Zambia

Effective Delivery of Public Education Services

DISCUSSION PAPER

A review by AfriMAP
and the
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

Choolwe Beyani

March 2013
© 2013 Open Society Foundations

This publication is available as a pdf on the Open Society Foundations website or the AfriMAP website under a Creative Commons licence that allows copying and distributing the publication, only in its entirety, as long as it is attributed to the Open Society Foundations and used for non-commercial educational or public policy purposes. Photographs may not be used separately from the publication.

Published by:
The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

ISBN: 978-1-920677-20-6

For further information, please contact:
AfriMAP/OSISA
PO Box 678
Wits, 2050
Johannesburg
South Africa

www.afrimap.org
info@afrimap.org

www.osisa.org

Design and lay-out by COMPRESS.dsl  |  www.compressdsl.com
Contents

Introduction 1
I: International and national legal framework 4
II: Information collection, publication and management 6
III: Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation 8
IV: Budgeting and expenditure management 10
V: Human resource management 12
VI: External oversight mechanisms 14
VII: Development assistance 16
Recommendations 18
Introduction

This discussion paper is based on the research report on ‘Effective Delivery of Public Education Services in Zambia’, a review by AfriMap and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA).

The introduction of free basic education (FBE) in Zambia in 2002 during the Basic Educational Sub-sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) significantly improved access to primary education, especially after declining enrolments in the 1990s. Secondary and tertiary education, on the other hand, stagnated during the early years of FBE and BESSIP and access to these two levels was not expanded to accommodate the primary school student population (although there has been a slow increase in enrolments in tertiary education in the few existing institutions).

While there was increased access for children at primary school level, an insufficient budget was allocated to the sector, which undermined delivery and quality of education. There has also been a shortage of teachers and teaching and learning materials; general school infrastructure is inadequate. This state of affairs has had a negative impact on the effectiveness of delivering services at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in the education sector. The internal system is very inefficient and characterised by poor transition rates and poor reading and arithmetic competency skills at mid-primary level and generally unsatisfactory examination performance at both primary and secondary levels.

The literacy rates for youths (15–24 years of age) are reasonable at 67% for females and 82% for males in 2010, reflecting the gender disparity in favour of males common in the region. In terms of school participation available statistics show that girls’ primary gross enrolment ratio was 112%, while that for boys was 113%; girls’ primary net enrolment ratio was 94%, while that for boys was 91% in 2010.

Of concern is the fact that more than a quarter of a million children are out of school and 47% of those enrolled do not complete the primary school cycle. The dropout rates are within the 2–3% range and therefore not high but the transition rates at 54.2% for primary education (Grades 7 and 8) and 38.54% for secondary education (Grades 9–12) are a serious problem. The reasons for this may relate to long distances to school, poor school water and sanitation and pregnancies in the case of older girls.

In the past, policies guiding education service delivery in Zambia were often led from a political perspective. While colonial education may have been provided by both missionaries
and the colonial government for reasons other than economic development it was this neglect of the sector, evident at Zambia’s independence in 1964 with 107 university graduates, that led successive governments to ensure a better control of the system to implement its goals for the country’s development. More recently, policy-making has improved with the support of international partners and the opportunities provided through Zambia’s participation as a member of the international community.

The main school system has always consisted of a primary and a secondary school level. The primary sub-sector comprises seven years of schooling while the secondary school sub-sector is divided into two levels: Grades 8 and 9 (Forms 1 and 2), which required an examination and again selection to senior secondary levels of Grades 10–12 (Forms 3–5). Tertiary and higher education address skills development in colleges and institutes and university education offers Bachelors degrees (four years), as well as degrees in the Veterinary (five years) and Medicine (seven years) fields.

