



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

REPORT

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE, HOUSING AND CHIEFS' AFFAIRS ON
THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE CONSTRUCTION,
REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE OF URBAN AND PERI-URBAN
DRAINAGES, 2020 TO 2023**

FOR THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY


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FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Local Governance, Housing and Chiefs' Affairs, has the honour to present its Report on the consideration of the Report of the Auditor General on the Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Drainages, 2020 to 2023. The functions of the Committee are set out under Standing Orders 206 (h), and is further, mandated to consider any report of the Auditor General that may be referred to it by the House, as provided for under Standing Orders 207 (g) of the National Assembly of Zambia Standing Orders, 2024.

The Committee sought both written and oral submissions from various stakeholders, who are listed at Appendix II. The Committee held ten meetings to consider submissions from various stakeholders. The Report is organised in two parts. Part I highlights the background, motivation, objectives and scope of the audit while Part II is a summary of the concerns raised by the stakeholders, responses by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the 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 an opportunity to scrutinise the Report of the Auditor General on the Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Drainages between 2020 to 2023. Further, appreciation is extended to the Clerk of the National Assembly and staff, for the support and guidance rendered throughout the Committee's deliberations.



Mr Twaambo Mutinta, MP
CHAIRPERSON

July, 2025
LUSAKA

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1.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of Mr Twaambo Mutinta, MP; (Chairperson); Mr Anthony Kasandwe, MP (Vice Chairperson); Mr Newton Samakayi, MP; Ms Emeldah Munashabantu, MP; Mr Kenny Siachisumo, MP; Mr Christopher Chishimba Kang'ombe, MP; Mr Paul Chala, MP; Mr Kabaso Kampampi, MP; Mr George Kasabila Kandafula, MP; and Mr Henry Sikazwe, MP.

PART I

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE AUDIT

The Auditor General informed the Committee that the Performance Audit Report on the Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Urban and Peri-Urban Drainages for the period 2020 to 2023 was conducted in accordance with the provisions of Article 250 of the *Constitution of Zambia, Chapter 1 of the Laws of Zambia, the Public Audit Act, Chapter 378 of the Laws of Zambia* and the *Public Finance Management Act, No 1 of 2018*. With this mandate, the office of the Auditor General conducted a Performance Audit for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of measures put in place by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) to manage drainage structures in the country.

2.1 MOTIVATION OF THE AUDIT

The Auditor General reported that drainage structures were an essential part of public infrastructure and played a vital role in the removal of excess storm and subsurface water. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) was responsible for construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of drainage structures in urban and peri-urban areas in Zambia. The MLGRD had delegated the responsibility to manage drainages to local authorities through the *Local Government Act No.2 of 2019*. The construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of drainages was essential in ensuring the flow of water and in turn prevention of waterborne diseases and flooding. However, drainages had been neglected while existing ones were neither rehabilitated nor maintained.

The Auditor General reported that the audit was motivated by the Presidential address to Parliament on the progress made in the implementation of national values and principles delivered during the First Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly on 11th March 2022. In the address, concerns were raised against the disposal of waste in undesignated areas making the surroundings untidy, unhygienic and clogging up drainage systems, thereby, contributing to perennial floods especially in urban districts.

Further, the Auditor General reported that similar concerns were expressed by the Minister in the office of the Vice President in his Ministerial Statement dated 25th February 2020. The Ministerial Statement was issued following flooding in urban and other peri-urban settlements such as Kanyama, which was attributed to poor seepage of water due to underlying bedrocks as well as blockage of outflow drains by wall fences and illegal construction.

In the same vein, the audit was motivated by high alert on flood warning issued by the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA) in January, 2023. The flood alert warning was in respect of Kabompo, Lukulu, Senanga, Kitwe, Mambwe and Solwezi districts.

In this regard, the Auditor General undertook the audit to assess the effectiveness of measures put in place by the MLGRD in relation to construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of drainages in Zambia.

2.2 AUDIT OBJECTIVE

The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the measures put in place by the MLGRD to manage drainage structures in the country.

2.3 SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

The Committee was informed that the audit examined the effectiveness of the measures developed by the MLGRD to construct, rehabilitate and maintain drainage structures in urban and peri urban areas as well as the extent to which the public was sensitised on drainage management. The Road Development Agency (RDA) and Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) were also engaged during the audit. The audit covered the period from 2020 to 2023, which provided an adequate timeframe within which to evaluate whether the measures developed had yielded the desired results.

The Committee was further informed that due to limited resources, the audit was undertaken in 32 out of 116 local authorities representing 28 per cent of the sample size. To avert the risk of the sample size being less representative, a request was made for information from all the 116 local authorities.

