



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

REPORT

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE
REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY IN
ZAMBIA**

FOR THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Published by the National Assembly of Zambia

FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Education, Science and Technology has the honour to present its Report on the Review of the Operations of the Higher Education Authority in Zambia, for the Fourth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly. The functions of the Committee are stipulated in Standing Order 206(c) of the National Assembly of Zambia Standing Orders, 2024.

In accordance with its Programme of Work, the Committee held twenty-six meetings to consider the topical issue. To fully interrogate the topical issue, the Committee requested detailed memoranda from various stakeholders, who were also invited to appear before it to clarify any issues contained therein. The list of stakeholders is at Appendix II. The Committee also undertook a local tour to the Copperbelt, Central and Lusaka provinces and a foreign tour to Uganda.

The Committee's Report is organised in two parts: Part I gives the background, objectives of the study, a summary of submissions from stakeholders, local and foreign tour reports, and the Committee's Observations and Recommendations. Part II of the Report contains the Action-Taken Report on the Report of the Committee for the Third Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly.

The Committee is grateful to all stakeholders who tendered both written and oral submissions. The Committee also appreciates the services rendered by the Office of the Clerk of the National Assembly during its deliberations. The Committee further wishes to thank you, Madam Speaker, for affording it an opportunity to carry out its work.



Mr Harry S K Kamboni, MP
CHAIRPERSON

July 2025
LUSAKA

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1.0 COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of: Mr Harry S K Kamboni, MP (Chairperson); Ms Melesiana Phiri, MP (Vice-Chairperson); Mr Twaambo Mutinta, MP; Mr Mweemba Malambo, MP; Mr Chinga Miyutu, MP; Mr Tyson Simuzingili, MP; Mr George Chisanga, MP; Mr Sydney Mushanga, MP; Mr Allen Banda, MP; and Mr Elias Daka, MP.

PART I

2.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE TOPICAL ISSUE

2.1 A REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY IN ZAMBIA

2.1.1 Background

The Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013, provided for the establishment of the Higher Education Authority whose roles, among others were to: develop and recommend policy on higher education, including the establishment of public higher education institutions and the registration of private higher education institutions; regulate higher education institutions and coordinate the development of higher education; promote quality assurance in higher education; and audit the quality assurance mechanisms of higher education.

The Eight National Development Plan (8NPD) stated that the Government planned to improve the quality of higher education, among other levels of education. The Government, therefore planned to increase access to public universities and other higher learning institutions by investing in infrastructure and continuing to create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive in the delivery of higher education, among other measures.

In view of the foregoing, the Committee on Education, Science and Technology resolved to undertake a review of the operations of the Higher Education Authority in Zambia and appreciate the opportunities and challenges.

2.1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were to appreciate:

- (i) the legal and policy framework governing the mandate of the Higher Education Authority in Zambia;
- (ii) compliance of the higher learning institutions to the existing legal and regulatory requirements;
- (iii) the capacity of the Higher Education Authority to oversee the operations of the higher learning institutions; and
- (iv) the challenges and opportunities if any; and recommend the way forward.

2.2 SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

The submissions made by the stakeholders were as summarised below.

2.2.1 THE POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING THE MANDATE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY IN ZAMBIA

The Committee was informed that the Higher Education Authority (HEA) was established by the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013*, read together with the *Higher Education Amendment Act, No. 23 of 2021*. The Authority was established to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education; provide for the establishment, governance and the regulation of public higher education institutions; provide for the registration and regulation of private higher education institutions, among others. Further, Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 51 of 2024 regulations provided for the operationalisation of registration of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and accreditation of learning programmes, by the Authority.

The Committee was informed that the Authority responded to the policy objectives and measures contained in the National Higher Education Policy of 2019, under Part IV which sought to: *enhance quality and relevance in the provision of higher education, increase equitable access and participation to quality higher education, enhance efficiency and effectiveness of higher education, promote alternative sources for financing higher education and enhance career development support to students*. The policy set out the objectives, measures, and standards for the education sector, including higher education. It provided guidance on issues like curriculum development, quality assurance and educational equity. Therefore, the Authority aligned its activities to the National Higher Education Policy of 2019, to ensure consistency and effectiveness in the delivery of higher education services in Zambia.

Additionally, the Committee was informed that other national policies and laws the HEA aligned its activities to included the following:

- i. the Educating Our Future Policy of 1996;
- ii. the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP);
- iii. the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework of 2024; and
- iv. *The Zambia Qualifications Authority Act, No. 8 of 2024*.

2.2.2 THE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS COMPLIANCE TO THE EXISTING LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Committee was informed that some higher education institutions offering education and training in Zambia had successfully registered with HEA as required by the Act, while others, although registered by the Patents and Company Registration Agency (PACRA), were yet to seek registration with the HEA. A report by HEA revealed that of the over 300 HEIs registered by PACRA, not more than eighty had sought registration with the HEA.

It had also been observed that despite fulfilling the registration requirement, some institutions had not fully complied with all the regulatory provisions outlined in the *Higher Education Authority Amendment Act, No. 23 of 2021*.

Other observations made by stakeholders included the following:

- i. some Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) had been registered by the HEA despite not meeting the minimum standards for infrastructure and learning resources, as provided in the Act;
- ii. several HEIs continued to offer and graduate students with learning programmes that had not been accredited by HEA;
- iii. HEIs had been unlawfully establishing new campuses or relocating to new premises without obtaining authorisation from the HEA; and
- iv. in some instances, HEIs had entered into affiliation agreements without authorisation from the HEA, while others had made changes to their operational plans without the HEA's approval.

