



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

**REPORT**

**OF THE**

**COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, SPORT AND CHILD MATTERS**

**ON THE**

**STATE OF SPORTS IN SCHOOLS**

**FOR THE**

**FIFTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

*Published by the National Assembly of Zambia*

## FOREWORD

Honourable Madam Speaker, the Committee on Youth, Sport and Child Matters has the honour to present its Report for the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly. The functions of the Committee are set out under Standing Orders 206 (o) and 207 of the National Assembly of Zambia Standing Orders, 2024.

In accordance with its Programme of Work, the Committee held ten meetings to interact with stakeholders on the topical issue "*The State of Sports in Schools*". The Committee requested detailed memoranda from various stakeholders, who were also invited to appear before it to clarify any issues arising there from. The list of stakeholders is at Appendix II.

The Committee's Report is organised in two parts: Part I presents the Committee's findings from its deliberations on the topical issue. This part further presents the Committee's Observations and Recommendations on the Topical Issue. Part II contains the Committee's Observations and Recommendations on the Action-Taken Report on the Report of the Committee for the Fourth Session of the Thirteenth National Assembly.

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



Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP  
**CHAIRPERSON**

April, 2026  
**LUSAKA**

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## List of Acronyms

NSP	National Sports Policy
MoEP	National Education Policy Implementation Plan
MoE	Ministry of Education
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSEN	Children with Special Educational Needs
PES	Physical Education and Sport
PE	Physical Education

## **1.0 Membership of the Committee**

The Committee consisted of Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP (Chairperson); Ms Jean Chisenga, MP (Vice-Chairperson); Mr Siphon Hlazo, MP; Mr Allen Banda, MP; Mr Alex Katakwe, MP; Mr Ackleo Banda, MP; Mr George Chisanga, MP; Ms Emeldah Munashabantu, MP; Mr Robert Kalimi, MP; and Mr Justin Kapema, MP.

### **PART I**

## **2.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE TOPICAL ISSUE**

### **2.1 The State of Sports in Schools**

#### **Background**

Sports play a vital role in the holistic development of students, encompassing physical, emotional and social growth.

The Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) recognises the importance of sports for youth development and includes provisions for sports development and promotion. Further, the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts in its 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan identified sports excellence as one of the four thematic areas. Under this theme, the Ministry committed to enhancing coordination and promoting sports programmes through talent identification, and in turn, increased performance and participation of citizens in active and physical sport.

Despite its importance, sports in Zambian schools face various challenges, leading to its decline. The historical decline in sporting activities, which were once integral to holistic student development, has resulted in reduced physical activity among students and a loss in talent identification. Notwithstanding the integration of physical education and sports into the school curriculum, sporting activities in schools has continued to decline.

In view of the above, the Committee resolved to undertake a study to appreciate and understand the state of sports in schools, identify areas of improvement, in order to contribute to the development of a more inclusive and thriving sporting landscape.

#### **2.2 Objectives**

The objectives of the study were to appreciate:

- (a) the legal and policy framework and strategies that support sports development in schools;
- (b) the state of sports infrastructure and its impact on sports development;
- (c) the sports funding mechanisms or model, if any, at school level;
- (d) the challenges, if any, faced in the implementation of sports development programmes in schools; and
- (e) make recommendations on how to improve sports in schools.

#### **2.3 Summary of Submissions by Stakeholders**

Stakeholders who appeared before the Committee made submissions as summarised below:

### **2.3.1 Adequacy of Policy and Legal Framework**

The stakeholders submitted that sports development in schools was anchored on a robust national, regional, and international legal and policy framework that recognised physical education, physical activity, and sport as essential components of a holistic education. These frameworks positioned school sports as a vehicle for physical well-being, character formation, social cohesion, inclusion, talent development, and sustainable national development.

#### **2.3.1.1 Legal and Policy Framework**

The legal framework for sports development in schools was guided by a number of legal and policy frameworks that included the following:

**a. The Education Act No. 23 of 2011**

The Act provides the overarching legal foundation for the provision of education in Zambia and mandates the holistic development of learners through both curricular and co-curricular activities. The Act promotes physical education and sports as integral to the education system, particularly through the encouragement of extracurricular activities that support learners' physical, social, and emotional development. However, while the Act broadly supports physical education, it does not explicitly articulate structured sports and physical activity requirements at Early Childhood Education (ECE) level, thereby presenting a policy gap in organised sports provision for young learners.

However, it was noted that the Act was earmarked for review. Therefore, it was envisaged that the revised Act would have deliberate provisions to support sports development in schools.

**b. National Policy on Education**

The Policy reinforces the principle of educating the “whole child” and explicitly recognises physical education and sport as key contributors to balanced learner development. This policy orientation provides a strong basis for multi-sectoral partnerships in the implementation of school sports programmes across all education levels.

