



2025 ***Annual Report***

Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS)

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Acronyms

AGEWEDS	Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Through Dialogue and Social Cohesion (AGEWEDS)
AFP	Acute Flaccid Paralysis
CAC	Corporate Affairs Commission
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FLHW	Frontline Health Worker
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GGC	Government Girls College
GGSS	Government Girls Secondary School
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for International Cooperation)
GJDSS	Government Junior Day Secondary School
IMC	International Medical Corps
KAPI	Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Intention
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LGA	Local Government Area
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MMC	Maiduguri Metropolitan Council
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
ORS	Oral Rehydration Solution
PPMV	Patent and Proprietary Medicine Vendor
SEPIN SUSI	Supporting Sustainable Social Protection, Participation and Economic Resilience in Northeast Nigeria
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UCD	User-Centred Design
VAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

About ZEGCAWIS



Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS) is a women and youth-led non-profit organisation registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in 2018.

Based in Northeast Nigeria, ZEGCAWIS works to advance the rights, dignity, safety, health, education, and economic participation of women, girls, children, and vulnerable communities, particularly in conflict-affected and underserved settings.

The organisation delivers community-based interventions across gender justice, education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, nutrition, child health, women empowerment, disability inclusion, social cohesion, and economic justice.

ZEGCAWIS combines grassroots access with evidence-based programming, policy advocacy, community mobilisation, peer-led engagement, and strategic partnerships. Its work is anchored on accountability, transparency, safeguarding, inclusion, gender sensitivity, respect, integrity, and community ownership.



ZEGCAWIS vision is to support survivors of gender-based violence and conflict through resilience building and empowerment.



The mission of the organization is to ensure the rights of women, girls, and children are observed, protected, and supported so they can fulfill their full potential.

Message from the Board

As the Board of Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support, we are proud to present this 2025 Annual Report as a reflection of courage, resilience, accountability, and community-rooted impact.

In a year shaped by both opportunity and uncertainty, including shifting donor funding realities and the continued complexity of humanitarian and development work in Borno State, ZEGCAWIS remained focused on its mandate: protecting the dignity, rights, health, education, and safety of women, girls, children, and vulnerable communities.

The Board recognises the dedication of the Executive Director, management team, staff, volunteers, frontline workers, peer educators, community leaders, government partners, donors, and the communities whose trust made this work possible.

Across menstrual hygiene management, girls' education, child health, SRHR, GBV prevention and response, gender equality, women's participation, social cohesion, and community-led advocacy, ZEGCAWIS has continued to demonstrate that sustainable change is built through trust, evidence, partnership, and local ownership.

As a Board, our role remains to provide strategic guidance, strengthen governance oversight, promote transparency, support institutional growth, and ensure that ZEGCAWIS continues to operate with integrity, accountability, and measurable impact.

Looking ahead to 2026, we encourage deeper investment in evidence, programme quality, staff capacity, diversified funding, policy influence, and stronger visibility of the organisation's impact. The next phase must be about scale, sustainability, and stronger systems.

We remain committed to supporting ZEGCAWIS as it continues to build a future where every woman, girl, and child can live with dignity, safety, opportunity, and hope.



Fatima Yerima Askira
Board Chair



Abubakar Sadiq Muazu
Board Secretary



Halima Abdulrauf
Board Member



Zara Umar Yakub
Board Member

Message from the Executive Director



It is with deep gratitude and pride that I present the 2025 Annual Report of Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS).

This report captures a year of resilience, impact, learning, and renewed commitment to improving the lives of women, girls, children, and vulnerable communities across Borno State.

The year came with significant opportunities and challenges, including a difficult funding environment and the wider effects of shifting donor priorities. Yet, despite these realities, ZEGCAWIS remained steadfast in delivering community-driven interventions across menstrual hygiene management, girls' education, child health, nutrition, gender equality, SRHR, GBV prevention and response, and social cohesion.

Behind every number in this report is a human story. We saw girls gain confidence to remain in school, women participate more actively in community decision-making, families adopt healthier practices, children receive essential health support, and survivors connect to services, care, and referral pathways.

In 2025, we also strengthened our internal systems, expanded technical capacity, improved monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning processes, and deepened collaboration with government institutions, community leaders, donors, and development partners.

As we move into 2026, our priority is to consolidate our impact, strengthen our evidence, expand our partnerships, and continue to place the voices and needs of women, girls, children, and marginalised groups at the centre of our work.

I sincerely appreciate our Board of Directors for their guidance and oversight, our donors and partners for their trust, our staff and volunteers for their dedication, and the communities we serve for their collaboration and confidence.

Together, we are building resilience, expanding opportunity, and working toward a future where every woman and girl can live with dignity, safety, and full potential.

Aishatu Kabu

Executive Director

Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS)

2025 Impact at a Glance



110,709
people reached directly



4,585,395
people reached indirectly through the media (radio and digital platforms)



10
LGAs reached through MHM and girls' education programming



24
MHM clubs established



1,210
schoolgirls enrolled in MHM clubs



80,000+
children reached with child health interventions



3,798
women and girls accessed contraceptive services



2,129
peers engaged through peer-to-peer SRHR sessions



38
religious and traditional leaders engaged on menstrual dignity



15
lawmakers engaged in MHM policy dialogue



30
healthcare and humanitarian workers trained



107
volunteers mobilised



N280,064,897
total programme funds managed in 2025



Direct reach refers to individuals who participated in, received, or directly benefited from ZEGCAWIS programme interventions, services, trainings, community engagements, school-based activities, referrals, or health campaigns.

Indirect reach includes estimated audiences reached through radio programs, social media engagement, public awareness campaigns, community amplification, and other mass communication channels.

