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FOREWORD

BY THE UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR



Welcome to the second quarter edition of the United Nations (UN) Newsletter covering the period April to June 2024, where we bring you the latest updates and stories from our initiatives and partnerships across Zambia Delivering as One. This quarter has been marked by significant engagements, collaborative efforts, and impactful events aimed at fostering development, inclusion, and resilience in the face of various challenges.

Zambia is currently facing a severe drought crisis that threatens the livelihoods and food security of many communities in 84 districts. In response, various initiatives are being implemented by the UN System in Zambia to build resilience and develop sustainable solutions. These efforts aim to provide immediate relief while also addressing long-term challenges associated with climate change.

We are pleased to share that Zambia recently held consultations on the upcoming Summit of the Future, an essential platform for shaping global progress. In a generous gesture of support, the European Union has donated to Zambia's drought response, highlighting the importance of international solidarity in tackling climate-related crises.

The UN El Niño and La Niña Coordinator has made an urgent appeal to bolster Zambia's efforts to overcome the current drought, emphasizing the critical need for sustained assistance. This call to action aligns with the reflections from the GRZ-UN Joint Steering Committee on the progress of our Cooperation Framework, underscoring our collective commitment to achieving our shared goals.

In our ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity, the UN recently oriented journalists on disability inclusion, aiming to empower the media to better advocate for the rights and representation of persons with disabilities. Additionally, the UN has made a strong call for an end to violence against children, reaffirming our dedication to protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

Addressing the urgent need for effective climate crisis communication, we have also focused on empowering media professionals to better cover and convey the complexities of climate change and its impacts.

We hope these stories inspire you as much as they have motivated us to continue our mission of creating a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for all.

Happy reading!

Beatrice Mutali
UN Resident Coordinator



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Building Resilience and Sustainable Solutions: WFP Executive Director's Visit to Zambia



In a recent mission to Zambia, World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director Cindy McCain witnessed firsthand the impact of El-Nino-induced drought and floods on the lives of millions in the region. With barren fields in most parts of the country, the stark reality of climate-induced food insecurity was brought to light during her visit.

ED McCain advocated for greater support and strategic partnerships to address immediate needs and build long-term resilience. In meetings with high-level officials, including the President and Vice President of Zambia, Donors, as well as heads of UN agencies in the country, the focus was on working together to enhance agricultural productivity, support regional food reserves, and boost resilience among communities facing food insecurity.

Visiting drought-affected districts like Chongwe, where communities have been hard hit by the effects of climate change, ED McCain heard stories of loss and resilience-building opportunities from smallholder farmers. WFP's innovative projects, such as post-harvest loss prevention and financial inclusion programs, were highlighted as lifelines for affected

communities.

Emphasizing the significance of innovation, ED McCain praised WFP Zambia for its pioneering approaches, such as climate risk insurance schemes. These initiatives are viewed as crucial for long-term strategies aimed at building resilience and self-sufficiency.

One shining example of innovative climate-smart food production was seen at Woodlands B Primary School in Lusaka,

where low-cost hydroponics and drip-irrigated gardens are being used to diversify meals and enhance nutrition education. These sustainable solutions not only help mitigate the effects of drought but also support consistent crop production in schools with limited water and space.

As Zambia faces continued challenges due to climate variability, the visit highlighted the urgent need for resilient and sustainable solutions. Through collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to building long-term resilience, WFP and its partners are working





EU donates to Zambia's Drought Response

Contribution is a top up to the Scaling Up Nutrition Phase II (SUN Phase II) which aims to address malnutrition in Zambia



On 25 June 2024, the European Union and the United Nations Children's Agency (UNICEF) signed a Cooperation Agreement worth EUR 4,528,750 (approximately ZMW 125 million). This agreement marked a significant step forward in preventing severe nutrient deficiencies in the drought-stricken districts of Zambezi, Shang'ombo, Kalabo, Mongu, Choma, and Monze in Zambia. The agreement renewed the commitment to the SUN-II alliance, led by UNICEF and supported by key UN agencies, including WFP, WHO, and FAO.

Dr. Gabriel Pollen, the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) National Coordinator, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Zambia. "The impact of drought on our communities has been devastating, affecting livelihoods, food security, and access to clean water. In these trying times, the support from the European Union is more than just financial assistance; it is a beacon of hope that reassures our people that they are not alone. Your aid will go a long way in alleviating the suffering and rebuilding the resilience of our communities."

This financial contribution will significantly bolster the drought response led by the Government of the Republic of Zambia. Approximately 89,741 women and children are set to benefit from food assistance, cash transfers, nutrient supplements, and the treatment of severe wasting—the deadliest form of malnutrition.

Karolina Stasiak, the Ambassador of the European Union to Zambia, emphasized the importance of international cooperation in her speech. "Climate change knows no borders, and its effects are felt across continents, making international cooperation not just beneficial, but essential. It is our collective responsibility to respond swiftly

and effectively, to mitigate the impacts of this drought and to build a pathway towards resilience and more sustainable development in Zambia. The European Union calls for climate action and a concerted response to this historic drought, leaving no one behind. Climate change is real, and this drought serves as a wake-up call to act more decisively to adapt to and mitigate climate change. There is no time to lose, and we need to act now."

Beatrice Mutali, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Zambia, highlighted the critical nature of the situation. "This drought requires concerted efforts. Far too many families in key affected districts are struggling to put food on their tables. There is evidence indicating that a nutrition crisis is likely to unfold in provinces where hunger and nutrient gaps are high if timely concrete prevention actions are not taken now. Therefore, we cannot thank the European Union enough for taking a very important step in the right direction. Your support is very timely, and it will greatly contribute to improving the lives of pregnant and lactating mothers and children under five."

A SMART survey conducted in May, with support from UNICEF and partners, assessing nutritional status and risk factors in six provinces revealed that more than half of the households were already experiencing moderate to severe hunger. It was estimated that within the next 12 months, 51,948 children under the age of five in the 84 drought-affected districts would fall into severe

wasting, and another 276,000 children under five would experience moderate wasting. The survey also found that nearly 112,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women were estimated to suffer from wasting, with about 13,000 facing its most severe form.

Having been conducted in a period of expected harvest, the survey also revealed that without immediate and adequate action, a nutrition crisis among children below five might unfold in Western, Southern, Central, and North-Western provinces of Zambia.

The Scaling Up Nutrition Phase (SUN Phase II) initiative aims to reduce stunting in children under two by 7% across 17 districts in Zambia. The SUN-II Programme is a multi-sectoral nutrition programme supporting the GRZ's national flagship Most Critical Days Programme (MCDP-II) for stunting reduction. It is jointly funded by the UK Government, the Swedish Government (SIDA), the German Government (BMZ/KfW), the Government of Ireland (Irish Aid), and the European Union. UNICEF, in partnership with FAO, WHO, and WFP, focuses on a multisectoral approach to maximizing nutrition impact, involving health, WASH, agriculture (including livestock and fisheries), food security, Early Childhood Development (ECD), and social protection.





Ensuring Access to Essential Sexual and Reproductive Health Services for Vulnerable Communities in Zambia: UNFPA Supports Mobile Clinics Amidst Drought Emergency



As Zambia grapples with a climate emergency caused by the driest agricultural season in over 40 years, the Ministry of Health, with support from UNFPA, has launched mobile clinic outreaches to deliver essential Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services to vulnerable communities.

These services include family planning, antenatal care, and HIV testing. Mobile teams, comprising healthcare professionals and community volunteers, travel to remote areas to provide quality SRH services, promote health education, and address the specific needs of women and girls in some of the districts hardest hit by drought: Monze and Mazabuka districts in Southern Province and Mambwe and Petauke districts in Eastern Province, including four constituencies in Lusaka district.