Early childhood care development and education (ECCDE), now recognised as the foundation to schooling and personality development has until recently been controlled by local councils (through the Ministry of Local Government) and basically fee-paying with the majority of the institutions owned by private businesses. The urban nature of this sub-sector has always had an inequitable aspect. However, the proliferation of such institutions and the orientation towards preschooling (preparation for formal schooling) has prompted the government to bring the sub-sector under the control of the Ministry of Education (MoE) so as to provide oversight to the many providers.

The state of education services in Zambia is both robust and vulnerable to shocks, creating challenges of increasing equitable access to schooling and improving its quality at all levels of education (primary, secondary and higher). Insufficient funding, low absorptive capacity to effectively and efficiently utilise given resources, lack of monitoring of the implementation of policies/plans, the poor functioning of designed governance structures and the ever-present effect of the HIV/Aids epidemic interact to present formidable challenges. There are, however, a number of actions that can be taken going forward. These include the following:

- The government needs to comply with its reporting obligations under the international human rights treaties, in particular on the right to education.
- There is a need to develop policy instruments to operationalise the new Education Act (2011) while its review is going on. The urgency with which the Act’s implementation should be implemented is dictated by the need to meet some of the international education goals whose deadline is imminent.
- The government needs to adequately fund the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and provide sufficient staff in order to improve education data collection, analysis and publication.
- Planning and budgeting for education should be integrated more closely so that budgeting is target specific and in line with the Annual Strategic Plan and five-year plans.
- Conditions of service for teachers need to be improved and remuneration packages made more attractive to invite and keep individuals in the teaching profession.
• The engagement of civil society as an oversight structure, along with local-level governance and management structures such as School Boards/Management Committees, parent–teacher associations and the media, needs to be strengthened.

• Zambia has found a way to balance government control of education with partnership with international and local organisations. In this regard strategies should focus on partnerships not only for leveraging resources but also for monitoring implementation in order to better report on results. Working better with civil society organisations (CSOs) and other local-level partners will increase effectiveness.
I: International and national legal framework

Zambia’s Constitution (1964) provides for equal and adequate provision of educational opportunities in all fields and at all levels in the form of Directive Principles, which are not legally enforceable. A new Act is under review in 2012. Legal provision for education is contained in the Education Act of 1964, repealed by the Education Act of 2011, which will govern the financing and management of education in Zambia.

Zambia is also a signatory to many international conventions that have guided response to provision of social services such as education. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, among others. The major concern raised in the main report is that the Bill of Rights, which forms the basis of Zambia’s social, political, economic and cultural rights, has still not been ratified.

The new Education Act has enough protection and provision for education to make progress towards national and international goals. It provides every person with a right to early childhood care, development and education, as well as basic education, including adult literacy education and high school education.

Article 15 provides for free basic education while Article 17 makes education compulsory and places the burden of responsibility on the parent to ensure that a child who attains school-going age attends school. Chapter 3 of the Article grants school authorities power and authority to follow up on the parents or guardians of a child who is not enrolled at an education institution, or where a learner who is enrolled fails to attend school without reasonable excuse, or fails to respond to a notice for exculpation designed to remedy the situation from school authorities is thereby penalised.

Article 18 prohibits the marriage of learners who are children and the Act penalises whoever marries a child to imprisonment of not less than 15 years. The Article further bans all government, grant-aided institutions and community schools from turning away a child from school on the grounds of failing to pay school fees, or particular clothing (e.g. uniform or sportswear). It also prohibits the turning away of a child who does not subscribe to the mission or religious practice of that educational institution.
The Act also guides authorities towards ensuring equality of access to education for children with special educational needs and promotes affirmative action in relation to this category of learners including identification, diagnosis and assessment for the placement of learners with special education needs. Other matters such as the decentralisation of education services and MoE policy instruments such as the reentry policy have been included in the new Education Act.
II: Information collection, publication and management

Data are essential for decision-making, programming and reporting. It is these very uses that make data also a complex aspect of management. In Zambia education-related data are generated by the MoE, which has an Education Management Information System (EMIS) in the Directorate of Planning. Data are collected annually through the School Census. These then inform the EMIS, a system with data from the whole education system covering all proprietors (since 2001) although better data come from the government’s schools and those that are grant-aided. The CSO responsible for national information obtains education data from the MoE’s sources and the data related to procurement from the Public Procurement Authority.

