

Building and Recognizing Communication Rights in Zimbabwe

From November 2009 to date, the Creative Centre for Communication and Development has been training women and girls to use computers. We are teaching the basic computer skills in order to increase their ability to harness the power of ICTs advance their communication rights. We initially conducted a needs assessment at the beginning of November 2009. The needs assessment revealed that 95 percent of the women and girls had never used a computer. The few that had used a computer were not confident enough to use them to advance their communication rights.

During the same month, we began a training programme solely aimed at teaching women and girls to use computers. We are teaching them to use Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Once they master these programmes, we will teach them to use the internet and web 2.0 to enable them to actively participate on other social networks.

Due to limited space, we have converted a veranda into a 'computer lab'. We have three



"Due to limited space, we have converted a veranda into 'a computer lab'.

computers and beneficiaries come in threes. Each person is allocated two hours a week and we have lessons five times a week to ensure that everyone is trained. This has slightly slowed our activities but the long term rewards are worth it.



Family Day

We actively took part in the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against women. We organised a family day aimed at encouraging communication within families. We also engage parents and children to freely discuss Gender Based Violence in their community.

During the day poetry, music and theatre were used as the main communication tools. Men and children were involved as they are key partners in ending violence against women and promoting women's communication rights in particular.

Communication rights dialogue session

In December, we conducted a dialogue session which brought together people from the church, media, government ministries, public institutions, NGOs, Faith Based Organisation and Human Rights groups. We focused on the history of Human Rights, challenges faced by local communities in exercising these rights and how the community can create an enabling environment for upholding communication rights. We used the GBV poster to focus our discussion as it acted as an entry point to discussing the need to build and recognise communication rights

Development of a communication rights manual

We have began work to develop our communication manual which we intent to share with other organisations in Zimbabwe. In January, we established a working group which comprise of five people who specialize in communication, human rights, women's rights and programme development. The team was selected to enable the Creative Centre for Communication and Development to develop a comprehensive manual that can be used by different people. The team is currently working on developing the content of the manual. We will update you on their progress.

Development of a website

The Creative Centre for Communication and Development acknowledges that information is power and it is critical to have a website for the organisation. We are currently developing text for our website. We want the website to reflect who we are. It should offer our beneficiaries a safe space to tell their stories. We envisage the women and girls using this website to access information once they are fully trained on how to use the internet. We are also thinking about setting up a blog to enable the women to share their stories, interact on line and expand their social network. Off course, these are plans that we have once we train them to use the internet.



Children perform a play during a family day organised by CCCD.



Women talk about Gender Based Violence (GBV) and how promoting communication rights can reduce cases of GBV in their



A woman shares her views during a communication rights dialogue session.