The Committee was informed that a detailed analysis of compliance levels among HEIs reveals a mixed scenario. While some institutions demonstrated high levels of adherence to regulatory requirements and quality standards, others faced challenges in certain areas. Common noncompliance issues included inadequate resources, outdated infrastructure, insufficient faculty development, and gaps in meeting accreditation criteria. Addressing these compliance gaps was essential to ensure the quality and integrity of higher education in Zambia.

2.2.3 THE CAPACITY OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY TO OVERSEE THE OPERATIONS OF THE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

The Committee was informed that to effectively carry out its oversight responsibilities, the Authority must have the necessary human resources, technical expertise, and financial support. This included skilled staff members and experts in areas such as accreditation, audits, data analysis, and policy enforcement.

The Authority had been building capacity over time. The Authority started operations in 2015 with a skeleton of two members of staff in the Quality Assurance Department and five members of staff in the Corporate Services Department. The Authority had since increased its capacity through the employment of additional four members of staff in accreditation, three in standards, seven in inspectorate and sixteen in corporate services. In addition, the Authority's system relied on experts for accreditation and audits; and had so far expanded the database of experts to more than 500 in various fields. Expanding on the growth in staff numbers across various departments within the Authority was evidence that it had the capacity to effectively oversee the operations of HEIs.

With the addition of staff specifically dedicated to accreditation, standards, and inspectorate, alongside the growth in corporate services team members, the Authority possessed a well-rounded workforce for comprehensive oversight. The presence of over 500 experts in various fields further strengthened the Authority's ability to uphold quality and regulatory standards within HEIs. Despite this growth in staff numbers, HEA still needed to be restructured to respond to the increased mandate as provided for by the 2021 Amendment to the Act. More employees were needed to provide regulatory oversight in the various regions of Zambia.

In addition, the grant had been insufficient to meet the operations of HEA and the lack of sufficient funds had hampered the expansion of internal capacity such as the creation of regional offices. For example, since 2018, the Authority had been receiving a grant of K26,556,686.04 per annum. Increasing the grant by 141 percent would help the Authority to increase members of staff from thirty-five to an optimal number of sixty-eight.

2.2.4 THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

The Committee was informed that the HEA experienced challenges in its operations, as set out below.

i. Legal Framework

The legal framework had not completely resolved overlapping mandates with the professional bodies. For example, HEIs wishing to offer a Diploma in Nursing learning programme were required to buy and pay for curriculum approval to the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Zambia (NMCZ) and also pay accreditation fees upon submitting the same learning programme for accreditation to the HEA.

ii. Funding Constraints

Limited financial resources constrained the HEA's ability to expand its monitoring and enforcement capabilities such as expanding its offices to regions as a way of expanding its monitoring and enforcement capabilities.

iii. Compliance Variability

The varying levels of compliance among institutions posed challenges in maintaining consistent quality standards across the higher education sub-sector.

iv. Centralisation

The HEA had remained centralised making it difficult to oversee all HEIs as per the requirements of the Act.

v. Rapid Changes

The dynamic nature of the higher education landscape, including technological advancements and evolving learning needs, necessitated continuous staff development, adaptation and updates to regulatory frameworks. However, this was not the case.

vi. Development of the Student Database

The Authority did not have a student database to allow for monitoring of student's enrollments in all HEIs.

v. Limited institutional and human resource capacity

Despite the 2021 amendment of the Act which expanded the mandate and functions of the HEA, the Authority had not been expanded in terms of institutional capacity and staff complement. The increasing numbers of private and public HEIs had also put strain on the capacity of HEA to deliver its services in an efficient manner.

vi. Resistance to External Quality Assurance Mechanisms by Higher Education Institutions

Quality assurance in higher education was a relatively new development in Zambia and several neighbouring countries. Despite its growing importance, some higher education institutions continued to resist external quality assurance mechanisms and oversight. This resistance was particularly pronounced among institutions that had operated for decades without being subjected to any form of external evaluation or monitoring. These longstanding institutions often perceived HEA's quality assurance mechanisms as an unnecessary interference, stemming from their historical autonomy and established traditions.

2.3 TOURS

2.3.1 LOCAL TOUR OF LUSAKA, CENTRAL AND COPPERBELT PROVINCES

In order to consolidate its findings on the topical issue, the Committee toured the HEA; and selected Higher Education Institutions in Lusaka, Central and Copperbelt provinces. Specifically, the Committee toured University College of Health Sciences, Kabwe College of Health Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University, Mukuba University, Copperstone University, Nkana College of Applied Science and Education, Zambia Institute of Business Studies and Industrial Practice (ZIBSIP) College, Kitwe College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Copperbelt University School of Medicine, Northrise University, Zambia University College of Technology and Mulungushi University.

The key findings of the Committee are summarised below.

i. The Higher Education Authority

The Committee learnt that the Higher Education Authority (HEA) was a statutory body established under the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013*, to provide external quality assurance for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Zambia. It began its operations in 2015.

The role of the Authority was, among others, to:

- a. register private universities and colleges;
- b. accredit learning programmes offered in both private and public universities and colleges;
- c. develop and monitor standards in universities and colleges;
- d. conduct institutional audits, inspections and surveillance of institutions operating in the higher education sector;
- e. undertake classifications of both private and public universities;
- f. manage the database of all students in higher education institutions; and
- g. advise the Minister on any aspect of higher education.

The Committee was informed that the Authority had a 2022 to 2026 Strategic Plan in place, which contained areas of development and showed priorities where resources would be channeled during the plan period.

The mandate of the Authority was to regulate and monitor standards in HEIs in order to ensure quality services and contribute to the enhancement of human capital and accelerated national development.

HEA was governed by a Board of the Authority which was constituted in accordance with the provisions of the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013 Part II Section 7 (1)*.

The Management of HEA was headed by the Director-General, who was the Chief Executive Officer of the Authority and was appointed in accordance with the provisions of the *Higher Education Act, No.4 of 2013, Part II Section 8*.