Generally, the School Census approach has gained prominence as a way of generating and reporting education statistics in an efficient and effective way to allow planning and monitoring education service delivery. The key challenges in this respect have tended to be on the approach to data collection as well as the timeliness of the reports.

In many countries such as Tanzania, Ghana, Liberia that use this approach, it was found that sending enumerators from the central ministry office to the regions was costly and that such people did not function well as they did not know the schools from which to collect the data. In many cases whole districts or regions’ schools would be missing from the census report, thus invalidating the exercise. Verifying data before entry for analysis also proved difficult without familiarity with the districts/schools. As a result, sometimes incomprehensible reports, which bore no resemblance to the reality on the ground, were produced.

The extent to which the approach used in Zambia is effective has to be verified. That questionnaires are sent from the central office to school heads to complete and return may mean that this has become just another routine exercise not deserving the original attention. That some of these head teachers are not even trained to complete the questionnaires means that some data are not collected. Tying the release of the school grant to receipt of completed questionnaires may have raised the return rate but may not actually have improved the quality of the data collected and consequently of the Statistical Bulletins produced.

Although generally education data are accessible and available, the delay in passing the Freedom of Information Bill is compromising the efficient and effective publication and access to valid information essential for decision-making. Financial data are particularly affected as reports
are sometimes two to three years behind schedule. Information on progress towards Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is available through the Sector Plan Advisory Group (SPAG) (whose members are cooperating partners, civil society organisations working in education, scholars and government). The SPAG reviews progress made and makes plans/projections for future action. Statistical bulletins are also available.

The challenges of accessing data include:

- Red tape;
- User-unfriendly programs (the coding system used by the EMIS requires training and practice);
- Information spread across various ministries; and
- The lack of a legal framework to access information.
III: Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation

Planning has been a big aspect of managing the education sector. At the national level, national development plans have always been comprehensive, covering all sectors. As a member of the international community, Zambia has also been party to agreements requiring planning and reporting according to international standards. What seems to have been weak is the monitoring and evaluation aspect. This too is a common feature of government ministries.

In recent years during the period of the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP 2006–2010), which followed a Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP 2002–2005), a National Implementation Framework (NIF 2008–2010) was developed to make progress towards the EFA goals and the MDGs. The national development framework for poverty reduction – the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS 2002–2004) – was developed during the period of the TNDP. The PRS is rolled over every three years. The Sixth National Development Plan (2011–2016) guides current work.

Although there were no plans as such for ten years prior to 2002 there were comprehensive policy documents such as the Educating Our Future (1996) whose guiding principles have shaped education delivery to date. The principles of liberalisation (which has led to the growth of the sector through private provision of services), of decentralisation, equality, equity, quality and accountability have been reflected in recent government plans and programmes. These principles guided the development of BESSIP (1998) and the subsequent 2003–2007 Strategic Plan, under which BESSIP was given prominence by focusing on the provision of FBE, whose implementation started in 2002.

Reforms of existing policies addressed all areas of education from curriculum diversification through governance and teacher education and management to equity and decentralisation. Financing the implementation was to be sought from partners, a strategy which required the use of new aid modalities such as the Pooled Fund or the direct and general budget support. The government, supported by donors led by the Netherlands, applied to the EFA Fast-track Initiative for catalytic funding of USD 60 million to cover the gap unmet by local donors. This process requires robust plan development and the fact that the funding was approved without having used the World Bank as the supervising entity put Zambia in the spotlight as a model in planning education delivery.
Another significant policy that has been successfully implemented with the support of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is an HIV/AIDS workplace policy for the education sector to manage and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on teachers and other education staff. Achievements have been reported in many areas and the ministry is a recognised authority in addressing the pandemic. The challenge remains in harmonising the programmes of different providers to strengthen impact.