**c. Education Curriculum Framework (2023)**

The curriculum promotes physical fitness, identification and nurturing of sporting talent, and inculcates positive values among learners. Despite this, the absence of a clear, stand-alone national strategy for systematic and age-appropriate sports development, particularly at the primary school level, has resulted in uneven implementation across schools.

**d. National Sports Policy**

The Policy provides overarching guidance for sports development and promotes among others, mass participation, talent identification, anti-doping education, and excellence in sport. Importantly, it explicitly mandates the integration of physical education, physical activity, and sport within learning institutions at all levels, thereby reinforcing the role of schools as foundational spaces for sports development.

Complementing the National Sports Policy is a Strategic Plan (2022–2026) for the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, which emphasises grassroots sports development, institutional collaboration, infrastructure development, and capacity building, all of which has direct relevance to school sports programming.

**a. Sports Council of Zambia Act: Chapter 142 of the Laws of Zambia**

The Act provides the statutory framework for the regulation, coordination, and oversight of organised sport in the country, including standards setting and institutional accountability.

**b. Persons with Disabilities Act No. 6 of 2012**

The Act extends its legal obligation to sports and physical activities in schools, reinforces the requirement for inclusive infrastructure, adapted programmes, and provides for equitable participation for learners with disabilities.

However, stakeholders submitted that despite the legal and policy framework being in place; it was undermined at the implementation stage by structural weaknesses and omissions, resulting in persistent failure. The most critical flaw was the lack of a governance framework to enforce compliance.

In addition, some stakeholders submitted that the Ministry of Education’s structure did not provide for school sports with the institutional support needed for development, resulting in core academic priorities consistently marginalising sports issues.

**Strategic Omissions in Curriculum and Infrastructure**

Stakeholders submitted that some key elements necessary for quality and sustainability were either omitted from the policy framework or not specified in sufficient detail.

**1. Coaching Standardisation:** There was no national curriculum or standardised coaching framework for school sports, resulting in inconsistent quality and hindering the development of a professional athlete pipeline.

**2. Infrastructure Exclusion:** The Ministry of Education (MoE) Implementation Plan’s general strategy to provide appropriate and adequate facilities was weakened because the policy did not explicitly include sports facilities (courts, pitches, tracks), leading to neglect and disinvestment in critical infrastructure.

**3. Calendar Conflict:** The lack of alignment between the academic calendar and national, provincial or district sports calendars created logistical challenges and reduced participation.

**2.3.2 State of Sports Infrastructure and its Impact on Sports Development**

Stakeholders submitted that the state of sports infrastructure in schools was the most visible impediment to successful sports development, marked by inadequacy, inequity, and neglect. This directly affected students’ participation, limiting opportunities for talent development and undermining policy goals for inclusive education and health benefits.

In addition, substandard construction, vandalism, theft of sports equipment, and limited routine maintenance, coupled with insufficient and inconsistent funding contributed to poor sports development and poor state of sports facilities in schools.

**a. The State of Infrastructure**

Stakeholders submitted that sports infrastructure in most schools was generally dilapidated, with inadequate age-appropriate sport infrastructure, and inadequate to cater for a huge number of learners. The Committee learnt that in schools where sports infrastructure existed, the facilities were poorly maintained and required extensive upgrades for them to reach acceptable standards.

In addition, stakeholders submitted that in the absence of sports infrastructure in schools, colleges and universities, learners were prone to engage in activities which were detrimental to their wellbeing and academic ambitions. This lack of sports facilities resulted in failure to conduct comprehensive talent identification programmes, inconsistent athletes' performance, discontinued sports programmes, non-existent sports nurseries, and minimal participation in physical education and sport (PES).

**b. Infrastructure Impact on Sports Development**

Stakeholders submitted that infrastructure had significant consequences on training, safety, equity and development:

- **Safety Risk** - dilapidated facilities, poor surfaces, and lack of maintenance caused significant injuries. This discouraged parental consent, increased liability, and limited the intensity of training.
- **Skill Development** - training on substandard fields led to poor development of good techniques and limited activities, directly hindering the quality of instruction needed to meet national standards.
- **Rural-Urban Divide** -high-quality specialised facilities were concentrated in a few well-resourced urban and private schools. This created significant inequity, preventing talent from poorer, rural areas from accessing necessary training environments. This directly violated the MoE's objective to achieve "equity and inclusion in the education system".
- **Exclusion of Children with Special Educational Needs (CSEN)** - Children with Special Educational Needs were marginalised due to the lack of CSEN-friendly facilities and mobility aids, effectively barring their participation.

Overall, poor facilities forced schools to focus only on low-cost, minimal infrastructure sports such as football and netball. Consequently, this limited talent identification, in diverse sports such as foot-golf, volleyball, basketball among others and specialised track and field events which remain restricted at grass root level.

