Zambia


Principles and general objectives of education

The goals of education as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (Educating our Future, 1996) as follows:

“(a) producing a learner capable of:

- being animated by a personally held set of civic, moral and spiritual values;
- developing an analytical, innovative, creative and constructive mind;
- appreciating the relationship between scientific thought, action and technology on the one hand, and sustenance of the quality of life on the other;
- demonstrating free expression of one's own ideas and exercising tolerance for other people’s views;
- cherishing and safeguarding individual liberties and human rights;
- appreciating in the preservation of the ecosystems in one’s immediate and distant environments;
- participation in the preservation of the ecosystems in one’s immediate and distant environments;
- maintaining and observing discipline and hard work as the cornerstones of personal and national development.

(b) increasing access to education and life skills training;

(c) building capacity for the provision of quality education;

(d) creating conditions for effective coordination of policies, plans and programmes;

(e) rationalizing resource mobilization and utilization.”

Current educational priorities and concerns

Zambia has been under one-party rule for over two decades. This one-party system laid little emphasis on the allocation of adequate resources for education. In addition to this, the economy declined and there was a decrease in the quality of education. The new government of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) wishes to make education a top priority on its agenda.

Following the structural adjustment programme, many ordinary Zambians are facing difficulties in meeting the basic education requirements for their children, because of the economic hardships coupled with unemployment and general poverty. Most of the infrastructure is very poor, making the provision of quality education extremely difficult. Learning and teaching materials are scarce and there is a marked reduction in teacher morale, mainly due to poor working conditions. Teachers have often moved to other sectors locally and within the region. There is currently an
insufficient number of schools at all levels and approximately 15% of the school age population is not enrolled because of lack of places. The 1990 population census showed that an estimated 66% of the adult population are illiterate (mainly women). In 1995, 26.7% of the population aged 15+ was illiterate.

The highly centralized management and administration of the education system has been a matter for concern. Centralization has had adverse effects on quality, efficiency and effectiveness. Consequently, the government has found it necessary to restructure the entire system, embarking on a comprehensive rehabilitation programme in the year 2000. In accordance with the MMD’s democratic principles, the education system has been liberalized to allow more participation of all stakeholders in the financing and administration of education. A decentralized system of management has been put into place: decision-making power has been handed out from the centre to the local levels such as districts and schools. The MDD has been working towards the expansion of educational facilities, especially for primary education, as well as improving the quality of education.

The programme is quite ambitious and includes a number of fundamental innovations and changes. Its major objectives are the following: to restructure the education system with a view to making it efficient and cost-effective; to promote gender equity in education; to increase the national budget allocation to education; to increase access to education and life-skills training; to rehabilitate the dilapidated infrastructure; to supply and maintain sufficient numbers of teachers; to build capacity for the provision of quality education; to create conditions for effective coordination of policies, plans and programmes.

The restructuring process has been governed by three principles, namely: decentralization, liberalization and cost-sharing. The government liberalized the provision of learning and teaching materials (such as textbooks, tools and equipment) as well as the establishment of learning institutions. Furthermore, although they must respect the government's educational policy, private organizations, individuals, religious bodies and local communities now have the right to establish and control their own schools. One major feature of the decentralization has been the establishment of Education Management Boards, through which decision-making power has devolved to the local level.

These reforms have had a positive impact. Such a decentralized system of management and administration has had several advantages, such as a quick response to problems and needs, and the involvement of the local community in decision-making, thereby creating a sense of belonging to the education system. Sufficient capacity exists in the system to admit all eligible 7-year-olds. Access and equity have improved due to the introduction of certain programmes as the Programme for the Advancement of Girls’ Education (PAGE), the emergence of community schools across the country, and the introduction of a community based, interactive radio programme targeting children who have never been to school. The quality of education has also improved due to better pre-service and in-service teacher training, new education management training programmes, a curriculum that is more responsive to society’s needs, and the introduction of primary reading programmes aimed to ensure that primary school children learn to read fluently and effectively across the curriculum.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
In 1999 the Ministry of Education together with international development agencies embarked on the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) to address the needs of grades 1–7. The programme covered the years from 1999 – 2002. The two main goals of BESSIP were to increase enrolment levels and improve the quality of education. In order to achieve these goals, nine components were established, namely: Overall Management; Infrastructure; Teacher Development, Deployment and Compensation; Educational Materials; Equity and Gender; School Health and Nutrition; Basic School Curriculum; Capacity Building and Decentralisation; and HIV & AIDS.

During the period 2003-2005, the government through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training implemented the Technical Education Sub-sector Investment Programme (TESSIP) under the supervision of the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA). The programme was born out of the realization that there was a mismatch between the skills acquired by Grade 12 school leavers and those demanded by the workplace—particularly in so far as quality and curriculum relevance were concerned. Therefore, the country’s TEVET reforms (2002-2007) are essentially to do with vocational training and is based on the need to develop a demand-driven national training system.