A staggering 50% of maternal and 45% of neonatal deaths globally occur in humanitarian settings, where sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services are often overlooked. Unmet SRH needs, including unintended pregnancies, obstetric complications, sexual violence, and reproductive disorders, rise in such humanitarian situations.

"Some of the indicators - like the first antenatal visit - have been negatively affected, which is a cause for worry," says Linda Muleya Libingi, Principal Maternal

and Child Health Nursing Officer in Southern Province, one of the hardest-hit provinces. "Because of the lack of food, some women are not prioritizing coming to health facilities," Nurse Libingi says.

Monze district in southern Zambia has about 43 health facilities, but in times of crisis, some residents cannot embark on sometimes long journeys for a consultation. Some of these communities live hours from the nearest health facility - in Hakukunla village, the nearest clinic is at least 30 km away. Taking services to communities is critical amid concerns that women and girls are prioritizing the search for food and water instead of their health.

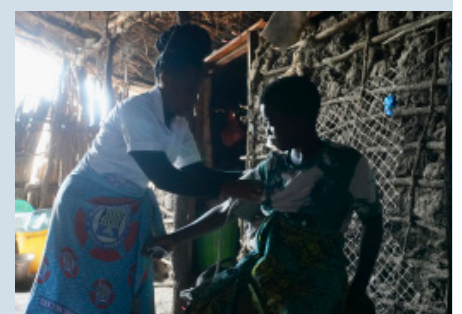
Leonard Zulu, a program Analyst at UNFPA Zambia, explains how the climate crisis affected women's health. "In times of crisis and drought like this, the health of women may not prioritize going to the health facility, but instead, [they] would prioritize looking for food. So this has the possibility of impacting their health. UNFPA is supporting the Ministry of Health to conduct mobile clinics, the health outreach activities, so that they can provide these services to women and girls, especially in this situation."

Forced marriages and sexual exploitation, which expose women and girls to unintended pregnancies and increase the risk of HIV, are also a high risk during the drought. Nurse Loveness Miyoba provides

antiretroviral therapy (ART) in the mobile clinics outreach. "Today, we are providing ART (Antiretroviral therapy for people with HIV). We are providing antenatal services. We are also providing children's clinic services, also family planning, and a bit of OPD."

UNFPA is also supporting 60 Safe Motherhood Action Group volunteers to provide information on safe motherhood to families as well as two national toll-free lines that provide information on maternal health and gender-based violence services.

UNFPA is also orienting traditional leaders on the importance of continued Sexual and Reproductive Health services during the drought. The orientation, conducted by the Ministry of Health, ensures that traditional leaders are equipped to provide guidance and support to their communities on SRH issues, even in the face of drought. The leaders have been informed about the availability of mobile health clinics and outreach services and are encouraged to mobilize their communities to access these services.





Drought's Impact on the Community

A journey to Rufunsa, one of the 84 districts in Zambia severely affected by a harsh drought, highlights the profound impacts on the community, particularly in Mpanshya village. Following the declaration of the drought as a national disaster by the President of Zambia, the United Nations swiftly responded to assess the situation and support the government's response plan. The drought has led to devastating crop failures, significantly affecting food security and the livelihoods of the residents.

The UN delegation, including Reena Ghelani, the UN Crisis Coordinator for El Niño/La Niña Response, Etleva Kadilli, UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, and Beatrice Mutali, Zambia Resident Coordinator, began their visit with a courtesy call on the District Commissioner. They were briefed on the drought's impact and the government's efforts to mitigate the crisis. In Mpanshya village, Headwoman Regina Phiri reported that the prolonged drought had led to a complete failure of the 2023-2024 farming season, with maize and supplementary crops succumbing to the harsh conditions.

Additionally, the drought had caused a significant drop in the underground water table, leading to the implementation of a water rationing system where each household could pump water only once from the communal borehole.

The visit to the farm fields in Mpanshya

allowed the UN team to gain a firsthand understanding of the situation. Farmers, including Headwoman Regina Phiri, shared their personal experiences and coping strategies. The unified efforts of various stakeholders, including the UN Assistant Secretary-General Reena Ghelani, FAO Zambia Representative Percy Suze, Minister for Lusaka Province Sheal Mulyata, UNICEF's Etleva Kadilli, and Lusaka Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Alex Chipu Mapushi, were highlighted as they discussed the government's proactive response to the climate crisis with Zambia's National Coordinator for the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU), Gabriel Pollen.

Engaging with community members in Mpanshya village provided the delegates with deeper insights into the challenges faced and the community's resilience. They learned about the significant impacts of the drought on education, as shared by Anna Mwemwetela, a 9th-grade student from Nkoloma Combined School. She discussed the coping strategies employed by female learners amidst the crisis.

Etleva Kadilli emphasized the crucial importance of children's survival and wellbeing in the face of the climate crisis. She highlighted UNICEF and the UN system's collaborative efforts with the Zambian government to mitigate the severe impacts on children's lives. Kadilli urged the community to adopt innovative farming methods taught in the farmer field

school, such as conservation farming, intercropping, and the cultivation of supplementary crops. These methods are vital for ensuring that children receive adequate nourishment to support their growth and development.

The day concluded with heartfelt gratitude from the visitors towards the community members of Mpanshya village for sharing their time and invaluable insights about the drought's profound impact on their lives. The UN in Zambia has developed a multi-hazard preparedness and response plan to support government-led efforts. They are calling upon international partners to join forces with the UN to provide emergency assistance, boost preventive measures, and promote sustainable recovery.

There is urgent need for concerted efforts to combat climate change and food insecurity. The community's resilience and the UN's commitment, donor support and government coordination are critical to finding sustainable solutions to ensuring that no one is left behind amidst this crisis.





A Partnership for Progress: UN and Government Convene Joint Steering Committee of the Cooperation Framework

On 15 May 2024, members of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) from the UN System in Zambia and the Government of the Republic of Zambia met to review progress on implementation of the Zambia-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027 (also known as the Cooperation Framework).

Co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, the JSC is at the helm of the partnership to ensure strategic direction and oversight of the Cooperation Framework, alignment with national, regional and international development processes, mechanisms, goals and commitments and links with other processes such as the Voluntary National Review (VNR). The JSC embodies the spirit of cooperation, dedication, and a shared vision for a better future between the UN and Zambia.

The 8th National Development Plan (8NDP) and the Cooperation Framework are strategically aligned, each encompassing four key areas that correspond to one another as follows: Economic Transformation and Job Creation with Prosperity; Human and Social Development with People; Good Governance Environment with Peace; and Environmental Sustainability with Planet.

The 2024 JSC brought together government officials from several ministries, Members of the UN Country Team and staff members. Speaking at the meeting, UN Resident Coordinator Beatrice Mutali emphasized the UN's dedication to leveraging the Cooperation Framework to advance Zambia's 8NDP, with a strong emphasis on achieving tangible results.

"One of the key areas is more engagement at the technical level on both sides so that we identify joint areas of collaboration or how we strengthen support to the 8NDP. We see that going forward this will continue to be the norm. We also look forward to the participation of Cluster Advisory Groups in UN planning meetings," Ms Mutali said.

The Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Ms Lois

Mulube noted the importance role that the Cooperation Framework plays in supporting Zambia's developmental agenda as contained in the 8NDP as well as attainment of the SDGs.

At the forefront of the discussions was the need to strengthen progress across all the four pillars of the Cooperation Framework and contribute to attainment of the SDGs in Zambia. The meeting reviewed progress made in the first Quarter of the year as well as opportunities and challenges on each of the four areas. They recognized that issues were interconnected and that a holistic approach was essential for meaningful progress.

The UN in Zambia remains committed to implementation of the Cooperation Framework through partnerships with the Government and other stakeholders. Through its 24 Agencies, Funds and Programmes, the UN will continue to innovate, adapt to the evolving needs in the country and leverage new technologies and data-driven approaches to enhance its impact.





