



ZAMBIA

Women, Business and the Law (WBL), in collaboration with the Global Financing Facility (GFF), has collected data on laws affecting women's and girls' access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), as well as frameworks supporting their implementation. Data were collected through desk research and a questionnaire administered to country experts. The analysis is organized around five indicators. For each indicator, the legal framework is assessed based on domestic laws and regulations. The supportive framework is assessed based on instruments—such as national policies, strategies, and guidelines—that are currently in effect and support the implementation of these laws.

INDICATOR		WHAT DOES IT MEASURE?	
		<i>Legal Frameworks</i>	<i>Supportive Frameworks</i>
	SRH rights	Right to SRH; guaranteed access to free SRH services without discrimination	Existence and contents of an operational SRH policy or strategy
	Violence against women and girls (VAWG)	Prohibition of female genital mutilations (FGM)	Adoption of measures to eradicate FGM
	Family planning	Absence of legal restrictions on SRH services, such as the need for consent from a husband, male guardian, parent or third party	Family planning guidelines or protocols
	Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)	Legal mandates for CSE in schools	Guidelines for delivery of CSE in schools
	Right to education	Girls' legal right to attend school during pregnancy and after childbirth	Policies to keep girls in school and allow pregnant and parenting students to attend school

LEGAL AND SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS

Zambia has a comprehensive and defined framework for:

SRH RIGHTS

The *Zambia Integrated Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan and Business Case 2021–2026* aims to expand equitable access to high-quality, rights-based family planning information and services. Its objectives include strengthening service delivery, increasing the use of quality family planning services across population groups, training health care providers, and engaging the private sector.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Only FGM of children is prohibited by the law, specifically the *Children's Code Act 2022*.

FAMILY PLANNING

No legal provisions require women to obtain consent from their husband or male guardian, or adolescents to obtain parental or a legal guardian's consent to access SRH services. Similarly, the law does not require any third-party consent that may restrict access to SRH.

Zambia's *Family Planning National Guidelines and Protocols* provide health care workers with guidance

on delivering quality family planning services, including counseling on contraceptive choices and use and other reproductive health issues.

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

In 2015, the Ministry of Education developed a curriculum incorporating CSE for out-of-school adolescents. CSE has also been integrated into school subjects, including Home Economics, Science, Social Studies, and languages.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The *Education Act* provides girls with the legal right to attend school after childbirth.

The *Girls Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihoods (GEWEL) Project*, launched in 2016, included the *Keeping Girls in School (KGS) Initiative* to improve access to secondary education for girls from extremely poor households.

Zambia's school re-entry policy prohibits the expulsion of pregnant students and provides for their return to school no later than one year after delivery. Its implementing guidelines set out procedures for schools and other stakeholders to manage student pregnancies and support girls' return to education.

POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

The data reveal gaps in Zambia's legal and supportive frameworks across the five indicators assessed. Strengthening these frameworks can help accelerate the country's progress toward gender equality and to improve health outcomes for women, children, and adolescents.

Zambia may wish to consider translating the following gaps into policy opportunities:

SRH RIGHTS

The law neither guarantees access to SRH services nor prohibits discrimination based on sex or gender, age, or marital status.

The *Zambia Integrated Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan and Business Case 2021 to 2026* does not explicitly include and budget any awareness or sensitization campaigns on SRH rights.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

While the *Children's Code Act 2022* prohibits FGM against children, it does not specifically penalize

parents or guardians for allowing their children to undergo FGM. FGM is not otherwise criminalized, including when performed across borders, and no measures to prevent or eradicate the practice have been adopted.

FAMILY PLANNING

The law does not guarantee access to SRH services in case practitioners raise conscientious objections.

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

The law does not mandate the provision of CSE in schools.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Girls do not have the legal right to attend school during pregnancy.

Policies allowing pregnant students to attend school have not been adopted.

WBL SRH LEGAL FRAMEWORKS DATA

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
SRH Rights	1.1 Does the law provide for the right to sexual and reproductive health?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	1.2 Does the law guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	1.2.1 If the answer to question 1.2 is Yes, does the law guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services free of cost?	N/A	
	1.3 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on sex/gender?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	1.4 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on age?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	1.5 Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to sexual and reproductive health services based on marital status?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
VAWG	2.1 Does the law criminalize FGM?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	2.1.1 If the answer to question 2.1 is Yes, is the individual performing the FGM procedure criminally responsible?	N/A	
	2.1.2 Is a parent or legal guardian criminally responsible for allowing FGM to be performed on a minor under their legal custody?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	2.2 Does the law criminalize cross-border FGM?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Family Planning	3.1 Is the law free of provisions requiring a husband or male guardian to consent for a woman to access sexual and reproductive health services?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	3.2. Is the law free of provisions requiring parental or a legal guardian's consent for an adolescent to access sexual and reproductive health services?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	3.3 Is the law free of provisions requiring any other form of third-party consent to access sexual and reproductive health services?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	3.4 Does the law guarantee sexual and reproductive service delivery in case practitioners raise conscientious objections?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
CSE	4.1 Does the law mandate comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Right to Education	5.1 Does the law provide for the right of pregnant girls to attend school?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	5.2 Does the law provide for the right of adolescent girls to attend school after childbirth?	Yes	The Education Act 2011, Sec. 25

WBL SRH SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS DATA

	QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCE
SRH Rights	1.1 Has the government adopted a sexual and reproductive health policy or strategy?	Yes	Zambia Integrated Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan and Business Case
	1.1.1 If the answer to question 1.1 is Yes, does the policy or strategy include the provision of sexual and reproductive health services among its targets/strategic actions?	Yes	Zambia Integrated Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan and Business Case
	1.1.2 If the answer to question 1.1 is Yes, does the policy or strategy include awareness campaigns among its targets/strategic actions?	No	Insufficient evidence located
VAWG	2.1 Has the government adopted measures aimed at eradicating FGM?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Family Planning	3.1. Has the government published guidelines on family planning?	Yes	Zambia Family Planning Guidelines and Protocols 2006
CSE	4.1 Has the government published guidelines for the delivery of CSE in schools?	Yes	Ministry of Education CSE Curriculum
Right to Education	5.1 Has the government adopted policies to keep girls in schools?	Yes	Girls Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihoods (GEWEL) Project
	5.2 Has the government adopted policies to allow pregnant students to attend school?	No	Insufficient evidence located
	5.3 Has the government adopted policies to allow adolescent parenting students to attend school?	Yes	Guidelines for the Re-Entry Policy, Ministry of Education