It is generally agreed that in spite of the many challenges that the Ministry of Education is faced with in the provision of basic education, it is on course to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015. Not only was free education from Grade 1 to 7 declared in 2002, but there is also in place an education Sector Strategic Plan (2003-2007). These efforts are a follow-up to a fairly successful BESSIP initiative that the country implemented with the assistance of cooperating partners in 1999 and wound up in 2002. There are still a number of strategic challenges for this level of education and which the Ministry of Education will need to deal with notably: high teacher attrition, demotivation and other related issues; lack of textbooks, equipment and laboratory infrastructure; problems in information sharing and its flow within the system and among stakeholders; poor quality of learning, fewer classroom places and learning hours; dependency on external financing; insufficient monitoring and evaluation to set and implement standards of curriculum, its quality and relevance; and low participation and completion rates especially among girls.

**Laws and other basic regulations concerning education**

Despite several changes that have occurred during the past three decades, the Education Act of 1966 continues to set the basic framework for the education system. The Act has not been comprehensively reviewed to cater for these changes and developments. Furthermore, because of insufficient facilities, it has not been possible at present to make education compulsory. There is no penalty to parents whose children are not enrolled in schools.

The TVET Act of 2005 has been approved in order to: establish the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) and define its functions; provide for the establishment of government institutions of technical education, vocational and entrepreneurship training; constitute management boards for institutions established under the Act and provide for their composition;
regulate all institutions providing technical education, vocational and entrepreneurship training; repeal the Technical Education and Vocational Training Act 1972; and provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing.

**Administration and management of the education system**

The **Ministry of Education** is responsible for education in the country. The Minister is the political leader. The Permanent Secretary is the highest-ranking civil servant and is the head of the administration. He/she is assisted by three deputy permanent secretaries in charge of administration, staffing and technical co-operation, and by the chief inspector of schools in charge of professional matters. Although the Ministry of Education is responsible for early childhood learning (age group 0-6 years) and preschool education (3-6 years), it is the **Ministry of Local Government and Housing** (through the local councils) that keeps records of this level of education provision, in accordance with the Day Nurseries Act of 1967.

The head at the provincial level is the **Provincial Education Officer** who interprets and implements policy. He/she is assisted by the deputy provincial education officer, the senior education officer, the principal inspector of schools and the personnel officer. There are nine provinces in Zambia.

The head at the district level is the **District Education Officer** who is assisted by the education officer, the district inspector of schools and an executive officer. They ensure that schools have adequate provisions and are functioning properly.

Vocational training programmes offered to learners after Grade 9 are under the responsibility of the **Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development**, while those offered after Grade 12 are controlled by the **Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training**.

The **Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority** (TEVETA) was established in 2005 to regulate, facilitate and support the delivery of Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) in the country.

Other ministries offer non-formal education programmes; for example, the **Ministry of Community Development and Social Services** conducts literacy classes at the community level and offers courses in home economics (cookery, knitting, etc.).

Non-governmental organizations are implementing several programmes at the community level in various areas of concern, such as HIV/AIDS and population issues. Four of the eleven primary teacher training colleges are grant-aided institutions owned and managed by churches.
Zambia: structure of the education system

### Pre-school education

Pre-school education is for children in the age group 3–6 years. Pre-schools are operated by local authorities, local communities, NGOs and private individuals. Attendance is not compulsory.

### Primary education

Primary education is the first stage of basic education and it is not compulsory. Pupils are expected to enter primary school at the age of 7. Because of insufficient school places, there is often a backlog of pupils that could not be accommodated in Grade I, and it is not uncommon to admit pupils who are 8 or 9 years old. Primary education lasts seven years and is divided into two sections: lower (Grades I-IV) and upper (Grades V-VII). Pupils are expected to complete primary education by the age of 13. There are common examinations at the end of Grade VII, and successful pupils receive the certificate of primary education.
Secondary education

Secondary education is divided into two cycles: junior secondary, or the second stage of basic education, lasting two years (Grades VIII and IX); and the three-year senior secondary cycle (Grades X-XII). There are common examinations at the end of Grade IX for selection for the senior secondary school. At the end of Grade XII, students sit the School Certificate Examination, which is also used for selection for the university and colleges. This examination is similar to the General Certificate of Education, Ordinary-level (GCE O-level) in other Commonwealth countries. In Zambia, the GCE Advanced-level is not part of the school system; however, those who wish to take this examination can do so as private candidates.

Tertiary education is offered in universities, specialized institutes or colleges. Bachelor’s degree programmes last four years, while the Bachelor of Medicine takes seven years. There are other degree courses that take five to six years to complete. College certificates and diplomas courses take two and three years, respectively.

The school year begins in January and ends in December. It is divided into three terms of approximately three months duration, separated by vacation periods (approximately one month).

Information concerning the average duration of the school year, expressed in number of working weeks, is not available.