EMPOWERING MEDIA FOR CLIMATE CRISIS COMMUNICATION



In light of the drought induced by the relentless impact of the climate crisis, the African Risk Capacity, World Food Programme (WFP), and Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit embarked on a collaborative effort to enhance awareness via a media training and a gender validation workshop.

The workshop held in Siavonga, Southern Zambia, centred on the media's role in addressing climate crisis challenges. It underscored the indispensable role of the media in advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and fostering awareness among communities.

Supported by the African Risk Capacity and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the training deepened and empowered media professionals' understanding of climate-induced risks and natural disasters.

Through targeted sessions, the workshop also enhanced the media's capacity to report on disaster risk management and financing accurately. It also enabled them to be more informed and proactive in crisis communication, fostering a sense of empowerment and responsibility.

Furthermore, the workshop also provided a learning platform for media practitioners. It allowed them to exchange best practices in disaster reporting and share insights and experiences. The training enriched their skillsets and laid the groundwork for more vital collaboration with governmental efforts in public information dissemination, emphasising the importance of shared experiences in





Zambia Holds Consultations on the Summit of the Future



Zambia will from 23-24 September 2024 join other United Nations member states at the Summit of the Future that will be held in New York to forge a new international consensus on delivering a better present and safeguarding the future. Each country will present its position on selected themes based on input from stakeholders. As a result, between 17 and 21 June 2024, the Government of the Republic of Zambia held consultations in Lusaka and the Copperbelt provinces with over 300 representatives drawn from the private sector, civil society organizations, youth, Persons with Disabilities and women.

The United Nations in Zambia played a pivotal role, supporting the government-led stakeholder consultations aimed at crafting a well-informed country position for the summit.

UN Resident Coordinator in Zambia, Ms. Beatrice Mutali, emphasized the importance of these consultations. "The Summit of the Future is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to enhance cooperation on critical challenges and address gaps in global governance," she said. "It will help the world move towards a reinvigorated multilateral system that is better positioned to positively impact people's lives."

The Summit of the Future, co-facilitated by the governments of Namibia and Germany, will be aimed at tackling critical issues, including major global shocks that had impacted economies worldwide, Zambia included. Central to the summit's agenda are five key priority areas, collectively known as the "Pact for the Summit." These areas encompass sustainable development and financing for development,

international peace and security, science, technology and innovation, digital cooperation, youth and future generations, and transforming global governance.

"Ensuring Zambia's position is included in the draft declaration is key to our deliberations during the summit," Ms. Mutali remarked, underscoring the strategic importance of the consultations. "It's about reaffirming our commitments, especially towards the Sustainable Development Goals."

Adding to the strategic significance, Zambia and Sweden will co-facilitate the Digital Global Compact, one of the summit's top priorities. This will present a unique opportunity for Zambia to advance its digital transformation agenda.

Acting Permanent Secretary (Planning and Administration) in the Ministry of Ministry of Finance and National Planning Lois Mulube noted that the Summit of the Future will strengthen global governance and cooperation on pressing issues.

"The Summit of the Future promises to close gaps in global governance and strengthen cooperation on pressing issues. Zambia sees the summit as an opportunity to take advantage of the global network and partnerships," said Ms Mulube.

For 20-year-old youth, Rebeka Mwanza, the global gathering should enhance the participation of young people in development including being given opportunities to innovate. "We need to see more action and not just words," said Ms Mwanza.

Civil society organizations feel as expectant about the Summit. "We hope the Summit of the Future can help address the ever-increasing inequalities, looking at the aspect of using technology to empower the marginalized and bring about the required development," said Grace Chikumo Mtonga, Habitat Coalition president.

The consultations saw vibrant discussions and a commitment to a shared vision for Zambia's future. The collective determination to address global challenges and seize opportunities for digital advancement showcased a nation ready to make a significant impact on the global stage.





FAO Continues Strengthening Veterinary Capacities in Zambia

30 frontline Veterinary & para-veterinary extension workers complete their four-week In-Service Applied Epidemiology Training (ISAVET) Cohort 2 training Programme in applied epidemiology

In response to the critical need for a skilled veterinary workforce equipped to address diverse challenges in animal health and public health, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), through its Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) is actively supporting the implementation of the In-Service Applied Epidemiology Training (ISAVET) programme in Zambia. With the successful completion of the first cohort, FAO continues its commitment to enhancing veterinary capacities through the training of ISAVET Cohort 2 from 6 to 31 May 2024 at Kwame Nkrumah University in Kabwe, Central Province.

Suze Percy-Filippini, FAO Country Representative said "the aim of the ISAVET training is to equip participants with the requisite tools, skills, and competencies to improve disease surveillance and risk management at the human-animal ecosystem interface, thereby impacting public health, poverty alleviation, and human livelihoods. Through initiatives like ISAVET, adapted from various field epidemiology programmes, FAO aims to enhance disease reporting and the quality of surveillance data collected by frontline animal health staff across the country."

Zambia, like many other countries, faces multifaceted challenges in animal health, food security, and public health. The shortage of trained veterinary professionals capable of addressing emerging diseases, conducting effective surveillance, and responding to outbreaks poses a significant threat to animal welfare, farmer livelihoods, and public health. Recognizing these challenges, FAO has developed the ISAVET curriculum to bridge this gap and empower frontline animal health workers with essential epidemiological competencies.

During the launch of ISAVET Cohort 2 training programme, Milnar Mwanakampwe, Permanent Secretary, Central Province emphasised the importance of socio-economic roots and stated that "Frontline animal health workers have strong socioeconomic roots and ties in rural communities. This makes them well-placed for prompt disease detection, reporting, and response to zoonotic disease outbreaks. They also facilitate rural economic growth by promoting a better environment and enhanced production and nutrition. Therefore, empowering our field staff through interventions like the ISAVET programme, which provides structured on-the-job training to develop capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to potential disease threats at the source, is an important development in global health security."

In collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, FAO facilitated a four-week didactic training programme for ISAVET Cohort 2 participants. The training aimed to equip 30 frontline veterinary and para-veterinary extension workers with applied epidemiology skills incorporating the One Health approach.

The programme aims to contribute to the global health target of 7-17 days for early detection, notification, and response to infectious disease outbreaks, improving public health preparedness. Participants will gain enhanced epidemiological skills, enhancing their ability to deliver animal and public health services effectively. Additionally, establishing a regional network of ISAVET graduates will promote collaboration

and knowledge sharing among practitioners, fostering ongoing learning and cooperation. Finally, raising awareness of local zoonotic threats and emerging infectious diseases will booster disease preparedness and response efforts, leading to more effective outbreak management and community health protection.

Beene Shambeza, ISAVET Cohort 2 participant from Lufwanyama District in Northwestern province expressed joy at the benefits derived from the ISAVET training. He said "The ISAVET training has equipped us with the pre-requisite skills to enable us control and tackle diseases of animal origin as we return to the field. It was also practical and enjoyable."

Through the ISAVET programme, FAO is empowering veterinary professionals in Zambia with the necessary skills and knowledge to address emerging animal health threats. By strengthening the veterinary workforce, FAO is not only enhancing food security and livelihoods but also safeguarding public health in Zambia and beyond.





UNESCO, UNICEF Launch Initiative to Support Children's Health and Education



In May, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched the Building Strong Foundations (BSF) Initiative which aims to help children, benefitting learners aged 5-12 in primary school, stay in school, keep safe, and grow up healthy to lead thriving lives.

Building Strong Foundations means taking care of one's own health, and other people's health, now and into the future from better protection from violence to fostering healthy and respectful relationships, civic engagement, gender equality, and inclusive practices and behaviours.

Under the global initiative, four joint technical briefs were co-published with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to provide evidence-based guidance to ministries of education, curriculum developers, policymakers, school management, educators and other stakeholders.

