

“When Children have Children” – a documentary by the Civil Society Scaling up Nutrition.

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In Zambia today, teenage pregnancies are a major concern with an average of 17, 600 young girls dropping out of school every year due to teenage pregnancy. “When Children have Children” is a collaborative effort between the Zambia Civil Society Scaling up Nutrition Alliance (CSOSUN) and the Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation (ZNBC). It is an insightful documentary that showcases the vicious cycle of Malnutrition made worse by adolescent pregnancies.

Preliminary findings of the 2013/2014 Zambia Demographic Health Survey report show that 40% of children below five years are stunted, while six percent (6%) are acutely malnourished, with the prevalence for underweight being 15%. Currently Malnutrition underlies up to 52% of all under-five deaths while the rates of micronutrient deficiencies are also high. The documentary was shot in Samfya District, Luapula Province in Northern Zambia. Samfya is one of the hardest hit districts with Malnutrition in Zambia with stunting rates at 49%. Furthermore, every year nearly 300 child deaths can be traced back to Malnutrition in the district.

The documentary brings to light the damaging consequences of Malnutrition seen through the eyes of a teenage mother and two malnourished twins. The documentary is being used as a sensitization tool on nutrition from the aspect of Sexual and Reproductive Health specifically targeting teenage pregnancies and its impact on the nutrition of children. It aired on the Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation (ZNBC) first on October 16th 2014, at prime time (18:05 – 18:30hrs) and re-televised on 24th October 2015 at a time Zambia marked 50 years of independence.

The documentary has been well received by the general public and partners alike. During his speech at the Nutrition forum held on 23rd December 2014, Chief Mwansakombe of Samfya District in Luapula Province (where the footage for the documentary was shot) expressed his appreciation over its airing, highlighting that this drew national attention to the problem

being faced by those in Samfya. The traditional leader remarked that the documentary is a strong tool for raising awareness and it has given encouragement to the people of Samfya to strengthen their efforts in addressing the problem knowing that the nation at large empathized and are supporting them. You can watch the documentary on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21TPL4uAiqg>