The MoE has a planning and regulatory framework for its educational institutions through the Education Act (1966 and 2011) and the NIF, as well as the national five-year development plans. However, the liberalisation of the education sector has led to a mushrooming of private educational institutions at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. These institutions lack a planning, regulatory and monitoring framework and structure, at both legal and administrative levels.

Many private schools operate from places that are not conducive to learning and do not meet the minimum standards of operations of schools and employ teachers with dubious qualifications. The MoE has no legal foundation for the supervision and monitoring of private schools. It is therefore failing to control or manage the establishment and even more so, the standards of many private schools that have proliferated in the country. It has also failed to provide for an inspection system for these schools mostly because, until now, there has been no law or policy in place to reinforce, let alone guide supervision and monitoring. This situation will hopefully improve when the new Act becomes operational.

The monitoring and evaluation ability of the Inspectorate Division is constrained most of all by inadequate funding, especially funding dedicated to inspectorate work. If the quest for quality education is to be seriously pursued, it is impossible for these activities to be sacrificed because of the financial limitations of the MoE.
IV: Budget and expenditure management

The government’s establishment of the Public Expenditure Management and Financial Accountability reform programme, whose purpose is to help government improve its capacity to efficiently and effectively mobilise and utilise resources, shows the extent to which there is commitment to doing things differently to meet international commitments on education. A Financial Management Information System has been in place since the 1990s.

The Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia (JASZ) operates within the NIF for the education sector, now in its third phase (NIF III). Contributing cooperating partners (CPs) sign what is called a Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF), which is the guiding instrument of cooperation between the MoE and its CPs. The NIF III ends in 2015. The members of the MAF coordination structure in 2012 are: embassy of Japan (recently joined), the government of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (returning), the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) on behalf of the United Nations, the African Development Bank, Irish Aid and the Netherlands contributing through UNICEF. Other modes of financial support from partners are also operational.

Zambia has been making progress to meet the internationally agreed threshold of 25% of the national budget allocated to education and 50% within that allocated to primary education. The budget allocated to education in 2010 was 25% of the national budget, which fell short of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) threshold by only 0.5%. This is impressive and should be commended under current conditions.

A concern relates to the absorptive capacity of the sector, which has in cases led to funds being returned to the Ministry of Finance and National Planning. It may also be that the delay in the release of funds to implementers contributes to this situation, in addition to poor absorptive capacity in the sector. As has been reported schools do not receive their grants on time and funds not utilised are not added to the next grants. These issues need to be addressed at the management level and clearly do not represent inability to spend at the implementation level.

User fees introduced earlier are still a burden to parents / guardians and a hindrance to effective school participation as they cover almost all aspects from books to shoes and transport. That private schools charge even higher amounts of fees (in excess of USD 5 000) per term is likely to exacerbate hardships for many parents/guardians and inequalities within the country.
The budget process is transparent but long. A concern is the change (2011) in the budget cycle to follow the calendar year. This means that the process has to start early in the current year for the budget release in 2013. By October of the preceding year the budget should be presented to Parliament and failing any problems funds should be available by January of the year in which it should be implemented. This was done to avoid ministries having no funds at the beginning of the implementation year.

The challenges this brings are significant even as it solves other problems. Having funds early in the calendar year is ideal for schools since the academic year follows the calendar one. However, it also means that ministries spend the budget preparation year tied up preparing the budget. Secondly, it is risky to plan for funding a whole 12 months ahead of schedule in this turbulent environment. Is it really feasible to accurately predict the needs and resources needed to implement programmes in a year that has not begun? The merits of starting the fiscal year in the middle of the year may outweigh those of total ignorance of what the trends are likely to be in an unknown year. It will also require advanced budget planning/simulation programmes that capture as many scenarios as possible. The implications for technical expertise to effectively budget cannot be overemphasised.

