girls' education. Furthermore, a *“Review of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Provision for Girls in Technical Schools in Zambia”* by the Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA 2010) notes that the gender parity index dropped from 1 in grade 1 to 0.83 in grades 10 – 12 (roughly 4 girls to 5 boys). The reason for the drop was that the older the girls get, the more they are exposed to the gendered nature of society reflected in deeply embedded socio-cultural practices and choices, such as who is responsible for the household work and the resulting opportunity costs of school (UNICEF and MOGE, 2014).

## **2.6. Factors for Impactful Policy on Girl Child Education**

### **2.6.1. Enabling Policy Environment**

The REP implementation process in Zambia entails the delegation of power to people involved in its implementation in relation to, the MOGE structures, communities, learners and school administration. Each of this is viewed as sub system of the policy process which creates the enabling environment for its implementation and achievement of the goal or what is referred as policy intent. The subsystem interacts with the environment for financial resources in form of grants, loans, machinery, skilled human resources, and government support which are classified as inputs.

The processes include: Management/Administration to see to it that finances are set aside for running of policy business effectively; and the output entails provision of services relating to re-entry.

A REP alone will not sufficiently address the barriers that adolescent mothers face in returning to school. Efforts must be made to raise awareness and ownership of the policy among community leaders, parents, learners, and school administrators; develop clear implementation guidelines in collaboration with communities and school administrators, and address the cultural norms that lead most adolescents to drop out of school when they become pregnant (Samati, 2013). Zambia has made efforts to address these factors through Girl-Child Education Campaigns implemented by the MOGE and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the 2000s. However, many girls continue to face social, financial, and practical challenges in returning to school after giving birth.

Nevertheless, there has been varying views on the real impact of the REP on girls' education although very limited research has been done to determine this. Some policymakers and school administrators fear that REPs simply encourages teen pregnancies by "rewarding" teens for becoming pregnant, or by removing the deterrent aspect that discourage girls to return to school (Mutombo & Mwenda, 2010). Others have claimed that such policies encourage second pregnancies among girls as they know that they can return to school once they give birth.

The ability for girls that fall pregnant and return in school is largely dependent on the existence of an enabling environment that will accept the girls back in school. Mutombo and Mwenda (2010) note that 50% girls who left school due to pregnancy, and had not returned to school named lack of financial support as their main reason for not returning, while 10% cited stigma and the way that they would be treated by other learners. Others girls preferred to go to a different school, primarily because of the stigma they feared they would face at their former school. Similarly, Nkhoma (2011) notes that in some southern African settings, adolescent mothers encounter "ridicule and discriminatory language" from both teachers and other learners when they return to school. Such attitudes do not promote a good environment of inclusion but rather discourages the girls that re-enter.

The school G&C teachers are directly involved in providing support services directly related to the REP. Girls in school that fall pregnant are expected to meet, discuss and receive counseling from the G&C teachers as well as guidance on how to proceed on maternity leave. RTS in collaboration with the MOGE as at 2015 trained 1,123 teachers in G&C and 11,230 learners in peer education and behavioral change methodology (Siamwiza et al, 2015). This was in order to increase the supply of related learner services among which the REP and girl child education being critical.

### 2.6.2. Demand Side of the Re-entry Policy

Different organizations that work on girl child education such as the FAWEZA Community Action Groups (CAG) have been identified as one of the local community platforms that has been used to effectively push for the implementation of the REP. CAGs are a group of volunteers who represent the composition and diversity of the local community or communities surrounding the school interested in uplifting the education of their children and especially girls (FAWEZA, 2010). CAGs are responsible for tracking learners who drop out of the schooling system due to pregnancy and child marriage and persuade parents to return pregnant school girls back to school after giving birth and raise awareness on affirmative educational policies such as the REP for teen mothers and other legal instruments on child defilements, GBV and child marriages among others (FAWEZA). Obviously the CAGs are an important local initiative that support demand for policy implementation from the community side.

Furthermore, the FAWEZA Learner Alliance for Equality (SAFE) Clubs are a peer support mechanism aimed at cultivating positive gender relations as well as a strategy for confronting negative gender attitudes, beliefs and practices that perpetuate the disadvantaged position of girls in the broader society including accelerating the implementation of the REP.

Under the Read to Succeed project, significant investment has been made under Learner Support & Services through the training of Guidance and Counseling (G&C) teachers and the Agents of Change (AoCs) to provide a range of support services on issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention, and care and support. The RTS (2014) annual Report indicate that In all schools, AoCs spearheaded implementation strategies aimed at avoiding early pregnancy, advocating for improved community support to pregnant girls, and preventing from Gender Based Violence (GBV) among others topics. The outreach activities being done by both the AoC and the G&C teachers can then be alluded as being able to create demand of the REP. The following citation from the report further solidifies these claims especially in the RTS project site;

*“With regards to pregnancies, RTS data shows neither a significant increase nor decrease of recorded pregnancies in 2013 (0.63%) and 2014 (0.63%) school calendar. However, there is an increase in the number of girls returning back to school after being pregnant i.e. from 0.20% in 2013 to 0.66% in Term One of 2014. This could be an indication that messages about reentry policy spread out by AoC were productive.”*

It therefore can seemingly be correct to state that the intervention that RTS is providing (G&C and AoCs) provides a possible future approach aimed at creating demand and awareness about the REP. This therefore brings us to a point of research gap that provide evidence and impact base of the different approaches and interventions that have been used by different organizations in increasing demand of the REP in Zambia. Such research data and information is necessary and important in having more focused interventions as well as documenting workable methodologies in increasing demand.

### 2.6.3. Supply Side of the Re-entry Policy

The pronouncement of the REP for adolescent mothers in Zambia was largely supported by the political will to bridge the inequality gap between boys and girls in education. The pronouncement was formalized through a MOE circular to all Provincial and District Education Officers and school heads introducing the policy (FAWEZA. 2004). Clear guidelines of procedures for implementation were to be followed.

The Ministry has made efforts to distribute the REP guidelines to schools in order to inform learners and teachers about the REP, and assist schools and other stakeholders, such as parents and guardians, to enable girls to complete their education after giving birth. However, there has been challenges for the guidelines to reach the parents, learners and entire communities. For example Sitali (2009) in her study pointed out that PTA officials interviewed during her research were not aware of the REP and its details and did not understand how the schools were implementing them. There is therefore need as Wedekind and Milingo have alluded, for the MOGE to develop short local language versions of the policy for the use in outreach campaigns, and more strategically involve chiefs [even parents] in order to reach populations in remote areas. Wedekind and Milingo, 2015 further added in creating sensitizations and access for the policy,

*“Schools should seek to actively engage local communities near the school and in the learners’ home villages. Schools can invite women with reentry experiences who are now successfully employed – including scholarship alumni - to speak to learners in order to motivate them and serve as role models. The general annual meeting with Parents and PTA meetings should be used for awareness raising” (Wedekind and Milingo, 2015).*

In addition, policy support mechanisms in the form of G&C services for pregnant girls and the adolescent mothers and financial support for the most vulnerable among them have been instituted through the revamping of the guidance and counseling departments headed by a trained G&C teacher. In the Zambian education system a guidance and counseling teacher, department and committee exist to provide counseling services covering a wide range of learner-centered social development services including career development and social counseling to learners. Specific counseling is also provided to those learners that fall pregnant so as to help them deal with the new reality of motherhood as well as encourage them to continue with their education. The G&C teacher and/or committee provides guidance to the pregnant girls and counseling on how to reenter in school after giving birth.

FAWEZA recognized that counseling before and after medical examination is vital for girls that fall pregnant. When girls become pregnant they live in fear, as such it is important to give them reassurance and the guidance and counseling teachers/departments come in handy in this regard. Mutombo and Mwenda (2010) in their study found that girls are more likely to return to school if they informed the school administration of their pregnancy before leaving, stayed in school past the first trimester, and were 20 years of age or older. This has been validated by Wedekind and Milingo (2015) by stating that close counseling and mentoring of

pregnant and re-entered girls seems to be a key factor to girls' reentry into school after pregnancy. However the services are limited and sometimes the learners leave school on their own without being attended to by the G&C teacher. Also sometime the G&C teachers do not have the adequate skills and materials to conduct successful counseling to the girls that fall pregnant.

There has also been some education administrators and teachers who have not been in favor of the REP. From the time the policy was pronounced some stakeholders such as the church, parents, teachers and schoolboys have been against the declaration (FAWEZA, 2004). Although now the situation is a little bit different, the acceptability of the REP has not yet reached a universal level. Mutombo and Mwenda (2010) conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with parents, teachers, community members, and learners were also conducted in each of the 12 districts. These findings indicated that most parents felt the REP was good, but that girls were "abusing" it. Many teachers likewise thought girls "abused" the policy, that it was "not good for the education system", and that girls who had children were "difficult to teach" because they felt their status as parents put them at the same level as teachers (Mutombo and Mwenda, 2010). Sitali (2009) also highlights some of the reactions of some teachers towards the REP where they do not favor the policy urging that it was only encouraging learners to become immoral and non-pregnant girls to think that falling pregnant was okay since they would be able to continue their education afterwards.

Nevertheless despite such feelings among teachers, they are expected to be supportive of the REP as well as creating a conducive environment for the learners to access the services being offered. Such a strict moral approach to teenage pregnancies can have a negative effect on the number of girls that are progressing to grade 12 and on the successful implementation of the policy.

Further, mission and/or faith based schools have not embraced the REP on girl's education (Mutombo and Mwenda, 2010), this too has not made government efforts any easier in trying to bridge the gender gap between boys and girls progressing to grade 12.

It is important to note that for the successful implementation of the policy stakeholders such as parents, teachers, MOGE officials and learners ought to fully understand and welcome the policy. This is essential for the creation of an enabling environment in creating the support at the supply end of policy implementation.

