



Girl Child Network

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In Touch Newsflash July~October 2006

Keeping in touch with funding partners, friends, board and supporters.

Chief Writer: Robinson Tafadzwa Chikowero

Editor: Hazviperi Betty Makoni (Director)

The Girl Child Network star continues to shine and so brightly it does in a socially, economically and even politically dark milieu. GCN has never allowed all the challenges it has faced be they of social, economic or political nature to be a stumbling block as it continues to march towards the empowerment and development of the girl child and the eradication of child sexual abuse, retrogressive and harmful cultural and religious practices. GCN has won coveted awards, received nominations and has been widely recognised as a force to reckon with in the fight against the vulnerability of girls to HIV/AIDS through child participation and empowerment of the girl child.

GCN's friends and funding partners have stood by the organisation through thick and thin and this has only spurred the organisation to scale greater heights and live by its motto-the sky is the limit. This has also seen GCN renewing its agreements with funding partners and courted others to add on to its funding base. This has also seen the organisation increasing its beneficiary base and as it executes more and more programmes that are geared towards ameliorating the plight of the girl child and the community she lives in.

As this year's curtain is about to come down GCN, through this "In Touch Newsflash", is honoured to give an account of the road we have traversed from July to October 2006. The major highlight of the past four months has been the historic inaugural UN Red Ribbon Award GCN won at the XVI International AIDS Conference held in Toronto, Canada. To cap a fine year GCN has already earmarked a huge celebration in collaboration with the local UNDP office on the 1st of December 2006 that coincidentally is the World AIDS day.

News In Brief

- ☒ THE major highlight of the past four months was the participation of Girl Child Network at the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto where the organisation was ably represented by the Director, Ms Betty Makoni and wrote yet another piece of history by

scooping the inaugural Award for addressing gender issues that fuel the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Also representing GCN was GCN Community Ambassador, Shadreck Taona Gwashavanhu and Silence Mazunga a Girl Child HIV/AIDS activist. On her return scores of GCN staff and networking friends thronged the Harare International Airport to welcome her amid song, dance and ululation. **(Also see a special article on Toronto 2006 below)**

- ☒ GCN held a Strategic Planning Workshop from the 29th–30th June 2006 that was bankrolled by Oxfam NOVIB and Newfield Foundation and facilitated by Development Consultant, Unity Chari. This saw the organisation coming up with a Strategic Plan Document for 2006–2009 that defines the organisation's direction for the next three years. GCN has incorporated new strategies and programs to suit the changing operating environment, changing needs of beneficiaries and implementing strategies of our key stakeholders. For the organisation to be effective and innovative in delivering its empowerment programmes GCN has had programmatic and operational elements being either introduced or changed. GCN considers the changes critical in that they are responsive to the trends that either contribute to the development of the girl child or hinder her development.
- ☒ ANDREAS Lonn and Paul Bolgrein from Sweden representing the World Children Prize for the Rights of Children visited GCN and took the opportunity to interview Betty Makoni on her life and work as the Director of an internationally venerated grassroots organisation. They also managed to get on the ground experience of the work GCN does through visits to 3 girls clubs, talking to girls at the Chitsotso Girls Empowerment Village in Rusape and attending club launches at Chinyadza and Chikumbu Primary in Rusape.
- ☒ CANADIAN Tara Doolan from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law spent time with GCN as an intern in the organisation's Advocacy and Lobby Program. Some of the major highlights of her stay included assisting the organisation in crafting the 2006-2009 Strategic Plan Document. She also worked on refining the Child Sexual Offences Bill that is the brainchild of Girl Child Network.
- ☒ GCN was privileged to host the Asian Diplomatic Spouses in July who got the opportunity to learn more about GCN and its beneficiaries. After meeting members of staff and beneficiaries the Group donated goodies that included mealie meal, clothes and sanitary ware to the organisation's Girl Empowerment Villages.
- ☒ THE Royal Netherlands Embassy funded a debriefing session for 30 OVC aged between 6 and 10 years who were mobilised by Girl Child Network' Community Development and Empowerment Program. The OVC attended the party at the Embassy Offices on the 27th of August 2006.
- ☒ FROM the 8th–10th October 2006 the Girl Child Network Director participated at the Women's Roundtable meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting sought to discuss issues affecting women in the SADC region and was organised by the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA)
- ☒ GCN organised and hosted the Zimbabwe edition of the International Rural Women's Day Commemoration from the 14th–the 15th of October at its Chitsotso Girls Empowerment Village in Rusape. At a time when the Domestic Violence Bill has invited so much debate the event provided an opportune time to reach out to the rural women and educate them on the contentious issue of domestic violence and how the Bill would, if passed into law, protect them and their spouses from the scourge of domestic violence.