The new initiative aims to ensure that all children receive foundational education that not only equips them with basic literacy and numeracy skills, but also lays the foundation for health, well-being, and social development for life.

Speaking during the launch in Lusaka, UNESCO's Assistant Director General for Education, Stefania Giannini said that children who receive good quality education are more likely to be healthy, and those who are healthy are better able to learn. But more robust action and investment are needed, starting early in the primary. This period of life is a window of opportunity to build a sound understanding of health and well-being, and strong foundations for the future.

While, UNICEF's Global Director of Education and Adolescent Development, Robert Jenkins, added that every child deserves to learn, grow, and thrive in a safe environment.

"The school is a key entry point to fulfill the holistic needs of a child, including nutrition, health, psychosocial, and other critical development needs beyond education," he said, adding that interventions during the early years of a child's life have an incredible long-term impact, laying the foundation for lifelong success in the education system and beyond.

Meanwhile, Acting Minister of Education Felix Mutati said that primary school education is paramount for children's

development and fulfillment, adding that it was during these formative years that children acquire essential skills.

"To effectively nurture these skills, it is crucial to approach early years' numeracy and literacy in a fun, engaging, and age-appropriate manner," said Mr. Mutati, who is also Technology and Science Minister.

Launching the initiative builds on UNESCO's regional work in education for health and well-being through its "Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future program," which is a key programme and the largest programme supporting education for health and well-being of children, adolescents and young people running across 33 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.





SADC AND IOM CONVENE STRATEGIC MEETING TO ENHANCE MIGRATION DATA QUALITY AND REGIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Migration is a global phenomenon that involves the movement of people across borders for various reasons, including economic opportunities, conflicts, and environmental changes. Effective migration governance is essential to manage these movements and ensure the protection of migrants' rights.

A crucial component of this governance is the quality, completeness, and consistency of migration data. Globally, there are significant gaps and inconsistencies in migration data, which hinders effective policymaking and the protection of migrants. These challenges are particularly pronounced in regions such as the East, Horn of Africa, and Southern Africa, where migration patterns are complex and diverse. Addressing these data challenges is vital to developing evidence-based policies that can manage migration effectively and protect migrants, especially the most vulnerable.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are at the forefront of this effort, exemplified by their recent strategic meeting in Livingstone, Zambia. This meeting which brought together Heads of Immigration, Labour Commissioners and Statistician Generals was convened from April 6 to 10, 2024, to deliberate on the Regional Migration Policy Framework and the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) Reporting. It aimed to

assess progress, share best practices, and reinforce commitments towards the GCM and SADC Regional Migration Policy Framework.

The meeting's collaborative nature encouraged knowledge exchange, best practice sharing, and partnership building among officials from Labour ministries, Immigration departments, and National Statistics Offices. By fostering a unified and cohesive approach to migration governance, the SADC Secretariat and IOM seek to contribute to enhancing data quality, completeness, and consistency across the region.

Professor Kula I. Theletsane, SADC Director of the Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Affairs, underscored the importance of official and credible data for migration management in the SADC region. "Reliable data allows for the inclusion of all migrants in policymaking as comprehensive, disaggregated data helps policymakers to develop sound, evidence-based policies ensuring that no migrant is left behind, especially the most vulnerable ones" he stated.

IOM Regional Director for Southern Africa, Mr. Mati Hashemee reiterated the importance of devising appropriate policies and processes to facilitate effective migration governance. "The key challenge is to find the right policies and processes to facilitate migration and protect the rights of migrants, irrespective of their

status, and transform migration into a win-win situation for the SADC member states."

During the meeting, governments examined GCM matrix reports, discussed data quality and challenges, identified areas for improvement and established mechanisms for enhancing future reporting efforts. This meeting highlighted the importance of international collaboration in enhancing migration governance to promote safe, orderly, and regular migration in the region. By enhancing data governance and fostering regional cooperation, SADC and IOM aim to build a robust framework that supports sustainable migration management and policy development.

The meeting was funded by the European Union and the United States government through the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) project and Africa Regional Migration Program (ARMP) respectively.





UNESCO UQP: Changing Lives of Students Forcibly Displaced from Sudan and Ukraine



The internal armed conflict in Sudan, as well as the Russia and Ukraine war has not only disrupted global economies, but also negatively impacted on the education sector.

Many students have been forcibly displaced due to the war in the two countries. In 2022, the Zambian government evacuated 140 students (130 from Ukraine & 10 from Sudan) back home and placed under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Qualifications Passport (UQP) initiative.

The UNESCO Qualifications Passport Project recognizes prior qualifications and learning among refugees and other forcibly displaced populations obtained in their countries of origin before flight into Zambia for asylum. The UQP is implemented by the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) in the Ministry of Education and Commissioner for Refugees and the Ministry of Home Affairs & Internal Security.

Due to complications associated with flight from armed conflicts, Zambian students did not have access to official documentation to prove their achieved academic levels, hence they could not be admitted into local universities in Zambia.

To harmonize students' academic progression whilst in foreign countries and local universities without disrupting their studies, in January 2024, UNESCO working with the Zambian government through the Ministry of Education placed the students on UQP.

The students underwent assessment by Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) and successful candidates had their prior studies recognized and are issued with the UQP certificate which is used as an admission criterion into local universities.

UNESCO Assistant Director General for Education, Stefania Giannini said that she was very pleased to announce over 90 successful UQP holders in Zambia (83 refugees and 7 Zambian nationals), the highest number in the world. Zambia was the first pilot country to implement the UQP Initiative, the Initiative pioneered in Zambia has now spread across other parts of African, the Arab region and soon to Latin America and Asia.

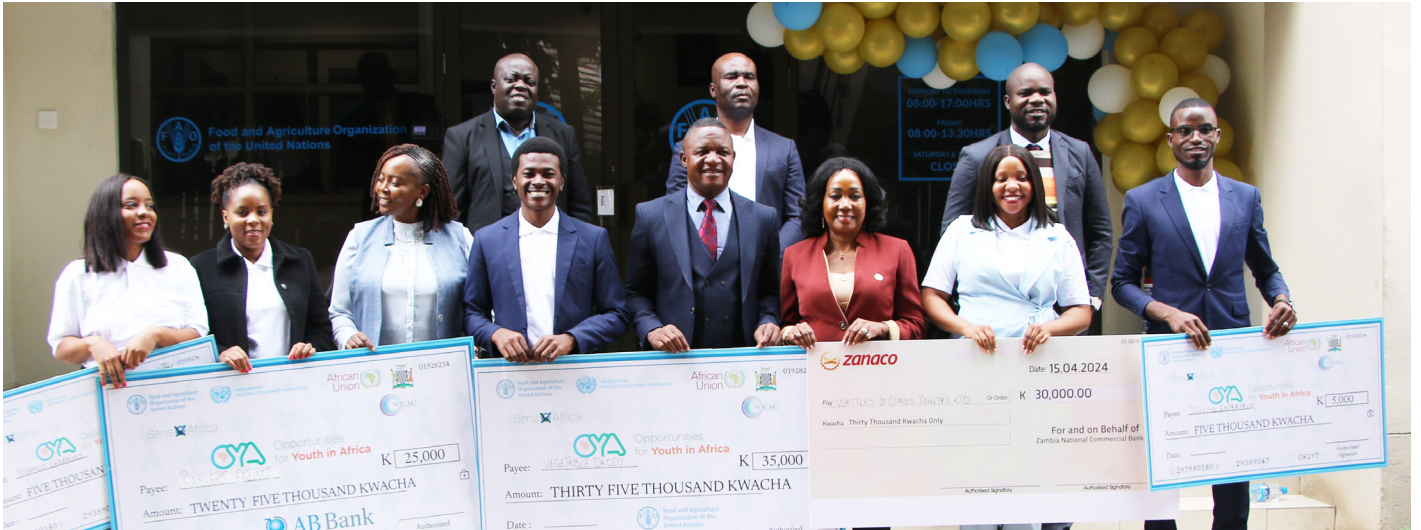
"The UQP is rebuilding lost dreams, not only for those of us forcibly displaced at the present moment but even for the future

generations to benefit as well, to continue with their studies or access the labor market to utilize their prior qualifications", said Yona Banda Farook, a beneficiary of the UQP and a Zambian national forcibly displaced from Sudan, where he was studying for a degree in Economics at the International University of Africa in Khartoum, Sudan.