**Comparative State of School Sport Infrastructure**

The Committee learnt that school sports infrastructure in the majority of schools had remained inadequate, with rural areas particularly neglected, due to minimal government

capital allocation for sports; while the Non-Governmental Organisations and other partners were the primary drivers for building and maintaining multipurpose courts and hubs. In contrast, in the neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe, their school sport systems were protected by institutional framework structures that Zambia lacked. For instance, South Africa was utilising an integrated framework where the Department of Basic Education, and Sport and Recreation jointly mobilised resources, ensuring that there was dedicated budgets, provincial support, and shared use of municipal facilities, resulting in basic facilities in most schools and “Sport Focus Schools” in every district.

### **2.3.3 The Sports Funding Mechanisms**

Stakeholders submitted that funding was critical for the coordination of sports in schools. However, Zambia lacked a dedicated national school sports financing model or ring-fenced budget. According to the MoE, the funding mechanism in school sports came through Government School Grants as outlined in the Utilisation Manual of School Grants that only accounted for 25 per cent of allocated funds. This percentage was inclusive of all other co-curricular activities such as Production Unit, JETS, Arts, Debate Clubs, and many other such events. Through this funding, a minimal allocation was allocated to maintenance of sports infrastructure.

In addition, some sports federations dealing with school sports such as the Football Association of Zambia, received some funding for international engagements from the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, whenever, they requested for support.

### **School Based Funding**

The Committee was informed that some schools had resorted to internal funding mechanisms, such as raising funds through student activities or parental contributions. However, this approach was often inconsistent and unequal as wealthier schools in urban areas were able to raise more funds for sports programmes, while schools in poorer areas struggled to maintain even the most basic facilities.

### **Sponsorship and Private Sector Support**

The Committee learnt that private sector involvement in school sports development was rare, with certain companies sponsoring sporting events or providing sports equipment as a form of corporate social responsibility. However, the involvement of the private sector had very little impact in the development of sports across schools.

### **2.3.4 Challenges in the Implementation of Sports Development Programmes**

Stakeholders submitted that the successful implementation of sports programmes in schools had been hampered by the following challenges:

- i. Inadequate Sports Infrastructure and Sports Equipment** – there was generally inadequate infrastructure particularly for racket-based sports such as lawn tennis, table tennis, badminton and bat-and-ball sports, indoor games and swimming. This extended to common sports such as football, netball, volleyball and basketball, which in most cases had poor playing surfaces. The lack of sports facilities and equipment posed as a major setback to the implementation of sports activities, especially in rural areas where there were no privately-owned facilities.

In addition, there was insufficient disability-friendly and gender responsive sports facilities, limiting safe and equitable participation.

- ii. **Inadequate Funding** – inadequate funding was reported to have led to sport governance challenges in schools. For instance, Zambia Schools Sports Association could not effectively run events due to insufficient funds. PES as a subject was also not being taught effectively in schools due to lack of finances.
- iii. **Insufficient Training of Teachers and Coaches** – many teachers and other school staff lacked formal training in sports coaching, which affected the quality of sports instruction in schools. Without skilled coaches, it was difficult to provide students with proper guidance in sports development.
- iv. **Inadequate Administrative Support** – lack of prioritisation or inadequate support for sports programmes. This lack of leadership resulted in poor coordination and planning, thus sport activities becoming fragmented or neglected.
- v. **Cultural and Societal Attitudes** – in most communities, there is a perception that academic success was more important than participation in sports, leading to a lack of support for sports programmes in schools.
- vi. **Gender Inequality** – gender disparity in sport participation, as girls often face more barriers to participation in sports due to cultural constraints. The lack of female coaches and role models has exacerbated this issue.
- vii. **Lack of Preference** – lack of preference for sports activities in schools, as priority is given to academic subjects and not sport. Despite understanding the benefits of physical activity, schools struggled with low participation rates, as balancing sports with academic commitments was a challenge for some students.
- viii. **Vandalism** – sports facilities and infrastructure are often vandalised, and encroached on, especially in schools with unsecured perimeters.
- ix. **Classification of Sport as a Co-curricular Activity** – the classification of sport as a co-curricular activity in the MoE has hindered direct funding towards sports development in schools.

#### **2.4 Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

Having carefully reviewed the submissions from various stakeholders, the Committee notes that there is much that needs to be done to improve the state of sports in schools. In light of this, the Committee makes the observations and recommendations presented below:

##### **i. Adequacy of Policy and Legal Framework**

The Committee observes that the policy and legal framework for sports development; was undermined at the implementation stage by structural weaknesses, and omissions, resulting in persistent failure. Key elements necessary for quality and sustainability were either omitted from the policy framework or not specified in sufficient detail.

In this regard, the Committee recommends for:

- a) strengthened policy implementation and the revision of the Act, so as address issues of sports development in schools;
- b) the creation of clear guidelines for sports development in schools, as well as more robust coordination between the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, National Sports Council of Zambia, and the public and private schools; and
- c) the alignment of the education-sector policies with the National Sport Policy to ensure coherence in implementation, safeguarding, and talent development pathways.

