

Advocacy toolkit case studies

MOBILISING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN ZIMBABWE

THEMES: Children and education
HIV

ADVOCACY APPROACHES: Community mobilisation
Mobilising people and campaigning
Working in alliances and coalitions

Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended hands (ZOE) is a Tearfund partner that works with orphans and vulnerable children in one of Zimbabwe's main cities. Many of the children and their families are living with or affected by HIV. During the development of the country's constitution, ZOE belonged to a coalition of child-focused agencies that worked to ensure that children's issues were considered and integrated into the development of the constitution. As part of this, they and the other members of the coalition mobilised children and their families to gather in the city centre. While speeches were given by the city councillors and members of the coalition, a mainstream radio station broadcast the event live on air. Everyone then marched to the city hall with a police escort, which was required by law, and the children and their families were given an audience with the city councillors. This gave them the opportunity to ask for their rights to be integrated into the constitution. However, because of government restrictions, they were unable to assess whether or not their requests were taken into account in the constitution development process.