The financing of education

Resources allocated to education have been increasing over the years. But this has been outweighed by the increasing rate of population growth, which stood at 3.4% per year for the 1990-94 period. In 1994, government expenditure for education rose to 14.7% of the national budget.

On the whole, primary education consumed the largest share of the allocation (37.7%), followed by the university with 15.9% and secondary education with 12.2%. Only 14% was budgeted for capital projects.

The government will continue to pursue the policy of cost-sharing in the financing of education. Parents and communities will be asked to contribute to the education cost of their children in the form of user fees. Parents have been able to contribute to the maintenance of school structures through the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs). The fees charged by PTAs vary from school to school and from region to region.

Latest information available on education expenditure is for 2003. The Ministry of Education was allocated 4.21% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), of which 1.1% was externally financed. The proportion of this total public expenditure going to basic education stood at 45.7%, of which 97.9% was for personnel emoluments (Republic of Zambia, 2005).

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
The educational process

The Ministry of Education defines the school curriculum as a specification of the desired knowledge, competencies, skills, values and attitudes which school children in Zambia need to achieve. Developing a curriculum consists of five phases, involving: (i) the formulation of aims and objectives; (ii) the selection of learning experiences; (iii) the selection of content or subject matter through which certain types of experiences may be offered; (iv) the organization and integration of learning experiences and content with respect to the teaching and learning process within school and classroom; and (v) evaluation of the effectiveness of all aspects of these steps in achieving the goals.

Within the new decentralized system, the Ministry has retained responsibility for key national functions such as: making legislation, forming policy, mobilizing and allocating resources, developing a national curriculum, setting standards and evaluation, collecting and analysing data, and providing effective mechanisms for accountability at different levels. It is important to note that various stakeholders are involved in the curriculum development process including members of the community, and school teachers and administrators also make decisions regarding what is to be taught in the school.

There is an in-built consultative mechanism in the curriculum development process during a curriculum review exercise at the Curriculum Development Centre, which ensures that the views of society are incorporated in the new curriculum. The curriculum review begins with a national symposium where various stakeholders meet to express their views on the curriculum; these views are articulated by specialists in technical committees at workshops. The end result of this process is a set of draft syllabi, which are presented to the stakeholders at a second national symposium, so that they can verify that the curriculum issues that were raised in the first symposium have been taken into account. The syllabi undergo further scrutiny by relevant institutions and various subject curriculum committees. Finally, each syllabus is approved by the appropriate curriculum committee.

The Curriculum Development Centre implements and evaluates curriculum policies through various committees. It also develops, evaluates and approves instructional materials for use in schools. Evaluation and monitoring of the curriculum and curriculum materials is conducted by the Evaluation and Research Department of the Curriculum Development Centre.

There is a wide range of teaching and learning strategies used in Zambia. These include discussions, investigation, experiment, project work, field work, demonstration, inquiry, problem solving, brainstorming, research, drama, role play, theatre, reflection and debate. A pupil-centered approach to teaching and learning is emphasized for both primary and secondary levels. At lower basic and middle basic levels, teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of teaching techniques that promote active pupil participation and class interaction, in particular methods which encourage learners to reflect, think and do rather than merely reproduce from memory. Since learning is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, pupils at the upper basic level are provided with opportunities to develop the skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate and to think critically, rationally and creatively.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
The Ministry of Education may change and adapt the curriculum if: there is a change in government, in the teacher education curriculum, or in national or international demand for inclusion of cross-cutting issues or disciplines such as family life education, reproductive health, environmental education, human rights, etc. Such changes lead to a review of the syllabus and to the development of teaching and learning materials. Curriculum change and adaptation are effected by curriculum specialists, examinations specialists, university and college lectures, teachers, NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) and churches.

Pre-primary education

The Ministry of Education recognizes the importance in the development of a child’s social, physical, mental and emotional capacities. Pre-schools are operated by local authorities, communities, NGOs and private individuals. The Ministry assists pre-school institutions by training pre-school teachers, monitoring standards, and making curriculum guidelines.

The number of pre-schools increased from 300 in 1990 to 443 in 1995. The target of increasing the gross enrolment ratio at this level from 2% in 1990 to 25% by the year 2000 was ambitious. Indications from available data show that only 7.3% of the children in the age group 3-6 years had attended some form of pre-school in 1998.

Opportunities for pre-school education are mainly for children in urban areas—especially in the most urbanized regions like Copperbelt and Lusaka. Rural areas and predominantly rural regions have very few children who experienced pre-school education.

By 1998, out of 248,698 children enrolled in Grade I, a total of 21,139 had had access to pre-school education.

The number of trained teachers in pre-schools increased from 473 in 1990 to more than 1,200 in 1997. In addition, there was an increase in the number of pre-school teacher training colleges established by private individuals and institutions. It must also be pointed out that the Zambia Institute for Special Education introduced a course for teachers of pre-school disabled children (Ministry of Education, 1999).