## **ii. Inadequate Sports Facilities and Equipment**

The Committee observes that the lack of proper sports facilities and equipment poses a major setback in the implementation of sports activities in schools. In addition, the Committee observes that the MoE Implementation Plan's general strategy does not explicitly provide for investment in sports facilities leading to neglect and disinvestment in critical infrastructure.

- a. In this regard, the Committee recommends for investment in sports infrastructure and equipment in a phased approach within constituencies to allow schools to alternately use the facilities to ensure equitable access to sports facilities;
- b. The Committee also urges the Government to collaborate with private partners, and development partners to mobilise additional resources for school infrastructure development, maintenance, and upgrading the facilities to enhance performance by athletes; and
- c. Further, the Committee urges the Government to investment in standardised, safe, and inclusive sports infrastructure, and ensure that development and maintenance of sports facilities in schools is prioritised especially in rural and underserved areas.

## **iii. Establishment of a Dedicated and Sustainable Funding Mechanism**

The Committee observes with concern the lack of a dedicated national school sports financing model or ring-fenced budget. The component under the school grants co-curricular activities through which sports receives its specific fund is insufficient and does not meet the growing demand. In this regard, the Committee urges the Government to ensure that a dedicated fund for sports development in schools is established as opposed to receiving funds under the co-curricular programme from the MoE.

In addition, the Committee recommends that schools should uphold structured partnerships with NGOs, private sector entities, and sports federations, including the use of locally produced and affordable sports equipment to enhance sustainability.

## **iv. Training of Teachers and Coaches**

The Committee observes that there is no national curriculum or standardised coaching framework for school sports, resulting in inconsistent quality of exposure to sports, thereby, hindering the development of a professional athlete pipeline. In this regard, the Committee

recommends that special programmes are established to provide professional development opportunities for Physical Education teachers and school sports coaches.

**v. Coordination and Talent Development Pathways**

The Committee observes that while the Ministry of Education has a massive reservoir of trained and skilled manpower in terms of coaches for various sports disciplines, many sports federations under the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts have not been working closely with the schools in talent identification programmes and nurturing of talent.

The Committee therefore, recommends that stakeholders (Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, Ministry of Education, sports federations and other stakeholders) should work together in holding inter-schools, inter-district, regional and national school competitions as platforms for early talent identification.

**vi. Calendar Conflict/Establishment of a National School Development Pathway**

The Committee observes with concern the lack of alignment between the academic calendar and national, provincial or district sports calendars resulting in logistical challenges and reduced participation of learners in sports activities. In this regard, the Committee recommends that school sport competitions, should be enhanced by coordinating school and sports calendars to ensure total participation of learners in school competitions. This must be organised not only to reduce dropout rates but also to serve as a formal training ground for coaches, referees, and athletes, creating a skilled workforce and direct employment pipeline into the national sports sector.

**vii. Foster Community and Family Involvement**

The Committee notes that communities and parents play a crucial role in the success of sports programmes. In this regard, the Committee recommends that schools should involve parents and community members in sports activities and school sports festivals, as a way of attaining effective participation of learners.

**viii. Vandalism**

The Committee observes that sports infrastructure is often vandalised especially in schools with unsecured perimeters. In this regard, the Committee recommends that schools should fence and secure sports facilities to prevent vandalism and encroachment.

**ix. Introduction of Physical Education**

The Committee observes with concern that Physical Education in schools was not being given the attention it requires amidst the rise in non-communicable diseases and massive engagement of children and youths in detrimental activities.

In this regard, the Committee recommends that physical education is integrated into school life, coordinated, supervised and treated with the same importance as other academic subjects. Consequently, it should be introduced in all schools both private and public starting from ECE.

## **PART II**

### **3.0 CONSIDERATION OF THE ACTION-TAKEN REPORT ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, SPORT AND CHILD MATTERS FOR THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

#### **3.1 Review of Government's Interventions on Streetism in Zambia**

##### **3.1.1 Adequacy of Policy and Legal Framework**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that legislation, policies and plans that provided for childcare, and protection specifically recognised street children as a special group in need, should be put in place. Further, the Committee had recommended for the enactment of a specific standalone law and policy that would provide for interventions or programmes that targeted fighting streetism.

##### **Executive's Response**

The Executive in its update submitted that the Government through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services was coordinating the revision of the National Child Policy. The revised policy would strengthen provisions from the 2015 National Child Policy to ensure children in street situations were considered a special group requiring attention. This would also ensure that the revised policy responded to the provisions in the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022 which sufficiently addresses the needs of all children requiring care and protection, including those in street situations. Additionally, the 2025 Street Outreach Guidelines aimed at addressing root causes of the problem such as poverty and neglect.

The Committee was further informed that in addition to revising existing policies and legislation, such as the 2015 National Child Policy and the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022, the MCDSS would develop a strategy that provided a structured, coordinated, and collaborative approach to tackling streetism in the country.

##### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a comprehensive progress report on the revision of the National Child Policy, and development of a strategy that provided a structured, coordinated, and collaborative approach to tackling streetism in the country.

##### **3.1.2 National Strategic Plan on Combating Streetism**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that using the joint multi-sectoral approach the MCDSS, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts, Ministry Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, MoE and key stakeholders, led by MCDSS, the Government should come up with the comprehensive strategy to combat streetism.

##### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Government through the MCDSS acknowledged that the approach to addressing streetism was already multi-sectoral in nature, drawing on various frameworks such as the 2015 National Child Policy and the National Plan of Action for Children.

In this regard, the Ministry had actively been coordinating efforts across several sectors, with line ministries, childcare facilities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) all playing a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by children in street situations. This collaborative approach ensured that resources and efforts were pooled together for a more comprehensive and effective response.

To strengthen these efforts, the Ministry was committed to developing a more formalised multi-sectoral strategy on combating streetism, which would be finalised and implemented once the revised National Child Policy had been approved. This strategy would incorporate the recommendations of the Committee and would build upon existing frameworks, such as the 2025 Street Outreach Guidelines, the 2015 National Plan of Action for Children, and the 2015 National Child Policy.

The strategy would be designed to ensure a more integrated, coordinated, and sustainable response to streetism, addressing the root causes and providing long-term solutions for children in street situations. It would involve a collective effort from various stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, NGOs, and international partners, all working together to safeguard the rights and welfare of affected children.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a progress report on the development on a more formalised multi-sectoral strategy on combating streetism.

#### **3.1.3 Lack of Coordination among Non-State Actors and the Government**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that the coordination among non-state actors; and between non-state actors and Government agencies be enhanced to facilitate effective interventions, as it is of utmost importance in combating streetism.

Further, the Committee had recommended that the Department of Child Development under the MCDSS whose mandate, among others, was to combat streetism, should deal with the phenomenon of streetism, street children and ensure that it was controlled and eliminated. An Act of Parliament that provided for coordination by the Department to spearhead all interventions on streetism should be put in place so as not to duplicate efforts being made in combating the vice.

### **Executive's Response**

The Executive in its update informed the Committee that coordination efforts related to child welfare, including addressing issues such as streetism, were carried out through the Provincial and District Child Protection Committees, which were multi-sectoral in nature. These committees brought together key stakeholders from various sectors, including health, education, social services, and law enforcement among others, to ensure a unified approach to protecting and promoting the rights of children.

It was further submitted that the committees were strengthened through the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022, which provided the legal foundation for the establishment of a National Coordinating Committee for Children (NCCC). To operationalise the Children's Code Act, Cabinet had approved the Statutory Instrument outlining the formation of the National Coordinating Committee for Children. To ensure the successful implementation of the

National Committee's mandate, the Ministry would facilitate orientation sessions for members of the committees. These sessions would equip them with the necessary training and resources to effectively carry out their roles, with a focus on enhancing their capacity to coordinate child welfare initiatives and responses to issues such as streetism, child trafficking, and exploitation, among others.

The Committee was further informed that a Statutory Instrument on the establishment of coordination committees for children at the National, Provincial and District levels, along with their functions was approved by Cabinet and the Ministry of Justice for publication in October, 2025. This development was expected to reduce duplication of efforts by ensuring that interventions were structured within a cohesive response framework. This framework would allow for cost-effective and coordinated implementation by all relevant stakeholders, fostering greater efficiency in addressing child welfare issues across all levels of government.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a progress report on the implementation of the National Coordinating Committee's mandate so as to reduce duplication of efforts by ensuring that interventions were structured within a cohesive response framework.

#### **3.1.4 Inadequate Infrastructure**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that the Government should prioritise the construction of transit safe homes by replicating the Cicetekelo Project model in other urban centers. Consideration was also to be given to help expand existing facilities or construct additional centres to cater for the growing number of street children. Further, the Committee had recommended that the Government should ensure that all amenities as per the road map of the Lukanga Youth Settlement Scheme should be undertaken.

### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that changing the current status quo would require substantial efforts, particularly in terms of increased budgetary allocations to the Department of Child Development. The Ministry recognised that the financial resources allocated to the Department were insufficient to meet the growing demands for comprehensive child welfare services. As a result, there was a pressing need for enhanced funding to strengthen the department's capacity to design, implement, and monitor child protection programmes effectively and to build new structures. The Committee was however, informed that the Ministry would continue to engage Ministry of Finance and National Planning to increase the budgetary allocation to Child Welfare in order to address the challenges.

The Ministry further submitted that the *Children's Code Act of 2022* had a provision on investments. Therefore, in close collaboration with the MCDSS, engagements would be scheduled with the Ministry of Finance to increase public resource allocations, and also would consider other innovative financing mechanisms.

