



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL

SERVICES

ON THE

NURSES AND MIDWIVES (AMENDMENT) BILL, N.A.B. NO. 25 OF 2026

FOR THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Published by the National Assembly of Zambia

FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Health, Community Development and Social Services has the honour to present its Report on *the Nurses and Midwives (Amendment) Bill, N.A.B. No. 25 of 2026*, for the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly. The Committee is mandated to consider any Bills that may be referred to it by the House, as per Standing Order 113 (1) and 207(j) of the National Assembly Standing Orders, 2024.

In order to acquaint itself with the ramifications of the Bill, and effectively report to the House, the Committee sought both written and oral submissions from selected stakeholders, the list of which is at Appendix II. The Report contains the background, objectives and provisions of the Bill, submissions from stakeholders and observations and recommendations made by the Committee.

Madam Speaker, the Committee is grateful to the stakeholders who tendered both written and oral submissions. The Committee also wishes to thank you, for affording it the opportunity to scrutinise the Bill. Further, appreciation is extended to the Clerk of the National Assembly for the support and guidance rendered to the Committee throughout its deliberations.



Mr Joseph S Munsanje, MP
CHAIRPERSON

April, 2026
LUSAKA

1.0. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of Mr Joseph S Munsanje, MP (Chairperson); Mrs Marjorie Nakaponda, MP (Vice Chairperson); Dr Christopher K Kalila, MP; Mr Paul Chala, MP; Mr Monty Chinkuli, MP; Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP; Mr Leevan Chibombwe, MP; Mr Masautso Tembo, MP; Mr Miles Sampa, MP and Mr Elias Mubanga, MP.

2.0. BACKGROUND

The Nurses and Midwives Act No. 10 of 2019 establishes the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Zambia (NMCZ) as the statutory regulator of nursing and midwifery practice, with section 5 providing for the constitution of its governing Board. The Government, through the Nurses and Midwives (Amendment) Bill, N.A.B. No. 25 of 2026, proposes to amend this provision as part of a broader public sector reform programme guided by Cabinet Office Circular Minute No. CO.101/39/1 of 2025. The Circular directs all Ministries to streamline Boards and Committees of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in order to strengthen governance, enhance representation and service delivery. It specifically requires that Boards and Committees include private sector representation, not exceed eleven members, ensure gender balance, and reflect national diversity.

The reforms aim at strengthening institutional governance by promoting accountability, transparency, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability. This approach is aligned with internationally recognised best practices, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises (2015). Accordingly, proposed amendments in the Bill seek to align the composition of the NMCZ Board with these established governance principles.

3.0. OBJECT OF THE BILL

The object of this Bill is to amend the Nurses and Midwives Act No. 10 of 2019 so as to:

- i. revise the composition of the Board of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Zambia; and
- ii. provide for matters connected with, or incidental to, the foregoing.

4.0. SALIENT PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

Clause 2 seeks to amend section 5 of the principal Act as it;

- i. Substitutes section 5 (1) (e) with a clause that provides for a representative from the private sector with knowledge and experience in finance or business management; and
- ii. introduces a requirement that relevant ministries, institutions, and organisations nominate candidates prior to ministerial appointment.

5.0. SUBMISSIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

The stakeholders made the submissions in relation to the specific provisions of the Bill as set out below:

Clause 2 (a): Amendment of Section 5, Composition of the Board

Stakeholders observed that Section 5(1)(e) of the principal Act provides for a representative from the business community but does not specify qualification criteria, thereby allowing any individual, regardless of expertise, to be appointed. Therefore, they submitted that the insertion of clause 2(a) which introduces *a representative possessing expertise in finance or business management* is progressive, noting that the NMCZ requires multi-disciplinary expertise to respond to complex strategic oversight demands associated with modern governance. Stakeholders further observed that the amendment would strengthen governance by enhancing financial oversight, strategic planning, and institutional sustainability. Consequently, stakeholders indicated that the requirement for appointment of a person possessing financial or business skills was necessary for prudent resource mobilisation and utilisation for NMCZ.

Notwithstanding this, stakeholders expressed concern that clause 2(a), although promoting financial and business acumen, still remains broadly framed and not sufficiently anchored within the nursing and midwifery profession. Therefore, they proposed that the clause be amended further to read as follows:

“a representative from the private sector with specialised knowledge and experience in finance or business management within the nursing and midwifery profession.”