With regard to registration, the Committee was informed that registration was the process or act of granting a prospective private institution authority to operate as an HEI. In some jurisdictions, it was referred to as institutional accreditation. Registration of private HEIs was a requirement by Law. This was done to ensure that the private institutions met the set standards for offering internationally recognised quality education. It was also done to protect prospective learners and the public against unscrupulous operators.

The Committee was informed that HEA had registered 199 Higher Education Institutions, with 162 private and thirty-seven public.

General Requirements for Registration and Recognition

ii. University College of Health Sciences

	a copy of the Operational Plan/Strategic Plan (if updated)
	statutes of the institution (if updated)
	academic policy document(s) covering admissions, progression, e-learning, student transfer, assessment, awards, academic calendar development, fee refund policy and student record management (this did not apply to institutes)
	Curriculum Development and Review Policy (if updated and this did not apply to institutes)
	Open and Distance Learning Policy, where applicable
	Terms and Conditions of Service (if updated)
	Curriculum vitae of principal officers (this did not apply to institutes and institutions for specialised training of professionals in a specified field)
	Policies of academic staff recruitments and promotions, where applicable
	Policy of student enrolment and graduates
	Student Handbook covering registration procedures, information on courses, examination regulations
	Evidence of financial resources or guarantee
	Annual budget and cashflow statement (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professional in a specified field)
	Financial management policies and procedures, including risk management (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professionals in a specified field)
	Audited financial statements for HEIs that had existed previously in different types of HEIs or in other jurisdiction (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professionals in a specified field)
	Quality Assurance Policy and Implementation Plan
	Annual Research and Consultancy Policy for HEIs upgrading to Tier 1 (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professionals in a specified field)
	Infrastructure Development Master Plan where applicable
In addition, for private HEI's (note: this was normally automatic to public establishment of HEI's)	Zambia Revenue Authority tax clearance certificate
	National Pensions Systems Authority (NAPSA) Compliance Certificat
	Fire certificate (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professionals in a specified field that did not conduct training at their premises)
	Health Permit from the Local Authority (this did not apply to institutions for specialised training of professional in a specified field that did not conduct training at their premises)
	Three references of good standing including one from HEI banker
	Declaration of bankruptcy for Directors

The Committee was informed that the institution was established in 2013 and had since 2023 carried the name UNICOHS.

The institute had ten programmes accredited with the HEA. These included: Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health; Bachelor of Science in Clinical Medicine; Bachelor of Arts Social work; Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Bachelor of Commerce; Diploma in Registered Nursing; Diploma in Environmental Health; Diploma in Clinical Health; and Diploma in Social Work.

The Committee was informed that the University was in partnership with the following regulatory bodies and practicum sites HEA, Health Professions Council of Zambia (HPCZ), Nursing and Midwifery Council of Zambia (NMCZ), Local Authority, Hospitals, Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVETA).

With regards to HEA, the Committee was informed that the University had faced a challenge of delayed accreditation processes, which was attributed to low staffing levels.

ii. Kabwe College of Health Sciences

The Committee was informed that the College was established in 2012 and was registered with the Higher Education Authority. The College had a student population of forty-four studying Diploma in Registered Nursing, against the staff strength of twenty-four.

The Committee was however informed that the College faced challenges to meet requirements of the Higher Education Authority such as payment of accreditation and audit fees due to reduced student population. The College also lacked full time qualified lecturers because it was not able to retain them due to limited financial capacity.

The Committee was informed that the learning programmes were not accredited with the HEA, as the institution was struggling to raise fees which were deemed to be very high.

The Committee learnt that the institution was required to pay an audit inspection fee of K20,000 before HEA could conduct an audit. The College also lamented revising of student registration fees from K4 to K75 per student.

iv. Kwame Nkrumah University

The Committee was informed that Kwame Nkrumah University began as Kabwe Teachers College, which was established in 1967 to train junior secondary teachers at Diploma level. In 1971, the College was renamed Nkrumah Teachers College. In 2013, Kwame Nkrumah University was established and by Statutory Instrument No.107 of 2013, Nkrumah Teachers College was dissolved. In the same year, the University began with 600 students, a number which had grown to 8,794 as at 2025.

The Committee was also informed that the University operated in adherence to the provisions of the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013* and its subsequent amendments; and regulations.

Challenges being faced out of Higher Education Authority Mandate

The Committee was informed that KNU was facing challenges arising from the mandate of HEA, which included the following:

- a. high and unsustainable regulatory fees which were revised upwards in 2024, by at least 100 percent and without consultation;
- b. payment for re-accreditation of programmes during curriculum alignment with the new education system;
- c. limited technical capacity of the HEA Inspectorate Unit and lack of sector specific experience;
- d. delays in feedback and the practicality of annual audits such that in most instances, it takes more than a year for HEA to provide much needed feedback; and
- e. duplication of accreditation processes and fees for health-related programmes. The affected bodies included NMCZ, HPCZ and HEA. Each imposed its own accreditation standards, review processes and fees, resulting in a scenario where institutions were required to pay twice for the accreditation of the same programmes.

v. Mukuba University

The Committee was informed that Mukuba University was a public university established under an act of Parliament. It had a student population of 3200 and had three schools, namely; School of Education; School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences; and School of Distance and Open Learning. The University had affiliations with the National Science and Technology Council, Health Professions Council of Zambia, United Nations Education and Scientific Council Organisation (UNESCO) and Institute of Tropical Agriculture, among others.

The Committee was informed that the University was running thirty-eight programmes and out of which seven which were accredited by the HEA were pending registration with the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA).

With regard to accreditation, the Committee was informed that HEA had not profiled programmes such that it used same standards to accredit all qualifications, regardless of disciplines.

