GIRL CHILD NETWORK

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Girl Child Network Announces Blessing Nyasha Mazango Second New Executive Director

(For immediate Release)

(Blessing Nyasha Mazango)

The board of Girl Child Network in Zimbabwe has unveiled Blessing Nyasha Mazango as the second Executive Director of Girl Child Network set to take over from the Founding Executive Director, Betty Makoni.

Born in 1972 ,Blessing grew up in Matabeleland where she completed most of her primary and secondary education and she brings a wealth of knowledge on empowering women and girls from marginalised communities in farming, rural and high density suburbs .She persevered through education overcoming harsh times to obtain an Masters in Philosophy in the United Kingdom, a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Politics and BSc Project Planning and Management Diploma from the University of Zimbabwe.

Prior to her appointment to this new position, Blessing worked in the Ministry of Local Government where she participated in a number of water and sanitation projects and her experience working with marginalised women and girls in deprived communities pushed her to set up girls and women community based projects in Zimbabwe . She has balanced skills and knowledge of how community based organisations can complement government efforts. She has worked as a Youth development worker in the United Kingdom. Blessing has recently completed an action participatory research on youth development and empowerment with a focus on girls and she hopes to bring her own experience on girls through her findings .

The new GCN Executive Director said she has plans to bring in more girl child and community grassroots centred programs and take GCN to even greater heights; key among which is in the area of girls' empowerment.

`I am delighted to join GCN and carry on with the legacy started ten years ago by the founding Executive Director Betty Makoni and her students at Zengeza 1 High School. My priority is to develop and promote girl child centred programs and ensure girls are at the centre of the organisation . I am a mother of a girl and I have been a girl myself and so my own stories and the stories of all girls I meet daily will shape my leadership style of the organisation. GCN has achieved so much in the last ten years and it is a matter of putting everything together and move forward to continue supporting girls ,` said Blessing who is due to be officially sworn in as GCN second Executive Director on 1 October 2009 at Chitsotso Girls Empowerment Village a sacred place for Vazvare ,Princesses of Makoni.

Meanwhile the GCN board chairperson Veronica Nyoni broke the news and final decision of the board to the Founding Executive Director Betty Makoni who immediately sent her congratulations to Blessing and pledged full support .

`There is no job that is more fulfilling than to rescue a girl from abuse, forced marriage ,early pregnancy ,child prostitution and trafficking .At first when girls come in their miserable state, one would think that hope is lost .But when the girls are empowered and come back singing ,dancing ,smiling and laughing and say I am now a woman leader because of you ,it really gives some relief and sense of hope that after all each girl at a time must be empowered to move on. I want Blessing to know that GCN has so many good friends and supporters in and outside Zimbabwe who believe and trust what we do for the common good of girls and those are the friends and supporters you must stick to daily in this ever challenging job` said Betty who is now moving to be the President and Founder of Girl Child Network World Wide due to be launched on 4 September 2009 in Essex United Kingdom.

In related developments the GCN board is geared for more action after Violet Kaitano a prominent woman leader in Zimbabwe accepted appointment to the board .Veronica Nyoni ,the board chair and well known activist around rural girls welfare and education could not hide her delight.

`Violet brings new energy in GCN governance structure so does Blessing at Management Level and Betty Makoni now strategically positioned at the international level .GCN has started another decade long history with the most passionate women on girls issues at the helm of the organisation `,said Veronica.

Veronica has announced that an intensive induction and introduction plan has been put in place so that Blessing is well informed about the past, present and future of GCN before coming up with a final strategic plan. Ruth Bikwa the Girls Empowerment Village and one of the long serving members of GCN staff has been tasked to facilitate in country introductions and other formalities whilst Betty Makoni has been tasked to help Blessing be connected to all GCN international funding partners and supporters in an exercise expected to take at least two months.

Statement from Girl Child Network Board

You call 263 91 22 88 251 and leave a message for Blessing Nyasha Mazango or email gcn@zol.co.zw and Blessing Nyasha Mazango personal email address is nyashabm@yahoo.com