The Ministry’s concern in the last ten years has been the establishment of early childhood programmes for children living in rural areas and poor urban areas. The Ministry resolved to work with partner ministries, district and urban councils, local communities, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, families and individuals in order to increase access at this level.

Out of the 2,668 ECCDE facilities visited in 2004, and delivering services to some 32,460 learners, 64.2% are in the private sector. In line with population projections and the available enrolment figures, only 1.9% of boys, 2.5% of girls and a total of 2.2% of children aged 3 to 6 years were accessing some form of ECCDE by 2004. This seems to confirm the assertion that the proportion of pupils accessing and participating in the available ECCDE services is negligible. However, age specific data obtained at school entry indicated that only 8.8% of children aged 7 had attended some form of early childhood education. It was also observed that out of the 2,166

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
teaching, only 559 are based in rural areas while 1,589 are based in urban areas; 29.7% of the rural teachers are male while 70.3% are female. On the other hand, only 21.8% of the urban teachers are male while 78.16% are female. When desegregated according to rural and urban locations, the rural pupil/teacher ratio is 22 pupils to every teacher, while in urban areas there are 15 pupils to every teacher.

**Primary education**

The Ministry’s first and foremost priorities for lower and middle basic education are to ensure that pupils master essential literacy and numeracy skills; pupils are also intended to acquire a set of life skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to cater for themselves and their families, to lead a healthy life, and to sustain their environment.

There are four types of primary schools in Zambia: government, private, grant-aided and community schools. Most primary schools are government controlled.

Community schools emerged as a response to the unmet demand for school places among the poor and other disadvantaged groups. These schools are inexpensive, close to home, less demanding in entry requirements and are managed by communities. Community schools emphasize literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills.

The number of community schools grew from 55 in 1996 to 373 in 1999. Equally, enrolments increased from 6,599 in 1996 to 47,276 in 1999. The number of community schools registered with the Zambia Community Schools Secretariat (ZCSS) increased seven times in three years from 1996 to 1999. The ZCSS, an umbrella NGO, was formed in 1997 to enable communities to participate in the running of community schools. In 1998, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Ministry of Education and the ZCSS which recognized the role played by the community schools in the provision of education and obliged the ministry to provide learning materials, educational advisors and pay an agreed number of trained teachers (Ministry of Education, 1999).

The table below shows the teaching subjects and the average number of weekly periods allocated to each of them in each grade:

*Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)*
Primary education: weekly lesson timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Lower basic</th>
<th></th>
<th>Middle basic</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambian language(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental science</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, environment and home economics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology studies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive arts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total weekly hours: 20h 25.5h 27h 27h 30.5h 30.5h 30.5h

Source: Ministry of Education, 2000

Note:
Areas to be covered under the teaching subjects:

**Literacy**
- Grade I: learning to read and write in a Zambian language and to use a computer.
- Grade II: learning to read and write in English and to use a computer.
- Grades III–IV: consolidating literacy skills in English and Zambian languages, and use of computer.
- Grades V–VII: developing literacy skills in English and in a Zambian language. Applying such skills on computers.

**Zambian language**
- Grade I: listening, comprehension, vocabulary, oral expression.
- Grade II: listening, comprehension, vocabulary, spoken and written expression, reading.
- Grades V–VII: oral communication skills in the most familiar language; literature and culture; competence in a second Zambian language. Life skills: thinking and learning skills, problem solving, concept formulation, analytic and creative skills.

**English language**
- Grade I: listening, comprehension, vocabulary, oral expression.
- Grade II: listening, comprehension, oral expression.
- Grades V–VII: English language, literature and culture; oral communication skills. Life skills: thinking and learning skills, problem solving, concept formulation, analytic and creative skills. Basic computer literacy.

**Numeracy**
- Grades I–II: basic understanding of numbers, volume and size.

**Mathematics**
- Grades III–IV: including life skills (buying, selling, negotiating prices) and using numeracy in the daily life.
- Grades V–VII: including arithmetic and geometry.

**Environmental science**

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Grade II: ‘Me and my immediate environment’; hygiene, health, diseases, food and nutrition; social life skills.

Grades III–IV: Living in harmony with the environment; hygiene, health, diseases, nutrition and food security; understanding geography and science basic concepts. Developing respect for all forms of life.

Science, environment and home economics

Grades V–VII: environmental education; agriculture; geography; food security; nutrition.

Social studies

Grade I: social studies; spiritual and moral education; health issues (hygiene, nutrition and diseases); environment.

Grade II: ‘Me and the other people’; values and attitudes; spiritual and moral education; social and psychological life skills.

Grades III–IV: ‘Me and other people in the village, town and nation’; spiritual and moral education; history of Zambia; social and psychological life skills.

Grades V–VII: society and the individual; history; civics; religious and moral education; reproductive health; social and psycho-social life skills.

Technology studies

Grades V–VII: design; industrial arts; construction and maintenance; using tools; practical life skills; psychomotor skills.

