Child Friendly budgeting key to attainment of children's rights

Child Friendly Budgeting Initiative (CFBI) is a fairly new concept in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC) adopted this concept in order to prioritize the needs of children. The Child Friendly Budgeting Initiative (CFBI) was launched in 2014. ZNCWC has led the development of the initiative and provided technical assistance and training to other CSOs on child friendly budgeting so that they can apply the concept in their programmes and activities. There have been several programmes and activities under the Child Friendly Budgeting Initiative (CFBI) which have been implemented and promoted, respected and fulfilled. Since then ZNCWC has partnered with other agencies and CSOs under the Child Friendly Budgeting Initiative (CFBI) and fostered the development of child friendly budgeting. However, child rights advocates still have a lot of work to do to ensure that child friendly budgeting programmes are in place and that they are effectively implemented. In order to ensure the progressive realization of children's rights, child friendly budgeting is an essential practice. Firstly, a budget should be adequate. The amount of money that is budgeted should be sufficient to meet the basic needs of children. Secondly, the budget should prioritize the spending on children by ensuring that the bulk of budget is allocated to sectors that affect children. Thirdly, the budget should check if the needs of children are taken into consideration. Fourthly, the budget must be equitable. Children should be provided with resources that are available across all geographic locations so as to ensure that all children have access to the services provided. Lastly, the budget should be effective with child representatives monitoring the execution of projects. This allows children to be actively participating and contributing in the decision-making process. In order to make sure that money allocated to children's issues is utilized effectively, the budget should be accountable. Thus child friendly budgeting can be seen as the practice of allocating adequate financial resources to sectors of the economy that are of direct and indirect benefit to children, directly and indirectly. It is budgeting that ensures that the best interests of children are maintained in decision making processes. There is the demographic imperative argument. In Africa children make up a significant portion of the population, children should be provided with platforms to articulate their views. As such, being a key rights holder, children should be the core of children rights advocacy activities. Inadequate social investment and high levels of inequality and poverty undermine children's rights. Investment in children can strengthen the social contract between citizens and their governments, resulting in stable political environment. By ensuring that the budget is allocable to sectors that affect children, it is budgeting that ensures the best interests of children are maintained in decision making processes. For example, an analysis of the 2015 national budget led to the identification of priority areas for the 2018 National Budget. These priority areas include: education, health, poverty reduction and prevention of violence and exploitation, and women and children's rights. There is the economic argument. When national budgets are allocated to sectors that affect children, it is budgeting that ensures the best interests of children are maintained in decision making processes. It is budgeting that ensures that children's rights are protected and promoted. There is the political argument. Child sensitive local and national budgeting will help popularize the concept for it to be used at all levels. Working with other partners such as The Regional Network of the Children and Young People Trust (CRNSA) which is a regional network for national child rights networks in southern Africa, investment in children can improve children's rights outcomes. Working with other partners such as The Regional Network of the Children and Young People Trust (CRNSA) which is a regional network for national child rights networks in southern Africa, investment in children can improve children's rights outcomes. Inadequate social investment and high levels of inequality and poverty undermine children's rights. Investment in children can strengthen the social contract between citizens and their governments, resulting in stable political environment. For example, an analysis of the 2015 national budget led to the identification of priority areas for the 2018 National Budget. 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