Furthermore, 21 refugees have since been admitted at Chalimbana University to study in teacher related programmes to be potentially employed by government to teach in refugee settlements to alleviate the challenge around language barrier between Zambian teachers and refugee children.

Zambia is the first pilot country to implement the UQP Initiative. The UPQ has now expanded to Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe in Africa.





FAO's Initiative Empowers 54 Zambian Youth Agripreneurs for Inclusive Rural Transformation

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, WEAC, and SensXAfrica, recently successfully concluded a comprehensive capacity-building program aimed at empowering young agripreneurs in Zambia through the Opportunity for Youth in Africa (OYA) Project under the "Empowering young women and men in agribusiness to lead inclusive rural transformation in Africa programme. 54 youth Agripreneurs were equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the agricultural sector.

A graduation ceremony, attended by representatives from both the public and private sectors, marked the culmination of this initiative. Hon. Elvis Nkandu, Minister of Youth and Sport, expressed his enthusiasm for the programme, stating, "This initiative underscores the importance of investing in our youth and providing them with the tools they need to succeed in the agricultural sector. By empowering young agripreneurs, we are not only addressing unemployment but also driving economic growth and transforming rural communities."

Suze Percy-Filippini, FAO Representative, also highlighted the significance of the program, saying, "FAO is committed to supporting youth-led agribusinesses and promoting inclusive rural transformation. Through initiatives like these, we are creating opportunities for young people to thrive and contribute to sustainable development."

One of the highlights of the ceremony was the recognition of five outstanding youth agripreneurs who demonstrated exceptional business acumen, creativity, and innovation during a pitch competition. These individuals

were selected based on the feasibility, scalability, sustainability, innovation, market relevance, and social impact of their business ideas. As a reward for their excellence, they received seed grants to further invest in their ventures.

The pitch competition served as a platform for the participants to showcase their entrepreneurial talents and attract potential investors. It was also an opportunity for them to receive feedback from industry experts and refine their business strategies. The presence of financial institutions, development organizations, and other stakeholders further enhanced the significance of the event, creating networking opportunities for the youth agripreneurs.

Monica Mwaba a youth agripreneur and CEO of Monmild Enterprise Limited elated for emerging as one of the winners of the pitch competition said "My participation in the pitch competition and winning the seed grant marked a turning point in my life as it this enabled me to gain exposure and essential resources for growing my company. With perseverance, creativity, and the priceless assistance of the Opportunity for Youth in Africa program and FAO, I turned obstacles into possibilities and fulfilled my dreams of enhancing my business skills as an entrepreneur."

The success of this capacity-building program is a testament to FAO's commitment to fostering youth-led agribusinesses and promoting inclusive rural transformation. By investing in the next generation of agricultural entrepreneurs, FAO is not only

addressing youth unemployment but also driving innovation and economic growth in rural communities.

Furthermore, this initiative aligns with FAO's strategic objectives of reducing rural poverty and fostering inclusive rural transformation, as well as Zambia's priorities outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF): 2023-2027.

By empowering young people and promoting decent jobs within agri-food systems, FAO is contributing to the creation of a brighter future for all, particularly among women, youth, and vulnerable communities.

FAO's collaboration with the Government of Zambia, UNIDO, Resource Partners, and Business Incubators underscores the importance of partnerships in achieving sustainable development goals. Initiatives like the Opportunity for Youth in Africa (OYA) program further demonstrate FAO's commitment to youth empowerment beyond this specific project, with over 5,000 youth in Zambia benefiting from training, coaching, and mentorship programs.

In conclusion, FAO's efforts to capacitate young agripreneurs in Zambia is crucial for youth participation in agriculture on-farm and off-farm and in agribusiness. By providing them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and support, FAO is not only empowering individuals but also catalyzing positive change in the agricultural sector and beyond. This initiative is a testament to the organization's commitment to building a brighter future for agriculture, youth empowerment, and inclusive rural development.



UNHCR Operations Chief Observes Refugee Day and Kicks Off Inclusive Development and Solutions Dialogue

Assistant High Commissioner for Operations at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR), Raouf Mazou has commended Zambia for its steadfast commitment to a progressive model for refugee protection and solutions. Mr Mazou who was joined by the Vice-President W.K. Mutale Nalumango to commemorate World Refugee Day at Meheba Settlement in Kalumbila District.

Zambia, which currently hosts more than 100,000 refugees, was commended by Mr Mazou for its longstanding tradition of providing asylum and protection to those fleeing conflict and its pioneering role in managing forced displacement in line with the Global Compact on Refugees.

Mr Mazou, accompanied by UNHCR Regional Director for Southern Africa, Ms. Chansa Kapaya, expressed gratitude to the Government of Zambia for championing the principles of the Compact, as demonstrated through pledges made by Zambia's Vice President at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum and her ongoing leadership.

The senior UN official's comments followed his meetings in Lusaka with government officials to discuss the implementation of the National Refugee Policy, which will facilitate the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons into national services and plans. Mr. Mazou assured the Government that UNHCR, and its partners stand ready to

support the work ahead to implement the Policy.

The theme of this year's World Refugee Day is Empowering Refugees: Developing Solutions and Skills for a Brighter Future. During the event, the Vice-President turned on the lights to inaugurate an electrification project jointly delivered by UNHCR, the Rural Electrification Authority and the Office of Zambia's Commissioner for Refugees. The project underscores Zambia's dedication to integrating forcibly displaced persons into national systems, including through sustainable energy access for districts hosting refugee communities.

In Meheba, Mr Mazou also visited drought-affected farmers and heard from both Zambian and refugee communities about their small businesses and farming efforts supported by UNHCR and noted the severe impact of the climate crisis-induced drought on local populations, necessitating

urgent humanitarian responses.

The Assistant High Commissioner's visit also started a dialogue on inclusive development and sustainable solutions for forcibly displaced persons and their host communities, co-convened by the Government of Japan, the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees, traditional chiefs and other stakeholders.

The Dialogue emphasized the importance of transitioning from humanitarian assistance to sustainable programming, fostering economic growth in refugee-hosting areas, and integrating refugees into national development plans.

Reflecting on the outcomes of the Dialogue, Mr Mazou underscored two key pillars for refugee inclusion and protection: the legal and policy framework and the economic imperative.





IOM Convenes Consultative and National Migration Data Strategy Development Workshops

Migration is a complex phenomenon and the focus of significant political and media attention in the 21st Century. Despite this, it is frequently misunderstood or misinterpreted. The international community is in need of reliable and nuanced evidence-based data that reflects the rich complexity and fast-paced dynamics of the movement of people and equally informs policies, practices and public opinion on migration, development, and other related fields.

States have consistently identified the availability of timely, accessible, reliable, disaggregated and comparable data as being key for effective migration management and good migration governance.

The need for such data is highlighted in multiple international frameworks including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which calls for the collection and utilization of "accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies." States, the United Nations, and the international community have made many efforts over the years to enhance migration data. Many countries especially developed countries now have the technology and skills to track migration. However, despite these efforts, challenges regarding data on the movement of people persists, especially in developing countries and Zambia is no exception.