The Committee was informed that there was low response to the request for information from local authorities as only 38 out of 116 responded representing a response rate of 33 per cent, thus the conclusion of the audit was based on the information provided. As of April 2024, the remaining 78 local authorities representing 67 per cent had still not provided responses to the information requested.

2.4 AUDIT QUESTIONS

The Audit was designed to answer the questions set out below.

- (i) To what extent has the MLGRD ensured construction and rehabilitation of drainage structures in urban and peri urban areas?
- (ii) To what extent has the MLGRD ensured that measures put in place are effective in enhancing maintenance of drainage structures in the urban and peri-urban areas?
- (iii) How has the MLGRD ensured that drainages in urban and peri-urban areas are maintained and kept clean?
- (iv) How has the MLGRD ensured that monitoring of drainage structures is effective?
- (v) How has the MLGRD ensured enhanced coordination with key stakeholders for effective maintenance of drainages in urban and peri-urban areas?
- (vi) How has the MLGRD ensured that the public is sensitised on the importance of drainage management practices?

2.5 GENERAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Performance Audit Report highlighted the recommendations listed below, which, if implemented accordingly, would reduce flooding incidences in Zambia.

- i. The MLGRD should consider formulating a comprehensive drainage policy to provide guidance for the effective management of drainage structures in the country.
- ii. The MLGRD should develop storm drainage plans to facilitate the systematic implementation of drainage projects and mobilisation of necessary resources.
- iii. The MLGRD should focus on educating traditional leaders and other stakeholders about the importance of Planning Agreements, promoting systematic development, and ensuring the incorporation of drainage structures within their jurisdictions.

- iv. The MLGRD should explore the establishment of dedicated structures to oversee drainage management, fostering enhanced responsibility, accountability, and prioritisation.
- v. The MLGRD should work towards improving monitoring mechanisms for drainage structure projects to enhance cleanliness and ensure value for money in implementation.
- vi. The MLGRD and Local Authorities should jointly design educational programs to raise public awareness about building requirements, promoting adherence at all development stages, and strengthening development controls to reduce encroachments.
- vii. The MLGRD should enhance the utilisation of Ward Development Committees (WDCs), acknowledging their critical role in supporting Local Authorities at the community level, especially considering the limited number of building inspectors.
- viii. Local Authorities should enforce punitive measures to deter indiscriminate waste disposal, thereby reducing the disposal of waste in undesignated places.
- ix. The MLGRD should enhance public sensitisation on drainage management.

PART II

3.0 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS ON THE AUDIT FINDINGS BY THE STAKEHOLDERS AND THE COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered submissions from various stakeholders. The submissions from the stakeholders, including the Permanent Secretary from the MLGRD, as well as the Committee's observations and recommendations are as set out hereunder.

3.1 SPECIFIC AUDIT CONCERNS

3.1.1 Construction of Drainage Structures in Urban and Peri-Urban areas

Stakeholders submitted that local authorities were mandated by the *Local Government Act No. 2 of 2019 (First Schedule section 16 (2))* and the *Urban and Regional Planning Act, No. 3 of 2015* to carry out construction of drainages. However, the lack of a policy to guide the development and management of drainage structures had greatly contributed to the current failure to effectively manage storm water run-offs. This had resulted in the destruction of property and proliferation of waterborne diseases such as the seasonal cholera outbreaks in the country and the disruption of livelihoods as buildings got flooded and roads became impassable.

In the same vein, stakeholders submitted that while local authorities had developed Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), very few had formulated drainage Master Plans. On the other hand, for those that had included plans for drainages in their IDPs, only side drainage infrastructure had been incorporated and not storm drainages. This was attributed to a lack of financial resources and also staff that could plan, design and implement storm drainages.

With regard to the role of the traditional leadership in actualising planning agreements, stakeholders submitted that traditional leaders resisted and often felt that planning agreements were an attempt to take away land from traditional authorities. This had further exacerbated the lack of development in most parts of the country, which were largely under customary leadership.

Ministry's Response

The Committee was informed that the MLGRD had already commenced background work on storm water drainage Master Plan before it could begin broader stakeholder engagement.

Furthermore, the Ministry submitted that the storm water drainage Master Plan for Lusaka District was developed under the Millennium Challenge project and all the drainage projects under implementation were being drawn from it. However, there was need to review the plan and replicate the same in all other districts. The MLGRD indicated that the biggest challenge to implementation of the Master Plan was the lack of adequate financing.

The Ministry further submitted that it had, through the Department of Physical Planning, started conducting sensitisation meetings for traditional leaders on the importance of Planning Agreements. The Ministry would soon make an adjustment to its engagements with Chiefs so as to add a component of “Importance of Infrastructure – (including Drainages)” to the awareness materials.