#### **2.6.4. Quality of Re-Entry Policy Implementation**

In reviewing quality issues surrounding the REP, Mwansa (2011) identified the main feature of policy-making as the stratified interaction of institutions and processes which, in turn affect the kinds of policies that are ultimately formulated. As already noted, mission and faith based schools have rejected the implementation of the REP in their Schools, she alluded that the main issues of concern among lower level participants and the church include:1)



non-inclusiveness of the policy process which includes policy formulation and implementation concerns; 2) weak capacity of the government in driving the policy process.

Mwansa (2011) recognizes that while there is much benefit towards the implementation of the re-entry policy, a clear recognition about implementation of the policy is far from being perfect and that there is much skepticism about the claims made for the exemplary success of the policy .

FAWEZA (2004) highlighted that there are Institutional factors hindering the implementation of the REP among them include; the policy not being fully understood by duty bearers especially at school level and communities due to lack of orientation, policy guidelines are not readily available in schools, -lack of Institutionalized mechanisms for detecting pregnancies early/counseling, lack of mechanisms to facilitate re-entry of girls after failing pregnant, grant aided schools still do not accept to re-enter teen mothers in their schools and the stigma within the schooling system deters teen mothers from re-enrolling back in school.

It is also worth to note that the implementation of the REP has been done side by side with other education programs such as school equal enrollment ratios, homework policy, school absenteeism, learner-teacher-ratio etc. This approach is not sustainable in the sense that it is not possible to account or measure a policy which has not been fully planned and budgeted for. For quality and effectiveness of the policy it is important to incorporate the REP into the Ministry of Education's programs and budget by the Directorate of Planning and Information and hence appear at all levels of the ministry down to the local levels (FAWEZA, 2013).

Nonetheless, it is clear that a majority of adolescent mothers are not returning to school after giving birth (Mutombo & Mwenda, 2010). This can further validated with reference to statistics in Table3above on re-admission of adolescent mothers.

However there is a likely possible new school of thought whereby some girls that fall pregnant after dropping from school and subsequently giving birth, perhaps go back to enroll at another school and do not disclose that they are re-entering. This is a gap in research that needs to be done. In exploring this line of thought, it would be important to find out the factors that cause them to keep their social situation a secret despite the REP favoring their return even to the same school.

### 3.0. Chapter 3: Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used in this study. Discussed in details are the research design, sample size, sampling method, data collection and data analysis.

This study was a qualitative research study in nature which used an integrated approach involving the secondary and primary sources of data as a main research method. The study also reviewed primary sources of information as well a secondary sources of information. Unstructured interviews were conducted with the stakeholders in two (2) of RTS' project districts these being Mongu and Sesheke districts of Western Province. This was done in order to ascertain the actual work RTS is doing and its contribution to the REP through the collection of case studies. The stakeholders engaged included, school teachers and administrators, PTA members, parents, MOGE districts staff and G&C teachers, provincial officials, learners that have re-entered and learners that have not re-entered in school after failing pregnant. The MOGE at all levels was the main source of both primary and secondary qualitative information. In addition to the review of literature to determine the impact of the REP no Girl's Education in Zambia, this study conducted interviews and focus group discussions so as to learn of the Impact of the work of RTS.

#### 3.2. Qualitative Study Approach

A qualitative study is primarily an exploratory research. This method allowed the researchers to provide an elaborate interpretation of a phenomenon based on reason, opinion and motivation without depending on numerical measurements. Ulin et al (2002) argues that qualitative methods are extremely useful in defining the social process by which problems emerge and for suggesting strategic points of programmatic intervention to deal with particular problems thereby increasing understanding. In this research, the following main research methodology and data collection approaches were undertaken as follows:

- i. **Literature Review** of similar research works and documents, statistics in relation to the REP were undertaken. This was done in order to have a more focused study as well as identifying the gaps that existed in the works undertaken so far in an attempt to have this study be more relevant.
- ii. **Unstructured Key Informative Interviews:** These included having in-depth interviews with key policy implementers and education players including, education administrators such as the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) and District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS), School Heads, PTA Members, Parents, G&C teacher (Agents of Change), re-entered girls and non-entered girls.
- iii. **Focus Group Discussions** targeting girls in school that have never fallen pregnant. As well as Focus group discussion with girls in school who have benefitted from the REP after falling pregnant and have re-entered.



- iv. **Documentation of case studies** targeting the beneficiaries of the RTS project and the change that has taken place due to the project intervention. Some of the case studies bring out best practices done by RTS worth emulating and replicating in other areas.

### 3.3. Research Sample

The sample size constituted three (3) schools which comprised of two government schools where RTS is present and one grant-aided school where it is not implementing any activities. A total number of (5) focus group discussions were conducted, two (2) were with adolescent mothers that have re-entered, while two (2) were conducted with school girls and boys who are Agents of Change (AoC) and one with G&C teachers. A total number of 106 participants were engaged through KII and FDG were conducted as follows;

**Table 1: Stakeholders Engaged through FGDs and KII**

Stakeholders	Number included in the study	Gender		
		M	F	Total
<b>Ministry of General Education HQ</b>	Director Standards and Curriculum	0	1	1
	Monitoring and Evaluation unit,	1		1
<b>Provincial Education Office</b>	Provincial Education Officer – Western Province	0	1	1
<b>Districts</b>	District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) (Sesheke and Mongu)	0	2	2
	District Guidance and Counseling Coordinator	2	0	2
	District Standards officer	0	1	1
<b>Schools</b>	Focus Group Discussions for Learners	3	65	68
	Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Learners	0	2	2
	FGD for Teacher G&C teachers	0	9	9
	Key Informant Interviews (KII) for teachers	0	13	13
<b>Civil society and NGOs on education</b>	FAWEZA,	0	1	1
	NGOCC	1	1	2
	Read to Succeed	2	0	2
	Plan International	0	1	1
<b>Educationalist and Gender expert</b>	Independent Educationist and Gender Expert	0	1	
	<b>Total Number of stakeholders</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>106</b>

Each interview lasted between 30 minutes to 45 minutes for KII and 45 minutes and one (1) hours for FGDs. Overall the fieldwork and report writing lasted for a period of two months.

### 3.4. Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded using a digital recorder during the data collection exercise. In view of the likelihood of using direct quotations, written permission was obtained in advance by way of participants to the study signing consent forms.

Data analysis looked at how to make the data collected more manageable in a qualitative manner. Using excel sheet, statistical data as well as key themes and data variables were analyzed. The preference was to code the raw data and to summarize it into descriptive statements. Categories of recurrent themes were grouped together systemically allowing for the categories to emerge while constantly conferring and confirming from the raw data. Special attention was paid to data that seemed to contradict the flow. The aim in doing so was to provide an accurate description and assessment of the experiences of adolescent schoolgirl mother and the impact of the policy on them.

## 4.0. Chapter 4: Research Findings and Discussion of Results

### 4.1. Introduction

Research findings and analysis is presented along the four main themes/research questions that are being considered in this study in ascertaining the impact of the REP on girls' education. These being, the existence of an enabling environment for policy implementation, demand side for policy implementation, the supply side of the policy and quality policy implementation. Thus the following section presents the research findings and a discussion follows.

### 4.2. The Re-entry Policy in Zambia vs Education Efficiency

The REP in Zambia was launched in 1997, it provides for girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy to be readmitted after giving birth. McCadden (2015) states that the school REP in Zambia provides an important first step towards creating more equitable access to Education for All, including adolescent mothers in Zambia. The REP in Zambia has been implemented alongside other important education and development initiatives in Zambia, which collectively are leading to improved educational outcomes for many Zambians (McCadden; 2015). Educating our Future policy has recognized gender equality as a critical factor in education and aims at providing equal access to education to all. In line with this, the MOGE has implemented policies such as the REP which is part of a wider strategy aimed at improving access and retention of girls in schools.

Education efficiency in the Zambia's education system is critical in ascertaining the manner in which the education system remains relevant to the learners. The 2011 Educational Statistical Bulletin alludes to the fact that education efficiency indicators relate to those indicators that are designed to guide stakeholders on how the system is able to absorb the learners with special emphasis and attention to learner outcomes and achievements. Among these indicators include, enrolment rate, transition rate<sup>6</sup>, dropout rate<sup>7</sup> and repetition rate<sup>8</sup>. These indicators are important in enhancing education access among the learners. As such in order to increase access in education, the MOGE has been implementing policies such, the Free Basic Education Policy from grade 1 to 7, the Bursary support Policy for orphans and vulnerable children and the REP aimed at enabling girls that fall pregnant to return and continue with their education.

In line with discussing education efficiency, it is imperative to look at the enrolment rate in Zambia in the quest of improving education access. The following table 2 shows Enrolment by Gender from 2009 to 2014 as provided by the MOGE.

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<sup>6</sup>**Transition rate** also known as promotion rate refer to the proportion of the learners who have successfully completed a grade and proceed to the next grade the following year.

<sup>7</sup>**Dropout Rate:** this indicates the proportion of learners who leave the system without completing a given grade school year.

<sup>8</sup>**Repetition Rate:** this is the proportion of learners from a cohort enrolled in a given grade in a given school year who study in the same grade in the following school year.