As the leading intergovernmental organization on migration matters, and given its place within the United Nations system, the onus is on the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to mobilize the international community

to build a stronger evidence base on migration and promote its systematic use to guide policy and action. In this regard, the IOM convened consultative and strategy development workshops on 22nd to 26th April and 21 to 24 May 2024 respectively, with state and non-state institutions to support the development of a national migration data strategy aimed at establishing a comprehensive and robust migration data system that provides timely, accurate, reliable and disaggregated data to inform evidence-based policy and decision making and migration management.

The Strategy will enhance cooperation and coordination mechanism in the collection, storage and sharing of migration data among relevant state and non-state agencies, ensuring data privacy and protection for migrants as well as support evidence-based policymaking and program development.

Speaking on behalf of the Director General for the Department of Immigration and co-chair of the Migration Data Technical Working Group, Dr. Japhet Lishomwa, a Senior Immigration Officer, Mr. Wellington Lubinda, stated that "Government of the Republic of Zambia prioritizes accurate and comprehensive data on migration for informed decisions, promoting development, ensuring security and effective management with international cooperation in the context of migration."

In a speech delivered on behalf of the IOM Zambia Chief of Mission, Ms. Keisha Livermore, she commended the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) for their efforts in promoting evidence-based migration management despite challenges in the collection, storage, management, analysis and sharing of migration data.

"IOM remains committed in supporting the government of Zambia in ensuring the development of a robust national migration data strategy, previously, we supported the government in the development of a National Migration Profile, the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) and the National Migration Policy among other key tools," added Ms. Livermore.

The National Migration Data Strategy is being developed with funding from the IOM Development Fund and the Africa Regional Migration Program funded by the United States Government.





UNESCO's CapED Increases Knowledge and Skills in Gender Responsive Pedagogy for In-Service Teachers

In its efforts to promote quality education, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in partnership with the Ministry of Education through the CapED Programme has continued to capacitate in-service teachers with knowledge and skills in Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP).

UNESCO organised a workshop with over 50 in-service teachers in Chipata district, with the aim of equipping the teachers with knowledge on how to effectively mainstream GRP in their teaching practice. Teachers were further oriented on the competencies on how to apply gender responsive methodologies to ensure inclusiveness and equal participation of both girls and boys in teaching and learning processes thereby promoting safer learning environment for both girls and boys in Zambia.

Speaking during the training workshop, Acting District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) Officer, Florence Kantini expressed her gratitude to UNESCO for continuing to support Chipata district by equipping teachers with knowledge and skills in GRP to contribute towards improving the quality of teachers and learning.

The DEBS stated that currently, Chipata and Eastern Province in general, was

experiencing high incidences of school related based violence characterised by increasing cases of child marriages, teen pregnancies, bullying and sexual abuse—serious social problems of all which are affecting not only girls' education but boys as well.

"We must know that school-related gender-based violence devastates the lives of many of our learners in our district. For girls especially, it affects their ability to get to and from school, to learn effectively while in school, and to remain there long enough to reap the benefits of education the government is working to provide" Mrs Florence Kantini said.

The Acting DEBS further emphasized on the need for teachers participating in the workshop to utilizing the knowledge and skills acquired and address specific learning needs of both learners in schools by developing teaching practices that engender equitable treatment of both girls and boys within the school community.

"As teachers, you need to actively promote a gender equal, respectful, non-violent culture with gender aware pedagogy amongst learners". Mrs Kantini stated that potential for teachers and learners themselves to act as agents of change provides one of the greatest hopes for achieving the social transformation necessary to unlocked high-quality gender

responsive pedagogy. The training covered among other aspects the conceptual and normative framework of gender including human rights issues, meaning of GRP; gender responsive language use in a school setting; gender responsive pedagogy and learning; understanding sexual maturation and adolescence through a gender lens; gender responsive teaching and learning materials; gender responsive lesson planning; engaging stakeholders and advocacy; and school level GRP action planning; and monitoring and evaluation.





Taking Steps to End Child Marriage: UNFPA supports Government to produce Ending Child Marriage Policy Brief



In a significant move to protect children's rights, the Zambian government has launched an Ending Child Marriage Policy Brief, with the support of UNFPA, the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency. The policy brief aims to raise awareness about the prevalence and harm of child marriage, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and galvanize national commitment to end the practice.

Speaking at the launch, Minister of Community Development and Social Services Doreen Mwamba called for collective action to end child marriage and ensure access to education for all children in Africa. "This is not an easy period, but if we work together, we can help adolescent girls and boys in Zambia fulfill their potential," she said. She noted that child marriage is a persistent violation of human rights that hinders girls' education, health, and well-being. "Child marriage is a persistent violation of human rights that hinders girls' education, health, and well-being," she emphasized.

Director of Public Prosecutions Gilbert Phiri emphasized the importance of open and constructive dialogue in implementing the Marriage Amendment Act No. 13 of 2023, which criminalizes child marriage under all laws, including customary law. "The legislation was a pivotal step which Zambia had undertaken in addressing the pressing issue of child marriage, which, with collective efforts from relevant stakeholders, had the potential to end child marriage," he said. He highlighted the complexity of Zambia's

legal landscape prior to the amendment, which allowed for child marriages under tribal traditions. "Before the amendment, Zambia's legal landscape was marked by complexity, with a blend of customary and statutory laws," he explained.

UNFPA Country Representative Seth Broekman reiterated that child marriage not only harms individual girls but also robs Zambia of its future leaders and innovators. "When girls are forced into marriage, they are denied the opportunity to pursue their education, develop their skills, and contribute to their communities. As a result, Zambia loses out on the potential economic, social, and political contributions that these girls could and should have made," he said.

He informed stakeholders that UNFPA's efforts to end child marriage will include awareness creation and positive social norms change interventions, integrated into programs on human capital formation, gender equality, and reduction of teenage pregnancies.

"An example of such a program is the Gender, Adolescent Pregnancy, and Social Norms (GAPS) Programme, funded by the Government of Sweden, which UNFPA and its partners are implementing," he said. Zambia has a high prevalence of child marriage, with 29% of adolescent girls married by age 18, translating to 1.7 million girls, with 400,000 married before age 15.

The new Marriage Amendment Act sets the minimum age of marriage as 18 years for all marriages, including statutory and customary marriage, removing all ambiguity regarding child marriages.

The launch of the policy brief and the amendment of the marriage act are critical steps towards ending child marriage in Zambia. Stakeholders have committed to working together to ensure that girls remain in school until tertiary education and have access to sexual reproductive services, education, and social protection programs. With collective action and sustained efforts, Zambia can end child marriage and ensure a brighter future for its children.





Over 260 Zambians in the Diaspora Witness the Launch of Zambia Diaspora Web Portal



Migration has always played a central role in the history of Zambia. As a nation sharing borders with as many as eight countries, the movement of people into, out of and inside Zambia forms a crucial fabric in the lives of all Zambians. This mobility is primarily responsible for the united yet colourfully diverse cultural heritage Zambians proudly enjoy today. Yet, the outward flow of Zambians, particularly in recent decades, has come at a cost. Emigration, especially of highly skilled Zambians, has denied the country of much-needed expertise that would otherwise have contributed a great measure towards its development.

It should not be assumed that the migration of Zambians, mostly to countries in higher stages of development, has been without its benefits. Many Zambians in the diaspora have taken the opportunity to advance their levels of expertise in various fields, thereby building massive potential for much-needed assistance in the development of the country. Reports suggests that many have embarked on various enterprises involving investments in Zambia, such as real estate development, manufacturing, agro-industry and charities.

The Zambian government recognizes the significant contribution of its diaspora to national development. To harness the potential of diaspora engagement, the country developed the National Diaspora Policy and has steadfastly continued in that trajectory. On 16th May 2024, in Lusaka, the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and International Cooperation, with financial and technical support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), developed and launched the Zambia Diaspora Web Portal. This platform facilitates continuous diaspora engagement and serves as a source of information on investment and trade opportunities, as well as government policies, programs, and procedures for the Zambian diaspora community.