Further, the Ministry was engaging various stakeholders to facilitate provision of various social amenities such as health posts, sinking of boreholes, and provision of start-up kits. The Ministry in the 2026 budget had increased the allocation to support youths in agriculture and hence this would help in enhancing provision of start-up kits to the youths

at Lukanga. The Ministry had also made efforts to increase the amount of grant support to the centre which would enable them improve the services being provided to the youth.

Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the Ministry had provided the youth resettlement scheme with a tri-circle for transportation of various goods and services, equipment that could be used to mobilise resources locally to support the operations of the centre. With regard to the provision of full-time staff, the Ministry through the Department of Human Resource had submitted a request for treasury authority to employ centre staff. It was envisaged that once authority was granted it would facilitate deployment of the requisite staff to the Centre.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission urges the Executive to ensure that the grant amounts are increased to facilitate for the support of the operations at the centre and resolves to await a progress report on the provision of infrastructure at the centres.

#### **3.1.5 Psychosocial Support**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that Government should deploy or support access to specialised personnel, such as psychologists and social workers, to address the mental health needs of the children.

### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services employs social workers who play an essential role in case management for children undergoing rehabilitation and awaiting reintegration. These social workers provided direct support to children by assessing their needs, offering counselling, and ensuring a smooth transition back into their families and communities. Despite the significant role they played, the Ministry recognises that there was a shortage of social workers, which limited the capacity to fully meet the mental health, and psychosocial needs of children.

To address this gap, the Ministry was in the process of developing a Social Service Workforce Strengthening Strategy. This strategy was aimed at increasing the number of trained social workers and other specialised personnel, such as psychologists, who could offer more comprehensive mental health support to children in need. It would include measures to recruit, train, and retain social service professionals, ensuring that the workforce was adequately prepared to meet the growing demand for services.

Additionally, the strategy would focus on enhancing the skills of current staff to ensure that the Ministry's interventions were responsive to the complex needs of children who had experienced life on the streets. This would involve collaboration with mental health professionals and training providers to build a sustainable workforce capable of supporting the long-term rehabilitation and reintegration of children.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a progress report on the development of a Social Service Workforce Strengthening Strategy. It was aimed at increasing the number of trained social workers and other specialised personnel, such as

psychologists, who could offer more comprehensive mental health support to children in need.

### **3.1.6 Lack of Accurate Data**

The Committee in the previous Session had urged the Executive to ensure that a mapping on the children on the streets was urgently undertaken so as to effectively inform the targeted interventions and financing aimed at combating streetism.

#### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Executive had been conducting headcounts to estimate the number of street children. These headcounts were carried out at both provincial and district levels by Ministry staff. The purpose of this exercise was to determine the number of children living on the streets to inform decision-making.

However, this method did not yield precise figures, as street children were often mobile and tended to run away when they saw officers approaching. To improve the current approach, the Ministry would undertake periodic surveys to more accurately assess the situation of street children in the country.

#### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission urges the Government to ensure that a more accurate assessment to map the children on the streets was undertaken so as to effectively inform the targeted interventions and financing aimed at combating streetism. The Committee resolves to await a progress report on the mapping on the children on the streets.

### **3.1.7 Employment Opportunities**

The Committee had urged the Government to emulate Morocco where youths who failed to complete high school were given a second chance by being trained in vocational skills. Once graduated, they were either employed or supported by being given small government projects. The Committee had recommended that the Government should come up with a mechanism where rehabilitated youths were not just given starter packs but were linked to existing income-generating projects or employment opportunities and follow ups on them made until they stabilised.

#### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that, once the youth completed the Zambia National Service skills training programme, some graduates were retained by the Zambia National Service, allowing them to continue serving while applying the skills they acquired. Others were successfully linked to reputable companies, including Zam Shoe and Shoprite, which provided the trained youths with formal employment opportunities and practical work experience. Additionally, a number of graduates had ventured into entrepreneurship, establishing their own businesses and applying the specific skills in which they were trained, thereby contributing to job creation and economic development within their communities.

#### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission observes that the Executive in its response only looked at those who graduate from ZNS. The Committee's concern was on the street

children who graduate from DAPP Children’s Home and other organisations which look after street children.

In this regard the Committee reiterates it earlier recommends and urges the Government to come up with a mechanism where rehabilitated youths were not just given starter packs but are linked to existing income-generating projects or employment opportunities and follow ups on them made until they stabilise.

### **3.1.8 Social Recreation Facilities**

The Committee in the previous Session had recommended that the Government should emulate the Kingdom of Morocco where every district had a recreation/sports facility. Further, the Committee recommended that as it was with the case with Kingdom of Morocco, Government should endeavour incorporating sports into the school curriculum and promote sports as a way of keeping children and youths away from the streets.

### **Executive Response**

The Executive in its update to the Committee submitted that the Children’s Code Act No. 12 of 2022, provided that every child was entitled to rest, leisure, play, and participation in cultural and artistic activities appropriate to their age. Public investments in recreation facilities were therefore essential, as they constituted a fundamental child rights issue and would contribute to addressing the challenge of streetism.