**Table 2: Enrolment by Gender and Group Grade from 2007 to 2014**

Enrolment Rate By Gender and Group Grade from 2007 to 2014							
Grade Group	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Average annual growth rate 2009 - 2014
Grades 1-7 <b>Total</b>	2 943 975	2 821 018	3 030 120	3 135 442	3 075 161	3 217 872	1.50%
Male	1 488 634	1 407 483	1 525 996	1 568 566	1 540 781	1 613 748	1.40%
Female	1 455 341	1 413 535	1 504 124	1 566 876	1 534 380	1 604 124	1.60%
Grades 8-9 <b>Total</b>	408 390	343 550	380 570	456 284	451 163	473 614	2.50%
Male	216 696	180 583	202 449	239 994	236 852	244 630	2.00%
Female	191 694	162 967	178 121	216 290	214 311	228 984	3.00%
Grades 10-12 <b>Total</b>	264 795	225 549	243 019	287 711	292 012	327 980	3.60%
Male	141 615	119 946	130 129	159 478	158 316	176 961	3.80%
Female	123 180	105 603	112 890	128 233	133 696	151 019	3.50%
<b>National Totals</b>	<b>3 617 160</b>	<b>3 390 117</b>	<b>3 653 709</b>	<b>3 879 437</b>	<b>3 818 336</b>	<b>4 019 466</b>	<b>1.80%</b>
Male	1 846 945	1 708 012	1 858 574	1 968 038	1 935 949	2 035 339	1.60%
Female	1 770 215	1 682 105	1 795 135	1 911 399	1 911 399	1 984 127	1.90%

**Source: Educational Statistical Bulletin 2014, MOGE.**

From the data provided in Table 2, the enrollment rate from grade 1 to 12 was at 3,617,160 learners in 2009, while 4,019,466 learners were enrolled in 2014. This represents an average annual growth rate of enrollment between this periods to be at 1.80%. It is also important to note that there are more males enrolled in school across all the grades than females. Data from table 2 indicate that there were 1,846,945 males against 1,770 215 females and 2,035 339 males against 1,984,127 females in 2009 and 2014 respectively. At grade one, the number of girls and boys enrolled is almost equal, sometimes even more girls than boys, however girls gradually drop as they progress. As the grades go higher, the gender gap between girls and boys seemingly also widens.

Further, this study assessed the other efficiency indicators these being Transition or Completion, Repetition and Dropout rates. Table3 below shows the Transition, Repetition and Dropout rates among boys and girls from grade 1 to 11 in 2013 and 2014.

**Table 3: Transition, Repetition and Dropout rates in Grades 1-11 from 2013 to 2014**

Transition, Repetition and Dropout rates in Grades 1-11 from 2013 to 2014									
Grade	Transition rates			Repetition rates			Dropout Rates		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Grade 1	90.20%	89.40%	89.80%	5.70%	5.60%	5.60%	1.00%	0.90%	0.90%
Grade 2	93.20%	92.90%	93.00%	5.60%	5.30%	5.40%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%
Grade 3	91.50%	92.40%	92.00%	5.70%	6.30%	5.50%	1.20%	1.70%	1.20%
Grade 4	86.40%	86.30%	86.40%	6.60%	6.10%	6.30%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%
Grade 5	85.90%	84.30%	85.10%	6.70%	6.30%	6.50%	1.60%	1.90%	1.70%
Grade 6	83.70%	80.60%	82.10%	7.70%	7.20%	7.50%	1.70%	2.60%	2.20%
Grade 7	59.10%	59.40%	59.30%	10.10%	8.90%	9.50%	2.00%	4.20%	3.00%
Grade 8	86.80%	84.80%	85.80%	7.90%	7.60%	7.70%	1.90%	4.00%	2.90%
Grade 9	42.00%	42.30%	42.20%	15.80%	14.60%	15.20%	2.30%	5.30%	3.70%
Grade 10	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	1.90%	1.60%	1.80%	0.50%	1.30%	0.80%
Grade 11	95.60%	93.20%	94.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	0.70%	2.30%	1.40%
<b>Average Rates %</b>	<b>83.13%</b>	<b>82.33%</b>	<b>82.75%</b>	<b>6.85%</b>	<b>6.47%</b>	<b>6.61%</b>	<b>1.40%</b>	<b>2.43%</b>	<b>1.85%</b>

**Source: Educational Statistical Bulletin 2014 MOGE.**

Overall, from the Table 3, the transition rate for males is higher than that of females standing at 83.13% and 82.33% respectively. The average repetition rate is 6.85% and 6.47% for males and females respectively. While female learners have on average a higher dropout rate at 2.43% compared to males at 1.40%. This clearly indicates that girls drop out more often than boys and the peak of the dropout rates being from grade 5 to 11, more so in grades 7, 8 and 9 standing at 4.2%, 5.3% and 4% respectively. Majority of these school dropouts can be attributed to teenage pregnancy among learners. The grades 5 to 11 are at high risk of teenage pregnancy since these grades consist of learners who have attained their puberty; as such they are exploring sexual experiences which eventually lead to teenage pregnancies and subsequently dropping out of school.

### 4.3. Child Pregnancies and Readmission Rates from 2010 to 2014

It is true from the MOGE statistics that enrollment level and the number of teen pregnancies in Zambian schools has been growing. Table 4 shows the number of girls that fell pregnant from 2010 to 2014 against total female enrollment.

**Table 4: Pregnancies by Grade Groups from 2010 to 2014 in relation to Female Enrolment**

Group Grade	Year														
	2010			2011			2012			2013			2014		
	# Preg	Enrollment of Females	% Proportion	# Preg	Enrollment of Females	% Proportion	# Preg	Enrollment of Females	% Proportion	# Preg	Enrollment of Females	% Proportion	# Preg	Enrollment of Females	% Proportion
Primary Grades 1-7	13,769	1,413,535	0.97	13,929	1,504,124	0.93	12,753	1,566,876	0.81	12,500	1,604,124	0.78	13,275	1,604,124	0.83
Secondary 8-12	1,817	268,570	0.68	1,778	291,011	0.61	2,096	348,007	0.60	2,428	348,007	0.70	3,103	380,003	0.82
National Totals	15,586	1,682,105	0.93	15,707	1,795,135	0.87	14,849	1,914,883	0.78	14,928	1,952,131	0.76	16,378	1,984,127	0.83

#### Data extracted from the Educational Statistical Bulletin 2010 to 2014

In 2010, out of the total number of female learners that were enrolled in school across all grades, being 1, 682,105learners, 15,586 of fell pregnant representing a percentage proportion of 0.93%. In 2014, there were 1, 984, 127 learners enrolled in schools, and 16, 378 fell pregnant. This represented a 0.83% of the total number of learners enrolled in school. The statistics reflected in Table 4, demonstrate a steady decline in pregnancy rates in 2011, 2012 and 2013 presenting 0.87%, 0.78% and 0.76% against the total number of girls enrolled respectively. In 2012, when the enrollment rate for girls increased by over 119, 748learners in schools within a year, the percentage of those that fell pregnant declined from 0.87% to 0.78%. These statistics demonstrate a marginal drop of pregnancies in schools if one is to relate the number of female learners enrolled in schools against those that fell pregnant over the years. It therefore important to underscore that despite increasing nominal figures from 15,586 in 2010 to 16,378 in 2014, the actual proportion of females falling pregnant against total female enrolment declined from 0.93% in 2010 to 0.83% in 2014.

The rise is mostly due to increasing population of learners. This analysis indicates that pregnancy cases have stabilized overtime and in some instances, they are slowly declining.

**Table 5: Number of Pregnancies and Re-admissions by Grade Groups from 2010 to 2014**

Year	Pregnancy		Re-admission		National Totals		Re-admission %
	Basic Schools	Secondary Schools	Basic Schools	Secondary Schools	Pregnancy	Re-admission	
2010	13,769	1,817	5,034	1,033	15,586	6,067	39
2011	13,929	1,778	5,106	924	15,707	6,030	38
2012	12,753	2,096	4,915	1,086	14,849	6,001	40
<b>2013</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>2,428</b>	<b>4,492</b>	<b>1,337</b>	14,928	5,829	39
<b>2014</b>	<b>13,275</b>	<b>3,103</b>	<b>5,322</b>	<b>2,069</b>	16,378	7,391	45
<b>Totals</b>	<b>66,226</b>	<b>11,222</b>	<b>24,869</b>	<b>6,449</b>	<b>77,448</b>	<b>31,318</b>	<b>40</b>

**Source:** *Educational Statistical Bulletin, 2014, MOE.*

Statistics in Table 5, indicate high pregnancy rates among learners in primary schools as compared to secondary school. These statistics actually speak to the statistics in table 3 regarding the dropout rates in school which heighten in grades 7 to 9, which can be attributed to teenage pregnancy. From these statistics it can be concluded that there is need to conduct a lot of REP related interventions in primary schools, no wonder the work of RTS.

From table 5, between 2010 and 2014, a total number of 77, 448 girls fell pregnant in schools, 66,266 girls were from basic schools compared to 11, 222 at secondary school level. These statistics are validated by Table 3 which earlier demonstrated high dropout rates from grades 5. These rates are alarming especially in ensuring that girls progress and complete their education. The table also shows that pregnancy situation in Zambia between 2010 and 2014, for both pregnancy and readmission among learners has not been dropping as expected especially if they are related against the enrollment rate. From Table 5, in the past five (5) years, only an average of 40% of girls that fall pregnant re-entered back in school. Furthermore on an average 6,126.80 girls returned to school every year to continue with their education. This figure should be interpreted with caution because this research established that are many cases of girls that re-enter and yet they are not recorded to due to stigma. Therefore, the above figure might be an underrepresentation.

The statistics represented here are contrary with to stakeholder expectation of almost 100% of learners being re-entered after falling pregnant since the introduction of the REP in Zambia. This expectation was perceived as a step aimed at increasing education access among girls. While this is not the case, it is important to recognize that the REP has had some positive effect on the transition rate of the girl child. Data from Table 3, shows that the transition rate of girls stands at 93.20%, which is relatively a good indication that more girls reach grade 12 despite some of them falling pregnant and withdrawing from school at some point in their lives.

#### 4.4. The Extent the Re-Entry Policy is Impactful on Girls' Education in Zambia

##### 4.4.1. Enabling Environment for the Re-Entry Policy

Under this theme, this study sought to answer the question as to whether there exists an enabling environment for the REP implementation in terms of coordination, planning, financing and quality (monitoring) mechanism. In addressing this component of the policy effectiveness, KII interviews with MOGE and schools administration officials were undertaken.