The Committee was informed that there seemed to be no difference between the role of HEA and ZAQA such that each institution requested for the information when they went for inspections. The Committee was also informed that HEA took more than six months to provide feedback on the audit findings contrary to the recommended three months.

The Committee was also informed that the institution made unnecessary duplicated payments to bodies such as NMCZ, HPCZ; and the HEA.

vi. Copperstone University

The Committee was informed that the university was established in 2004, through company incorporation. In July, 2011, it attained its charter. With regard to accreditation and registration, the institution was registered with the HEA and had accreditation with TEVETA, Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), Institute for the Management of Information System (IMIS) and Binary University, among others.

The Committee was informed that the institution was facing financial challenges to meet the cost of accreditation and audit inspection fees required by the HEA. The Institution also lamented about delayed feedback by the HEA, after conducting audits.

vii. Nkana College of Applied Sciences and Education

The Committee was informed that the college was registered as Nkana College of Nursing but the intention was to establish a Nkana University College, which would offer Nursing, Health Science and Education programmes.

The Committee was informed that the college was offering courses which were quality assured by the Health Professions Council of Zambia, Examinations Council of Zambia and Nursing and Midwifery Council of Zambia; and that subscriptions and indexing fees were being paid to the organisations.

However, the Committee was informed that while the college was not registered with the HEA, the Authority had not visited the institution and had never conducted any audits since its establishment.

It was submitted that the HEA was better placed to provide oversight on Universities and interfaced with professional bodies that oversaw the colleges, to avoid duplication of tasks.

viii. ZIBSIP College

The Committee was informed that ZIBSIP was a Public Training Institution under the Ministry of Technology and Science and Management Board. The College offered Tertiary Training in Business, Education and skills development training on full-time, part-time and open distance learning basis.

The Committee was informed that the college was also offering programmes under the Copperbelt University, University of Zambia and Mukuba University. This notwithstanding, the College was registered with TEVETA and had no interface with the HEA. The Committee was however, informed that the College had been encouraged to register with HEA on account that it was offering programmes accredited with HEA.

ix. Kitwe College of Nursing and Health Sciences

The Committee was informed that the College was opened in 1964 and offered training in Registered Nursing. The College was regulated by the NMCZ.

The Committee was informed that the College had interacted with the HEA and requested that all lecturers needed to train in research methodology. The College however, lamented that a course in research methodology was in the curriculum offered to graduate nurses. Therefore, there was no need to undertake such training.

The Committee was informed that HEA had not yet accredited the College's programmes and had not yet undertaken audits.

x. Copperbelt University School of Medicine

The Committee was informed that the Copperbelt University Medical School was the Country's second public medical school, after the University of Zambia School of Medicine. The School provided medical education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Committee was informed that the school was established in 2011. The school departments were Department of Basic Sciences, Department of Clinical Sciences and Department of Dental Sciences.

With regard to challenges with HEA, the Committee was informed that the 1:50 ratio of student to lecturer was unrealistic in developing countries. Further the ratio should take in to account the mode of learning. 1:75 ratio was instead proposed.

The Committee was also informed that the increment of local student registration fees K4 to K75 was unrealistic and did not take in to account the cost of living and the funding by the Government to institutions.

With regard to affiliation of colleges to offer HEA programmes accredited through other institutions, it was suggested that a regulation be put in place to stop institutions from offering higher qualifications contrary to their core mandates.

The Committee was also informed that the University was paying various fees to professional bodies such EIZ, NMCZ, HPCZ, for offering programmes aligned to professions, for membership of individual lecturers, and for students. In addition, institutions are expected to pay statutory fees to the HEA.

With regard to the HEA revised fees, it was submitted that the increment should have been 50 percent across the board.

xi. Northrise University

The Committee was informed that the vision to establish the University emerged in 1988 but was only realised in 2004. Therefore, the institution had existed for 20 years, in 2024.

The institution had nine accredited Bachelors Degree programmes in Business Administration, Finance and Accounting, Computer Science, Human Resource Management, Information Technology (Web and Software Development), Law, Nursing, Theology and Civil Engineering.

With regard to the HEA, the Committee was informed that private HEIs had limited resources but were expected to meet the same regulatory requirements as public universities which were long established and had larger student populations.

The Committee also learnt that HEA required a fully-fledged administrative framework regardless of student numbers. It was submitted that the scale and operational realities of institutions differed significantly.

The Committee was also informed that accreditation fees introduced by the HEA presented a significant financial burden for private universities and may impact their ability to operate

sustainably. Other fees that needed to be met were ZAQA registration, professional bodies affiliations, research budgets, among others.

The Committee was informed that the mandatory involvement of internal moderators and external examiners (in particular, HEA required that each course/module must have an External Examiner from outside the country), were posing a great challenge.

Prolonged feedback on audit inspections and accreditation of programmes was causing delay in implementation and enrollments. The Committee also learnt that the institution had paid for annual inspection audit for 2023 but the HEA had not visited to conduct the audit.

xii. Northern Technical College

The Committee was informed that the College was established in 1959 to offer technical and vocational training and the institution had not departed from its core mandate. The College fell under the Ministry of Technology and Science and was accredited with TEVETA. The College had a student population of 7500 and was inspected termly.

xiii. Zambia University College of Technology

The Committee was informed that Zambia University College of Technology, formally Zambia Information Communication Technology (ICT) College/ Zamtel College was the fastest growing higher learning institution based in Ndola. The University College was a Government higher learning institution and a Centre of Excellence. The University College offered both academic and professional programmes as well as consultancy services in ICT, Engineering and Business-related areas. The University had 106 staff strength against the population of 2800 students and was yet to appoint a University Council.