Expressive arts

Grades V–VII: art, drawing, music, dance, theatre, Zambian traditional culture.

Physical development

Grade I: physical education/sports; using tools and materials; drawing, psychomotor skills.

Grade II: physical education/sports; games; using tools and materials; drawing; practical life skills; psychomotor skills.

Grades III–IV: physical education/sports; games; dance/music; drawing; using basic tools; practical life skills.

Grades V–VII: physical education, games and sports activities.

The medium of instruction is mainly English, but the teacher may use a local language to help those pupils who may experience problems in understanding English. In each grade there is continuous assessment done by the teachers, as they progress from topic to topic. Teachers also evaluate their own teaching in each class. Progression of pupils from one grade to another within the same level is automatic. At the end of Grade VII, pupils sit the examination prepared by the Examinations Council of Zambia (EMZ). Successful pupils receive the certificate of primary education and, depending upon their marks, they gain access to secondary education.

The primary school system is generally inefficient. Repetition and drop-out rates are high and the retention rate is very low. In 1994, only about 74% of children enrolled reached Grade VII, while 21% dropped out for various reasons. The majority of those who dropped out are girls, mainly due to early marriages and pregnancies. There is an alarmingly high rate of repetition, especially at the examination levels. Pupils tend to repeat several times in order to improve their marks so as to gain access to secondary school. In 2000/01, the gross enrolment ratio for primary school has improved slightly, reaching 78.15%. In 1998/99, the teacher-pupil ratio was 1:45. Most recent data are shown in the tables below:
### Basic schools by level and province, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Gr. 1-4</th>
<th>Gr. 1-7</th>
<th>Gr. 8-9</th>
<th>Gr. 1-9</th>
<th>Multigr</th>
<th>Gr. 1-12</th>
<th>Unk.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copperbelt</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luapula</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusaka</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Western</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>906</td>
<td>3,587</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>6,796</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Republic of Zambia, 2005.*

### Enrolment in basic schools (grades 1–9), by gender and province in 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>% (F)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Tot.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>142,058</td>
<td>133,897</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>275,955</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copperbelt</td>
<td>221,156</td>
<td>221,485</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>442,641</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>142,374</td>
<td>132,280</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>274,654</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luapula</td>
<td>105,057</td>
<td>91,521</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>196,578</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusaka</td>
<td>142,414</td>
<td>146,472</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>288,886</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Western</td>
<td>81,435</td>
<td>72,569</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>154,004</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>196,426</td>
<td>167,972</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>364,398</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>182,402</td>
<td>171,543</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>353,945</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>88,845</td>
<td>82,472</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>171,317</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,302,167</td>
<td>1,220,211</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>2,522,378</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Basic schools: gross enrolment ratio by gender and province, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Grade 1 to 7</th>
<th>Grade 1 to 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>114.7</td>
<td>108.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copperbelt</td>
<td>115.8</td>
<td>113.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luapula</td>
<td>102.5</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusaka</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Western</td>
<td>112.8</td>
<td>103.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>131.2</td>
<td>114.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>120.1</td>
<td>112.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>105.7</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td>108.5</td>
<td>102.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basic school teachers by agency/type and province, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>GRZ</th>
<th>Grant Aid</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Comm.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>4,082</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>4,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copperbelt</td>
<td>7,444</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>9,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>3,475</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>4,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luapula</td>
<td>2,911</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>3,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusaka</td>
<td>4,675</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1,473</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>6,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Western</td>
<td>2,535</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>2,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>4,173</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>5,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>4,907</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>6,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>3,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>37,005</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>3,736</td>
<td>3,947</td>
<td>45,772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to promote the education of girls, a positive discrimination in Grade VII examinations has been adopted. Girls have a lower cut-off point for selection for Grade VIII (and also for Grade X). More affirmative actions will be introduced in the new education policy. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has already embarked on some practical measures, such as sensitizing educational personnel at various levels in gender-related issues. There are also logistical problems that hinder the participation of girls. There are more school places for boys than for girls. Some boys schools have already been opened to girls, as a move to create more spaces.

In 1994, the average primary school class size at the national level was 37. It should be borne in mind that, although the national class size tends to appear small, in reality the size for urban schools is much higher than the statistics show. At the lower primary level, one class could have as many as 60 pupils or as few as 25 pupils. Generally, class sizes for the upper primary section tend to be smaller than those for the lower primary section.

A basic education curriculum review, started in 1993 and completed in 1996, dealt with issues of national concern including population education, environmental education, drug education, HIV/AIDS prevention, education for democracy and human rights. Another major curriculum reform at the basic education level began in 1998. As a result, the curriculum is now outcomes-based, affords more learning time, uses continuous assessment methods, concentrates on fewer subjects, emphasizes the development of basic literacy and numeracy, includes local content, and comprises life skills education.