- ☒ DENISE Parmentier (Programme Officer) and Monique van Zijl (Assistant Programme Officer) from NOVIB one of GCN's biggest funding partners came to undertake the Risk and Opportunity Appraisal toolbox that is being used by NOVIB to assess partners for funding. There was a two day session that saw GCN and the NOVIB team going through the possible risk and opportunities that are either setbacks or incentives for further partnership and the achievement of the proposed project outcomes.

XVI International AIDS Conference Toronto 2006 Special

GCN Red Ribbon Award Marks Watershed for Girls.

The XVI International AIDS Conference that attracted nearly 25 000 people from 170 countries to Toronto from the 14th to the 17th of August came and went but not without leaving an indelible mark on the fight against the dynamics and dimensions HIV and AIDS. Crucially girls' education and gender equality were recognised as essential to tackling the epidemic. Ministers from 20 countries and leaders representing development partners, civil society, networks of women living with HIV, faith based groups and the business community agreed in a high level session on leadership that it is "time to deliver for girls and women". In a separate special conference session "leadership in Girls' Education", participants argued that getting more girls into school and empowering them through education is one of the best ways of protecting them from HIV and called on national governments to honor their commitments to universal education goals and provide long term funding for education

Girl Child Network (GCN), made history by scooping the inaugural US\$20 000.00 award for **Addressing gender inequalities that fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic**. The architect of this victory GCN Founder and Director, Ms Betty Makoni was honoured to receive the coveted award presented by the Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway. Betty attended the Conference alongside Shadreck Taona Gwashavanhu, GCN's Community Ambassador and Silence Mazunga, child activist around issues of HIV/AIDS.

The conference was a worthwhile avenue for GCN to explore and learn from other initiatives like those promoting HIV/AIDS prevention and the one in Zambia providing support to children orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable children. GCN got another lifetime opportunity to present its model-the girl child empowerment strategy that has been a source of hope for the girl child so much so that there have been widespread calls for its replication beyond Zimbabwe.

While the HIV and AIDS pandemic has left a trail of destruction that has created fertile ground for the increased vulnerability of girls the award has immensely contributed to the renewed hope in the battle against the pandemic and its impact on girls in Zimbabwe. Activities around empowering the girl child to effectively respond to the impact of the scourge have increased and GCN has ensured augmented child participation in this regard. Girls and communities now have increased confidence in GCN resulting for surpassing international standards in fighting HIV/AIDS and for them this guarantees long lasting high quality services. This has seen an increased number of girls and women approaching the organisation for assistance.

Red Ribbon Congratulatory Messages

The historic Red Ribbon Award that GCN scooped in Toronto Canada was received with a sense of unity, appreciation and sisterhood and brotherhood as people generally agreed that it was not a GCN victory but a victory for Zimbabwe, people working towards alleviating the impact of the HIV/AIDS and the girls worldwide as sharing the GCN model benefited the participants and the communities they represented. Bill Sparks now arguably the most outstanding GCN Ambassador in Canada first broke the news to wide array of his networks and wrote the following:

*At 10.30 pm august 16th Toronto Canada time, her royal highness crown princes Mette-Marit of Norway announced at the UNDP red ribbons' award dinner that the girl child network of Zimbabwe had won the first ever **Red Ribbon award for addressing gender inequities that fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic**. Accepting the award for the Girl Child Network were Founder and Director Betty Makoni, long-time GCN supporter Taona Shadreck Gwashavanhu and 17-year-old girls club member silence Mazunga. Please join all friends of betty and GCN by passing on this message and wishing congratulations to betty, Shadreck and silence, the dedicated staff of GCN, the hundreds of teacher coaches in the GCN network that assist the over 300 girls clubs and to the almost 20,000 girls that belong to GCN girls' clubs. We salute you on this greatest of world achievements in the battle against HIV/AIDS and the struggle for girl child rights around the world! -Bill Sparks, Toronto, Canada*

Dear Friends

Girl Child Network (GCN) is proud to congratulate her honour the founder and director of GCN Muzvare Betty Hazviperi Makoni, together with the long-time GCN supporter Taona Shadreck Gwashavanhu and a 17 year old girls club member Silence Mazunga, for raising so high the GCN flag on the international forum by winning the first ever UN Red Ribbon Award in Toronto, Canada on 16 august 2006. Sincere compliments are conveyed to the team for the powerful work premised on real empowerment. We congratulate all other stakeholders and especially the girls who are at the centre stage in all GCN activities for the unwavering support and commitment to the cause of GCN. We feel proud to be part of this unique organisation- From GCN Staff

Dear Muzvare Betty

Makorokoto, Amhlope, congratulation. We are very happy for you and the organisation for winning the Prize-From GCN Hwange Staff

DCI-Canada is proud to be associated with Betty and with the work of the Girl Child Network. We congratulate Taona Shadreck Gwashavanhu and Silence Mazunga and the whole network for the powerful work they have been doing and we look forward to meeting Betty at Agnes's before she returns-Agnes Samler, President and Les Horne, Executive Director

Dear Bill, Betty, Taona and Silence, all the staff of GCN and Girl Child Clubs and Coordinators. I had no doubt you would win!! Congratulations all. -Denise Parmentier (Oxfam Novib)

Netherlands

Dear Betty, GCN Girls and all the hardworking staff, families and communities.

Congratulations from Firelight Foundation and from an admirer of Girl Child Network from the start! You are amazing, inspiring and wonderful girls who are changing the world through your courageous work. Thank you. This is a special moment to celebrate. I send you a thousand songs of courage, hope and love. Keep up the great work! -Jen Astone (Firelight Foundation)

Dear Betty and all the Staff and Girls of GCN

Many, many congratulations. We are very proud to be associated with you. We know what incredible dedication and commitment you give to your work, and this award is very well deserved. I hope it brings a great deal of attention to GCN, more resources and support, and an international profile that gives you some protection in Zimbabwe-Sarah Dotlich IDEX.

On behalf of everyone at The Teresa Group in Toronto, Canada please accept our congratulations for your well-deserved Red Ribbon Award. It was our great pleasure to meet you at the Envisioning the Future Symposium and find out more about your organization through your presentation on the Girl Child Network. What a wonderful organization you and your team have developed and what a difference you are making in the lives of so many young women. I had the great pleasure of listening to the Girl Child Network CD this past weekend and was truly inspired by the wonderful voices. Please convey our appreciation to everyone at the Girl Child Network for such amazing work. - Karen Vance-Wallace, Executive Director.

We congratulate GCN on wining the ribbon award and we wish you to continue with the good work of emancipating girls under duress in Zimbabwe and the region at large. You make us proud. - Dialogue Kubvoruno, Gender and HIV/AIDS Coordinator, Oxfam GB (Zimbabwe)

I just wanted to say congratulations on winning this prestigious award. You have really worked hard to deserve it and I'm happy for you. Keep up the great work! -Memo Bandera

My hearty congratulations to Betty Makoni and the staff at GCN. Keep the flame burning. Wish you all the best in future-Sifelani Tsiko-The Herald