##### *Ministry of General Education Officials*

One of the duties of the MOGE officials from the national, provincial and district levels is to ensure that national policies such as the REP are implemented by school. Also it is to ensure that adequate financial and technical support is available to enable effective policy implementation. During the KII, MOGE officials at national provincial level and district levels, were asked on whether there exists an enabling environment for the effective implementation of the REP, the following were the responses;

- The MOGE has explained the policy to the school administrators and managers and we also distributed the guidelines in all the schools to follow.
- The REP is a MOGE Policy and all government schools are mandated to follow it. However it has been difficult to compel the grant aided schools to implement it as they are not 100% government schools.
- A coordination mechanism exists at MOGE Head Quarters, through the Provincial Education Offices and district Education offices as well as schools for the management and implementation of the REP.
- The standards and G&C staff are the ones responsible directly for the implementation of the REP under the supervision of Director Standards and administration at HQ and provincial Education Officer-PEO at province and District Board Secretary (DEBS) at district level and school managers at school level. While the personnel do not only manager REP it's their responsibility to ensure the policy is followed by schools.
- The relevant levels in the MOGE structures during their annual planning meetings ensure they plan for the REP activities.
- The study also established that there was no specific budget line for the entry policy implementation at all levels; activities related to entry policy are carried out along with other ministry of education activities using directorate of standards budget and partners support of specific policy related initiatives. The MOGE Standards Offices' scantily conduct monitoring of the implementation of the policy.
- At national level, activities included monitoring of REP implementation at lower levels and receiving semi-annual reports on learners who have gotten pregnant and re-entered. The monitoring activities include the annual data of learners who got pregnant in a particular year and those who get readmitted after the pregnancy even though the learners are not same as those who get pregnant in a particular year mostly return to school the succeeding years due to the six months period to breast feed the child and the mostly leave school in the five to seven months of pregnancy.



## **District Guidance and Counseling Coordinators (DG&CC)**

At district level there exist the District G&C Coordinators (DG&CC) through the MOGE who are concerned with coordinating all G&C activities at district level. The District G&C Coordinators also ensure that all aspects of G&C are being implemented at school level. During KII interviews with the District G&C Coordinators the following were their responses on their role in providing an enabling environment in policy implementation;

- The DG&CC's role was to provide technical support to teachers in the schools at district level to promote the successful implementation of the REP.
- They also regard themselves as advocates of every child who falls pregnant to have an opportunity to return to school.
- The DG&CC alluded that one of the greatest challenge that learners face from re-entering back in school after falling pregnant is the negative social and cultural attitudes and norms especially in rural areas, where teenage pregnancy is high. They said that the communities and parents still feel that girls that fall pregnant despite their age are automatically licensed to get married and leave school. As such, there is need to conduct sensitization and awareness activities among parents and communities on the REP and the importance of girl child education.
- The challenge of having well trained and qualified G&C teachers in schools still remains critical and a challenge. It was learnt that although the MOGE in the recent past had made efforts to train the G&C teachers, there still remains a gap as some schools still have no trained teachers; as such quality of services is compromised. Also the burden of working as mainline teachers challenges the time required for G&C.

## ***School Administrators and Guidance and Counseling Teachers***

In order to get the actual situation that is obtaining on the enabling environment that exists in the schools for better policy implementation, school administrators, that is the head teacher, deputy head teachers and the G&C teachers were asked how the enabling Environment is provided for, for the successful implementation of the REP. The following were the responses:

- The school is aware of the REP and is implementing the policy. Whereas for the Grant Aided schools, they too are aware of the REP but re-entering girls that fall pregnant does not sit well with their core values as faith based schools, despite recognizing that every child has the right to education.
- The G&C teachers (in schools) are the ones dealing directly with learners who benefit from the policy, although both the head teacher and the deputy have agreed that, they too and other teachers are involved and interested in the successful implementation of the policy.

- The G&C teachers are mainly mandated to give details about the functionality of the policy, for instance giving leave to learners who fall pregnant and later re-enter after giving birth.

Furthermore during the FGDs with learners and G&C teachers, it was noted that locally based awareness based activities around the REP were mainly driven by NGOs Organizations such as FAWEZA, YWCA, CAMFED and RTS were cited as some of the NGOs that conduct specific activities on the REP, child marriage, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS among the topics. The school G&C teachers are working to create an enabling environment for learners to remain in school when they become pregnant and to return once they give birth and the child is old enough to be cared for by another adult.

There are safe homes which have been created by some NGOs where learners who don't have where to live can stay in. It was also interesting to note, in one of the FGDs with G&C teachers who expressed surprise to learn that two girls who attended the FGD were adolescent mothers. In making reference, she said that some girls, the moment they realize that they are expecting without mentioning, take a transfer to another school where they are not known. As such when they go to that school, they do not inform the school authorities that they are adolescent mothers. The teachers said that this non-disclosure of the fact that some of the girls are adolescent mothers hinders them from accessing help and counseling.

### ***Grant-aided or Faith-based Schools***

For grant aided or faith-based schools, it was noted that the level of implementation of the Policy is varying. It was clear that in all the government schools surveyed, the policy is being implemented. In the grant-aided schools however, the policy is recognized, but not fully implemented. During the KII, respondents recognized that grant-aided schools simply provide leave and transfers to girls that fall pregnant, but do not re-admit them.

It could therefore be deduced that it is possible that some of the girls that fall pregnant either stay home for more than 6 months and prefer to go to re-enter at another school, without disclosing that they are adolescent mothers as such the data is not captured.

In the schools where RTS project is being implemented, there is an enabling environments for adolescent mothers to return to school through the use of G&C departments and creation of Guidance and Counseling Committees which handles among other things, counseling and the REP utilization at school level. The G&C committee plans and coordinates re-entry related activities by involving the learners affected and their communities and guardians. The school follows the adolescent mother from pregnancy through to the time she is ready go on maternity leave. This has made schools become child friendly schools as through these processes; the school provides emotional support for the adolescent mothers.

The school also creates linkages of vulnerable children/adolescent mothers to the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of Community Development so that further assistance

can be provided. Through the PTA/now community-partnership boards the school arranges for the follow up visits to the residential places of the adolescent mothers. The school has a monitoring for girls who are pregnant and those adolescent mothers who have returned to school and are readmitted; through such tool they are able to report to the district and during quarterly review and staff meetings they are able to discuss their performance on REP.

### ***Learners***

The girls who were re-entered had age range and 15 to 20 years and most of them had to repeat a grade or two due to the six months they had to breast feed the babies. However in some unique cases, other girls had stayed away from school for a period between 4 to 8 years due to the fact they were prey to child marriage and only re-entered after the marriages failed. For most of the adolescent mothers, they receive some form of support from their parents or members of their family. Majority of them interviewed reported that their babies are being cared mostly by the girl's parents, grandparents and relation and most men responsible don't give any form of support to raising the children. As such this proves to be a challenge for the girls and the families especially the poorest households to provide this dual support. All the girls interviewed said that the REP is very good policy and has helped them to get back to school.

Additionally the learners interviewed said that they were encouraged to re-enter back in school due to the following main reasons;

- They have seen society role models such as the Vice President of the Republic of Zambia Ms. Inonge Wina whom they have alluded that it is because of her education that she is in that high office.
- Some girls said that they valued education as it was one of the gateway to having a bright and fulfilled future.
- Other girls that they were able to re-enter because of their parents who knew about the REP and they appreciated education as such after their daughters fell pregnant, they insisted that their children when back to school.

### ***Girls that have not Re-Entered***

KII were conducted with girls that had fallen pregnant but have not re-entered into school. The following are some of the key issues that came out during the interview;

- They said that the men that impregnated them either deny responsibility of the pregnancy or do not support them in raising the children; as such the burden of fending for the child rests with the girl and her family.
- Most respondents said that once they fall pregnant, their parents do not have anything to do with them in terms of spending money for their education. One respondent said that *'When I became pregnant, my mother told me that since I have become pregnant, I have forfeited my right to go to school.'*

- Family members and society perceive the girls that fall pregnant to be adults as such they do not deserve to be spent money on to go to school. As such they find it difficult to go back to school.
- Lack of resources due to poverty: High levels of poverty do not allow the young mothers within families to return to school, due to the various competing needs at household level. As such returning to school becomes a secondary need.
- Social pressure and discrimination: the girls said that they face a lot of discrimination in the schools and communities by virtue that they are young mothers. Some of the respondents said that both friends and community members look down on them and call them names. They are also pressured to marry as they are told that they failed in school. This they say delays them from making a decision to return to school as they are emotionally affected by the discriminatory comments made by family members, friends and community members.

It was clear from the discussion that the majority of the girls that are young mothers come from poor households and their school has now become secondary. Household poverty hinders their ability to re-enter. When asked if they would be more than willing to return to school if there was sponsorship, the girls affirmed and vowed that if given an opportunity to return to school, they would not waste it.

It therefore can be construed that one of the critical components in creating an enabling environment for the girls to re-enter back in school is the presence of educational sponsorship, more supportive communities and families which will support the young mothers to continue their education.

#### **4.4.2. Demand Side of the Re-entry Policy**

Increasing demand for the utilization of the REP, it was found out that different organizations that work on girl child education such as the FAWEZA, NGOCC, YWCA, and CAMFED among others conduct activities aimed at creating demand for the REP.

The study found that in schools with donor programs driven by local NGOs, had more available teachers in G&C who were supporting children and making schools child friendly using the all child all school and all community approach where the three work together for the benefit of the child.