The University was running thirty programmes and eight were accredited with the HEA. The Committee was informed that the institution was facing challenges with the HEA qualification requirements by the lecturers. The Committee was informed that HEA classified ACCA as a Degree while ZAQA recognised it as equivalent to a Masters qualification.

The Committee was informed that the University College was paying affiliation fees to UNZA and CBU. The Committee learnt that the institution had paid the HEA fees for audit inspections and was awaiting the exercise.

xiv. Mulungushi University

The Committee was informed that Mulungushi University was the third largest public university boasting of three campuses and a student population of 14,500.

With regard to the mandate of the HEA, the Committee was informed that the University was facing the following challenges:

- a. delays in programme accreditation;
- b. delayed audit reports;
- c. inadequate consultation on policy changes; and
- d. inadequate record keeping and submission tracking.

The Committee was informed that the institution had paid for 2025 audit inspections but was yet to be audited by the HEA.

2.3.2 FOREIGN TOUR TO UGANDA

The Committee on Education, Science and Technology undertook its benchmarking visit to Uganda, where it interacted with the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation; and the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Sport. The Committee also had an engagement with the National Council for Higher Education of Uganda.

The findings of the Committee are set out below.

a. Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation

The Committee was informed that the mandate of the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation was provided for under rule 186a (1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, which included the following:

- i. to review, discuss and make recommendations on the scientific and technological content of Bills laid before Parliament;
- ii. to initiate Bills on strategic issues of science, technology and innovation for national development;
- iii. to monitor, evaluate and assess activities of public institutions and any other bodies engaged in national science, technology and innovation development; and
- iv. to examine and research the performance of the science, technology and innovation subsector.

Therefore, under Article 164(3) of the Constitution, Rule 159(c) and Rule 186A (1)(c), the Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation is empowered to do oversight through monitoring, evaluating or assessing activities of public institutions or any other bodies engaged in Science, Technology and Innovation development.

1. The Science, Technology and Innovation Ecosystem

The Committee was informed that Uganda's Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) ecosystem was a growing network of institutions and activities focused on promoting technological advancements and innovation for socio-economic development. While Uganda was not yet a major global player in STI, there were ongoing efforts to strengthen the national STI system and harness its potential.

Another pertinent oversight role that was carried out by the Committee was post-legislative scrutiny. This was in a bid to explore the efficiency of the policies and laws. This process allowed for the identification of gaps and violations of the law. It further enabled Committees to come up with appropriate resolutions which the line sectors adopted in order to offer improved services.

The Committee was informed that the Government of Uganda, through a Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation - Office of the President had made deliberate efforts to grow the economy and offered improved social services through eight industrial value chains,

which were anchored on mobility, pathogen economy pharmaceuticals, industrial 4.0+, import substitution, infrastructure innovations, aeronautic and space science; and productivity acceleration.

It was submitted that the Science, Technology, and Innovation Committee (STI) performed oversight on various entities, which included the Secretariat for STI – Office of the President, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, Uganda Industrial Research Institute, National Agricultural Research Institute, Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institutes, and National Livestock Resources Research Institutes, among other entities.

b. Committee on Education and Sports

The Committee was informed that the Parliament's oversight mandate was derived from Article 164(3) of the Uganda Republican Constitution, which provided that Parliament shall monitor all expenditures of public funds.

Under Article 90 of the Constitution, Parliament was also empowered to appoint committees necessary to efficiently discharge its functions and prescribe its powers, composition and functions. Therefore, the Parliament of Uganda constituted Sectoral and Standing Committees with general and specific functions as provided for under the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

In this regard, the Committee on Education and Sports was one such Sectoral Committee, which was mandated to scrutinise the operations and monitor expenditure of public resources by Government Ministries and departments responsible for Education and Sports. It was submitted that the Committee on Education and Sports had a Membership of 38 Members, who applied for membership at the beginning of the Session of Parliament. Notwithstanding the application for Membership, One-third of the Membership must be women.

c. Engagement with the National Council for Higher Education of Uganda

The Committee was informed that the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) was established as a higher education regulator by the *Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, Chapter 262 of the Laws of Uganda*.

NCHE was mandated to regulate and guide the establishment and management of higher education institutions in Uganda. While NCHE reported to the Minister of Education and Sports, it was overseen by Parliament through presentation of ministerial policy statements, budget framework papers, when invited on several occasions.

The functions of NCHE as provided under Section 5 of the *Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, Chapter 262 of the laws of Uganda*, were as set out below.

1. To receive, consider and process applications for the establishment and accreditation of private tertiary institutions, other degree awarding institutions and private universities. The accreditation of the academic and professional programmes of these institutions in consultation with professional associations and regulatory bodies.
2. To register all institutions of higher education established under the Act.

3. To receive and investigate complaints relating to institutions of higher education and take appropriate action.
4. To monitor, evaluate and regulate institutions of higher education.
5. In co-operation with the relevant Government departments, private sector, or the different institutions of higher education, to evaluate the overall national manpower requirement and recommend solutions to the requirements.
6. To ensure minimum standards for courses of study and the equating of degrees, diplomas and certificates awarded by the different public and private institutions of higher education.
7. To promote and develop the processing and dissemination of information on higher education for the benefit of the people.
8. To advise the Minister on the establishment and accreditation of public and private institutions of higher education.
9. To promote national interests in courses of study and professional qualification among the different types of institutions of higher education.
10. To perform any other function incidental to the objects of the Act or relating to higher education in Uganda or that may be conferred upon it by the Minister or any other law. The Committee was informed that Uganda had about 10.5 Million Students among whom 280,000 were tertiary students.

The institutional landscape was that the Country had 260 tertiary education institutions, of which eighty were universities, campuses or degree awarding institutions. The Country had atleast 4,000 academic programmes. This was against a staff strength of forty-nine inspectors.