*Congratulations are in order for Ms Betty Makoni and the Girl Child Network for winning **THE FIRST EVER RED RIBBON AWARD FOR ADDRESSING GENDER INEQUITIES THAT FUEL THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC**. It is with unreserved and profound admiration that the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) congratulates the Girl Child Network (GCN) on the occasion of winning the first ever **UN Red Ribbon Award for addressing Gender inequities that fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic**. We believe that this award bears witness to the efforts of the GCN in fighting for child rights in Zimbabwe and beyond. It is our view and indeed that of the GCN that Child Rights occupy critical space in the fight for a just society that respects human rights. ZLHR takes this opportunity to wish the GCN well in their work and towards a vision for a just society. "The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision on what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding, go out and meet it"- Tinashe Mundawarara, Communications Officer, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.*

Congratulations on the Norwegian award Betty - you are a real ray of sunshine and beacon of light to continue doing what you are doing given the constraints you are faced with. -Marcia Davids. (WARM member)

Greetings from (Urgent Action Fund for Women) UAF-Africa. On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Fund I would like to congratulate you on your recent award of the United Nations Development Program Red Ribbon for addressing the relationship between gender inequities and HIV/AIDS prevention in Zimbabwe.

We are proud to be associated with the Girl Child Network and would like to commend you on the commitment to carry out this work even when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges. – Vicky

Betty: Makorokoto well done. You have done great and the Red Ribbon Award is testimony to this. I wish the very best to you and your staff- Tsitsi Dzinavane (CIDA)

The Project Grants Check

This section of the newsflash will serve to update GCN board, friends, the girls and funding partners on developments related to GCN's project grants. This month we will focus on the approved and renewed grants after GCN submitted project proposals to current and potential funding partners over the last four months.

- ☒ GCN had its grant renewal project proposals approved by the American Jewish World Service for the period up to December 2007. This will cater for activities and administrative issues at Chihota Girls Empowerment Village and surrounding areas focusing on *Girl Child Economic Empowerment Through Self Help and Humanitarian Assistance*.
- ☒ Egmont Trust has also renewed its grant assistance to GCN on *HIV and AIDS Prevention, Mitigation and Support for the girl child in Mutasa District, Zimbabwe*. The project cycle runs from October 2006~September 2008.
- ☒ GCN entered into a six-month partnership with Save the Children UK under the latter's Central Emergency Relief Fund. This has seen GCN implementing the Capacity Building of Children and Communities Internally Displaced in Chitungwiza program.
- ☒ GCN is on the verge of clinching another partnership agreement with the European Union. The project will be aimed at popularizing instruments that provide, promote and protect children's rights. Through the project GCN will among other things simplify, translate, repackage and distribute international and domestic legal statutes that governs the rights of children and will also be involved in awareness raising campaigns on children's rights and rehabilitation of survivors of practices that violate children's rights in communities.
- ☒ GCN also submitted a proposal to UNICEF on the National Action Plan on Orphaned and Vulnerable Children, which is going through review. GCN will keep you updated on the developments related to the Proposal

- ☒ GCN staff held a meeting with a two-member team from CIDA's GESP fund that sought to review the last project partnership between GCN. The project was targeted at addressing gender issues as they affected the girl child and also ensuring that communities understood the need to uplift the position of the girl child in the society through gender quality and equity. Plans are currently underway to ensure that GCN submits another project proposal for further CIDA funding support for the *Program of action on issues affecting the girl child in Zimbabwe*.
- ☒ The project cycles of projects funded by Firelight Foundation and Newfield Foundation are coming to any end and GCN is in the process of submitting regrant proposals to the two funding partners for continued funding.

Programs Update

Advocacy and Lobby Program

The Advocacy and Lobby department was involved in a lot of activities, which include the vigorous lobbying for the Domestic violence bill and awareness raising on harmful cultural practices in the areas of Chiweshe and farming communities of Beatrice. With the aim of improving the sensitivity of traditional and religious practices in conformity with regional and international statutes the program followed up on a case of a girl aged 14 years who died whilst a member of the Johane Masowe apostolic church was exorcising her of evil spirits. GCN took advantage of the case follow up and addressed 300 church members of the apostolic faith church and sensitized them on harmful and religious practices that have violated girl' rights.