Under the Read to Succeed Project, significant investment has been made under Learner Support & Services through the training of G&C Teachers and the Agents of Change to provide a range of support services on issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention, and care and support. The RTS (2014) Annual Report indicated that in all schools, AoCs spearheaded implementation strategies aimed at avoiding early pregnancy, advocating for improved community support to pregnant girls, and preventing from Gender Based Violence (GBV) among others topics. The outreach activities being done by both the AoC

and the G&C teachers can then be alluded as being able to create demand of the REP. The following citation from the report further solidifies these claims especially in the RTS project site as earlier cited that;

*“With regards to pregnancies, RTS data shows neither a significant increase nor decrease of recorded pregnancies in 2013 (0.63%) and 2014 (0.63%) school calendar. However, there is an increase in the number of girls returning back to school after being pregnant i.e. from 0.20% in 2013 to 0.66% in Term One of 2014. This could be an indication that messages about reentry policy spread out by AoC were productive.”*

In addition, RTS has spearheaded the School-Community Partnerships an expansion of PTA to support school effectiveness and girls’ education. With dedicated Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) in all districts, the project is reaching out to more community members, leading to increased participation in learning activities. Key messages during meetings continue to focus on how to stop child marriages/teenage pregnancies, fighting absenteeism, HIV prevention, supporting learners with homework and promoting the REP.

### ***Community Members/ PTA***

During the Key informant interviews the following were found to be true and critical:

- The community members interviewed were aware of the REP and agreed that it’s a good policy in support of girl’s education. They revealed that girls need sensitization that despite the policy being in place they need not get pregnant in schools.
- The PTA supports the REP as a policy for the girls who want to return to school. They work with the community leaders to ensure that girls who are pregnant return to school after giving birth.
- The study also found that there were community practices, values and belief which discourage girls from going back to school after falling pregnant. For example the belief among some communities that a man is to marry a girl he impregnates. Also the perception that when a girl despite her age, has a baby she is regarded as an adult. Such beliefs are reducing due to increased sensitization and engagement on the policy by different stakeholders.
- Parents and guardians are not resistant to the policy rather; they have proactively come forward in the schools to access the policy.
- The community had no social safety nets to support the adolescent mothers but where social cash transfer initiatives are available the adolescent mothers are put on cash transfer schemes to help them support their kids.
- In most of the schools, it was found that there were limited available community linkages with social welfare services which learners in the communities who could not afford fees can easily access so as to enable them to go back to school.

## *Learners*

During the FGD, when the girls were asked about the policy, all the girls said that they knew about the school REP and that this is a policy which gives a girl child an opportunity to return to school after falling pregnant. The girls said that the REP was good in promoting girls education and gave the following reasons that made the policy to be good:

- Girls have the right to stay in school despite falling pregnant
- It provided an opportunity to return to school after a mistake (pregnancy)
- Without the policy, girls would have suffered

They also said that the following factors encourage those girls that fall pregnant to re-enter;

- When you see other women doing fine in society you get encouraged to go back to school and get an education.
- The policy itself serves as an encouraging factor for girls to be re-admitted in school as it provides an opportunity for them to return to school after falling pregnant.
- The sensitizations and awareness activities conducted by different organizations encourage many girls who have fallen pregnant to go back to school.

Discouraging factors attributed to the demand of the policy included;

- Some girls are not aware of the REP as such they think that when they fall pregnant, that is the end of their education
- Other girls fear to be laughed at, especially if they are performing badly in school once they re-enter.
- Lack of support for child care makes some girls not re-enter
- Others feel they are old or grown up once they have a child mainly because their family members say so and begin calling them by their child's name.

When asked if there is an increased demand for learners who fall pregnant for the REP, the respondents said that demand was there, but they also indicated that most girls fear to be stigmatized, thus due to this discomfort, they leave the school and transfer to another school for fear of stigma and intimidation. But there are some girls who are not afraid, they are brave and return to re-admit at their old school.

In addition, the FGD and the KII with both learners and teachers, it was discovered about 62% of the girls that were part of the FGD that re-entered after falling pregnant did not return to re-enter in their previous school. Some of the reasons some girls advanced once asked why they did not re-enter at the same school included: feeling shy and embarrassed after getting pregnant as some of their friends laughed at them. One girl openly said, "*When I became pregnant, I lost all my friends, at my old school, the started laughing at me. Therefore I felt lost. But here at my new school friends and teachers are understanding and do not mock me.*" Other girls said that due to the fact that some faith based schools do not re-enter girls that fall pregnant, they had to go to another school after discovering that they are pregnant. Others said that due to family pressure, they had to relocate from one town to another; as

such that is where they enrolled for school. Whereas, some attitude and teasing by fellow learners may also affect the enabling environment as some re-entered learners complained of fellow learners teasing them.

#### 4.4.3. Supply side of the re-entry policy

For policy to effectively be impactful, it is important to look at the supply side in the implementation of the REP and availability of both human and technical resources to smoothly implement the policy.

All the respondents said the school places in Government schools were readily available for adolescent mothers who want to return to school. Although the schools have not reserved a specific number of places for the adolescent mothers but there was no report of an adolescent mother who was denied a school place. Whereas faith based schools (including Mission schools) do not re-admit the girls that drop out of school after falling pregnant but rather grant them a transfer to another school, where they believe they will be able to go and start a new life.

The FGD with re-entered learners undertaken, revealed that most of the girls who have re-entered after falling pregnant said that they did not fill in any form and did not disclose that they were re-entering. In cases where girls fall pregnant and teachers are aware about it, the G&C teachers together with the school administration are also readily available and support learners before taking leave to go and give birth. One of the teachers interviewed said that the girls that fall pregnant do not disclose to the teachers that they are actually expecting, rather the teachers often hear about the pregnancy from the girls' peers through ridicule and mockery. In essence, adolescent mothers before they withdraw to go on maternity leave are expected to disclose to their G&C teachers about their pregnancy, and are supposed to sign the leave forms indicating that they will go on maternity leave and they will return to school once they have delivered. Nonetheless, most girls do not disclose and eventually stop going to school once the pregnancy is visible.

There are no specific financial resources for adolescent mothers at school to support adolescent mothers in form of bursaries. The Bursary scheme that exists in most schools is targeting orphans and vulnerable children and girls that fall pregnant are not considered. Thus in most cases school officials are flexible and lenient towards adolescent mothers such that they do not chase them out of school if user fees are not paid or they fail to purchase books and uniforms needed for them to return to school. Rather they allow the learners to pay their school user fees in installments and sometimes allow learners in cloths especially in rural areas. This is one way of encouraging the learners to stay in school. There are no child friendly rooms where parents or guardians can bring the baby of an adolescent mother to breast feed so as to reduce the period of 6 months which girls take as maternity leave, as the learners said the period they stay home to breast feed is too long which makes them be a grade behind from their colleagues.



From the KII with learners it was noted that the girl's performance after re-entry is affected and sometimes they have to leave school to take their children for under five and when the children are sick, they miss school too. Although the adolescent mothers still have to brave the stigma they receive from their friends as social relations once they fall pregnant tend to fall apart. The girl's minds get divided as mother and lose concentration in school.

### ***Guidance and Counseling Teachers***

The G&C teachers provide both preventive counseling sessions as well as curative where the girls have already gotten pregnant. The study find out that schools have sessions where the G&C teachers have meetings with learners to talk about their health, pregnancies and the importance of education. The approach would differ from school to school but the rights approach included recognizing that;

- Children should be supported to grow in good health and be assertive in order for them to grow into responsible adults and contribute to national development
- Children are people with dignity. Their views should be listened to and respected in the same way as those of adults

The G&C teachers work from the realization that education is a right and is key to development, education is a must for children to realize their full potential. Thus the contribution of the RTS project, in building capacity in the G&C teachers is essential in providing an environment that empowers schools to provide good services related to the policy.

#### **4.4.4. Quality of Re-Entry Policy Implementation**

In reviewing quality issues surrounding the REP, quality policy implementation is key to the entire process. Mwansa (2011) recognizes that while there is much benefit towards the implementation of the re-entry policy, a clear recognition that implementation of the policy is far from being perfect and that there is much skepticism about the claims made for the exemplary success of the policy. In order to validate and investigate further this statement, MOGE officers and the teachers during the KII had their views about quality Implementation of the policy;

### ***MOGE Officials***

- The DESO in an interview said *“the policy is good but it is being abused by some girls, as such there is need to develop a minimum limit as to how many times a girl can re-enter.”*
- Issues of quality in terms of how the policy is being implemented at local level is very hard to determine because there is not direct funding towards activities on the policy, rather schools rely on the goodwill of NGOs who have funding for sensitizations.



- The PESO and DESO interviewed admitted that since there is no budget to support the implementation of the policy, Monitoring is always a by-the-way activity, as we are collecting data on the number of learners in school, absenteeism and level of school dropout.

### ***NGOs Representatives***

Additionally to the responses provided by the MOGE officials, NGO representative in their interview said that;

- The policy was known, however the REP guidelines were not fully understood by duty bearers especially at community level. This was alluded to due to lack of orientation to the policy guidelines thereby impacting on quality implementation. It was noted that depending on the school visited and the kind of administrator in charge, the intensity of REP implementation varied from school to school; also reluctance was seen in some administrators in accepting girls that fall pregnant, like in faith based schools.
- They also said that there lacked mechanisms through the MOGE to carry out activities aimed at enhancing quality policy implementation. Majority of what schools do towards implementation is through personal effort and the good will of the leadership in the school administration. For example they said that in schools there are no mechanisms in place for detecting pregnancies early/counseling or post counseling to girls that re-enter.

It is true from the interviews and FGD that the implementation of the REP has been done side by side with other education programs by the MOE. Schools are expected to manage and coordinate implementation efforts as well as awareness raising. This approach is difficult to fully account or measure the success of a policy which has not been fully planned and budgeted, and whose implementation is varied among the schools. For more impactful, quality and effective policy, it is important for more consistency in terms of level of implementation and the kind of activities being undertaken in various schools. Such could be done though the Ministry of Education's annual programs and budgets through the Directorate of Planning and Information.