**Secondary education**

At the junior secondary level, the following compulsory subjects are taught: English, mathematics, environmental science, history, geography and civics. Optional subjects include: religious education, commercial subjects (i.e. office practice, typing, bookkeeping), industrial arts (i.e. technical drawing, woodwork, metalwork), music, creative art, home economics and French.

Concerning the compulsory subjects, the average number of weekly periods allocated to each of them is as follows:

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
At the senior secondary level, the following subjects are taught: English, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry (physical science), English literature, geography, history, Zambian languages, commerce, principles of accounts, additional mathematics, additional science, industrial arts, arts, fashion and fabrics, food and nutrition, and religious education.

All subjects throughout the junior and secondary school levels are taught in English, except Zambian languages. There are common examinations at the end of Grade IX for selection for the senior secondary school. At the end of Grade XII, students sit the School Certificate Examination which is also used for selection for the university and colleges. This examination is similar to the General Certificate of Education Ordinary-level (GCE O-level) in other Commonwealth countries. The table below shows the results of the Grade IX examinations during the period 1991-94:

**Grade IX progression rate by year (1991-94)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of candidates</th>
<th>No. of candidates selected</th>
<th>Progression (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>82,500</td>
<td>16,708</td>
<td>20.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>103,412</td>
<td>16,812</td>
<td>16.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>124,908</td>
<td>16,660</td>
<td>16.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>99,994</td>
<td>18,113</td>
<td>18.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2000/01, the gross enrolment ratio for secondary school was only 23.5%. In 1998/99 the teacher-student ratio was 1:29. In 1995, the average secondary school class size at national level was 48.4. There is a variation in the average class size according to regions, from a minimum of 40 (Western region) to a maximum of about 88 (Lusaka and Southern regions). The class size tends to be bigger in urban schools.

High school education in Zambia is offered in Grades 10-12. Admission to high school is based on performance in the terminal examinations at Grade 9. Historically, primary (Grades 1-7) and secondary (Grades 8-12) education was offered in separate schools but this has now changed with the introduction of a nine-year basic education system. The goal of high school education is to enable every pupil to
become a well educated person who is useful to society and who is adequately prepared to better his or her education and become a self-supporting worker.

There are three types of high schools in Zambia, e.g. government owned, those owned by faith-based organizations and the privately owned ones. Government schools, have since 1996 been offering, in addition to normal morning session, parallel classes in the afternoon known as Academic Production Units (APU). In 2004, there were 112,863 students enrolled in high schools (Grades 10-12). In 2003, there were a total of 7,879 teachers in public high schools broken down as follows: 5,442 male and 2,394 female (Republic of Zambia, 2005).

Before the 1990s, Zambian high schools followed syllabi prepared at Cambridge in the United Kingdom. In the early 1990s, however, the Ministry decided to include local content into the curriculum for Grades X-XII. Subject technical curriculum committees were formed, and development teams were constituted for each subject to develop that subject's syllabus, including content, objectives, scope and sequence chart. Once the syllabi were developed they were presented to the technical curriculum committees and to various educational institutions such as the university and colleges for their input. Once the syllabi were approved, pupil textbooks and teacher guides were developed by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). The developed materials were evaluated through an internal evaluation system in the evaluation department at CDC. In the year 2000, all syllabi were revised in order to include environmental education at the high school level.

**Assessing learning achievement nationwide**

The process of defining learning competencies at the primary education level has started beginning with Grade IV. The development of a national testing instrument has been completed. Nevertheless, the establishment of benchmarks is in its infancy.

The Southern Africa Consortium for the Measurement of Educational Quality study of 1995 was sponsored by the UNESCO International Institute of Educational Planning. The study prepared tests that were designed to measure reading ability of Grade VI pupils. The tests indicated minimum and desirable performance standards. The following were the main findings of the study:

- only 25.8% of the Grade VI pupils reached minimum mastery level.
- only 2.4% reached the desirable mastery level.
- with the exception of schools in the Western and Luapula provinces, urban schools performed better than rural schools;
- boys performed better than girls: 28% of the boys as compared to 23.1% of the girls attained minimum mastery level.
- pupils from high-income families performed better than those from low-income families.
The National Assessment System (NAS) has been established to measure levels of learning achievement in reading and numeracy. The NAS also assessed contextual factors and their effect on learning achievement. It is designed for Grade V pupils and administered by the Examinations Council of Zambia. The assessment was first conducted in mid-1999, the second in 2001 and the third one in 2003. The table below presents trends in learning achievement:

### Proportion of pupils attaining defined levels of competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>7,156</td>
<td>7,233</td>
<td>7,332</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>7,117</td>
<td>7,249</td>
<td>7,278</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lcimbemba</td>
<td>1,467</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silozi</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitonga</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinyanja</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>1,518</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Higher education

There is in the country a wide diversity of tertiary education institutions ranging from various colleges and training centres to universities. Many of these, such as the two public universities and most of the teacher training colleges pertain to the Ministry of Education. Others, such as the technical institutions, belong to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training while others pertain to such Ministries as Health and Agriculture. The total number of students enrolled in all these institutions in 2000 was 24,648 (7,551 in the universities, 5,878 in teacher training colleges and 11,219 in the other colleges). Technical institutes and colleges offer a wide range of programmes:

- Technologist level/diploma (three-year course);
- Technician level/advanced certificate;
- Craft certificate level.