The government’s introduction of the Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) during the 2004–2006 is in line with the new aid modalities. The MTEF is defined as a multi-year public expenditure planning exercise used to set out future budget requirements for existing government supported services, as well as the resource implications of future policy changes. It is a rolling process repeated every year and aims at reducing the imbalance between what is affordable and what is demanded by line ministries (UNDP 2000).

For many governments the MTEF was meant to assist them move away from the incremental budgeting hitherto used but which was sometimes not linked to the goals and objectives of a plan or programme. It is based on the principles of: strategic planning, multi-year arrangements, broad-based integrated approach and emphasis on prioritisation. The MTEF is therefore very much in line with the direct and general budget support approach to supporting governments. Success in performing the implied activities requires technical expertise, which has been in short supply in the MoE in Zambia.
V: Human resource management

Teachers, the largest group of employees in the education sector, are still in short supply due to a combination of factors such as low capacity of institutions to produce them, high attrition rates and impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The conditions that had to be met for Zambia to qualify as a heavily indebted poor country added hardships as salary increases were frozen along with recruitment of new staff. This led to high learner to teacher ratios, especially at the lower levels of the school system, as it coincided with BESSIP and later FBE.

In line with the government’s ownership of the majority of the schools, the government is the largest employer of teachers in Zambia with close to 90%, since most community and grant-aided school teachers are also employed by the government. The teaching profession loses large numbers of teachers every year, ranging from 4,965 in 2005 to 9,645 in 2010 for basic education and 501 in 2005 to 1,470 in 2010 for secondary education. The general economy has been improving since 2002. This may have opened up more posts for educated people in areas other than teaching and the versatility of teachers make them an accessible recruitment pool.

Almost all (97% in 2010) government-employed teachers had the minimum academic qualifications required to teach at the levels but only 14.5% were qualified to teach at the secondary school level. The situation was reversed at the basic school level where only 7.8% teachers were unqualified.

An interesting finding is that the main urban provinces of Lusaka and Copperbelt provinces had the largest numbers of unqualified preschool teachers. This may be due to the large numbers of children in preschool in these provinces which makes it necessary to recruit large numbers of ECCDE teachers to meet the expanding need. This may also be related to the fact that this sub-sector has only been recently brought under the MoE and that standards and qualifications have yet to be enforced. The fact that this sector is mostly under private ownership would also explain the situation.

The remuneration package for staff at the MoE includes housing and pension contributions. The civil service is generally underpaid in Zambia, especially at the lower ranks. The general perception is that teachers’ salaries are low and the payroll inefficiently managed, causing delays in payment of salaries. There is a serious shortage of teaching materials, especially in rural schools. Many teachers have a preference for teaching in towns where living conditions are more favourable than what is found in rural areas.
Teachers belong to teachers’ unions and a code of conduct is operational through the Teaching Service Commission, which is responsible for teacher management. The Commission has disciplinary codes for certain improprieties such as teachers behaving immorally with pupils or students of any education institution. There is a disciplinary committee within the MoE that handles disciplinary cases involving teachers and staff. One of the most common causes of teacher dismissals involves sexual harassment of girls by male teachers, as well as exam leaks.

Some teachers escape disciplinary procedures for defilement while many civil servants get away with non-performance because matters are ignored or merely discussed without any serious consequences. It is not uncommon to hear comments such as: ‘It’s very difficult to lose your job in the civil service.’ Few cases have been taken to court and the ones that do often involve top civil servants in financial impropriety and abuse of office.
VI: External oversight mechanisms

There are several oversight institutions in Zambia including the Parliament, the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG), the Human Rights Commission (HRC), the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), parent–teacher associations (PTAs), school management committees and the media.