In this regard, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services would collaborate with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts to promote the development and accessibility of recreational and cultural facilities for children across the country. This collaborative effort would aim to create safe, inclusive, and engaging environments that encourage children to participate in wholesome activities, thereby supporting their overall development and well-being.

### **Committee’s Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a progress report on the actualisation of the collaborative interventions between the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts to promote the development and accessibility of recreational and cultural facilities for children across the country.

## **3.2 THE ACTION TAKEN REPORT FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **3.2.1 Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youths in Zambia**

#### **3.2.1.1 Limited Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres**

The Committee in the previous Session had reiterated its previous recommendation and urged the Government to consider increasing the number of treatment and rehabilitation centres for the effective treatment and rehabilitation of youths who were suffering from the effects of drug and substance abuse. The Committee had resolved to await a progress report.

### **Executive's Response**

The Executive submitted that they were aware of the limited number of treatment and rehabilitation centres in the Country. In this regard, Government in the 2026 Budget had allocated K46,307,266.00 to commence the construction of National Drug Rehabilitation and Skills Development Centre, furthermore, in an effort to increase the number of treatment and Rehabilitation Centres, the Commission had engaged the Ministry of Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development to allocate appropriate infrastructure dotted around the country for purposes of converting them into rehabilitation centres.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee resolves to await a progress report on the construction of a National Drug Rehabilitation and Skills Development Centre as a response to the limited number of treatment and rehabilitation centres in the country.

## **3.2.2 Drug Enforcement Commission**

### **3.2.2.1 Closure of the Zambia National Service - Youth Rehabilitation Centres**

The Committee in the previous Session had resolved to await a progress report on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the reopening of the Zambia National Service Youth Training Centres.

### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed in 2020, which facilitated the training of youth in lifelong skills, as well as the rehabilitation and training of street children. However, the MOU came to an end in 2021, and the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services was in the process of developing a new MOU with the Ministry of Defense to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee urges the Executive to expedite the development of a new MoU with the Ministry of Defence and resolves to await a progress report.

### **3.2.2.2 Abuse of Emerging Drug-related Substances among the Youths**

The Committee in the previous Session had resolved to await a progress report on the removal of codeine and other medicines containing codeine from the list of medicines and place it on the list of prohibited substances.

### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Drug Enforcement Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2024 engaged the Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority (ZAMRA) who are charged with the mandate to regulate, and control the manufacture, importation, storage, distribution, supply, sale and use of medicines and allied substances in Zambia, ZAMRA had since communicated to the DEC that a draft SI to ban medicinal mixtures containing codeine was sent to the Ministry of Justice for finalisation. The SI was at Cabinet Memorandum stage with the Ministry of Health.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee resolves to await a progress report on the removal of codeine and other medicines containing codeine from the list of medicines and place it on the list of prohibited substances.

### **3.2.3 The Plight of Circumstantial Children in Zambia**

#### **3.2.3.1 Lack of Non-custodial Sentence Mechanism for Mothers and Pregnant Women**

In the previous Session, the Committee had resolved to await a progress report.

#### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security had continued engaging relevant stakeholders, such as the Judiciary, to consider prioritising imposing non-custodial sentences on pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and on the need to develop guidelines for community sentencing.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee notes the submission with concern and urges the Executive to ensure that mechanisms imposing non-custodial sentences on pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are implemented, and the need to develop guidelines for community sentencing are prioritised. The Committee resolves to await the progress report.

### **3.2.4 Management of Child Care Facilities in Zambia**

#### **3.2.4.1 Material for Artificial Limbs**

The Committee in the previous Session had urged the Government to urgently source funds to facilitate the opening up of provincial centres for prosthetics and orthotics in order to enhance the availability and accessibility of the material for artificial limbs for children with special needs in various centres across the country and had resolved to await a progress report.

#### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that funding was allocated for the procurement of equipment for Chipata Central Hospital, Solwezi General Hospital, Lewanika General Hospital, and Kasama General Hospital. The Ministry also intended to recruit prosthetics and orthotics professionals trained at Levy Mwanawasa Medical University to strengthen service delivery.

An allocation of Fifteen Million Kwacha was approved for prosthetics and orthotics supplies for 2026. In 2025, the Ministry spent seven million Kwacha on related materials for the University Teaching Hospital (Adult), Livingstone Central Hospital, Kitwe Teaching Hospital, and Ndola Teaching Hospital.

The Ministry remained committed to securing additional resources to improve infrastructure for prosthetics and orthotics services. Furthermore, Government would continue to engage cooperating partners to mobilise funding for the establishment and operationalisation of provincial centres aimed at expanding access to prosthetics and

orthotics services, including artificial limb materials for children with special needs across the country.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a comprehensive progress report on the establishment and operationalisation of provincial centres aimed at expanding access to prosthetics and orthotics services, including artificial limb materials for children with special needs.