Extension studies are also available for those who cannot attend full-time programmes.

The two universities are the University of Zambia (UNZA), with nine faculties, and the Copperbelt University (CU) with six faculties. In 1994, the total enrolment was about 6,000 students—4,592 at UNZA and 1,393 at CU. In recent years, the completion rate for female students decreased drastically in comparison to that of male students.

The university education has, over the years, suffered from a brain drain. Its qualified staff have gone into other sectors or other countries, where salaries are
higher and conditions of service are better. Between 1984 and 1994, the university lost about 210 lecturers, of whom 60% were Ph.D. holders. Replacement of qualified staff is difficult and costly. Because of the loss of academic staff, the few that are available are over-extended, thus jeopardizing the quality of teaching and research.

The UNZA receives most of its funding from the government in form of grants and student bursaries. In 2002 the estimated allocation for the two public universities (UNZA and the CBU) was K6.5 billion which represented 5% of the total education budget.

Special education

The government recognizes the importance of providing educational opportunities to children with special education needs. Four senior inspectors and an education officer are in charge of special education at the Ministry Headquarters. There is a regional inspector for special education for each of the nine provinces.

The government policy encourages the integration of handicapped children in regular schools throughout the country. A special unit is set up in schools and a specialized teacher is assigned to head the unit. Where possible, each school caters to only one type of disability.

In 1995, there were thirty-one special education institutions: twenty-eight were at the primary, one at the secondary and two at the tertiary education level. There were 80 special units, of which 52 were in primary and 28 in secondary schools. There were special residential schools in different parts of the country—five for the blind, two for the deaf, and five for the physically handicapped.

At the tertiary level, integration is also encouraged. Special units exist in teacher training colleges—four for the visually impaired, one for the deaf, one for the physically handicapped, and one in the in-service college.

Teachers specializing in special education must have had an initial teacher training, three years of teaching experience and must have completed a one-year training course at the in-service college.

Private education

The government encourages partnership in the provision of education, in accordance with the policy of liberalization promoted by the Movement for Multi-party Democracy. The private sector can establish and administer schools at all levels. There are schools owned by individuals, religious organizations, communities and companies. The quality of education in some private schools is considered to be higher than that of government schools because of many factors. The classes are small in terms of pupil-teacher ratio and there is a sufficient stock of learning materials.

Teachers are well paid and this reinforces a high morale. Some international companies may wish to offer education of good international quality to the children of their employees. Generally, private schools follow the official curriculum but some
company-owned schools follow international curricula—such as the British system curricula).

In 1990, there were 117 private schools established throughout Zambia, of which sixty were secondary schools, fifty-three primary schools, and four correspondence schools.

**Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure**

A UNESCO-sponsored study carried out in 1993 revealed that there was a critical shortage of school textbooks and other teaching materials. The study also acknowledged that the infrastructure for developing publishing and distribution of books already exists. The Curriculum Development Centre, the Education Publishing House, Printpak Zambia and Zambia Printing Company are some of the existing structures which need to be strengthened. As a follow-up to the recommendation of this study, a National Book Policy is being developed. It is hoped that a Book Development Council will be established to ensure policy implementation.

The provision of textbooks has been liberalized and publishers can develop books for schools at their own risk. However, the Ministry of Education will continue to approve textbooks to be used in government schools.

Existing resources have not allowed the provision of computers for use in schools, but they are popular in in-service teacher training programmes and are extensively used at the tertiary level. The area of Educational Broadcasting Services has deteriorated to a great extent. Audio-visual equipment is not available in most schools. The Educational Broadcasting Services can access air time and studios on a commercial basis only, which would be unaffordable for the Ministry.

Library facilities in schools and in the country as a whole are scarce. There are no libraries in government primary schools. Although all primary schools have received small book collections with the aid of donors, much still remains to be done. Most secondary schools have no libraries and very few have trained librarians. In order to develop high reading skills levels, there is an urgent need to provide good reading materials.

**Adult and non-formal education**

The government encourages the provision of education through various channels. The Department of Continuing Education offers four main programmes to both youths and adults:

- junior and senior secondary courses for about 30,000 students enrolled in the National Correspondence College;
- open secondary schools with about 19,000 students enrolled;
- evening classes at the primary and secondary education levels for about 15,000 students;

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
training in specific skills for about 1,250 school leavers and adults in schools for continuing education.

The Department also provides a formal type of education and gives a second chance to students to re-enter the formal system.

The National Alliance for the Advancement of Literacy was founded in 1990, following the Jomtien Conference of Education for All, with the purpose of coordinating literacy activities in the country.