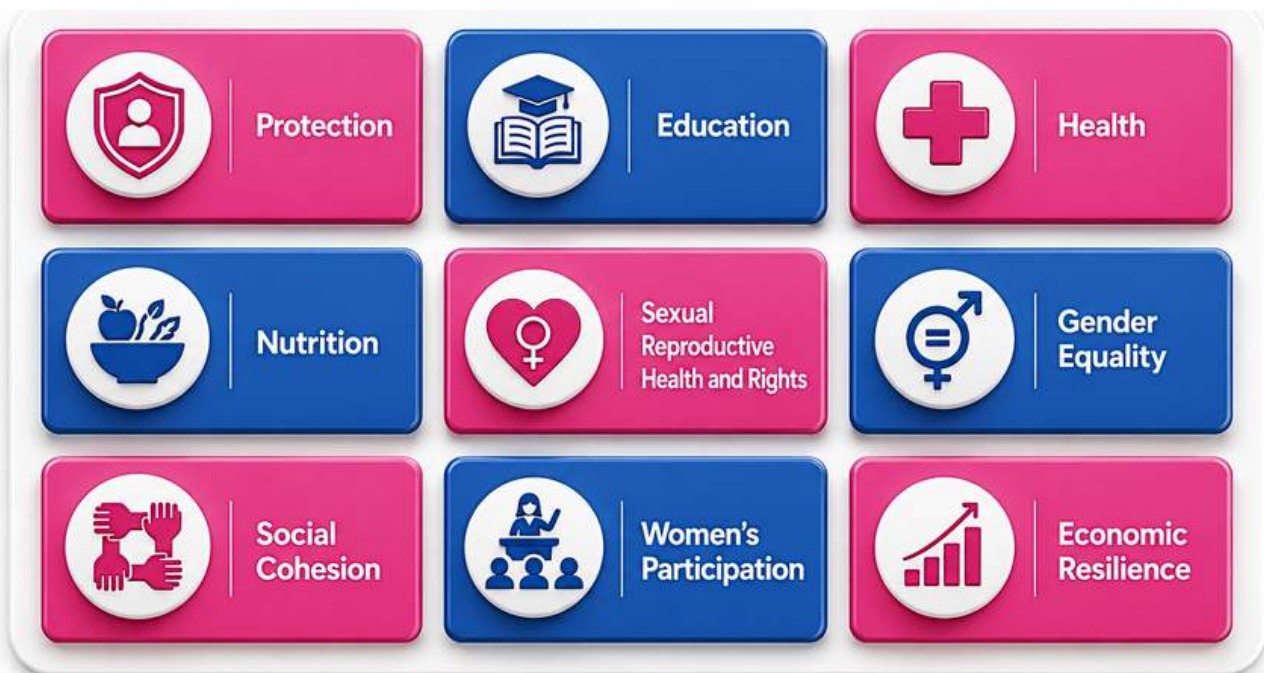
Service uptake figures are reported separately where individuals accessed specific health, protection, or referral services.

Strategic Focus Areas

ZEGCAWIS' 2025 interventions were organised around interconnected focus areas that respond to the lived realities of women, girls, children, and vulnerable communities in Borno State.

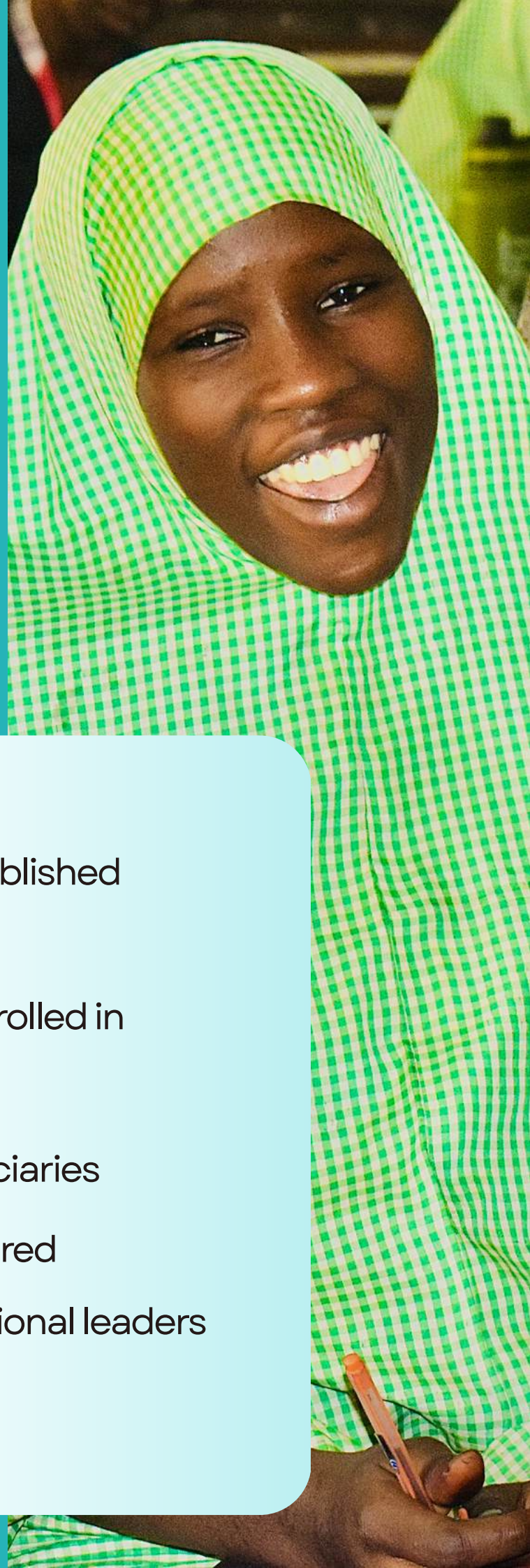
These focus areas reflect both immediate humanitarian needs and longer-term development priorities: protection, education, health, nutrition, SRHR, gender equality, social cohesion, women's participation, and economic resilience.

Across all programmes, ZEGCAWIS applied a community-led approach, working with schools, households, religious and traditional leaders, frontline health workers, peer educators, government institutions, and development partners to strengthen local ownership and sustainable change.



Breaking the Silence:

Advancing Menstrual Hygiene, Girls' Education & Policy Advocacy In Borno State



- 24 MHM Clubs established



- 10 LGAs reached



- 1,210 schoolgirls enrolled in MHM clubs



- 3,362 direct beneficiaries



- 16 radio episodes aired



- 38 religious & traditional leaders engaged

Across many communities in Borno State, menstruation remains surrounded by silence, stigma, and misinformation. For many girls, this affects school attendance, confidence, health, dignity, and participation in learning.

With support from the **Malala Fund**, ZEGCAWIS implemented a comprehensive intervention in menstrual hygiene management and girls' education across 10 LGAs in Borno State.

The project established **24** MHM clubs, enrolled **1,210** schoolgirls, reached **3,362** direct beneficiaries, aired **16** episodes of radio programmes, and engaged **38** religious and traditional leaders to promote menstrual dignity and girls' education.

A major outcome was the improvement in menstrual hygiene knowledge among participating girls, rising from **49%** at baseline to **83.3%** after the intervention. This represents a **34.3** percentage-point increase in awareness and understanding.

Beyond school-based learning, the project also created safe spaces where girls could speak openly, build confidence, challenge stigma, and support one another. It further strengthened advocacy toward an inclusive menstrual hygiene management policy framework in Borno State.