Committee’s Observations and Recommendations

The Committee in noting the submission by the MLGRD bemoans the lack of proactiveness by local authorities to discharge their mandate of establishing and constructing drainages. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the MLGRD spearheads the formulation of the National Drainage Policy to encompass mandatory integration of drainage infrastructure as a compulsory component of all roads and physical infrastructure projects for rural towns, peri-urban and urban areas and informal settlements.

The Committee further observes with concern that only eleven of the twenty-six reviewed local authorities have included drainages in their IDPs. In this regard, the Committee recommends that local authorities incorporate drainage Master Plans in their IDPs for purposes of enhancing coordinated development of districts.

The Committee recommends that the MLGRD enhances sensitisation with traditional leaders so as to include storm water management planning in customary land.

3.1.2. Maintenance of Drainage Structures in the Urban and Peri-Urban Areas

Stakeholders submitted that the lack of an established Storm Water Drainage Unit under the MLGRD exacerbated the continued neglect and lack of planning for drainages.

Furthermore, stakeholders submitted that local authorities were usually reactive, only attending to emergencies when disaster struck, especially during the rainy season. This was further compounded by construction of structures on top of drainages, which prevented comprehensive maintenance and sustainability of drainages.

Ministry’s Response

The MLGRD submitted that it would engage the Management and Development Division (MDD) at Cabinet Office to discuss the need to revise the structure to specifically enhance the capacity of the Department of Rural Development whose mandate was to manage drainage infrastructure with a view of establishing a drainage unit.

Committee’s Observations and Recommendations

The Committee in noting the submission recommends that the MLGRD through the proposed Storm Water Drainages Unit, under the Engineering Department, should develop drainage maintenance plans which should be circulated to all Local Authorities for implementation.

In addition, local authorities should budget for periodic and routine maintenance of drainage structures in accordance with approved maintenance plans. Further, through CDF, allocation could be made to various drainage infrastructure interventions.

3.1.3 Public Sensitisation of Drainage Structures in Urban and Peri Urban Areas

Stakeholders submitted that sensitisation campaigns should be intensified in areas where there was indiscriminate waste disposal, including through collaboration and training of Ward Development Committees.

Furthermore, stakeholders submitted that contracted waste management companies were not collecting silt as they swept it into drainages, as well as disposing it in undesignated dump sites.

Ministry's Response

The Ministry submitted that it had already come up with sensitisation programmes on TV, Radio and social media.

Furthermore, the Ministry was working on a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to ensure that solid waste management was included in the school curriculum for effective behavioral change. The Ministry would therefore, engage the Ministry of Education on the matter.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

The Committee notes the responses and recommends that the MLGRD should expedite the process of developing sensitisation programmes to enhance public awareness.

The Committee further recommends that the MLGRD reviews the strategies and measures put in place to sustain the Keep Zambia Clean and Green Campaign through a National Coordinating Committee with approved structures for effective implementation.

The Committee also recommends that heavy fines and citizen's arrest should be enforced on those found littering. The MLGRD should also consider imposing a total ban on plastic carrier bags and champion the use of paper, sisal and other bio-degradable materials unlike the current situation.

4.0 COMMITTEE'S GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee observes that while central Government provided funding for road works, there was no direct funding specifically dedicated to drainages with a clear standalone budget line. This had resulted in the neglect of construction of the attendant infrastructure such as drainages, thereby, affecting the longevity of roads.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that Government should provide funding for side and storm-drainages to address the perennial flooding experienced in most parts of the country.

The Committee further notes with concern, the high turnover of engineers in local authorities, which has had a negative impact on project implementation. In this vein, the Committee urges the Government to consider engineers as part of the critical staff for purposes of retention.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee commends the Office of the Auditor General for conducting the Performance Audit on the Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Drainages in Zambia. The Committee is hopeful that the Government will address the issues raised in the Audit Report and in the Report of the Committee, in order to address the challenges observed.



Twaambo Mutinta, MP
CHAIRPERSON

July, 2025
LUSAKA

APPENDIX I - List of National Assembly Staff

Mr Barnabas Bwalya, Director, Social Committees
Mrs Chitalu K Mumba, Deputy Director, Social Committees
Mr Darius Kunda, Senior Committee Clerk (SC 1)
Mr Timothy C Lumba, Committee Clerk
Mrs Charity Muyunda, Administrative Assistant
Mr Daniel Lupiya, Senior Committee Assistant
Mr Muyembi Kantumoya, Committee Assistant
Ms Taonga Chabinga, Committee Assistant

APPENDIX II - List of Witnesses

Office of the Auditor General
Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
Ministry of Finance and National Planning
Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit
Chipata City Council
Engineering Institution of Zambia
Kabwe Municipal Council
Katete Town Council
Kitwe City Council
Lusaka City Council
Mansa Municipal Council
Mongu Municipal Council
Road Development Agency
Solwezi Municipal Council
National Council for Construction
Zimba Town Council