Between 1992 and 1995, a total of 33,225 females and 13,891 males participated in literacy programmes. Learners undergo a two-year course and after completion they obtain a certificate. Youths aged 9-14 enrol in basic literacy programmes, while those aged 15+ follow a functional literacy course.

Literacy campaign programmes face constraints mainly because of inadequate funding for the production of materials, an inadequate number of trained instructors and lack of transport.

In 2004, there were 495 institutions (classes) in Zambia offering Basic Literacy, 270 offering Functional Literacy and 148 offering Integrated Literacy programmes bringing the total to 913 classes covering all districts in the country. The literacy institutions had a total of 33,157 learners, of whom 14,391 were male and 18,766 were female. The learners were taught by 1,933 teachers. Of this figure, 885 were female and 1,048 were male; giving a teacher-student ratio of 17 learners per teacher. These teachers are mainly volunteers or part-time and with little or no formal training in teaching skills. The majority of teachers have completed Grade 9, while only a few of them completed Grade 12. The literacy rate in 2004 for those aged 15 and above was estimated to be 67.2% (Republic of Zambia, 2005).

**Teaching staff**

There are three categories of teachers in Zambia: (a) primary school certificate and diploma teachers; (b) secondary school diploma teachers; and (c) secondary school degree teachers.

Primary school certificate teachers follow a two-year training course at any of the eleven primary school teacher colleges. There is no specialization *per se* for this pre-service programme, as teachers are expected to handle all subjects offered at primary school. Primary school diploma teachers are trained at the National In-service Training College after completing the initial training from a primary school teacher college and having served in schools for some years. Primary school diploma teachers may obtain a diploma in special education from the Lusaka College for Teachers of the Handicapped.

Secondary school diploma teachers are trained at Nkrumah Teacher College, Copperbelt Secondary Teacher College, and Luanshya Technical and Vocational Teacher College. The latter is run by the Ministry of Science and Technology. They are qualified to teach at the junior secondary education level. There is another

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
category of secondary school diploma teachers who follow a three-year course in agriculture science at the Natural Resources Development College, belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Water Development. This category is qualified to teach agriculture science up to the senior secondary school level. In addition, teachers for arts and music are trained at the Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts and Commerce.

The University is responsible for all these programmes, with the exception of the courses at the Evelyn Hone College. Non-university institutions are associate colleges to the university, which determines the curriculum, monitors the standards and grants academic awards for each college.

Secondary school degree teachers are trained at the University of Zambia and are qualified to teach up to the senior secondary level. They can also teach at the teacher training colleges and as staff development fellows. During their study they take two teaching subjects and professional courses in education. A few of them may have a single major subject. In 1996, the University of Zambia launched a new degree in primary education and twenty students were admitted.

A private college, the George Benson College at Namwianga, offers a three-year training programme for secondary school teachers. In theory, diploma holders teach at the junior secondary level while university graduates teach senior grades. In practice, because of a shortage of university graduates—especially in mathematics, science and English—diploma holders from colleges also teach senior secondary classes.

The capacity of the Ministry of Education to offer in-service training programmes is very limited. In 1994, only 1% of serving teachers underwent formal training of some kind.

In June 1994, there were 47,519 publicly supported teachers in primary and secondary schools—36,697 or 77.2% in primary schools and 10,822 or 22.8% in secondary schools. About 1,900 teachers graduate annually from teacher training colleges. While the output of teachers from the colleges has remained static, the primary school system has been expanding rapidly. Colleges are unable to produce the numbers of teachers required in schools. Hence it is necessary to employ untrained teachers to keep the schools running. In 1994, 15% of primary school teachers were untrained.

The University of Zambia and all the colleges together train over 2,000 teachers annually; enough to staff 3,700 primary and 600 secondary schools adequately. But the staffing levels in schools are far from satisfactory, because of the high attrition rate of teachers. The Ministry of Education fails to retain its teachers because the conditions of service in the Zambian Teaching Service do not compare favourably with those obtained in other sectors within the country and in the neighbouring countries. About 10% of the teachers, therefore, leave the public education system every year.

Teachers have been introduced to the new content and to the new teaching and learning strategies through orientation workshops and in-service and pre-service
activities. The Basic Education Curriculum Reform of 1998 through 2001 has gone hand in hand with the new teacher education course, the Zambia Teacher Education course (ZATEC). The ZATEC, a two-year teacher education course composed of a college-based component and a school-based component, has enriched teaching and learning strategies at the basic education level. Indeed, the ZATEC advocates the development of planning, teaching, evaluating and interpersonal skills; it has introduced team-teaching as an important feature, and the student teachers are given a chance to relate theory to practice during the school-based year.

**Educational research and information**

Most of the research in education is carried out by the universities. However, due to poor funding very little research work is undertaken. A number of studies have been carried out by the Zambia Education Research Network (ZERNET).

**References**


**Web resources**