The Committee was informed that the challenges which were being faced in the operations of higher education institutions in Uganda, included, inadequate teaching staff, high cost of inputs, inadequate infrastructure, limited internet access, funding constraints, regulatory framework challenges, conflicting mandates with other regulators and gaps in the law.

2.4 COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having considered the submissions made by various stakeholders and taking into consideration the findings from the local and foreign tours, the Committee makes the observations and recommendations set out below.

i. Legal Framework

The Committee observes that the existing legal framework surrounding higher education has not completely resolved overlapping mandates of HEA with the professional bodies. The Committee notes with concern that HEIs wishing to offer Diplomas in Nursing programmes are required to buy and pay for curriculum approval to the NMCZ and also pay accreditation fees upon submitting the same learning programme for accreditation to the HEA.

In this regard, the Committee urges the Executive to effect the harmonisation of the *Higher Education (Amendment) Act, No. 23 of 2021* with the *Nursing and Midwives Act, No.10 of 2019*, which did undergo consequential amendments following the amendment of the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013*.

ii. Funding Constraints

The Committee observes with concern that limited financial resources constrain the HEA's ability to expand its monitoring and enforcement capabilities such as expanding its offices to regions.

The Committee, therefore, urges the Executive to consider revising upwards, the budget allocation to the HEA in order to optimally perform its mandate. The Committee also urges the Executive to engage external partners for funding, to bolster the Authority's operational capacity.

iii. Compliance Variability

The Committee observes that the varying levels of compliance among institutions pose challenges in maintaining consistent quality standards across the higher education sub-sector. In this regard, the Committee urges the Executive to develop targeted assistance initiatives to help institutions address specific compliance gaps and quality issues, without delay.

iv. Centralisation

The Committee observes with concern that the HEA has remained centralised making it difficult to oversee all HEIs as per the requirements of the Act.

The Committee, therefore, urges the Executive to consider restructuring the HEA in order to increase and align its capacity to the increased mandate and functions as per the requirement of the *Higher Education (Amendment) Act, No. 23 of 2021*.

v. Rapid Changes

The Committee observes with concern the dynamic nature of the higher education landscape, including technological advancements and evolving learning needs.

In this regard, the Committee urges the Executive to conduct periodic reviews of legal and regulatory frameworks so that they are aligned with emerging challenges, technological advancements, and international best practices in higher education governance.

vi. Development of the Student Database

The Committee expresses concern that the Authority does not have a student database to allow for monitoring of student's enrolments in all HEIs. The Committee, therefore, urges the Executive to mobilise requisite funding and technical support to develop the student database in order to allow for monitoring of students' enrolments in HEIs.

vii. Limited Institutional and Human Resource Capacity

The Committee observes with concern that despite the enactment of the *Higher Education (Amendment) Act, No. 23 of 2021*, which expanded the mandate and functions of the HEA, the Authority has not been expanded in terms of institutional capacity and staff complement.

The increasing numbers of private and public HEIs have also put more strain on the capacity of HEA to deliver its services in an efficient manner. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Executive should consider expanding institutional capacity and staff complement of the HEA, to enable it meet the mandate for which it was established.

viii. Resistance to External Quality Assurance Mechanisms by HEIs

The Committee expresses concern at the resistance by the HEI's that have operated for decades without being subjected to any form of external evaluation or monitoring. The Committee, however, urges the HEA to exert its authority and ensure that all institutions are subjected to quality assurance processes without exception.

ix. Low Awareness among HEIs

The Committee observes with concern that some HEIs lack awareness or understanding of the HEA regulations and standards, leading to non-compliance. The Committee, therefore, urges the Executive to put measures in place that will increase awareness of HEA regulations and standards among HEIs.

x. Increment of Statutory fees without Consultation

The Committee observes with concern that while the *Higher Education Act, No. 4 of 2013* empowers the HEA to impose statutory fees on obligatory services offered to HEIs, there was limited consultation before the latest fees were adjusted. What is more concerning to the Committee is the increment of all statutory fees by at least 100 per cent. The Committee finds this unfortunate and urges the Executive to withdraw the increment and institute consultations with all key stakeholders, especially HEIs, before effecting any increment on statutory fees. The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

xi. Engagement of External Examiners

The Committee expresses concern at the HEAs mandatory requirement for HEIs to engage internal moderators and external examiners for each course/module, from outside the country as this was pausing logistical and financial challenges.

In this regard, the Committee urges that this privilege must be extended to any locally based citizen, as long as such citizens have acquired relevant professional and academic qualifications required to perform the assignments.

xii. Annual Inspection Audit Fees

The Committee observes with concern that HEIs are paying mandatory annual inspection audit fees, notwithstanding the failure by HEA to conduct such audits. The Committee finds this unacceptable and urges the Executive to revise the regulation and only mandate HEIs to pay the said fees once an inspection report for the preceding year has been issued to them by the HEA.

xiii. Multiple Payment of Statutory Fees

The Committee finds unacceptable the multiple payment of fees by HEIs to professional bodies such as EIZ, NMCZ, HPCZ, for offering programmes aligned to their professions, for membership of individual lecturers, and for students. In addition, institutions are also required to pay statutory fees to the HEA.

In view of this, the Committee urges the Executive to harmonise the payments so that professional bodies should only be collecting membership fees and leave the other obligations to the HEA.

xiv. Affiliation of Training programmes

The Committee observes that a number of institutions visited during the local tour were offering various programmes on affiliation basis, with other already established Public Universities. However, the Committee contends that the said programmes are not offered under the same academic conditions of the sponsoring public universities and therefore, compromises the quality of learners graduating through this avenue. In view of this, the Committee urges that a regulation be put in place to restrict learning institutions to offer qualifications within their mandates. The Committee also urges that the regulations put in place should prohibit sponsoring public universities to perform the role of HEA on the affiliated institutions.