### **4.5. Interventions under RTS towards Enhancing Access to Girl Child Education**

*Through the Learner Support and Services component, RTS has provided support towards creating a conducive environment for the learner. Focusing mainly on age-group 10-17 years, RTS also engaged the community to provide support services (enabling environment) to both learners and adults for example the REP. Support service are provided through the G&C teachers and the AoCs.*

RTS through this component the project has integrated direct learner target activities and teacher targeted activities. RTS has facilitated training, capacity building and mentorship to

the G&C Units in the schools in the project sites. Through the G&C teachers, issues of girl child education are strengthened and addressed. AoC being persons whom RTS has trained and mentored to be positive change agents in the school and community around girl child education, HIV, child marriage and teenage pregnancy.

Learners were trained as AoC and have gone ahead to conduct awareness and sensitization among the learners in the school around a particular theme.

The Learner Support & Services by RTS is essential because it helps the child to concentrate on school and learning activities without having to worry about psychosocial issues obtaining in a home or other immediate social environment. Thus RTS continued its support to schools with a view to promoting positive life skills, stable psychosocial behavior, responsible life choices and creating linkages with support institutions such as health centers, community groups, teachers and other model figures in the community. All this is essential in promoting girl child education. The notable activities that RTS has undertaken to strengthen the RP, in promoting girl child education among them include training of G&C teachers and AoC and community level awareness raising through community facilitators.

This study also took time to analyses data from RTS operational areas in terms of the pregnancy rates and re-admission rate among learners in 12 districts. Table 6 shows statistics over a period of five (5) years in RTS project areas. Majority of these areas are rural areas.

**Table 6: Pregnancy and Re-Admission in RTS Operational Districts between 2010 and 2014**

RTS Operational Districts	2010			2011			2012			2013			2014		
	Preg	Re-admit	% of Learners re-admitted	Preg	Re-admit	% of Learners re-admitted	Preg	Re-admit	% of Learners re-admitted	Preg	Re-Admit	% of Learners re-admitted	Preg	Re-admit	% of Learners re-admitted
Chipata	521	218	41.8	712	243	34.1	622	236	37.9	179	220	122.9	595	200	33.6
Lundazi	187	60	32.1	172	49	28.5	58	33	56.9	190	42	22.1	213	96	45.1
Mansa and Chembe	256	106	41.4	260	110	42.3	177	106	59.9	245	96	39.2	212	121	57.1
Mwense and Chipili	184	84	45.7	184	84	45.7	55	29	52.7	169	49	29.0	118	70	59.3
Isoka	137	51	37.2	115	28	24.3	93	40	43.0	98	38	38.8	42	26	61.9
Chinsali and Shiwang'andu	166	76	45.8	205	44	21.5	139	58	41.7	136	53	39.0	108	40	37.0
Mungwi	95	28	29.5	101	26	25.7	98	41	41.8	84	31	36.9	103	41	39.8
Mporokoso	146	36	24.7	183	30	16.4	99	32	32.3	117	28	23.9	143	62	43.4
Solwezi	508	292	57.5	477	228	47.8	374	188	50.3	580	386	66.6	613	319	52.0
Mufumbwe	210	113	53.8	207	132	63.8	165	97	58.8	197	108	54.8	223	117	52.5
Mongu	223	99	44.4	313	154	49.2	275	131	47.6	284	120	42.3	221	86	38.9
Sesheke(Mwandi & Mulobezi)	154	49	31.8	205	84	41.0	177	64	36.2	232	84	36.2	50	54	108.0
<b>Overall Data in 12 Districts</b>	<b>2787</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>3134</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>2332</b>	<b>1055</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>2511</b>	<b>1255</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>2641</b>	<b>1232</b>	<b>46.6</b>

**Source:** Data is extracted from the Educational Bulletin 2010 to 2014

From Table 6, it is clear that the number of learners falling pregnant in these areas are still raising, the number of those re-admitting back in school is steadily growing as well. In 2010 and 2011, it is clear that the overall in the 12 districts the number of girls that were readmitted back in school against those that fell pregnant was low. Overall, the average percentage of re-entry over the period of 5 years was 44.7% above the national re-admission average being at 40%. In addition, there has been an increase in re-admissions in Chipata in 2013, and 108% in 2014 in Sesheke, Mwandi and Mulobezi districts.

Additionally, data collected in the schools where RTS is operating, has indicated that positive changes are occurring as a result of the various Learner Support & Services interventions. Table 7 below has more details

**Table 7: A Comparative Analysis of Attendance Rates for Learners Attendance & Other Indicators in Some RTS Supported Schools**

ATTENDANCE RATES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS & OTHER INDICATORS IN SOME RTS SUPPORTED SCHOOLS- COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS																					
No.	Districts	2015 RATES (%)																			
		Learner Attendance Rate					Dropout Rate					Pregnancy Rate					Re-entry Rate				
		Years			Change(+/-) 2014-15	Change(+/-) 2013-15	Years			Change(+/-) 2014-15	Change(+/-) 2013-15	Years			Change(+/-) 2014-15	Change(+/-) 2013-15	Years			Change(+/-) 2014-15	Change(+/-) 2013-15
		2013	2014	2015			2013	2014	2015			2013	2014	2015			2013	2014	2015		
1	Chipata	75.39	72.56	75.61	3.05	0.22	2.69	0.49	3.09	2.6	0.4	0.27	0.32	0.89	0.57	0.62	0	0	0.58	0.58	0.58
2	Lundazi	83.74	79.94	73.26	-6.68	-10.48	1.46	1.03	3.43	2.4	1.97	0.33	0.47	0.42	-0.05	0.09	0	0.35	0.63	0.28	0.63
3	Isoka	54.43	80.15	78.35	-1.8	23.92	5.22	1.81	1.25	-0.56	-3.97	0.48	0.3	0.2	-0.1	-0.28	0.47	0.18	0.32	0.14	-0.15
4	Chinsali	64.86	77.31	77.16	-0.15	12.3	3.33	1.66	1.22	-0.44	-2.11	1.83	0.61	0.34	-0.27	-1.49	0.39	0.15	0.32	0.17	-0.07
5	Mporokoso	79	73.9	79	5.1	0	1.21	2.43	1.95	-0.48	0.74	0.42	0	0.14	0.14	-0.28	0	5.57	0.08	-5.49	0.08
6	Mungwi	82.3	62.7	77.42	14.72	-4.88	0.04	0	4.62	4.62	4.58	0	0	0.29	0.29	0.29	0	0	0.13	0.13	0.13
7	Mansa	74.38	71.56	71.88	0.32	-2.5	2.06	2.89	6.82	3.93	4.76	0.25	0.4	0.53	0.13	0.28	0.44	0.18	0.14	-0.04	-0.3
8	Mwense	61.8	82.42	80.2	-2.22	18.4	2.3	3.31	2.12	-1.19	-0.18	0.9	0.47	0.27	-0.2	-0.63	0.4	0.26	0.21	-0.05	-0.19
9	Solwezi	80.78	78	70.9	-7.1	-9.88	1.35	2.5	6.3	3.8	4.95	0.51	1.05	1.1	0.05	0.59	0.01	0.65	1.16	0.51	1.15
10	Mufumbwe	76.95	75.38	70.51	-4.87	-6.44	4.7	0.82	3.92	3.1	-0.78	2.37	1.43	1.37	-0.06	-1	0	0.05	1.25	1.2	1.25
11	Mongu	68.83	74.81	75.39	0.58	6.56	0.94	1.05	1.63	0.58	0.69	0.42	0.71	0.76	0.05	0.34	0.26	0.48	0.33	-0.15	0.07
12	Sesheke	67.25	71.67	70.85	-0.82	3.6	0.82	0.05	2.75	2.7	1.93	0.72	1.07	1.06	-0.01	0.34	0.63	0.23	0.63	0.4	0
<b>All Districts</b>		<b>72.48</b>	<b>75.03</b>	<b>75.05</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>2.18</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>1.76</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>-0.19</b>	<b>0.26</b>

Source: RTS Annual M&E database report 2015

Table 7 above shows a comparative analysis of the important education efficiency indicators such as learner attendance rate, dropout rates, pregnancy rates and re-entry rates in schools in 12 districts where RTS is operating from 2013 to 2015. Overall, the learner attendance rate improved for the period 2013 to 2015 by 2.57% showing a positive improvement in the number of learners attending school in the period. The school dropout rate between 2013 and 2015 increased by 1.08%. The pregnancy rate decreased by -0.1% and the average re-entry rate of girls that fall pregnant improved to about 0.26% of girls re-entering back in school after falling pregnant.

From statistics in tables 6 and 7, it can be noted that RTS operating in the most of the rural parts of Zambia where negative cultural and social norms towards girl child education are still high, minimal change is seeming occurring especially with regards to the community awareness activities through the G&C teachers and the AoC. Despite behavior and attitude change taking long to take effect, it can be denoted that transformation in the RTS areas is taking place, although more investment is required to see the real change.

These statistics demonstrates the effect of the work of RTS in promoting Girl Child Education in the areas it is operating. The learner services which are targeted at the learner through the AoC initiative provides not only general improvement in education, but also changes in attitudes towards education efficiency thereby impacting on the general education outcomes of the school.

Among other Learner Support service interventions that have been provided by RTS include:

- Support to G&C teachers who are providing counseling services to girls that fall pregnant and seek to go on maternity leave or re-enter in school. During the KII interviews with G&C teachers were grateful for the support they have received from RTS. Additionally, RTS has provided a standardized manual which being used by AoCs concerning how to facilitate HIV, teenage pregnancy and child marriage issues in the schools.
- The G&C teachers and the AoC (learners) have a schedule of activities they conduct at school level, thus enhancing sensitization and responsibility among learners.
- AoCs led discussions once a month using a child friendly guided curriculum and successes were noted from schools which revealed that learners have become more open to discuss any topic and to challenge each other on risk behaviors.
- AoCs conduct sessions that are mainly free, open and honest on HIV/AIDS related issues including GBV. Other topics covered include knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, alcohol and substance abuse, reentry and other policies, adolescent sexuality and development of life skills such as assertiveness, and decision-making and self-esteem.
- Also with dedicated Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) in all districts, the project is reaching out to more community members, leading to increased participation in learning activities. Key messages during meetings continue to focus on how to stop child marriages/teenage pregnancies, fighting absenteeism, HIV prevention, supporting learners with homework.