Safe Spaces for Girls Through MHM Clubs



ZEGCAWIS established **24** Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Clubs across schools in **10** LGAs of Borno State, including **Bama, Chibok, Damboa, Gwoza, Jere, Kaga, Konduga, Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Mafa, and Monguno.**

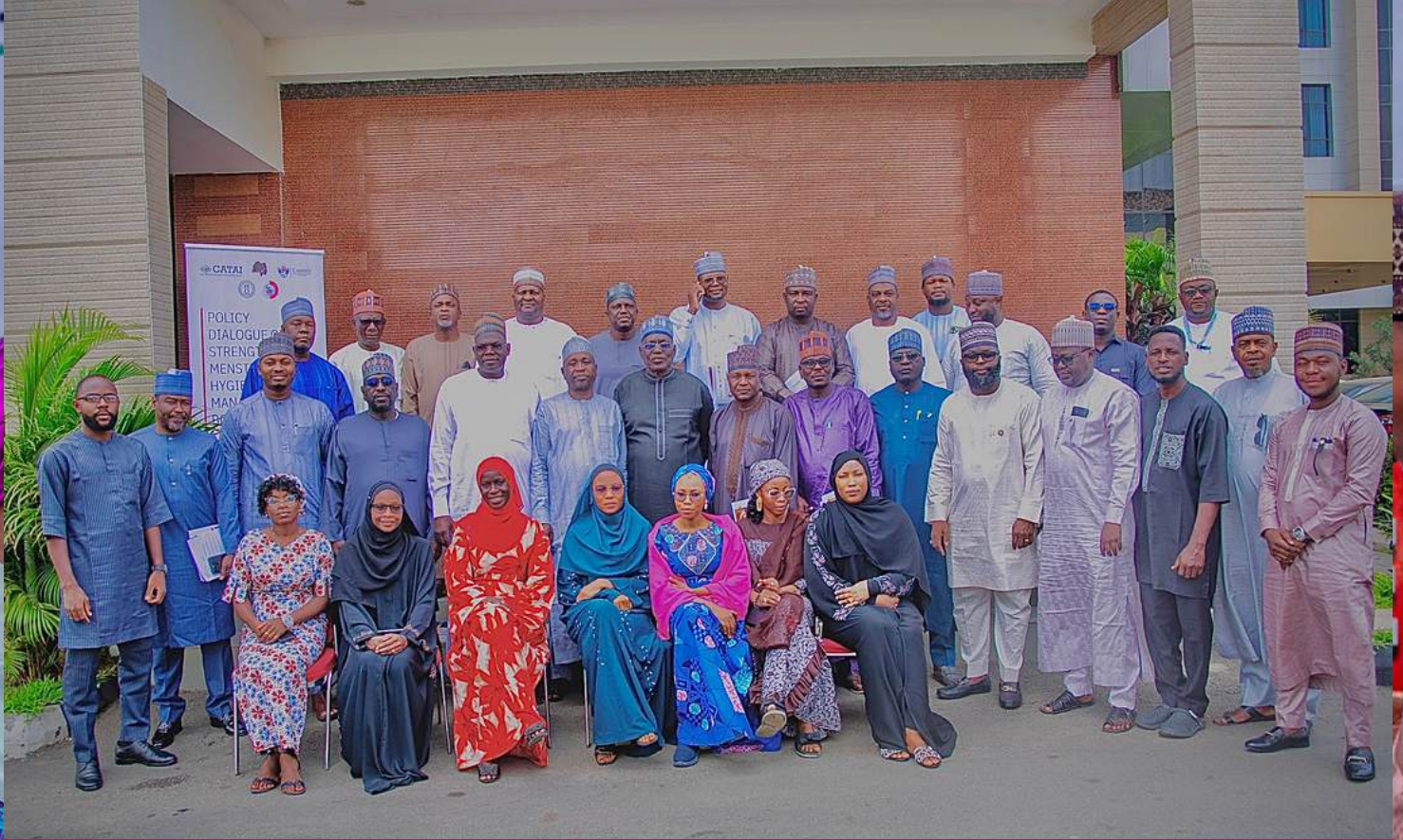
The schools are JSS Central Konduga, JSS 1000 Estate, Kaigamari JSS, Kasugula JSS, GJDSS Mafa, JDSS Malakyariri, UBE Guduf, UBE Pulka, JDSS Garu East, JDSS Chibok, Charamari JSS, Central Monguno, JDSS Ngamdu Model School, JSS Shuwari, JDSS Low-cost, GGSS, Shehu Garbai, GGC, JDSS Bulabulin, Yerwa GGSS, JSS Fariya, UBE Fogoli, Mafoni Secondary School, and JSS Ngomari.

Working closely with Local Government Education Secretaries and school authorities, the clubs were created to provide safe and supportive spaces where girls could openly discuss menstruation, learn about menstrual hygiene, build confidence, and support one another without fear of shame or stigma.

A total of **1,210** schoolgirls aged **11–17** were enrolled in the MHM club sessions, which covered topics including menstrual hygiene management, school-related gender-based violence, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and menstrual stigma. The clubs also encouraged peer learning and leadership, enabling girls to share knowledge through school assemblies, discussions, dramas, presentations, and community sensitisation activities. Pre- and post-assessments conducted during the club sessions showed a significant improvement in knowledge and understanding among participating girls, increasing from a **49%** baseline to **83.3%**, representing a **34.3%** increase in knowledge and awareness.

To address harmful social norms and cultural silence surrounding menstruation, community dialogue sessions were conducted across Bulabulin, Garu, Gana Ali, Ajari, Ngamdu, Mala Kyariri, and Mainari communities. Through these engagements, **291** girls were reached with awareness on menstrual hygiene, dignity, and confidence-building.

Recognising the strong influence of faith and traditional institutions in Borno State, the project actively engaged **38** gatekeepers to champion positive social norms around menstruation and girls' wellbeing. Sermon notes and advocacy messages were developed and validated by Muslim and Christian leaders to support faith-based advocacy and help break long-standing cultural silence around menstruation.



One of the major advocacy milestones of the year was ZEGCAWIS' engagement with the Borno State House of Assembly to develop a **Menstrual Hygiene Management Policy Framework**.

In collaboration with Malala Fund Education Champions, ZEGCAWIS convened a high-level policy dialogue with 15 lawmakers to examine how menstrual hygiene challenges affect girls' education, dignity, school attendance, and well-being.

The engagement helped move menstrual hygiene from a private and often stigmatised issue into a public policy conversation. Follow-up advocacy visits to the **Borno State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (BMWASD)** and the **Ministry of Education, Science and Technology** further strengthened government engagement and created a pathway for continued policy action in 2026.

