

PRESS RELEASE

RECOMMENDATIONS BY NON-STATE ACTORS RAISES GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE FOR CHILDREN

A BOOST TO NON-STATE ACTORS' QUEST TO END INEQUALITY

Kitwe, Zambia, 16 June 2019 - There is a growing consideration of children in budget expenditure in some African countries. This has been as a result of positive response to recommendations by Non-State Actors derived from declarations endorsed by heads of states and governments to realise child rights through considerable budgetary allocations. This is according to a study conducted by Tax Justice Network Africa with the support of Save the Children in three African countries. The study that focused on government expenditure on children in Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia showed that there is a deliberate effort by the three governments to measure up to the recommendations set by the NSAs.

The vision by the Non-State Actors (NSAs) on investment on children particularly Health, Education and Agriculture is crystal clear. It is feasible because the resources are available. Heads of state and governments are also aware of the recommendations as they endorsed them. The declarations that the African governments subscribe to are;

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) that came into effect in 1990
- The African Charter on Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC) that was adopted in 1990
- The 2000 Abuja Declaration, where 189 heads of state adopted the Millennium Declaration designed to improve social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries by 2015
- The Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action adopted in Korean, 2015
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Agenda 2040
- Maputo & Dakar Commitments which was endorsed by heads of states and government in July, 2003.

According to the Maputo and Dakar Declarations [Click here](#), governments committed to increase budget expenditure for Health (15%), Education (15%) and Agriculture (10%) of the national budget to realise child rights. If this is implemented, it would translate to a healthy and informed citizenry.

The government of Uganda has prioritised agriculture among other sectors. It also awarded the education sector almost a quarter of the national budget with a lion's share going to primary schools. The state of social services also grew by 10% in ten years.

In Tanzania, the state party improved the budget allocations for children and it was ranked as the first country in Africa to allocate budgets for children in 2010. It is however worth noting that, Tanzania had not factored in pre-primary education in its budget expenditure by 2010.

In a report reviewed in 2015, Zambia developed the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) succeeded by the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) with provisions for the inclusion of adequate resources for children. Though financially hard pressed, there has been a nominal increase on the health budget, there has also been an allocation of funds for programmes relevant to child welfare. There has also been a gradual increase on budget for the education sector from 16.1% in 2006 to an all record high of 19.9% in 2010.

Were it not that revenue that could be used to invest in children related activities was lost due to inappropriate tax systems, Africa could be a chapter ahead of this narrative. For instance, in Zambia, approximately US\$1.919 billion was lost between 2010 and 2012 due to IFFs which was more than 2.7 times more than the country spent on education and health combined in 2011, estimated at nine per cent (9%) of the country's total GDP. Such losses ultimately result in governments collecting insufficient revenue to advance investments in children.

“Such unfortunate eventualities are the push behind TJNA's endeavours to challenge harmful tax policies and practices that on one hand facilitate illicit resource outflows and on the other hand favour the wealthy while aggravating perpetuating inequality” said Riva Jalipa, a Policy Lead at TJNA.

Endorsement of the declarations is not only a sign of good will by governments but also a confirmation that they are practical and achievable. The NSAs should therefore not relent in pursuing governments to make what they endorsed real and end inequality.

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