The department was involved in networking meetings and workshops and saw the organisation participating in the Human Rights Conference hosted by National Association of Non Governmental Organisation (NANGO) and a Women in health workshop organised by National Association of Non Governmental Organisation (NANGO). Also as a member of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty GCN attended the GCAP Briefing for the Task Force arranged by MWENGO Regional Organisation Coordinating GCAP Activities.

The department also attended a 16 Days of Activism meeting that was convened by the Ministry of Gender in collaboration with Women's Coalition and UNIFEM. This was aimed at coming up with activities to commemorate 16 days of activism and to link activities conducted during the 16 days of activism to the national processes such as the Domestic Violence bill. This year's world theme is "16 days for 16 years" while the Zimbabwean theme is "Change attitudes and practices to outlaw domestic violence"

Girls At Risk Support Program

The major highlights of the program for the past four months has been the payment of school fees, attending court cases and offering humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries from poor and disadvantaged households. The humanitarian assistance included provision of stationery, food, subsistence and medication. As such the Program managed to attend to 14 court cases in the past

four months and paid school fees for 1 476 beneficiaries and reached out to 300 girls with humanitarian assistance.

The GARS Program also undertook activities under the UNICEF funded “Reunification and Reintegration of Children living on the streets” project from July 2004 to September 2006. The activities undertaken and covered in the report submitted included:

- ☒ Provision of temporary shelter and basic needs to girls in the organisation 's three Girls Empowerment Villages (Chitsotso Girls Empowerment, Chihota Girls Empowerment and Mwemba Girls Empowerment Villages)
- ☒ Reinstatement and retention of girls into school
- ☒ Visits to families prior to reunification
- ☒ Reunification preparatory meetings with community members, local leaders and other stakeholders
- ☒ Life Skills and Reproductive Health training
- ☒ Monitoring and assessing of girls in reunified families

This saw the organisation reaching out to 65 in the past four months under this project who were provided with temporary shelter and basic needs at the organisation's Girls Empowerment Villages. 91 girls were reinstated and retained in school through the provision of school fees, stationery and other educational needs. On the other hand 16 girls were reunified with their families and communities and 3 workshops on life skills and reproductive health training were undertaken. 3 Reunification Preparatory Meetings were held with Social Welfare officials, local leaders and community members. 8 monitoring and assessment visits were carried out on reunified girls, their families and communities.

Girls Empowerment Clubs Program

Club Coordinators Cluster/Area Meetings

Area Coordinators were allocated funds to hold cluster/area meetings in their respective area of operation and managed to hold nine areas out of twelve. The Area meetings targeted mostly Club Coordinators and their and their Assistants. Girls National Executive Committee members also participated in some area meetings to ensure the Club Leadership Committee is equally equipped with skills to effectively coordinate girls' Clubs as a back up system to Club Coordinators. The meetings also provided a platform for Club Coordinators to share best practices on club management. Club Coordinators and Club member's needs were also identified during these Area meetings. Of great importance was the opportunity to make reviews of notable successes made and challenges faced by both Club Coordinators and Area Coordinators in their endeavour to address issues that hamper the development of girls in their respective areas.

Area Coordinator Train the Trainer Workshop

The Girls Empowerment Clubs Program also conducted a train the trainer workshop on the 13th of September 2006, which was meant to capacitate Area Coordinators and new club coordinators to effectively manage GCN club activities. Club Coordinators were expected to impart knowledge gained to girls in their respective clubs. The training workshop also assisted in the identification of Area/Club Coordinators' training needs, highlighted challenges they face when they report

cases of child sexual abuse. Some of them demand urgent intervention from the organisation as their lives are at risk.

Club Launches

Four clubs were successfully launched in September in Mhondoro, Gokwe, Gweru and Rusape. The Director used the Club Launch platforms to sensitise the community on the implications of recently introduced domestic statutory instruments that are geared towards protecting girls and women. These are the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act and the Domestic Violence Bill that is still being debated in Parliament. She highlighted some of the practices that the Act and the Bill seek to address such as pledging of girls for purposes of appeasing spirits, abduction, child marriages, forced marriages, forced wife inheritance and other harmful cultural practices that degrade girls and women. The Club members also exhibited indicators of empowerment and enjoyed amazing support from their parents and guardians. This was most evident at the club launch in Rusape.