The excitement among over 260 Zambians in the diaspora who attended the launch virtually, exhibited their sense of belonging and desire to stay connected and contribute to the country's development. Speaking virtually, President of the Zambia Diaspora Organization, Mr. Ferdinand Simaanya, stated, "Indeed, this innovation will help us to stay connected, as well as engage, and collaborate with the public and government in driving the country's development. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to commend the government, IOM, and partners for this initiative."

Guest of Honour and Foreign Affairs Minister, Hon. Mulambo Haimbe, MP, expressed his gratitude to the IOM and partners for technical and financial support to realize this remarkable undertaking. "Today, we embark on a new chapter, one that amplifies our commitment to engaging, connecting, and collaborating with the Zambian Diaspora Community for national development. The Web Portal is

not just a mere abstract concept; but it is a vibrant channel of transformation that serves as a tangible vehicle facilitating the transfer of critical resources, technology, knowledge, and ideas back to the home country," stated Hon. Haimbe.

The IOM Zambia Chief of Mission, Ms. Keisha Livermore highlighted that the 2023 diaspora mapping and survey report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support from the IOM show that 97.8% of Zambians in the diaspora are interested in investing in Zambia.

"The launch of the web portal, therefore, is a crucial and innovative step forward towards the operationalization and implementation of global, regional, and national frameworks and policies on diaspora and development," stated Ms. Livermore.

The web portal was developed with funding from the IOM Development Fund (IDF) and the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) Project funded by the European Union.





UN Zambia Celebrates World Press Freedom Day



In a significant display of solidarity for press freedom, the United Nations (UN) in Zambia, media institutions and various partners came together to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2024, under the theme, 'A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis' which brought to the forefront the pressing need for media to act as a catalyst for change in the face of global environmental challenges.

The day was marked by a vibrant march past and concluded on a high note with a national media conference, underscoring the critical role of journalism in addressing environmental crises. This was a powerful testament to the unity and resolve of journalists and media practitioners in Zambia as participants marched with banners and placards, advocating for the freedom of the press and the importance of responsible journalism in promoting environmental stewardship.

In remarks read on behalf by UNESCO Team Leader Alice Saili, UN Resident Coordinator Beatrice Mutali said the UN in Zambia value the partnership and critical role that the media plays in national development and ensuring that we achieve an equitable society, leaving no one behind.

"In the context of this year's theme, we are fully aware of the challenges that media encounter in the face of environmental crises arising from climate change. Let me add that the media also have a key role in promoting environmental sustainability through creating awareness about the effects of climate change, inspiring action and driving positive behaviour change", she said.

The conference featured a series of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and workshops focusing on the intersection of media and environmental issues. Experts from various fields provided insights into how journalists can effectively report on environmental degradation, climate change, and conservation efforts. One of the highlights of the conference was the unveiling of a new initiative aimed at enhancing environmental reporting. The program, developed in collaboration with environmental scientists and media veterans, aims to equip journalists with the tools and knowledge necessary to cover complex environmental issues accurately and compellingly.

Furthermore, the event served as a platform to honor journalists who have made significant contributions to environmental reporting. Awards were presented to individuals and media houses that demonstrated excellence

in investigative reporting and storytelling that spurred action and policy changes. There was a renewed commitment among participants to uphold the principles of press freedom and to leverage their platforms to inform, educate, and inspire action for the planet's well-being.

The World Press Freedom Day celebrations in Zambia not only highlighted the importance of a free press but also emphasized the role of journalism in safeguarding our environment. It was a day of reflection, learning, and commitment to a cause that transcends borders –the health and future of our planet.





Zambia Undertakes Benchmarking Visit to Nigeria for Labour Migration Governance and Diaspora Initiatives

Labour migration is a global phenomenon that has grown to be one of the key policy areas, prompting countries to develop harmonized rights-based and migrant-centered approaches. The human desire to seek decent employment and improved livelihoods is at the core of the migration-development nexus.

Like many countries in the continent, Zambia has a significant population in the diaspora and has long been characterized by high levels of migration for the purpose of employment. The Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) recognizes the enormous potential of the diaspora and labour migrants to contribute towards national development.

Accordingly, GRZ formulated National Diaspora Policy and the National Labour Migration Strategy. The policy provides an enabling framework for diaspora engagement and promotes the participation of the Zambian diaspora in national development while the strategy aims to support effective governance and management of labour migration in Zambia. The GRZ is committed to enhancing the engagement and participation of its labour migrants and diaspora in national development as reflected in the 8th National Development Plan and Sustainable Development Goal 10.7.

In view of the above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), undertook

a benchmarking visit to the Federal Republic of Nigeria from 6th to 10th May, 2024 aimed at improved understanding of Diaspora engagement initiatives and Labour Migration Governance to aid in Zambia's effective implementation of the National Labour Migration Strategy and its Diaspora Policy for economic growth.

Head of delegation and Assistant Labour Commissioner, Ms. Mukamasole Kasanda recognized the crucial contribution of the diaspora community to Nigeria's economy and commended the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Nigeria Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) for successfully setting up institutions including the Diaspora Advisory Council, MRC among others to ensure sustainable government led efforts for diaspora engagement and labour migration governance and management.

"Our mission is to learn from your government specifically your Commission on how you have successfully implemented various diaspora engagement initiatives including dual citizenship, the MRC among other initiatives which have continued to contribute to your country's development. The lessons drawn from this tour will go a long way in harnessing the potential of our labour migrants and strengthening our diaspora engagement programmes," stated Ms. Kasanda.

The NIDCOM Secretary, Dr. Sule Basi revealed that there are over 20 million

Nigerians in the diaspora contributing to the GDP of their host communities and that of Nigeria. "Nigerians in the diaspora are huge global economic drivers in different sectors, including healthcare, education, entertainment, sports, entrepreneurship among others. We have about eight Nigerians in the US Congress, other Nigerians in the diaspora have set up businesses, including the famous Agege Bread Bakery in Canada. Annually, they remit over 20 billion dollars to the Nigerian economy," stated Dr. Basi.

IOM's Regional Project Coordinator for the Southern Africa Migration Management Project Mr. Tunde Sunday Omoyeni stated that IOM remains committed to supporting governments in harnessing the potential of migration to be an enabler of sustainable development in Africa and across the globe. The Benchmarking visit to Nigeria was funded by the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) Project funded by the European Union.





National Validation of the Diagnostic Study towards the Development of the Comprehensive Teacher Policy for Zambia

Since 2022, UNESCO through the Capacity Development for Education (CapED) Programme has been supporting the Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialised Services to development the comprehensive teacher policy to address teacher quality challenges and contribute towards the delivery of quality education at all levels.

In line with the agreed roadmap, UNESCO, through the CapED Programme commissioned the comprehensive diagnostic study on teacher quality issues to generate data to inform the policy develop process. The diagnostic study investigated a comprehensive desk review of the existing policy guidelines, legal frameworks, procedures and practices in relation to the status of teachers, their working conditions, management, administration and professional development in line with the nine dimensions of teacher issues in Zambia.

UNESCO in partnership with the Ministry of Education organised a validation workshop to provide an opportunity for participants to provide feedback, suggestions, and insights regarding the research findings and clarity of some misunderstandings or ambiguities to enable the technical team to make necessary revisions in readiness for dissemination of the diagnostic study. The workshop was attended by various government institutions which have been actively involved in this process include the Teaching Council of Zambia, Teaching Service Commission and Higher Education Authority.

Ministry of Education Permanent Secretary -Educational Service, Joel Kamoko indicated that the issue of teacher shortage, characterised low teacher competencies and teacher management, low teacher motivation arising from poor working conditions remained a huge concern for government which such that in the absence of a conducive policy environment, it was difficult to resolve them effectful effectively.