PART II

3.0 ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2013 ZAMBIAN CURRICULUM: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

i. Capacity Building

The Committee had observed, in the previous session, that there were serious gaps in the implementation of the vocational pathways. These gaps were attributed to poor training of most of the teachers of vocational subjects, including some in the academic pathways.

The Committee had therefore, recommended that the Government should conduct a skills gap assessment and embark on a programme to train and orient teachers in curriculum content and delivery in their specific subjects.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the Government, through the Ministry of Education, was addressing the gaps attributed to poor teacher training on a significant scale. Among the interventions undertaken included the recruitment and deployment of Computer Studies and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Teachers; capacity building of more than 5000 teachers in vocational pathway subjects such as ICT; and about 9000 teachers in Design and Technology, Home Economics, Building and Plastering, Electrical Engineering, Carpentry and Joinery, and Metal Fabrication and welding.

However, through the Ministry of Education, the Government had yet to conduct a school needs assessment to include skills assessment for the teachers in both career pathways in readiness to implementing the 2023 curriculum.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee urges the Government to expedite the conducting of a school needs assessment without any further delay. The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

ii. Curriculum Communication

The Committee, in the previous session, had recommended that when a new curriculum was rolled out to schools, all supporting materials, books and everything essential for the implementation and transitioning should be available and distributed at the same time.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that before the Curriculum was implemented, it was trialled (piloted) in selected schools using draft subject syllabi that had been developed. After the trial, the syllabi were reviewed, finalised, validated, and subsequently sent to schools for implementation. However, the Government was fully aware of the challenges encountered during the trial phase, such as some draft documents not being retrieved and remaining in

schools, as well as the Ministry's difficulties in printing the required number of syllabi and related materials. As a result, some schools did not receive the necessary materials and continued using draft versions. The Government was taking proactive steps to address the issues, demonstrating its understanding of the situation.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee reiterates its recommendation on the matter and will await a progress report.

The Committee had, in the previous session also recommended that there should be a structured communication system which should be action oriented to allow the teachers to work effectively in accordance with the curriculum requirements. The Committee had urged the Government to ensure that orientation workshops for teachers were conducted to share notes on how best to implement a new curriculum.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the Government, through the Ministry of Education, had developed the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum with a comprehensive implementation plan and cost estimates. This plan covered all aspects, including the costs for printing and distributing the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework, subject syllabi, and teaching and learning materials to all schools. Additionally, the plan included provisions for the orientation and capacity building of key stakeholders, such as teachers, ensuring a holistic approach to implementation.

With lessons learned from the previous curriculum implementation in 2013, the Government was committed to securing the necessary funding for the 2023 curriculum implementation and ensuring that past mistakes were not repeated. This included establishing a structured communication system through Curriculum and Change Management Committees at all levels (national, provincial, and district) to provide oversight and guidance on curriculum implementation.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the Government's commitment to securing the necessary funding for the 2023 curriculum implementation.

iii. Stakeholder Expectations

The Committee had observed, in the previous session, that in most parts of the country, parents and pupils discriminated against those who opted for vocational pathways as they viewed them as routes taken by failures or by those who could not excel in academic pathways. The Committee further observed that this was because of communication and orientation failure at the time of introducing the curriculum and therefore, recommended that there should be an aggressive information sharing exercise in all the schools and to members of the public about the importance of vocational pathway.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the Executive had acknowledged that there was need to enhance information sharing to members of the public about the importance of vocational pathway. While Government through the Ministry of Community Development

and Social Services had been doing this through the district officers and Community Development Assistants, there had been no formal commitment towards sensitisation. The ministry may however formalise and ride on the existing structures to ensure there was aggressive information sharing on vocational pathways in the communities.

Further, the 2023 Curriculum Implementation Plan included community (parent) sensitisation on the new education curriculum to help them better understand and appreciate the eight pathways.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee urges the Executive to expedite the sensitisation programme and will await a progress report.

The Committee, in the previous session had also recommended the development of policy-based criteria for identifying learners' special skills, which should be aligned with schools that offered the appropriate career pathways.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the Executive would avail support that may be required to the Ministry of Education in the development of such policies.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the availing of support to the Ministry of Education.

iv. Revamp the Teacher Resource Centers

The Committee in the previous session had urged the Government to ensure that more funding was allocated to teacher resource centers and to ensure that all the centers around the country were revamped to address the high teacher pupil ratio prevailing in the country.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that Teachers' Resource Centers (TRCs) played a critical role in teacher's professional development. They served as hubs for in-service education and provided lifelong learning opportunities for teachers. TRCs were established to enhance teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, which was essential for improving student learning outcomes. These facilities were not limited to lesson plan preparation but were also valuable for teachers pursuing higher qualifications. TRCs were also utilised by student teachers.

However, the ability of TRCs to provide in-service training had been significantly hindered by several challenges, including:

- inadequate equipment and materials to support teachers, educators, and student teachers; and
- insufficient funding to support the implementation of teacher education programmes.

Funding for TRCs

The Government acknowledged that TRCs nationwide were receiving inadequate funding due to financial constraints. However, it was crucial to highlight the urgent need for additional resources to ensure the provision of quality education. The Government was committed to mobilising funds to address this issue.

Revamping TRCs

To revitalise TRCs, the Ministry had engaged in ongoing discussions with various Cooperating Partners (CPs) who played a crucial role in restocking TRCs with the necessary equipment for effective and efficient operations. These partners provided technical assistance and financial support for initiatives such as the Ministry's World Bank-funded Zambia Education Enhancement Project (ZEEP), which supported the improvement of TRCs. The project would assist the Ministry of Education in conducting an inventory assessment of the resource centres (covering required resources, staffing, and computers) and propose a rejuvenation plan. The findings from this assessment would guide the Government in determining the necessary support to revive TRCs through sector-wide efforts.