Parliament is the most important oversight body for the executive wing of government. In practice, the oversight capability and effectiveness is weak. The education budget documents are discussed and approved without rigorous critique.

The OAG is the most important financial oversight mechanism. However, it has serious limitations with regard to its human resource capacity. Its reports of financial misconduct go unheeded as it possesses no prosecutorial powers. The institutions that do have such powers – such as the police – almost never respond to the reports of the Auditor-General on financial misconduct by government departments and officials.

The ACC has had some important successes in tackling corruption and abuse of power or office, but these have been scattered cases and most public concerns and reports of corruption by the media have not been investigated or prosecuted. This raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of the ACC.

Oversight by PTAs has occasionally been useful in combating petty corruption. However, these too are weak and rarely highlight misconduct. PTAs are also constrained by inadequate information on policy and budget preparation processes and systems and thus, their intervention is limited in many other areas of education governance.

Freedoms of the media and civil society advocacy have been characteristic of Zambia’s burgeoning democracy since the end of the one-party state and the birth of plural democracy in 1991. In education, key civil society organisations that have emerged are the Zambia Children’s Education Association, which deals with children’s right to education, the Forum for Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA) and the Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC) that became a coalition of a number of education advocacy CSOs. They too face a number of challenges in exercising their oversight role, including donor dependency, sidelining by government (especially for more politically-orientated NGOs) and poor rural presence. However, education NGOs are on the whole respected by government and have a good working relationship.
Despite these weaknesses, CSOs have played and continue to play an important role in creating an acceptance of an increasing public participation in policy-making, assessment of service delivery and the budget process. They have commissioned studies in the education sector such as budget tracking and education indictors that have been important instruments for advocacy. ZANEC, FAWEZA, the Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA) and a number of NGOs and education specialists participate in the MoE Annual Review meetings and their work has enabled greater access to education information, as well as proactive planning in education issues. The only problem is that after the Joint Annual Review, these organisations are left on the sidelines of the MoE planning and implementation process.

The media have been a major means of advocacy through the dissemination of education messages and implementation activities designed to improve the quality of education delivery. Even the state media, which have been known to stay silent about public service issues except those that satisfy the establishment, have become increasingly informative on the state of education and public service delivery in general. Media freedom has grown with the growth of community radio stations, which now offer alternative information to the state media.

Civil society activism has taken many forms such as petitions and press releases targeted at particular authorities. Transparency International often lobbies and writes to relevant authorities on governance issues while education NGOs continue to lobby and advocate various issues within their respective concerns.
VII: Development assistance

Like many countries in the region, Zambia depends on international partners’ support in education service delivery. On average donors contribute over 30% to the national budget. Through the JASZ 2007–2010, designed by the CPs to manage their support to the government during the FNDP, partners are also responding to Zambia’s Vision 2030.

Harmonisation of support is done through a Memorandum of Understanding now known as Wider Harmonisation in Practice. Its objectives are the same as for other aid modalities approaches such as to reduce transaction costs for the government; to articulate priorities for support during the plan period; to improve aid delivery through a more effective division of labour and allocation of partners’ resources; and to establish a shared vision and guiding principles for CPs’ support to the FNDP and the Vision 2030, among others.

Partners supporting the MoE through the Pooled Fund approach continued their support during this period resulting in a more than 50% rise in expenditure on education with the pool contributing 12% of the budget. Overall donor support to education through these approaches has been successful, strengthening planning and budgeting, improving transparency, accountability and monitoring and evaluation.

In view of recent significant financial contributions to the education sector through the MAF and the Netherlands’ contribution of USD 10 million to education through UNICEF, it appears that CPs will continue supporting the education sector for some time. The challenge for the government and the sector is to maintain this high level of commitment through mutual accountability for results.

Many CPs publish information on development assistance or aid flows in all sectors including education. The coverage of the reporting varies and some partners are more diligent in reporting with actual figures while others make general reporting. Many have websites demonstrating the type of development assistance they render.