15 Lawmakers Engaged

for Policy Change & Institutional Action



To address the growing challenge of out-of-school children in Damboa LGA, ZEGCAWIS facilitated a town hall meeting that brought together education stakeholders, traditional and religious leaders, teachers, government representatives, and community members to identify barriers limiting children's access to education. Discussions during the meeting highlighted key challenges affecting school enrollment and retention, including poverty, teacher absenteeism, insecurity-related displacement, long distances to schools, inadequate infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, and limited parental awareness of the importance of girls' education. The dialogue created an opportunity for stakeholders to collectively develop action points aimed at improving access to quality and inclusive education for children in Damboa LGA. Education authorities are committed to strengthening teacher accountability and monitoring attendance, while community leaders emphasise continuous sensitisation of parents to encourage school enrollment and retention, especially for girls. Stakeholders also recommended increased support for vulnerable children, provision of learning materials and uniforms, improvement of school infrastructure, and the establishment of skills development opportunities for out-of-school youth.

Key Outcomes

- Structural and social barriers affecting education were identified
- Stakeholders committed to improving teacher accountability and attendance monitoring
- Recommendations developed to support vulnerable and internally displaced children
- Increased advocacy for improved school infrastructure and girls' education facilities
- Strengthened collaboration between government, communities, and civil society actors on education access and retention




700,010

People Reached Indirectly

ZEGCAWIS aired **16 episodes** of the menstrual hygiene management radio programme titled **“Tsaftar Jiki A Lokacin Al’ada”** on Al-Ansar Radio and TV, Maiduguri, between February and May 2025. The programme addressed critical issues affecting girls’ education and well-being, including menstrual stigma, myths and misconceptions about menstruation, school-related challenges, gender equality in education, the role of parents and government, and the importance of supportive learning environments for girls.



The radio programme provided a powerful platform for girls’ voices to be heard publicly. Episodes were anchored by girls from the **Borno State Children’s Parliament**, alongside youth advocates and invited stakeholders, including **Malala Fund Education Champions**. The programme contributed to increased community dialogue, public awareness, and advocacy for an inclusive menstrual hygiene management policy in Borno State.



The **Malala Fund Girl Programme** significantly strengthened ZEGCAWIS' institutional capacity, visibility, and leadership in advancing girls' rights, menstrual hygiene management, and education advocacy in Borno State. Through the implementation of the project, ZEGCAWIS expanded its engagement with government institutions, schools, student union bodies, community leaders, and development partners, positioning the organisation as a key local actor championing girls' education and menstrual dignity. The project also increased opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and strategic partnerships with youth-led movements and stakeholders working to improve the well-being of girls and young women.

The grant further strengthened the organisation internally through improved systems, technical staffing, and operational capacity. ZEGCAWIS was able to recruit and retain skilled professionals across key units, including finance and operations, contributing to stronger accountability systems, improved programme delivery, enhanced donor confidence, and increased readiness for future partnerships and funding opportunities.

“When girls are supported to manage menstruation with dignity, they are better able to learn, lead, and thrive.”

Improving Child Health Outcomes Through Community Based Interventions

Vitamin A deficiency remains a major public health challenge affecting children under five (5), contributing significantly to preventable blindness, weakened immunity, and increased vulnerability to childhood illnesses. Globally, hundreds of thousands of children lose their sight annually due to Vitamin A deficiency, with many unable to survive beyond the first year after blindness occurs.

To address this challenge, Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS), with support from **Dimagi**, implemented a **Child Health Campaign** across **Damboa, Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Jere, Konduga, Mafa, and Bama** Local Government Areas of Borno State.

The campaign utilised trained frontline health workers to conduct door-to-door outreach activities, aiming to reach vulnerable children aged 6–59 months with essential child health services.

Key interventions included the administration of Vitamin A supplements to eligible children, distribution of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) and Zinc co-packs, screening for malnutrition using the Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) method, and community sensitisation on nutrition, hygiene, promotion of missed vaccination, and preventive healthcare practices.

Through this campaign, we equipped community frontline health workers with digital tools (**Dimagi's CommCare Connect application**) to strengthen data collection, improve service delivery, and increase uptake of essential child health and nutrition interventions at the household level. The digital tool also strengthens accountability and monitoring, capturing services delivered in real-time, including MUAC readings and documentation of ORS co-pack distribution.

The use of digital tools enhanced data accuracy, real-time reporting, and effective tracking of health interventions delivered across targeted communities.



6



80,000+

Children Reached

Through sustained community outreach efforts, ZEGCAWIS delivered essential child health services to over **80,000 children** (6-59 months) across Borno State. The project contributed to improved access to Vitamin A supplementation, increased awareness of child nutrition and hygiene practices, early identification of malnutrition among vulnerable children, support for prevention and management of diarrheal diseases, and strengthened community-level child healthcare delivery.

The integrated approach combining frontline healthcare workers, household outreach, community sensitization, and digital technology enabled the campaign to effectively address preventable childhood morbidity and mortality in underserved communities. Through proactive and targeted interventions, the campaign continues to promote healthier childhood outcomes and strengthen resilience among vulnerable families in Borno State.





Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Through Dialogue and Social Cohesion (AGEWEDS)

520

People Reached



356



164



258



60



38



The Advancing Gender Equality And Women's Empowerment Through Dialogue Sessions And Social Cohesion (AGEWEDS) in Borno state, is executed by ZEGCAWIS under the Supporting Sustainable Social Protection, Participation and Economic Resilience in Northeast Nigeria (SEPIN SUSI) Programme, implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH as commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and co-funded by the European Union (EU).

The project is carried out across selected communities in MMC and Jere Local Government Areas of Borno State, including Sulumri, Bolori II, Old Maiduguri, and Jiddari. The project focused on promoting women's rights, strengthening women's participation in community decision-making, addressing harmful traditional practices, and fostering social cohesion through sustained community dialogue.

Through sensitisation meetings, community forums, consultations, advocacy engagements, trainings, and media activities, the project created safe spaces for women, men, youth, traditional leaders, and religious leaders to openly discuss gender inequality and collectively identify solutions to challenges affecting women and girls.

The project engaged community structures, government stakeholders, women's groups, youth platforms, and grassroots leaders to strengthen local ownership and encourage long-term change.

The project contributed to improved awareness of women's legal rights, increased confidence among women to participate in community discussions, and growing commitment from traditional and religious leaders to support women's inclusion and empowerment within their communities.

1

Women reported

- Exclusion from decision making spaces
- Cultural and social barriers
- Limited leadership opportunities
- Household and economic constraints
- Low confidence in public participation

2

Issues Addressed

Prompted Community Actions to Address:

- Early marriage & FGM
- Gender-based violence (GBV)
- Women's exclusion from leadership , and promotion of their inclusion
- Restricted movement & inheritance denial
- Limited access to education & healthcare

Community Dialogue Platforms Strengthening Women's Participation and Addressing Harmful Practices Affecting Women and Girls in MMC & Jere LGAs of Borno, Nigeria.