#### 4.5.1. RTS Support towards REP and Girl Child Education at National, Provincial and District Levels

The contribution of RTS in promoting girls education is not only limited to the school level, engagements have taken place at national, provincial and district levels. Efforts by RTS have been made through collaboration with the MOGE has been critical in galvanizing efforts aimed at enhancing girl child education. For instance in 2013/2014 RTS supported MOGE(then MESVTEE ) to develop and produce policy guidelines for operationalizing G&C; *Guidelines for Administration and Management of G&C in the Education Sector*, as well as follow up training of the Guidance and Counseling teachers. Furthermore, as way of operationalizing the G&C services at district and school level, RTS supported MOGE to draft a circular which directed all PEOs and DEBS to immediately begin putting systems and structures in place for the provision of G&C services to learners. The circular content is a synopsis of the contents of the policy guidelines. Additionally the following interventions were aimed at enhancing effectiveness of the REP and impacting on Girl child education;

- Since RTS project inception there has been enhanced policy engagement for example MOGE approved the development of the Communication Strategy on Teenage Pregnancy. The Communication Strategy supports the implementation of a national strategy on Early Marriages.
- Spearheaded of School-community partnerships to support school effectiveness
- Furthermore, at national level, RTS actively participated in a number of high level policy meetings and continued to provide support towards the development of policy guidelines for G&C services at all levels.

It is true that a journey is started with one step, RTS efforts is evident in the schools that it is presently operating in but also at national level where policy is being influenced for better attention to girl child education. The overall contribution and efforts of RTS through the learner support component resonates well to the increased implementation of the REP on girl child education in Zambia.



## Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

### 4.6. Conclusion

Data has shown that although in the past, the REP had been received with mixed feelings, overall, MOGE officials, school administrators, teachers and learners now know the value of the policy. From the findings and analysis presented, it can be concluded that stakeholders in the schools where RTS is providing Learner Support & Services are, to a large extent, implementing the REP despite the structural challenges that they face. Using the existing government systems and policies RTS has strengthened the schools through the G&C departments in policy implementation by actualizing activities through training and mentorship of G&C teachers, activities of AoC, community mobilization around girl-child related issues, which should have otherwise been directly driven, initiated and supported by government.

From the study findings, it is imperative to note that girls at primary school level are the majority of the victims of teenage pregnancy. Also available data show that very few of them return to school after falling pregnant. This however cannot be regarded as the only school of thought. From the FGD held with the girls re-entered, it was discovered that 62% of the girls that re-enter don't go back to their old school but re-enter at a different school. It's possible that more girls return after pregnancy but they are not captured due to the fact that they go to another school. Girls consider this approach as one of the way of dealing with stigma. Other factors include, lack of or limited information on the REP and sexual reproductive health information that would aid them to make positive and proactive decisions in their lives.

A positive environment has been created, in terms of behavior and attitude change especially among teachers (through RTS interventions) who are now more helpful and provide counseling to learners, citing the value of education and the need to delay sex among girls and boys in schools. The REP and awareness of it has reached most of the communities and is assisting adolescent mother with another chance to go to school. The study revealed that all the people talked to were aware of the REP.

With the modest contribution that RTS has made through the MOGE structure, especially at school level, the study noted that the policy implementation has been improved and the learning environment in schools has been enhanced. RTS interventions had helped the establishment of AoC and the training of G&C teachers has enhanced the impact of the policy both at lower levels of operation and the high levels. Through the trainings and provision of guidelines, the G&C teachers have correctly been implementing the REP as well as impacting the lives of the girls that fall pregnant through counseling. The ability of the teachers, the PTA and the school administration to link the girls that fall pregnant to useful networks such as the social welfare or NGOs is important in the overall impact of a girl child education through the REP. RTS contribution to REP as evidenced through their community mobilizers, sensitization campaigns and linking girls to social safety nets is helping adolescent mothers to come back to school and continue with school.

#### 4.7. Recommendations

In view of the forgoing findings, the following recommendations were made:

- The Learner Support & Services provided by RTS at school level represents one among the many feasible model that can be replicated to other schools that are not currently part of the project.
- Given the current high pregnancy rates especially at primary school level, there is need to accelerate implementation of the comprehensive sexuality education and information initiatives by Government through the school curriculum at all levels. It is hoped that this will in return empower girls especially at primary school level to delay sex for later in their lives thereby reducing the early pregnancy rates.
- The MOGE should take deliberate steps in ensuring that additional systems towards the REP especially to track girls that withdraw and re-enter at different schools and refuse to re-enter. Consideration also ought to be undertaken in terms of activities, additional resources and specific monitoring mechanisms like other ministerial polices.
- The REP, although being a government policy has seen a lot of stakeholder collaboration from NGOs. Schools through the G&C teachers are critical in spearheading school level G&C aspects such as career guidance, psychosocial counseling, REP and referrals. While almost all community sensitization and awareness activities conducted targeting parents and learners aimed at addressing attitudes and behaviors are a preserve of NGOs. Such important activities should not be left to be and solely an NGO driven agenda, whose sustainability over time may be a challenge.
- The REP alone may not be sufficient to drive a substantial increase in educational attainment among girls (adolescent mothers). Additional financial support is needed to encourage this group to return to school, help them in meeting their responsibilities as both mothers and learners, and ensure that they are able to remain in school for as long as their peers. It would be helpful if MOGE through the Social Welfare Department and perhaps the bursaries committee considers coming up with a deliberate bursary schemes and or a social cash transfer system to aid and support the girls that re-enter in school from poor households.
- MOGE should ensure that all head teachers implement a proper monitoring mechanism of screening all girls transferring into their schools. In this respect, all receiving schools should contact the school where a girl would be transferring from and specifically ask whether the girl was pregnant. A signed confirmation form should be filed by either the head teacher, senior teacher or G&C teacher.

- There is need to establish Adolescent mothers friendly schools or rooms which could be made available for adolescent mother to breast feed if the people taking care of the child are able to bring the child to school to breastfeed. This would reduce the period adolescent mother are out of school.
- There is need to strengthen the G&C committees in schools to strictly adhere to the provisions and guidelines of the policy. This is in order to eliminate delays and/or girls dropping out of school without filling out the leave forms or their parents being fully engaged. Also the committees should be able to offer counseling for girls that have re-entered so as to help them address the social challenges and stigma they face. Additionally the G&C committees should be responsible in organizing medical personnel to conduct termly pregnancy tests among girls so as to enhance early detection of pregnancy as well as provide necessary counseling and help to the affected girls. This will in the long run eliminate possibilities of girls leaving school without the knowledge of the school authorities.

## Chapter 5: Case Studies

This section presents practical/real life case studies in relation to the topic under discussion. The names referred to in this section have been changed in order to protect the identity of the informants. The experience of adolescent mothers and challenge of using Re-entry Policy to get back to school are documented in the case studies.

The documentation is about three adolescent mothers of Western Province who got pregnant while in school and are not yet re-admitted. The story was done to hear the experiences and challenges adolescent mothers face to return to school and gaps which would be needed for REP to achieve better results.

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### *Lengwe's Story*

Lengwe Mwangala (not real name) aged 17, is an adolescent mother from Western province of Zambia. She lives with her grandmother. She got pregnant at age 16 when she was in grade nine at Kanyonyo School. At the time of the interview, Lengwe's child was over six months old and she was not yet back in school. The adolescent mother was impregnated by a fellow learner from another school and the father to the child has continued with school, while the policy states that the young fathers should also be given leave from school to support the lady. Lengwe is faced with a gloomy nightmare of battling to prove the paternity of her child. Thus the school was unable to grant leave to the boy due to the fact that the argument regarding paternity of her child still stands unresolved and there are fears that if years later it is discovered that the boy was not the father of the child, he could sue the school. As such, most schools prefer counseling the boys and allowing them to continue with school while the girl is given leave.

Lengwe and her grandmother were aware of the REP. They live in a two roomed house and their means of livelihood is farming and selling vegetables and fish at the market. She knew that she needed to get back to school but faced challenges of lack of finances to buy uniforms and pay school fees. Despite the father to her child eventually accepting responsibility of her pregnancy after she gave birth, there is no support to the child and the mother. Her experience as adolescent mother included stigmatization from friends who were laughing at her and that makes her miss school at times. Days of antenatal also made her absent at school. She had to leave school at six months because she was getting tired and waking up late.

The school G&C committee and the head teacher have come to her aid and the school Parent Teachers Association PTA assisted Lengwe with school uniforms, shoes and linked her to social welfare for schools fees. She was ready to start school when school opens the next term. Lengwe dreams of becoming a teacher one day and being able to make her grandmother proud.

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### ***Story***

Martha K (not real name) is a young mother aged 22 with a four years old baby. She was in grade nine at the time she became pregnant and lives with her mother. The man who made her pregnant accepted responsibility but rarely supports her and the baby. Martha's mother supports her and the baby, and helps to take care of the child when she goes to school. Martha thanks government for the REP and the way Read to Succeed has supported the school in sensitizing the communities and learners on the REP.

“We have community workers under RTS who visit us on regular basis and ask me when I will be ready to come back to school and that makes me look forward to going back to school,” said Martha.

The G&C committee of the school helped her fill in the leave forms before she stopped going to school. She complains about the period she has to stay home and she wished the leave could be reduced to three months so that she doesn't have to repeat a year. Martha looks forward to going back to school and completing her education. She expressed thanks to the Government REP and RTS who have supported her.

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### ***Makayi's Story***

Makayi M (not real name) is a 24 years mother of an eight years old child. She has been out of school for over eight years but she now wants to enroll back in school. Makayi is physically challenged and has visual impairment which requires her to be in special education school. The RTS has been visiting her and discussing her situation. The approach being used by RTS is in line with government commitment to reduce the out of school children and to increase literacy levels in the country and among the physically challenged people. Makayi, with support from RTS supported school, has been linked to Sefula School which has children with special education needs. She has also been linked to the social welfare for support.