The Ministry of Finance and National Planning does not have an easily accessible information system on development assistance; consequently, obtaining that information is a challenging process.

The general push and acceptance of the sector-wide approach to programming has enabled the creation of a sector Pool Fund, which has improved MoE budgeting, coordination and harmonisation of education resources. There have been 13 CPs in the education sector and the challenges of managing coordination are certainly numerous.
CPs provide critical support to many civil society organisations involved in various advocacy issues in education and governance. These education NGOs provide critical support and supplement to government initiatives, but also make government less complacent due to their advocacy work. Organisations such as FAWEZA provide important support to girl-child education, while ZANEC advocates for quality delivery of education services and thus undertakes research into budget and other education-related issues.
Recommendations

**International and national legal framework**

- The policy of FBE must be made effective by provision of adequate funding to the primary school sub-sector. As such, pronouncements to undertake free education at secondary school must be seen as a long-term goal and to be implemented only after FBE is adequately resourced and quality education delivery assured.
- In keeping with the country’s Vision 2030 designed to make the country reach middle-income status by 2030, skills training must be enhanced and financed adequately. Bursary schemes for students who cannot afford school fees at tertiary level must be put in place. But given the limited resources, a meritorious approach can be undertaken to implement this for a given percentage of students.
- The government must comply with its reporting obligations under the international human rights treaties, in particular by reporting on its implementation of the right to education.
- In line with the new Education Act, policy instruments need to be put in place for its operation, even as the review process is being undertaken. It was passed as an Act and implementation must take place and need not await the new Constitution.
- With regard to penalties for parents who either marry off their school-going daughters or fail to send their children to schools, an alternative way of enhancing the learner’s right to education must be found instead, such as a combination of police, community and school involvement.
- A clear road map is necessary for the implementation and enactment of the draft Constitution since it is currently unclear.

**Information collection, publication and management**

- To improve data collection and publication of the National Statistical System, the government must adequately fund the CSO and make sure that there is provision of adequately qualified personnel.
- The MoE must increase the number of the personnel in the Planning Division so that data updates and timely delivery of information is assured. In this regard, education-related NGOs such as ZANEC, FAWEZA, the ZCEA and UNICEF must engage the ministry on the manpower requirements of the Planning Division.
• The government must ensure quick passage of the Access to Information Bill. Civil society organisations must lobby and advocate for the quick enactment of the Access to Information Bill. They must demand a time frame for the current review process and final submission to Parliament.

• Civil society must additionally advocate for the timely publication of the Statistical Bulletin so that it is published regularly at the end of each year, and not at two-year intervals.

• The MoE must review its reporting on completion rates in the EMIS data, starting with Grade 7 which is the last grade of primary school education, and then address the issue at higher grades.

Strategic planning

• To make strategic planning effective and efficient, capacity must be built in the Directorate of Planning. Efficient and skilled personnel must be recruited into the directorate.

• Adequate financial resources must accompany the planning system to support the work of the Directorate of Planning.

• The Directorate of Inspection must be strengthened with skilled manpower, but more so with adequate financial resources for effective management and monitoring of the delivery of quality education, and ensure that the school system is compliant with the MoE’s guidelines and standards.

• While there are limited resources to implement the three above, resource mobilisation must be considered through increased revenue collection from the mining sector in line with civil society demands and even the recommendations of the Breton Woods Institutions. This requires a broader societal lobby and advocacy approach.

• The voices of CSOs need to be heard during the planning, monitoring and evaluation of education programmes to increase their knowledge base and thus make their advocacy work far more informed and effective. An effective way is to have real input in the Annual Joint Review as well as in the annual plans of the ministry.

• The CSO and the MoE must improve collaboration in data collection and other education-related surveys.