(Strengthened **20** community dialogue forums. Held **10** sensitisation meetings with leaders. Conducted **8** roundtable discussions with local authorities. Developed **9** community action plans. Engaged **50** traditional & religious leaders engaged)

3

Key Outcomes

- Increased women's confidence in dialogue spaces
- Stronger engagement with community leaders
- Greater awareness of women's rights
- Improved acceptance of women's participation
- Growing support for girls' education

4

Community Action

- Leaders committed to women's inclusion
- Increased reporting awareness on GBV
- Community-led discussions on harmful practices
- Locally developed action plans implemented

ZEGCAWIS introduced the **Gender Action Learning System (GALS)** under the **AGEWEDS** project, a participatory approach designed to strengthen gender equality, improve household relationships, and promote shared decision-making within families and communities.

Participants were trained using practical GALS tools, including **Vision Journey, Happy Family Tree, Empowerment Leadership Map, Challenge Action Tree, Tracking Tool, and SMART Visioning.**

The sessions encouraged participants to reflect on household responsibilities, communication, financial planning, leadership, and shared decision-making within families.

Post-training monitoring showed positive changes among participants, including improved communication within households, increased confidence among women, better understanding of shared responsibility, improved financial planning and decision-making, and positive shifts in attitudes towards women's participation and leadership.

Women who were initially reluctant to speak during the workshop became more confident and actively participated in discussions and group activities.



Regions

- MMC (Sulumri)
- Jere (Old Maiduguri)

Men

10

Women

20

Project Staff

10

20



12 Episodes Broadcasted

580,009

People Reached Indirectly

ADVANCING GENDER

EQUALITY AND WOMEN

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH

DIALOGUE

The **AGEWEDS** project expanded conversations on women's rights and gender equality beyond community meetings through a radio programme. The radio discussions addressed issues such as women's legal rights, access to justice, gender-based violence, women's economic empowerment, shared household responsibility, and harmful traditional practices. The programs also provided community members with opportunities to seek guidance, report concerns, and share personal experiences.

Increasing Sexual and Reproductive Autonomy Among Women and Girls in Borno State

28,979

Individuals Reached Through Digital and Community-Based Engagement



3,798

Women and Girls Accessed Contraceptive Services



2,129

Peers Engaged Through Peer-To-Peer Sessions



30

Healthcare and Humanitarian Workers Trained

20

Community Intermediaries Trained on SRHR and Referrals



17

Public Endorsements by Community Leaders Supporting Gender Equality and SRHR

49.3%

Increase in SRHR Knowledge and Awareness Recorded Through KAPI Assessment



With support from **Ipas Nigeria Health Foundation** and funding from **Global Affairs Canada (GAC)**, Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZEGCAWIS) implemented interventions aimed at increasing sexual and reproductive autonomy among women and girls in **Chibok** and **Kaga** LGAs of Borno State.

The intervention focused on improving access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services, strengthening referral pathways, addressing harmful gender norms, and supporting women and girls to make informed decisions about their bodies and health.

The project is implemented in **Garu** and **Mbalala** communities in **Chibok** LGA, and **Benisheik** and **Ngamdu** communities in Kaga LGA.

Women and girls continue to face barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive health services and exercising bodily autonomy. In many communities, stigma, harmful social norms, limited awareness, and restricted access to services reduce women's ability to make informed decisions about their reproductive health.

Through community engagement, peer to peer session, health systems strengthening, and stakeholder mobilisation, ZEGCAWIS worked to bridge these gaps and expand access to essential SRHR services and information.



ZEGCAWIS adopted community-led and peer-driven approaches to increase awareness and improve attitudes toward sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in **Chibok** and **Kaga** LGAs of Borno.

Through peer-to-peer engagement, digital outreach, awareness campaigns, and community sensitisation activities, thousands of women, girls, and community stakeholders were reached with information on contraception, safe abortion pathways, gender-based violence responses, and bodily autonomy.

A Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, and Intentions (KAPI) assessment conducted across the project communities recorded an increase in awareness and understanding of access to contraceptive services, safe abortion pathways, sexual and gender-based violence services, and sexual and reproductive health rights.

The findings demonstrated the effectiveness of peer-led engagement and community sensitisation in transforming attitudes and improving awareness.

Religious and traditional leaders played a critical role in promoting positive gender norms and challenging harmful beliefs. ZEGCAWIS engaged religious and traditional leaders on tailored sermon notes addressing gender inequality, sexual and reproductive health rights, prevention of harmful gender norms, and support pathways for women and girls.

As a result, engaged leaders actively delivered community sensitisation sessions, and the project recorded public statements made by influential leaders endorsing the project goals and promoting positive social norms.

• A woman leader in Ngamdu, Kaga LGA, Borno, conducting a sermon note session



The uptake of contraceptive services significantly exceeded the project target, reflecting growing trust in community engagement efforts and strengthened referral pathways.

- **197** women and girls received facility-based abortion care, including post-abortion support
- **158** women and girls accessed self-managed abortion support
- **3,798** women and girls received facility-based contraceptive services

Continued community engagement and on-the-job mentoring were identified as key strategies for improving future outcomes on referral uptake and SGBV service utilisation.

- **12** women and girls accessed SGBV-related care services
- **127** women and girls were referred to SRHR and GBV services by trained peer educators

To improve access to integrated sexual and reproductive health services, ZEGCAWIS supported both community and facility-level interventions across Kaga and Chibok. The project strengthened referral systems, trained healthcare service providers, engaged community intermediaries, and expanded community access points to improve service delivery for women and girls.

To strengthen quality and compassionate care delivery:

- Trained **30** healthcare and humanitarian workers were on reproductive coercion, trauma-informed care, and care for marginalised groups
- Trained **20** community intermediaries to provide SRHR information and referral support
- Engaged **13** community-level access points (PPMVs) to improve access to SRHR services

The effort strengthened local systems for delivering more accessible, inclusive, and community-responsive SRHR services.

Using a **User-Centered Design (UCD)** approach, community members participated in identifying harmful gender norms and co-creating practical solutions tailored to their realities, where **4 UCD** community activities were facilitated to strengthen locally owned solutions and improve access to services for women and girls.

Commemoration of World Menstrual Hygiene Day 2025



ZEGCAWIS commemorated **2025 World Menstrual Hygiene Day** in collaboration with the **Borno State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development**, at Kashim Ibrahim University, Borno, alongside students and members of the Borno State Children's Parliament. The theme focused on "Together for a **#periodfriendlyworld**", raising awareness on menstrual hygiene management, breaking stigma around menstruation, and promoting girls' health, dignity, and school attendance. Interactive sessions were held on proper menstrual hygiene practices, while participants were encouraged to become advocates for a menstrual-friendly environment within their schools and communities. The event aligned with global calls for improved menstrual health awareness and support for girls and women.