This assessment was essential, as TRCs were initially established in the mid-1990s, and their purpose had evolved significantly due to increased teacher needs. The document produced from the assessment would also be used to source funds for improving TRCs at all levels (provincial, district, and zonal) and potentially to lobby for the establishment of a National Teachers' Resource Center.

While the preliminary work for this assessment was set to begin in the fourth quarter of 2024 and would conclude in the first quarter of 2025, the Government's commitment to finding a solution remained unwavering. Discussions with CPs would continue throughout the period and remained hopeful for a positive outcome.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ZAMBIA'S SCHOOL RE-ENTRY POLICY

Absence of a Statutory Instrument to Support Implementation of the School Re- entry Policy

The Committee in the previous Session had resolved to await a progress report on the issuance of a Statutory Instrument that would support the implementation of the School Re-entry Policy.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that significant progress had been made in finalising the National Education Policy and initiating the review and amendment of the Education Act of 2011. The Ministry of Education was considering the issuance of a Statutory Instrument to support the implementation of the School Re-entry Policy once the *Education Act, No. 23 of 2011* had been amended accordingly.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee urges the Executive to expedite the process and resolves to await a progress report.

SKILLS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Lack of Adequate and Appropriate Infrastructure to Support Vocational Training

It was reported in the previous Action-Taken Report that the Ministry of Education, in 2020, procured some more equipment in carpentry to enhance the implementation of the two-tier system and vocational training. The Carpentry tool kits were distributed to a total number of 1,000 primary and secondary schools. Each province had 100 schools receiving carpentry toolkits. However, there were still more schools that needed equipment for vocational training.

Further, the Executive reported that the Ministry of Technology and Science was implementing the two-tier system or secondary school vocational education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Technology and Science was implementing this programme through six trades training institutions namely; Lukashya, Mansa, Solwezi, Mongu, Chipata Trades Training Institutes and Nkumbi International College. These institutions were all beneficiaries of the training equipment and tools that were procured by the Ministry in 2020. The allocation of the training equipment and tools was based on the training programmes offered.

The Executive through Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority was responsible for assessing and examining all the students/pupils that underwent training through the secondary school vocational education and training. The Technical Education Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) was collaborating with the Ministry of Education in ensuring quality training of Secondary School Vocational Training.

The Committee had noted the response and resolved to await a progress report.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the Executive had a contract with Mikalile Trading Company for the supply and installation of various school materials and equipment, including laptops, desktops, design and technology tools, as well as solar equipment to power computers; laboratory supplies and equipment; office furniture; and carpentry tool kits. A full report would be provided once the deliveries were completed.

Furthermore, the Executive had allocated funds to procure equipment for TEVET Institutions including the six trades training institutions namely; Lukashya, Mansa, Solwezi, Mongu, Chipata Trades Training Institutes and Nkumbi International College.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS IN ZAMBIAN SCHOOLS

Policy Framework to Support the Teaching of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

The Committee in the previous Session had resolved to await a progress report on the finalisation of the draft National Education policy.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that through the Ministry of Education, the development of the Zambia National Education Policy was being finalised.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

THE TEACHING OF COMPUTER STUDIES IN ZAMBIAN SCHOOLS

Policy Framework to Support the Teaching of Computer Studies

The Committee in the previous session had resolved to await a progress report on the final launch of the Education Information and Communication Technology Policy.

Executive's Response

It was reported in the Action-Taken Report that the delay was due to the decision to put the ICT policy draft on hold to prioritise the finalisation of the Zambia National Education Policy, a move aimed at ensuring alignment between the two documents and the overall education agenda.

The Government was committed to the development of the Zambia National Education Policy. This was not just a priority but a commitment it was fully dedicated to fulfil, through the Ministry of Education.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee will await a progress report on the matter.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The HEA plays a crucial and strategic role in shaping the quality and integrity of higher education in Zambia. This is done by ensuring that HEIs meet established standards for infrastructure, learning resources, programme accreditation and safeguards the credibility of education offered in HEIs in Zambia. Additionally, the HEA's regulatory oversight helps to align the operations of HEIs with national development goals, enhancing the relevance of education and training to the needs of the labour market. Strengthening the HEA's capacity and systems is therefore vital to achieving a robust and sustainable higher education sector that supports Zambia's socio-economic growth and global competitiveness.

The findings have demonstrated the need for the HEA operations to be reviewed in order to improve Education and Training in the Higher Education sector.

The Committee on Education, Science and Technology has made some far-reaching recommendations on the topical issue and is confident that the Executive will act upon the findings and the recommendations contained in its Report.



Mr Harry S K Kamboni, MP
CHAIRPERSON

July, 2025
LUSAKA

APPENDIX I – LIST OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALS

Mr Barnabas Bwalya, Social Director (SC)
Mrs Chitalu K Mumba, Deputy Director (SC)
Mr Darius Kunda, Senior Committee Clerk (SC1)
Mr Moses Chuba, Committee Clerk
Ms Anita Mulale, Administrative Assistant
Mr Daniel Lupiya, Committee Assistant
Mr Muyembi Kantumoya, Parliamentary Messenger

APPENDIX II – LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT)
Justo Mwale University
Zambia Open University
DMI-St Eugene University
Evelyn Hone College
Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR)
Zambia Association of Public Universities and Colleges
University of Zambia
Health Professions Council of Zambia
University of Lusaka
Mukuba University
TEVETA
UNZALARU
Higher Education Loans and Scholarship Board
Zambia Qualifications Authority
Higher Education Authority
Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ)
Ministry of Technology and Science
Ministry of Education