Information Documentation and Dissemination

Material production

The Information Documentation and Dissemination Program produced an HIV brochure and the quarterly newsflash for distribution to the 500 girls clubs in the 35-targeted areas of operation to increase their awareness on HIV/AIDS issues. In collaboration with the Advocacy and Lobby Program the department also produced an empowerment kit aimed at equipping all the girls in the girls clubs with skills on how to deal with the problems and challenges they face in their day-to-day lives. The girl's empowerment kit will be distributed to all girls clubs in the 35 areas of operation. The kit comprises the strategic plan document, brochures on anti trafficking, HIV/AIDS, brochure on the rights of the child, Post Exposure Prophylaxis, the African Charter on the Rights, domestic violence, girls needs assessment form and a flyer on how to start and manage girls clubs.

Networking, workshops and meetings

GCN successfully exhibited at the Harare Agricultural Show from the 28th of August to the 2nd of September under the National AIDS Council banner along with other organizations. Many people were interested in our stand and we managed to reach out to more people than we expected. A total of 100 copies of the GCN In retrospect, HIV/AIDS flyers, 600 GCN brochures, three GCN posters, 800 GCN warning flyers and brochures were reproduced as promotional materials at the Harare Agricultural Show.

On the other hand the organisation through the GCN Director participated in 3 of ZTV's Mai Chisamba shows on issues affecting the development of the girl child that is, forced and early marriages, gender equity and some harmful cultural practices that impart negatively on the girl child like Chiramu. Another show covered issues related to protection of children during school holidays when they are sent off to relatives' houses for the holidays.

GCN also got the opportunity to reach out to a large audience through a recording at FEBA on the 6th of September that airs its programs through Spot FM. Another opportunity for GCN to reach out to more people through radio was availed through taking part in the Signs of Hope program

that is aired weekly. The department also attended the launch of the Interaction class of 2006, which was hosted by the British Council at the Miekles Hotel on the 12th of September.

GCN attended the launch of The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation short film on the 13th of September. The film, entitled "Ndizvo Zvandiri" (That is what I am) is about PPTCT and its social and medical concerns in our local setting. The guest of honour was the Minister of Health and Child Welfare Dr. David Parirenyatwa.

The department also participated in the Domestic Violence Bill hearing which was held on the 21st of September where domestic violence survivors left many people astonished after chronicling their life stories through testimonies.

Community Development and Empowerment

Home Visits

In August 2006 the CDEP carried out home visits in Zengeza, St Mary's, Seke and surrounding areas to verify the eligibility of the registered potential beneficiaries non-food items to the Save the Children UK selection criteria. Focus Group Leaders accompanied the GCN team in the process of beneficiary verification.

Anti- Human Trafficking

The Community Development and Empowerment program officially launched the US Embassy bankrolled anti human trafficking investigations on the 5th of August 2006. The Private Investigation team has already visited Chipinge, Beitbridge and Chiredzi to identify brothel and other areas where human trafficking syndicates operate from. On the other hand GCN has rescued and identified 20 girls who are human trafficking survivors. The girls have participated in a life survival skills training workshop at the GCN Zengeza 4 offices.

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Home Based Care Training Workshop for OVCs

Having realised that many children are increasingly getting involved in caring for siblings and relatives affected and infected by the HIV pandemic the CDEP organised a two days workshop on Basic Home Based Care at GCN Zengeza. The workshop was attended by 65 OVC from around Chitungwiza

Gender, HIV and AIDS and Child Abuse Awareness Workshop

The situation prevailing among the many apostolic sects has shown that there is a great need to mainstream HIV/AIDS and gender in the groupings. GCN responded to this realisation by undertaking an awareness workshop for the members of the apostolic sects. This was also at GCN Zengeza 4 offices on the 19th and 20th of September 2006.

It's Shocking!

This column of the newflash will bring to you the atrocities and appalling information on violence against girls in all spheres of life. These are cases recorded and dealt with at GCN offices.