International Women's Day 2025: Promoting Women's Rights, Dignity and Bodily Autonomy

In commemoration of **International Women's Day**, ZEGCAWIS strengthened community conversations around sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender equality, and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) across **Ngamdu, Garu, Benesheik, and Mbalala** communities of Borno State.

The activity provided an opportunity for religious and traditional leaders, community members, women, and girls to engage in discussions focused on challenging harmful social norms and promoting safer, healthier communities for women and girls.

30

Religious and Traditional Leaders Were Trained on Tailored SRHR And SGBV Sermon Guides

26

Trained Community Leaders Actively Delivered Sensitisation Messages Within Their Communities

405

Individuals Were Reached Through Community Sensitisation Sessions and Advocacy Messaging

The sermon-based approach helped simplify conversations around sensitive issues while encouraging community acceptance and support for women and girls seeking information and services related to their sexual and reproductive health.

The activity also contributed to strengthening community support systems, reducing stigma, and promoting positive gender norms through trusted local leadership structures.

Commemoration of 2025 International Day of Rural Women, and International Day of the Girl Child

Under the **AGEWEDS** Project, ZEGCAWIS commemorated the **International Day of Rural Women** with rural women from **Sulumri** and **Old Maiduguri** communities. The activity highlighted the critical role of rural women in community development, food security, peacebuilding, and economic resilience. Discussions focused on women's empowerment, access to opportunities, and strengthening the voices of rural women in decision-making processes. The engagement also provided a platform for women to share experiences, challenges, and strategies for improving their livelihoods and community participation. The celebration reflected global recognition of rural women's contributions to sustainable development and community well-being.



Also, ZEGCAWIS marked the **International Day of the Girl Child** with female students and community women from **MMC** and **Jere** of Borno, through awareness and advocacy sessions aimed at promoting girls' rights, education, leadership, and protection. The event encouraged girls to speak up, pursue their ambitions, and participate actively in shaping their future. Discussions also addressed challenges affecting women and girls, including gender inequality, limited access to education, and harmful social norms. The commemoration reinforced the importance of creating safe and supportive environments where girls can thrive and lead positive change in their communities.



100

Participants Engaged

50

Female Students Engaged

2025 16 Days of Activism: Raising Voices Against Gender-Based Violence

ZEGCAWIS implemented large-scale community awareness activities under the **Increasing Sexual and Reproductive Autonomy Among Women and Girls in Borno State project**, aimed at promoting safe communities for women and girls and increasing awareness of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), as part of the global **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence** campaign.

The campaign engaged community stakeholders in **Chibok** and **Kaga**, using the “**Exploring Our Power**” tool to encourage reflection on harmful gender norms, unequal power relations, and pathways for supporting survivors of violence.

The **AGEWEDS** project extended the commemoration to community members, traditional and religious leaders, women groups, youth representatives, government ministries, and other key stakeholders in **MMC** and **Jere** LGAs of Borno State.

The activities mainly focused on challenging harmful gender norms and stereotypes that fuel violence and discrimination against women and girls, while promoting positive social change, mutual respect, and inclusive community participation.

Through interactive dialogue sessions and community engagements, participants were encouraged to become advocates for the prevention of GBV, support survivors in accessing available services, and foster environments where women and girls can live free from fear, violence, and inequality.

768

Community Members & Stakeholders (Male & Female) Were Reached During the Commemoration

“Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Requires Collective Community Action”



Stories of Impact From our Programmes

Aisha's Story of Courage and Change

In one of the classrooms at Fogoli Junior Secondary School in Jere LGA, Borno State, change was quietly unfolding.

It was around 10:15 am during break time when the ZEGCAWIS Programmes Team arrived for a routine monitoring visit of the ongoing peer-to-peer (MHM CLUB) session. The session was part of ZEGCAWIS's commitment to ensuring girls' retention in school, irrespective of barriers that can hinder them, including menstruation, with funding from the **Malala Fund**, supported through menstrual hygiene management club engagements. The club is led by peer instructor Hauwa. The session on this particular morning had taken a reflective turn. To encourage interaction, Hauwa posed a simple but powerful question to the girls seated before her:

"What have you learned through this session?"

Hands shot up with enthusiasm. One after the other, the girls shared how the club had taught them about menstrual hygiene, self-confidence and standing against gender-based violence, and the importance of staying in school. Then, a name was randomly called from among the raised hands: Aisha Mustapha, a 16-year-old student who had quietly joined the session.

What Aisha said next brought a wave of silence across the room.

With her eyes fixed on the desk in front of her and a voice that trembled but remained steady, she said:

"If not for this club, I would have left this school."

Aunty Hauwa always talks about many things that are happening in my life. I am an orphan; nobody is supporting me. But she taught us how to use alternative ways to manage our menstruation and still come to school without thinking less of ourselves. Here, everybody knows that a stain is not a funny thing."

In that moment, Aisha's story encapsulated the essence of what the intervention stands for, empowering girls with knowledge, tools, and the confidence to overcome barriers that keep them from reaching their full potential. For Aisha, menstruation was not just a biological experience; it was a monthly source of shame, absence from school, and diminished self-worth. But through the safe and supportive environment of the MHM Club, she gained knowledge about menstrual hygiene, learned to access dignity kits, and most importantly, realized she was not alone. Her courage to speak out, to own her story in front of her peers, became a moment of transformation, not just for her, but for every girl in the room who might have silently faced similar struggles.

“

If Not for
MHM Club, I
Would Have
Left School

From Violence to Justice.

How Peer Support Saved Hauwa

At just 21 years old, Hauwa faced one of the darkest moments of her life. Four months into her pregnancy, she experienced severe domestic violence at the hands of her husband. Her health and that of her unborn child were at great risk. Fortunately, her cousin, Awa, who had participated in a peer-to-peer session under the Increasing Sexual and Reproductive Autonomy among Women and Girls project, recognised the danger and acted quickly. She sought help from peer educator, Christiana, who immediately intervened. Christiana ensured that Hauwa received emergency medical care and then referred the case to Esther, the GBV officer with the International Medical Corps (IMC). Through IMC, Hauwa received both medical treatment and psychosocial support that helped her begin her recovery. Once discharged, she was further connected to the Human Rights office, where she could pursue legal redress against the abuse she endured. This chain of support not only saved Hauwa's life and protected her unborn child but also empowered her to seek justice. Her story is a powerful reminder of how community-based peer education, timely intervention, and coordinated referral systems can restore hope and dignity to survivors of gender-based violence.