"Our quest to have the teacher we need for the education we want in Zambia cannot just happen in a vacuum. Rather, it an important endeavour that requires a conducive policy environment to guide our concrete choices and actions across various the teacher policy dimensions, such as recruitment and retention, teacher education, deployment, career paths, working conditions, remuneration, teacher standards and accountability to mention but a few," said Mr Kamoko.



Chief of Section, TED UNESCO, Carlos Vargas, highlighted a snapshot of teacher issues in the Global Report and further mentioned key recommendations of the UN SG High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession. Furthermore, Director for UNESCO IICBA, Wodon Quentin gave a solidarity message underscoring the needed for evidence driven teacher policy making process.

During this workshop, participants had the opportunity to appreciate the research findings, methodology used, implications of the results concerning teacher issues in Zambia. They also discussed how these findings will inform the dimensions required to develop a comprehensive national teacher policy for Zambia.





Securing Equal Rights for Women in Zambia



According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Goal Number Five, gender equality is key towards realisation of peace and prosperity across the globe. However, in many countries women are marginalized when it comes to land acquisition.

United Nations Human Settlement Programmes (UN-Habitat) therefore develops, disseminates and implements gender-transformative and responsive land tools through the Customary Land Certification Project implemented using the social tenure domain model, a fit-for-purpose land administration tool.

These tools and approaches contribute to land reform, good land governance, inclusive land administration, sustainable land management, and functional land sector coordination – empowering women globally and contributing to an enabling environment where women can equally access their land rights.

In response to the challenges faced by women in Zambia, UN-Habitat took a comprehensive approach ranging from securing tenure for women and youth in informal settlements and customary land contexts, to creating low-cost housing through women cooperatives and slum upgrading with livelihood

creation, as well as working with local and national government partners on capacity development and policy updates.

Through community participation, capacity building with a focus on women, girls, and youth, and working directly with women land activists, 1,882 new customary land occupancy certificates were issued to women in 2016, increasing both tenure security and stability for women and their families, as well as reducing boundary and land disputes.

"I used to fight with neighbours during the farming season because some people would encroach on my land. The fights were recurrent until the land was mapped, and I got my land certificate. I can now sleep peacefully. As a widow, the customary land certificate has given me insurance. You know when you do not have a husband, people can do anything to you because society undermines women's land rights," said Anna Lunsungwe, a 76-year-old widow beneficiary of Chief Chamuka's village in Chisamba District.

UN-Habitat has so far issued land tenure certificates to 4,752 households in Chamuka Chiefdom, out of which 1,882 certificates are women-owned.

Investing in the land rights of women in Zambia and globally is crucial for the realization of

human rights, poverty reduction, economic prosperity and sustainable development leading to the attainment of the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, and other regional and country level policy initiatives.





UN Trains Journalists on Disability Inclusion



A Disability Rights Advocate and Expert in Deafblindness has called on the media to play an active role in influencing society to counter myths and negative attitudes and behaviours towards Persons with Disabilities.

Hellen Shakele, who is a lecturer at the Zambia Institute of Special Education (ZAMISE) in Lusaka and Founder of a Zambian NGO, Defeating Blindness in Zambia, says that Persons with Disabilities have the same rights as other people. "Journalists must help society to understand that Persons with Disabilities should be supported to enjoy their rights like everyone else. They are also able to do a lot of things. It is about giving them reasonable accommodation," said Shakele.

Speaking during a Media Training on Disability Inclusion organized by the UN in Zambia held from 23-24 April 2024, Shakele gave a moving firsthand account of her experience as a mother of a Congenital deafblind child. Deafblindness is a condition in which an individual is both deaf and blind.

"Caring for my daughter Lulu, who is now 15 years old, has taught me a lot. Apart from formal education in Deafblindness which I have acquired, I used my personal experience to help other parents with bodily tactile modalities and improve language development in deafblind children," she said.

The training, which was attended by 22 print, electronic and online journalists from public and private media organizations was aimed at enhancing disability inclusive reporting in the media. The training was premised on raising awareness, increasing knowledge and understanding of disability issues, identification

of challenges and perspectives on disability reporting among media practitioners as well as promote inclusive language and educate participants on the use of respectful and non-stigmatizing and non-discriminatory language in stories.

For the UN in Zambia, every person, regardless of their abilities, should be given the opportunity to thrive and be heard. In her remarks to officially open the training, UN Resident Coordinator, Beatrice Mutali, represented by UNICEF Representative Penelope Campbell, noted that inclusion was not just a buzzword but a fundamental human right.

"Remember that every person has a story to tell, and it is your duty as media to provide a platform for those stories to be heard. By doing so, you not only empower Persons with Disabilities, but also enrich our own lives by embracing the richness and diversity of the human experience," she said.

Mutali underscored the UN family's commitment to promoting disability inclusive and accessible communications through the media. She explained that inclusive and accessible communications reduce bias and discrimination and promote inclusion and participation. Participants interacted with disability experts that included Bruce Chooma, Executive Director for the Disability Rights Watch (who served as the lead Facilitator), Miyoba Hamanyanga, Vice-Principal for ZAMISE and Moses Chibili, UNV Coordination and Partnerships Officer in the Resident Coordinator Office, UN Zambia.

Apart from practical sessions on how to

interact with and interview Persons with Disabilities, participants learnt about human rights and Disability Inclusion; portrayal of disability in the media and impact on attitudes and behaviours. Other sessions centred on identifying common stereotypes and misconceptions about disability; guidelines for using respectful and inclusive language when reporting on disability and developing inclusive stories.

The work of the UN on Disability Inclusion is guided by the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, which was launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2019, aimed at raising the standards and performance on Disability Inclusion across the UN's work.





UNHCR - COR - ZJA Sign Tripartite MoU



The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, and the Zambia Judo Association (ZJA) came together to formalize their partnership and signed a tripartite memorandum of understanding.

This agreement solidifies the inclusion of judo sports activities in settlements across Zambia under the Judo-for-Peace programme, benefiting both refugees and the host community. The Judo for Peace programme has had a positive impact since its establishment in 2016 at the Meheba settlement in Kalumbila District, North-Western Province, and later expanded to the Mayukwayukwa settlement.

This programme, dedicated to promoting peace and well-being, will further extend its reach to the Mantapala settlement in Nchelenge, Luapula Province on August 6th, enriching the lives of even more individuals.

The International Judo Federation, through the ZJA, is providing crucial support to the Judo programme. This support demonstrates the potential of sports to foster empowerment and resilience among forcibly displaced populations.

Following the signing of the tripartite agreement, UNHCR Representative in Zambia, Ms Preeta Law, voiced her enthusiasm, stating, "We are thrilled to sign this agreement to support Zambian communities that are hosting refugees. Judo will help them achieve their aspirations for a brighter future and help them to be resilient." These words echo the underlying goal of the programme, emphasizing the importance of nurturing hope and resilience among the participants.

Professor Prosper N'gandu, the Commissioner for Refugees, expressed his sincere satisfaction with the agreement, emphasizing that the involvement of refugees in judo will not only alleviate the stress they face but also enhance co-existence by fostering positive interaction between refugees and the host community.

Furthermore, Mabvuto Nguni, the ZJA General Secretary, highlighted the significance of the agreement as a long-term partnership, affirming, "We'll use judo as a tool to change people's lives and we are happy that refugees and the host community in the settlements have been included." This long-term commitment further underlines the positive impact and sustainability of the judo programme in fostering meaningful change in the lives of those involved.

Zambia hosts over 101,000 refugees and other displaced persons in the three refugee settlements of Meheba, Mayukwayukwa, Mantapala and in urban areas.





PHOTO FOCUS

The Impact of Drought on Agriculture



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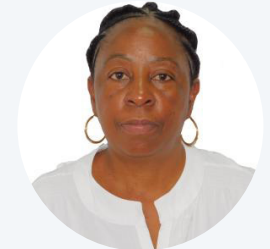
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