- ✂ A 7-year old girl was raped on different occasions by 3 men (among them businessmen) who are her mother's boyfriends and infected her with HIV. The mother just dumped her and disappeared. The girl is now under the custody of GCN at one of the Girls Empowerment Villages.
- ✂ 54-year old former soldier raped four girls aged between 7 years and 12 years on numerous occasions. They were forced to watch pornographic material after he lured them into his house with sweets and biscuits.
- ✂ The youngest rape survivor attended to by GCN officers in the last four months is aged 4 years and was raped by a 38-year-old man.
- ✂ The organisation's Girls At Risk Support Program has recorded 3540 cases of child abuse since January 2006 with 303 of them being sexual abuse cases which translates to at least over 30 girls being sexually abused every month. Shockingly, this means everyday a girl is raped thereby making the society perilous for girls at a time when people are generally agreed that empowerment of the girl child is the best form of reducing her vulnerability to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

On the Cards

Look out for the following exciting events lined up in the near future by the organisation. If you are in the vicinity please make a date with us and donations towards any event are welcome.

- ☒ Having landed the Red Ribbon Prize at the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto Canada GCN has lined up a big event on the World AIDS Day to celebrate this remarkable achievement.
- ☒ On the 19th of November 2006 GCN will join the rest of the world in commemorating the World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse. The day is also remembered as the day the Switzerland based Women World Summit Foundation confers awards and prizes to organisations and individuals for best practices in child abuse prevention. The prize is formerly known as the Prize Betty Makoni. Betty Makoni inspired the naming of the prize after she scooped the inaugural prize.
- ☒ From the 26th November 2006 to the 10th of December GCN will again be part of the mainstream activities in Zimbabwe and the world at large as people mark the 16 Days of Activism. This year's Zimbabwean theme is "Change attitudes and practices to outlaw domestic violence"

Donations

GCN and its beneficiaries especially those in the Girls Empowerment Villages continue to receive donations from different well-wishers who among them include members of the Women As Role Models Programme and also Women In Progress. Donations include money for school fees, stationery and other education related requirements. They also include clothes, sanitary ware and panties. At an occasion organised by Old Mutual GCN received an array of goods and materials that included sewing machines, garden implements, blankets and peanut butter making machines. The donated items were shared among the organisation's Empowerment Villages. On the other hand Save the Children UK as part of its Central

Emergency Relief Fund delivered bath and laundry soap, waterproofs, bath towels baby nappies, blankets, girls and boys' pants, soccer and volleyballs and nets. Monetary donations in the past months include:

Ms S Manyuma	Z\$160 000.00
Innsco Africa	Z\$100 000.00
Rouzeh Eghtessadi	Z\$ 70 000.00
Mr. and Mrs. Rukuni	Z\$ 5 000.00
Lydeway Consultants	Z\$160 000.00
Willie and Roe Green	Z\$ 70 000.00
Elizabeth Rea	Z\$ 5 000.00
Mr and Mrs Vickers	Z\$90 000.00

Rouzeh Eghtessadi remains the biggest contributor to the Women As Role Models. She currently sponsors the education of 28 girls at Zhenje Primary School in Chivhu. The WARM Programme has 10 women at the moment. GCN encourages individuals especially women who have made it in life to make a difference in poor girls' lives by sponsoring their education.

Girl Child Network will remain grateful to those who have made the organisation tick this far and will always welcome those who want to contribute to the development and empowerment of the girl child in any form.

********We pride in keeping you abreast, posted and closer to our work********
For views, comments and donations get in touch with us

<u>Contact Person</u>	Hazviperi Betty Makoni
<u>Position</u>	The Director
<u>Address</u>	131 Duri Road Unit F, Seke, Chitungwiza
<u>Telephone</u>	263-70-31132/21509
<u>Cell</u>	091 288 251,253
<u>Fax No</u>	263-70-31132
<u>Email</u>	gcn@zol.co.zw , gcninfo@zol.co.zw , gcnadmin@zol.co.zw
<u>Website</u>	www.gcn.org.zw