• The MoE must ensure that annual education sector plan reviews clearly set out steps for collecting and harnessing views and priorities of communities through their organised agents if decentralisation of services delivery as well as ownership of the programme by local communities is to have meaning. It must set out procedures and steps by which local voices can be heard and heeded. CSOs in education must provide the framework for identifying these voices as they work with them in the communities.

Budgeting and financial management

• The MoE must increase capital budget above personal emoluments to help improve equipment and infrastructure in the school system. These improvements can be phased in starting with certain districts and be scaled up over time.
• Funding to the school system must be systematic and timely. The erratic release of school grants must end to enable school programmes to run smoothly and systematically in line with the budget.

• CSOs must agitate for an increase of resources, especially for vulnerable groups such as orphaned and vulnerable children and children with special needs.

• The MoE must improve sector plan delivery so that resources allocated to the sector actually achieve intended results. The planning and budgeting must be better linked so that budgeting is target specific and in line with the Annual Strategic Plan and five-year plans.

• CSO organisations must seek greater participation in planning and budgeting, as well as assessment and evaluation of education sector goals and achievements. They must seek to highlight views of local communities in education service planning and delivery. This participation can be advocated through the Annual Joint Review meetings

**Human resource management**

• The MoE needs to reduce the pupil–teacher ratios by scaling up the building of more schools and related infrastructure, including the training and recruiting of teachers.

• There is need to improve conditions of service for teachers and offer improved remuneration packages to attract teachers into the teaching profession.

• CSOs and stakeholders in education should develop an advocacy strategy that seeks human resource management and development strategy to address the real issues and needs of staff so that teachers are retained and teacher attrition is eliminated to negligible levels.

• The disciplinary code of conduct is clear but it needs enhanced enforcement mechanisms, that is, the ministry and stakeholders must develop improved reporting and recording and procedures in disciplinary cases. This also requires greater sensitisation about ministry codes of conduct and ethics.

**External oversight mechanisms**

• The OAG, the HRC and the ACC need to operate truly autonomously in order to carry out their mandate as oversight institutions that ensure proper utilisation of public resources in the MoE and other government institutions. CSOs, like the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) and others, must examine the legal frameworks of these institutions with a view to strengthening them.

• The OAG needs authority and power to work with the ACC and police so that its reports can have prosecutorial sanction.

• Oversight institutions need to be properly resourced to carry out their mandates and to remunerate their staff adequately. CSOs, especially the Economic Association of Zambia and the LAZ, must lobby for this.

• CSOs must take stock of the activities of oversight bodies and build synergies with these institutions to find ways to improve their advocacy skills. The current cooperation
should not be limited to a few training workshops between oversight bodies and CSOs, but focus must be on building sustainable synergies and cooperation.

- PTAs must be sensitised by education NGOs to act as stronger oversight institutions for their schools in their respective communities, especially in cases of corruption. In common forms of petty corruption they should liaise with the police and anti-corruption offices where necessary.
- Education NGOs must liaise with the Parliamentary Committee on Education to ensure their recommendations on improving service delivery are adhered to and in particular, be able to undertake monitoring and evaluation of their respective sectors.
- The speaker must be lobbied to undertake, through the Parliamentary Reforms and Modernisation Committee, a review and modernisation of the committee system to make it more effective and have power of sanction.

Development assistance

- The MoE must address concerns of development partners in order to continue to build confidence and continued support especially in areas of resource use and transparency in the governance of the education sector.
- In the light of departing CPs, civil society must lobby for increased revenue collection, especially from the copper mines, so that the financing of education and other sectors can be made more efficient.
- Commitments to the education budget must be increased to 30% of the total government budget in line with many SADC region countries. NGOs in education should engage in lobbying and advocacy on this issue in a consistent manner. The media can be a keen advocate of this matter.
- CSOs must develop a strategy for lobbying for a proportion of government funding in some of their key projects that complement the work of MoE.
- CSOs must strengthen and expand their advocacy so that they can be effectively involved in the annual plan and budget of the MoE.