Furthermore, stakeholders acknowledged the value of incorporating financial and governance expertise, but emphasised the need to maintain an appropriate balance. They argued that an effective Board should integrate diverse competencies while safeguarding the core mandate of regulating nurses and midwives. Some stakeholders submitted that the absence of worker representation through trade unions left a gap where socio-economic and workplace concerns of nurses and midwives were inadequately represented.

Other stakeholders raised concern that the clause contributed to provisions that risked diluting the representation of nurses and midwives on the Board. They argued that as a profession-specific regulatory body, effective regulation depended on strong professional input to guide decision-making on standards, ethics, and practice. They contended that the clause might weaken the professional character of the Council, as professional dominance was considered necessary to maintain credibility, enforce discipline, and ensure that regulatory decisions were grounded in technical expertise.

Clause 2 (b): Insertion of new subsection in Section 5, Nomination of Board Members

Stakeholders supported the provision requiring nomination of members by respective institutions prior to appointment by the Minister. They stated that the measure enhanced transparency, accountability, and legitimacy in the appointment process, as it ensured that nominations were institutionally driven rather than discretionary, thereby strengthening

confidence in the governance structure and promoting a more credible and structured appointment framework. However, they observed that decentralised nomination authority may hinder attainment of gender parity across the Board, as institutions may not consistently apply gender-responsive selection criteria.

6.0. COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After carefully studying submissions from stakeholders, the Committee makes the following observations and recommendations:

6.1. Strengthening Professional Representation

The Committee observes that Clause 2(a), while improving the principal Act, remains overly broad and may dilute professional representation on the Council. The Committee strongly recommends that the provision be tightened to expressly limit representation to qualified professionals within the nursing and midwifery field, in order to preserve the professional integrity, technical competence and sector-specific focus of the Council.

6.2. Advancing Gender Equity and Inclusive Governance

The Committee is concerned that the omission of provisions on gender representation weakens equity, inclusiveness and balanced participation in the governance of the Council. The Committee therefore strongly recommends that the principal Act be amended to provide for mandatory gender balance in appointments, supported by conditional appointment powers that allow the Minister to defer appointments and require fresh nominations where gender thresholds are not met. The Committee further recommends the development of clear and enforceable appointment criteria to institutionalise inclusivity and prevent gender disparities.

6.3. Strengthening Leadership and Decision-Making on the Council

The Committee observes that the current nomination framework may result in the appointment of junior officers, thereby weakening the quality of deliberations and slowing decision-making. In this regard, the Committee strongly recommends the insertion of a new clause compelling nominating institutions to designate senior-level officials to the Council. This measure is necessary to strengthen strategic oversight, improve institutional accountability, and ensure that the Council benefits from experienced and authoritative decision-makers.

Nomination framework

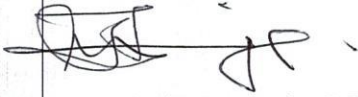
6.4. The Committee observes that the nomination framework is not sufficiently defined, particularly for nomination of non-state actors. It, therefore recommends establishing a structured nomination process for organisations, supported by clear criteria to ensure competence, transparency, and credibility.

Exclusion of Attorney General's Office

- 6.5. The Committee observes that inclusion of the Attorney-General on the Board may undermine the role of in-house legal units in providing legal advice. It therefore recommends excluding the Attorney-General from the Board, with legal functions undertaken by internal legal counsel.

7.0. CONCLUSION

The Committee finds the Bill progressive and supports the proposed clauses and stakeholder amendments. While noting its alignment with Government efforts to strengthen governance of State-Owned Enterprises, the Committee emphasised the need to preserve corporate governance principles in the regulatory body and, therefore, supports the Bill subject to addressing the recommendations.



Mr Joseph S Munsanje, MP
CHAIRPERSON

April, 2026
LUSAKA

APPENDIX I - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALS

Mr Charles Haambote, Director (Social Committees)

Mrs Chitalu K Mumba, Deputy Director (Social Committees)

Mr Darius Kunda, Senior Committee Clerk (SC1)

Mr Kelezo Lushako, Committee Clerk

Ms Catherine Chibuye, Administrative Assistant II

Mr Daniel Lupiya, Senior Committee Assistant

Mr Muyembi S Kantumoya, Committee Assistant

Ms Taona Chabinga, Committee Assistant

APPENDIX II–LIST OF WITNESSES

Institute of Directors Zambia

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Justice

Nursing and Midwifery Council

University of Lusaka

Zambia Congress of Trade Unions

Zambia Union of Nurses and Midwives Organisation