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## Advocacy case studies

# EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO ADVOCATE IN ZAMBIA

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<b>COUNTRY:</b>	<b>Zambia</b>
<b>THEMES:</b>	<b>Children and education; governance; land and property</b>
<b>ADVOCACY APPROACHES:</b>	<b>Demonstrating good practice; educating community members; government officials: lobbying; research and analysis</b>

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In Zambia, Tearfund partner Jubilee Centre set up a Junior Parliament, with the aim of involving young people in the issues affecting them and their communities, and equipping them to engage with government officials to see these addressed. The idea was to offer young people a chance to have their say on development issues, and learn how government decisions are made and implemented, in order to create a better future for their communities.

In Kanyama, near Lusaka, the Junior Parliament identified that dumped rubbish was a major issue that was not being addressed. So they came together, mobilising young people from the local community as well. They debated how to resolve the problem, raising issues such as health concerns associated with unmanaged waste, including the spread of cholera and other diseases. They emphasised that it is the government's responsibility to collect dumped rubbish in order to maintain a clean, safe environment for people to live in. The debate successfully raised the profile of the issue, and within a few days the government had sent trucks to clear the waste. Moreover, many more young people were inspired to get involved with the Junior Parliament as a result. To share what the Junior Parliament had achieved, Jubilee Centre created a video, ['We Will Not Be Silent'](#), telling the story in the words of one of its members.

The Junior Parliament also researched the government's educational provision for orphans and other vulnerable children, highlighting that schools were failing to meet the needs of children with disabilities and those with special needs in particular. They invited the local Member of Parliament to debate these issues with them at a meeting with the local community. The young people held him to account on their concerns, even calling him out as he attempted to evade a question. The MP expressed his appreciation for the research the young people had conducted, and said how impressed he was with their progress since the last debate.

More recently, the Junior Parliament also conducted research in a number of government departments to find out what the government was doing to address poverty, in preparation for a debate they were holding on the topic. The debate was attended by representatives from a wide variety of sectors, including government, business and the church, as well as other young people, such as students. Members of the Junior Parliament asked what the government was doing to involve young people in addressing issues of poverty, and challenged government leaders with difficult questions. The Youth Development Officer at the Ministry of Youth commented on how pleased she was to see these young people visiting her office and learning about political issues.

Jubilee Centre also wanted to teach members of the Junior Parliament about the importance of practical actions to underpin their advocacy efforts, and of finding local solutions without involving the government where possible. With this in mind, they undertook a community social responsibility project at Kawama Clinic in Chifubu, during which they swept the clinic, painted the walls and cleared the surroundings of rubbish. Not only did the nurse in charge express her huge appreciation, but while they were cleaning, the young people realised that much of the rubbish on the premises had been thrown over the security fence from the neighbouring bars, and that a hole in the fence, allowed sewage to flow into the clinic grounds. Members of the Junior Parliament made plans to write to the area councillor, MP and the District Health Management Team to highlight these issues and see them addressed.