## **3.2.5 Child Marriage in Zambia**

### **3.2.5.1 Inadequacy and Inaccessibility of Schools in Rural Areas**

The Committee in the previous Session resolved to await a comprehensive progress report on the completion of the forty-nine projects planned for in the 2023 – 2025 Medium Term Budget Plan.

### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that as at 31st December 2025, forty-two projects were actively under implementation. Of these, ten projects were at advanced stages, while four projects were on track for completion.

Further, seven projects had their final accounts concluded but were yet to proceed to tender. These projects were scheduled to commence implementation in the first quarter of 2026.

In addition, the implementation of the projects under the Medium-Term Budget Plan remained ongoing. These interventions were aimed at improving access to education, particularly in rural areas, thereby contributing to the retention of learners in school and addressing underlying factors contributing to child marriage.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee resolves to await a progress report on the forty-nine projects.

## **3.2.6 Youth Unemployment in Zambia**

### **3.2.6.1 Apprenticeship Act, Chapter 275 of the Laws of Zambia**

The Committee in the previous Session had resolved to await a progress report on the review of the *Apprenticeship Act, Chapter 275 of the Laws of Zambia*.

### **Executive's Response**

The Executive in its update to the Committee submitted that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security with the Technical Working Group consisting of the social partners and other relevant stakeholders had since drafted the Work-Based Learning Bill. The draft Bill had been submitted to the Ministry of Justice for internal legislative review before Cabinet approval.

### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee in noting the submission resolves to await a progress report on the review of the *Apprenticeship Act, Chapter 275 of the Laws of Zambia*.

### **3.2.6.2 National Youth Development Council Board**

The Committee in the previous Session had urged the Executive to expedite the process of reviewing the *National Youth Development Council Act, chapter 144 of the Laws of Zambia*, which will eventually provide for the appointment of the National Youth Development Council Board and resolved to await a progress report on the matter.

#### **Executive's Response**

The Committee was informed that the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts working in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and other line Ministries was in the process of repealing and replacing the NYDC Act No. 144 of the Laws of Zambia. Provincial consultations were undertaken countrywide and a call for public participation was made through the Times of Zambia News Paper and other social media platforms to allow for massive participation in decision making processes for the youth.

#### **Committee's Observations and Recommendations**

The Committee resolves to await a progress report on the process to repeal and review the NYDC Act No, 144 of the Laws of Zambia.

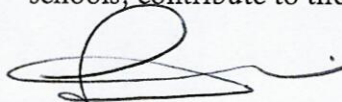
#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Committee observes persistent and systemic implementation gaps in sports development, relating to infrastructure deficits, fragmented financing, limited human resource capacity, weak coordination, and insufficient monitoring, safeguarding, and integrity mechanisms. These constraints continue to limit participation, exacerbate inequities, and undermine the full developmental potential of school-based sports.

The Committee is therefore, of the view that in addressing these issues, targeted investments, improved policies and strategic partnerships must be enhanced. Central to this agenda is the need for clear policy direction, strengthened inter-ministerial coordination between the Ministries of Education, Sport and Local Government, predictable and ring-fenced financing, inclusive and standardised infrastructure development, expanded teacher training and deployment, and robust systems for monitoring, safeguarding, and accountability. In addition, priority attention to school sports is essential to establishing strong foundations for lifelong participation and talent development.

Thus, with coordinated leadership and adequate resourcing, school sports can be transformed into a coherent, inclusive, and sustainable national platform that contributes meaningfully to Zambia's long-term education goals, public health outcomes, and socio-economic development. Additionally, strengthening sports development in schools and embedding sport firmly within the education system would ultimately be an investment in Zambia's people. The country could unlock the full potential of its learners, foster inclusive growth, and build a healthier, more resilient, and more competitive nation.

The Committee is hopeful that the issues raised in this Report will be expeditiously addressed by the Government in order to create an environment where sports flourish in schools, contribute to the mental well-being of students and development.



Mr Heartson Mabeta, MP  
**CHAIRPERSON**

April, 2026  
**LUSAKA**

## **APPENDIX I - List of National Assembly Officials**

Mr Charles Haambote, Director (SC)

Mrs Chitalu K Mumba, Deputy Director (SC)

Mr Darius Kunda, Senior Committee Clerk (SC1)

Ms Media Hachombwa, Committee Clerk

Mr Danny Lupiya, Senior Committee Assistant

Mr Muyembi Kantumoya, Committee Assistant

Ms Taona Chabinga, Committee Assistant

Ms Debora Mbewe, Intern

**APPENDIX II - List of Witnesses**

Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts

Ministry of Education

National Sports Council of Zambia

Zambia Volley Association

Local Government Association of Zambia

Physical Education Teachers Association of Zambia

Sports in Action

Zambian Schools Sports Association

FootGolf Association

Mr Kebby Mwangala