“I Just Had to Stay in Isolation” – How Zara Unlearned Menstrual Myths

In many rural communities, cultural beliefs and taboos around menstruation continue to shape how girls understand and manage their periods. These beliefs often lead to shame, fear, and restrictions, keeping girls indoors and isolated during their menstrual cycles. For 15-year-old Zara, this was her reality. Before she encountered Fatima, a trained peer instructor under ZEGCAWIS's community-based sessions for women and girls, menstruation meant one thing: exclusion.

According to Zara, *“When I'm menstruating, I don't go out at all. I don't even walk around my house. My mother said I should stay inside, in isolation, until it's over.”*

This was her norm. She never questioned it until the session, where the conversation focused on menstrual myths, stigma, and health rights. Zara raised her hand and asked: *“Is it okay for a girl to go out of her house while menstruating?”*

Fatima, the peer instructor, responded that yes, it is perfectly okay for a girl to go outside during menstruation. She explained that menstruation is a natural biological process, not something to be ashamed of or hidden, and that girls have every right to live and participate fully, even during their periods.

After the session, Zara waited behind. She approached Fatima and said, *“Before I came to this session, I didn't go out while menstruating. I just stayed in isolation. That's what my mom told me. But now I know better. I have learned I am not the only one with this experience, and I shouldn't be ashamed.”*

Zara now speaks openly about menstruation with her friends. She walks freely during her cycle. And she's not ashamed anymore. Her story is a proof that changing minds begins with honest conversations and that, when empowered with knowledge, girls can challenge taboos and reclaim their space in the world.

Timely Detection Saves a Child

How a frontline health worker's quick action protected little Isa from paralysis

In the community of Kofan Layin Jirgi, Auno, in Borno, a mother's instinct raised an alarm that would make all the difference for her child. Aisha noticed something unusual about her 23-month-old son, Isa Mohammed. "His leg wasn't moving like before," she recalled. "He wasn't walking or crawling normally, and I became afraid." Just days earlier, Isa had appeared healthy. But now, his limbs seemed limp. That same day, Tijjani Baba Musami, a trained frontline health worker (FLHW) under the **Give-Well Child Health campaign funded by Dimagi**, was conducting routine community visits. Upon seeing Isa, Tijjani immediately recognised the signs of a suspected case of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP). Without delay, Tijjani reassured Aisha, explained the urgency of the situation, and initiated the referral process. Isa was taken to a health facility, where stool samples were collected within the critical 14-day window, ensuring proper investigation and reporting under Nigeria's AFP surveillance system. Thanks to this swift action, Isa's case was documented, investigated, and managed appropriately. Early detection not only protected Isa from potential long-term complications but also strengthened community-based disease surveillance efforts critical to polio eradication in Nigeria. Today, Aisha is grateful that help arrived when it did.

"I am thankful he came that day. I didn't know it could be serious. Now we are getting help."

Isa's story highlights the lifesaving role of trained frontline health workers and the importance of community-based surveillance, especially in hard-to-reach areas. Through the Give-Well Child Health campaign, health workers are equipped to detect danger early before it becomes irreversible.

“

I didn't know what it was. I was scared. But the frontline health worker explained everything and helped us quickly

– Aisha (Isa's mother)

Transforming Family Conflict into Cooperation Through GALS Training

Umar Abdullahi, a GALS training participant from Old Maiduguri in Jere LGA, attended the training under the **AGEWEDS Project** alongside his wife. Reflecting on his experience, Umar shared that when he first arrived at the training, he initially perceived it as just another routine workshop involving group discussions and paperwork.

However, his perspective changed completely after the facilitators introduced participatory tools such as the Family Tree, Happy Family Tree, and Challenge Action Tree. According to him, these exercises encouraged couples to openly identify and discuss real-life challenges affecting their families.

Umar explained that he had always opposed his wife's domestic animal rearing business because the animals often littered their home environment, causing frequent disagreements between them. He had even planned to stop her from continuing the business entirely.

During the Happy Family Tree exercise, Umar and his wife were asked to jointly map out their sources of income, individual expenditures, and contributions toward family welfare. Through this process, he realized that his wife's animal rearing and charcoal business were her primary sources of livelihood and that her earnings significantly supported the family's needs.

The exercise helped him reflect deeply on the root causes of their conflicts and understand the importance of his wife's economic contribution to the household. Rather than stopping her business, Umar began to think of practical solutions that would address the challenges while preserving her source of income.

As a result, he decided to support his wife by providing a safe and organized cage within the house where she could rear her animals without affecting the cleanliness of the environment.

Umar stated that the training has transformed his mindset and improved communication within his family. He added that the knowledge gained from the GALS training has inspired him to share these lessons with other families in his community so they can resolve household conflicts peacefully and strengthen family relationships.

Supporting SRHR Access for Naomi, a Survivor with Disability

Naomi, a deaf woman and survivor of repeated sexual assault that led to three unplanned births, found new hope through the intervention of a peer educator, under the **Increasing Sexual and Reproductive Autonomy among Women and Girls project**. Her family, after learning about the work of peer educators in her community, reached out to Christiana (one of the peer educator) for support. Naomi's situation was particularly complex, as she was unable to identify her assailant or access family planning services independently. Understanding this vulnerability, Christiana worked closely with Naomi's family to connect her with International Medical Corps (IMC), a trusted service provider in the area. Through this referral, Naomi is now receiving family planning services tailored to her needs and has also been supported with a dignity kit. Her story reflects not only improved access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for persons with disabilities but also the inclusion of vulnerable groups in reproductive health interventions across Borno State



Safeguarding and Ethical Reporting

ZEGCAWIS recognises the sensitivity of its work with women, girls, children, survivors of violence, persons with disabilities, and conflict-affected communities.

All programme documentation, storytelling, referrals, data collection, and reporting are guided by the principles of dignity, informed consent, confidentiality, child protection, survivor-centred practice, disability inclusion, and do no harm.

Personal stories included in this report are presented with care to protect the dignity, safety, and identity of participants, especially in relation to GBV, SRHR, child health, disability, and protection-related interventions.



Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL)

In 2025, ZEGCAWIS strengthened its Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning systems to improve programme quality, data reliability, and community accountability.

Routine monitoring was conducted through field supervision, real-time data collection, digital reporting tools, school and community-based tracking, reflection sessions, and beneficiary feedback mechanisms.