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### ***The Model of Learner Support & Services***

#### ***Kanyonyo School***

Mr. Nawa Kwalombota, the Head teacher at Kanyonyo Primary school, is passionate about girls' education. Kanyonyo primary school was recently upgraded with secondary grades (8 to 12) in 2014. As such, the school has been able to retain learners from the primary school level all the way through to the secondary grades. The work of RTS which started in 2012 has left lasting marks on the school culture and perspective in promoting girls' education through the REP.

Wendy (not real name) a grade 11 learner at the same school said that *“If it was not for my head teacher, I believe by now, I would have had gone back to the village in Namwala to my mother. After I fell pregnant, he followed me at my sister’s home after noticing my absence at school”*. This is a story being told by Wendy, a girl who has re-entered in school after falling pregnant. Wendy now has a new life being an adolescent mother and has a dream of being a medical doctor having re-discovered the value of education after being given an opportunity through the REP.

Primary school is one of the old schools in Mongu District of Western Province where RTS has been operating from. The school has a population of over 2,000 learners from grades 1 to 12, after it was upgraded in 2014 to a secondary school. The Head Teacher’s passion and concern for girls’ educations during discussions with learners stood out.

The RTS Project which is being implemented at the school has benefited many teachers and learners from the different interventions that have been implemented over the past four years. The school, through the leadership of the head and the deputy head teachers, has established a fully functional G&C department which is supported by the G&C committee consisting of teachers from the lower level grades to grade 12. Teachers at the school are encouraged to give motivational talks on the needs for boys and girls to delay sex as a way of preventing early pregnancy.

For those who have fallen pregnant, they are reached through the G&C teachers and the AoC who are providing support and information on how they can re-enter in school after giving birth. Since the message trickles within the nearby communities, learners are reached out whether they are coming from the Kanyoyo School or transferring from another school due to pregnancies.

Thus, Kanyoyo School, with the RTS intervention especially on Learner Support & Services, can be regarded as a model school that is open to girls who seek a second chance to education opportunity. One of the adolescent mothers, Esther aged 18, who lost a school place at her old school after falling pregnant, said that *“at my old school I was given a forced transfer at the beginning of my grade 10 term one when it was discovered that I was pregnant. My pregnancy by then had not even grown, I did not even know before the test.*

*“I was hurt and broken! My dreams of ever finishing school were shattered. I returned home shamefully as I did not know about the REP,” said Esther.* She said she stayed home for a year after giving birth until, *“one day my friend told me that girls at her school (Kanyonyo) are allowed to attend school even up to the time they are due to deliver. She encouraged me to go and seek a place there; which I did and I was immediately offered a school place, and I started school a week later. I have found the environment supportive at Kanyonyo as I am not called names and even when my child is sick or needs to go for under-five care, my teacher grants me permission. This makes school enjoyable.”*

It is evident that Kanyoyo School has taken the capacity building and support by RTS seriously. The school, despite being upgraded to a secondary school, has managed to integrate the programmes such as AoC through its secondary level. The school is always ready to receive learners even if they have been rejected by other schools. With the support from the PTA, the school has been able to support girls that have challenges returning to school and those with challenges paying their school fees by linking to them social welfare department and the FAWEZA for educational support.

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### ***Jonathan the Agent of Change***

Jonathan (not real name) is a grade 10 learner at Katima School in Sesheke District, Western Province of Zambia. Katima School is one of the schools where the USAID funded Read to Succeed Project is being implemented. Jonathan is an eloquent young man with dreams of becoming a doctor one day. He is an Agent of Change (AoC) in his school and says he likes making a difference in his school. Jonathan is friends with Sara, aged 26 years old, who stayed out of school for over 7 years. Sara says that the agents of change like Jonathan keep her want to do her best in school.

Jonathan said that as AoC in the school, we *“advise those that are pregnant and have dropped out of school to return to school. We also teach our fellow learners about HIV, how they can protect themselves against HIV. We go out in the community to sensitize people on HIV and the importance of going of back to school. We talk about abstinence. We also give talks about assertiveness, knowing about themselves, others, self-esteem and self-leadership.”*

Jonathan said that he has learnt a lot by being an AoC. The G&C teachers encourage the AoC to be kind and place value on the education of girls as well. As such, Katima School is regarded as a good school. *“Although there are some girls who do not return at Katima once they fall pregnant, the majority want to come here because of the cooperation of the teachers and the sensitization activities which the AoC conduct of the REP,”* said Jonathan.

He further said that, once reported, prefects punish the people that mock those girls who are have babies while still in school. This, therefore, shows that learners are also helping in the cooperation. Sonia, another learner at the school, further illustrates that *“being a learner at Katima is a great thing as both learners and teachers including the headmaster are concerned about your welfare and want to help.”*



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## Appendices

### Annex 1: Data Collection Tools for the Assignment of Assessing the Impact of the Re-Entry Policy on girls in Zambia

#### Re-Entered Girls

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##### To be read by the Interviewer

Creative Associates through its project Read to Succeed (RTS) is implementing a five year project aimed at improving early grade reading programme. *The project aims to improve learner performance by improving school effectiveness in such a way that schools provide the environment and services for learners to acquire essential academic skills, with a particular focus on reading. Therefore as part of the project outcomes, RTS is interested to impact on policy implementation regarding Girl Child Education.*

*You have therefore been randomly selected as one of the policy implementers, beneficiary and stakeholder to RTS to be a respondent in its **assessment of the impact of the re-entry policy on girl child education in Zambia.***

Our purpose in meeting with you today is to learn your thoughts, feelings, and experiences with regards to the impact of the REP on Girl Child Education in Zambia. Your insights will help RTS to have more focused and targeted programming and impact on girl's education.

Anything you tell us in this interview is confidential. Nothing you say will be personally attributed to you in any reports that result from this Key Informant Interview or focus group discussion. All of our reports will be written in a manner that no individual comment can be attributed to a particular person if so, names and places will be changed.

Your participation in this focus group is totally voluntary. *We hope that this questionnaire can be administered between 30 to 45 minutes.* Are you willing to answer our questions?

*If the interviewee is agreeable have them sign a separate consent form as an informant to the study*

- a. Name of district\_\_\_\_\_ b. name of school\_\_\_\_\_ c. age of learner\_\_\_\_\_ d. year she came back\_\_\_\_\_ e. grade of the learner?
1. Are you happy being back in school after a while? 1.yes 2.no
  2. How long where you out of school to care for the baby?
  3. How was the experience?
  4. Was it easy to come back to school after being a young mother
  5. What were the challenges you faced
  6. Is the school environment well coming for young mothers?
  7. What do your fellow learners say about you?
  8. Are teachers supportive to you in school?
  9. If yes in what ways
  10. Is your child still alive?

11. Who remains with your baby while you are at school?
12. Are there organizations supporting u with child
13. Has RTS supported you in any way
14. Did you repeat any grade when you came back
15. Did that affect you seeing your friends where in higher grade
16. Are you parents supportive of your coming back?
17. How does the community look at you as a young mothers
18. Do you think there practices and beliefs in our community which discourages learners not to come back after

## **Annex 2 Annex 1: Data Collection Tools for the Assignment of Assessing the Impact of the Re-Entry Policy on girls in Zambia- (for MOE staff/officials, PEOs, DEBs and School Administration)**

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### **To be read by the Interviewer**

Creative Associates through its project Read to Succeed is implementing a five year project aimed at improving early grade reading programme. The project aims to improve learner performance by improving school effectiveness in such a way that schools provide the environment and services for learners to acquire essential academic skills, with a particular focus on reading. Therefore as part of the project outcomes, RTS is interested to impact on policy implementation regarding Girl Child Education.

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Our purpose in meeting with you today is to learn your thoughts, feelings, and experiences with regards to the impact of the REP on Girl Child Education in Zambia. Your insights will help RTS to have more focused and targeted programming and impact on girl's education.

Anything you tell us in this interview is confidential. Nothing you say will be personally attributed to you in any reports that result from this Key Informant Interview or focus group discussion. All of our reports will be written in a manner that no individual comment can be attributed to a particular person if so, names and places will be changed.

Your participation in this focus group is totally voluntary. We hope that this questionnaire can be administered between 30 to 45 minutes. Are you willing to answer our questions?

*If the interviewee is agreeable have them sign a separate consent form as an informant to the study*

### **1. Background Questions**

- a. Province..... b. District..... c. school name:  
d. Name of respondent..... e. Position\_\_\_\_\_ f. period in the position.....

### **Main questions**

2. With your position are you directly or indirectly involved in the implementation or administration of the re-entry Policy?  
1. Yes 2. No
3. If yes how are you in involved?

4. In your organizational setup is there a person/position responsible for coordination the implementation of the re-entry policy at national, province, district and schools levels? 1. Yes 2. No

If yes what are their titles/positions at each level?

1. National \_\_\_\_\_
2. Provincial \_\_\_\_\_
3. District \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 School \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Others specify \_\_\_\_\_

If No, through what structure/position/title has the policy being administered or implemented through.

5. How is the planning of the implementation of the re-entry policy conducted?
6. Is there a policy strategy / budget allocation specific for implementation of re-entry policy at your level? National, province, district and school?
  - a. If yes please provide details of the strategy or plan or action and/or budget amounts and are these adequate? Explain.
  - b. If No, how do you carry out re-entry policy implementation without financial resources?
7. How are activities related to re-entry policy carried out at lower level?
8. Is there legal/legislative act for the policy?
9. Which act of parliament does the re-entry policy come from?
10. Is the legal backing adequate for smooth implementation of the re-entry policy?
11. If no what are the gaps?
12. Are there cultural beliefs and practices which stands in the implementation of re-entry policy?
13. If yes what are those?
14. What are initiatives being carried out to deal with those beliefs and practices





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