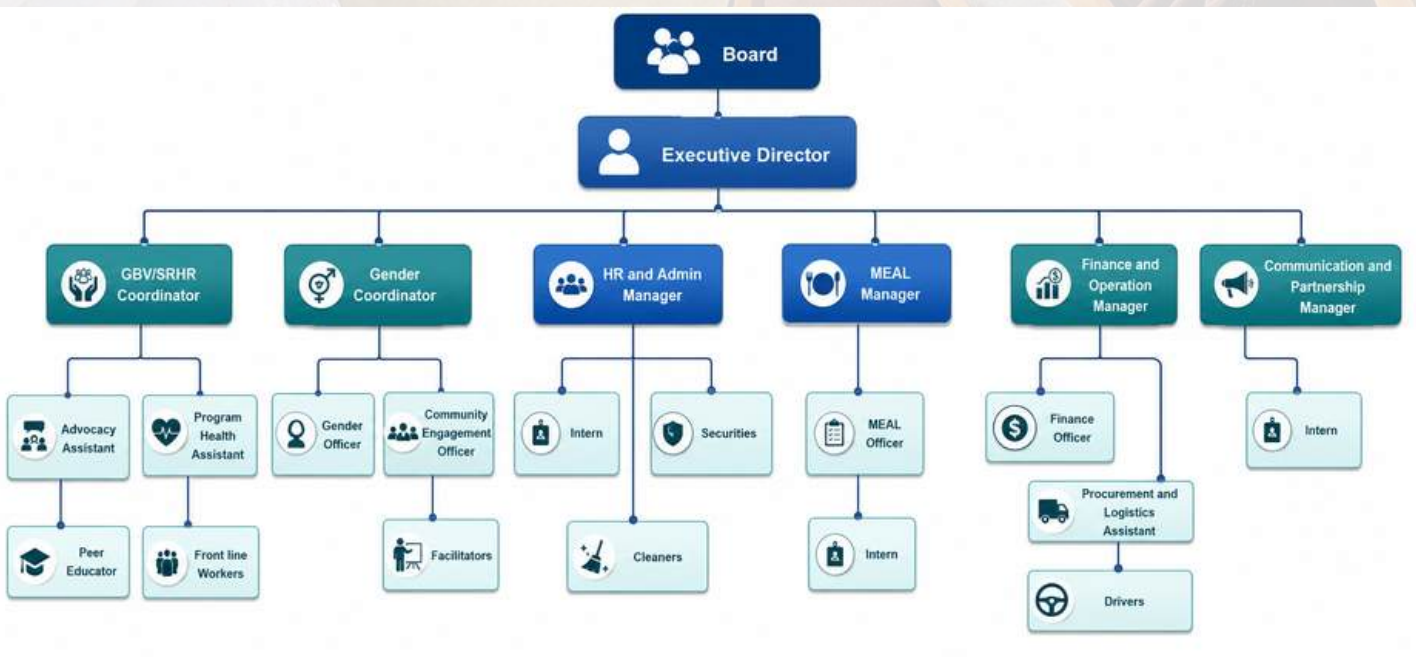
Digital tools such as CommCare Connect improved data accuracy and timely reporting during the child health campaign, while monitoring across MHM, SRHR, GBV, gender equality, and social cohesion interventions helped identify implementation gaps, improve referrals, strengthen inclusion, and adapt programming to community realities.

ZEGCAWIS also strengthened accountability to affected populations by integrating feedback and complaint-response channels into programme activities. Community members, women, girls, peer educators, frontline workers, and local leaders shared concerns, recommendations, and lessons that informed programme improvement.

Organizational Capacity



Zenith for Girl Child and Women Initiative Support has a structured organisational capacity designed to implement interventions effectively. The organisation operates with a workforce of **30** staff members supported by **107** volunteers, including frontline health workers, field community mobilisers, and peer educators. Its leadership structure is headed by an Executive Director, supported by **4** managers responsible for Operations and Finance, Communication and Partnerships, Human Resources, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL). The organisation also has **2** coordinators overseeing gender-related programmes and GBV/SRHR activities. Operational activities are carried out by officers in community engagement, finance, MEAL, and gender units, alongside assistants responsible for procurement, logistics, and programme health support. Additional personnel include field facilitators, interns, drivers, office assistants, cleaners, and security personnel who support administrative and field operations. Furthermore, the volunteer network comprises **30** peer educators, **80** frontline health workers (FLHWs), and **7** community mobilisers, demonstrating the organisation's strong grassroots presence and community outreach capacity. The organisational organogram is below:



FINANCIAL SUMMARY



TOTAL FUNDS MANAGED

₦280,064,897

Funding by Project

Project	Amount (₦)	Percentage of Total
Malala Fund Project	132,190,987	47.2%
Ipas Project	79,157,710	28.3%
AGEWEDS/SEPIN SUSI Project	68,716,200	24.5%
Total	280,064,897	100%

Expenditure by Category

Category	Amount (₦)
Programme Implementation	155,302,769
Project Personnel	76,648,197
Project Operations	11,128,750
Total	280,064,897

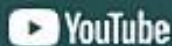
Communication & Media Impact

Social Media Analytics

2025



Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support



Zenith of the Girl Child and Women Initiative Support (ZECCAWis)



@zegcawis



@zegcawisorg



@zegcawiszegcawis

Scan Me



Future Outlook 2026 Priorities

In 2026, ZEGCAWIS will focus on consolidation, scale, evidence, and sustainability.

Key priorities include:

- 1 Expanding access to inclusive and youth-friendly SRHR information and services for women, girls, adolescents, married women, and underserved communities.
- 2 Strengthening girls' education advocacy, with a focus on school retention, menstrual dignity, learning materials, safe school environments, and support for out-of-school girls.
- 3 Deepening GBV prevention and response through community sensitisation, survivor-centred referrals, VAPP Law awareness, and stronger protection pathways.
- 4 Promoting disability inclusion by ensuring that persons with disabilities are meaningfully included in programme design, service access, advocacy, and decision-making spaces.
- 5 Strengthening community-led social cohesion, women's participation, and dialogue platforms across target LGAs.
- 6 Improving evidence generation through stronger MEAL systems, better data visualisation, documented outcomes, and regular learning reviews.
- 7 Diversifying funding through stronger donor engagement, private sector partnerships, government collaboration, and strategic visibility.



Call to Partnership

ZEGCAWIS invites **donors, government institutions, development partners, private-sector actors, community leaders, and civil society organisations** to partner with us to expand dignity, safety, education, health, and opportunity for women, girls, children, and vulnerable communities.

The work ahead requires shared responsibility. With stronger partnerships, deeper investment, and sustained community trust, ZEGCAWIS is ready to scale proven interventions, strengthen systems, and drive lasting change across conflict-affected and underserved communities.

Together, we can build a future where every woman and girl is protected, educated, empowered, and able to reach her full potential.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



ZEGCAWIS

SDGs of Coverage



Special Thanks to OUR PARTNERS AND DONORS



**Together
We Excel**

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