



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

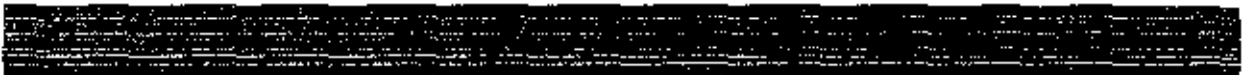
STATEMENT BY HON. GIVEN LUBINDA, MP

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

ON THE

STATUS OF THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

FEBRUARY, 2016



MR. SPEAKER.

I THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO DELIVER THIS STATEMENT WHICH IS AN UPDATE ON '**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM. UNDER THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAM (FISP)**', DURING THE 2015/2016 AGRICULTURAL SEASON. THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN NECESSITATED BY A POINT OF ORDER RAISED BY **MONZE CENTRAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT HONOURABLE JACK MWIIMBU**, REGARDING THE OPERATIONS OF THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM IN MONZE CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY. BEFORE I RESPOND TO THE POINT OF ORDER , WHICH IS SPECIFIC TO MONZE CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY, ALLOW ME TO GIVE THE HOUSE AN IDEA HOW THE E-VOUCHER IS PERFORMING NATIONALWIDE.

MR SPEAKER,

THE HOUSE MAY RECALL THAT THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM WAS OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED ON 12TH OCTOBER, 2015 IN CHOMA DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN PROVINCE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU.

THE PROGRAMME IS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN 13 PILOT DISTRICTS INCLUDING MONZE.

THE FARMERS MEANT TO BENEFIT FROM SUPPORT UNDER FISP ARE BEING SELECTED BY THE CAMP AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEES (CACs) THROUGH THEIR RESPECTIVE FARMER ORGANISATIONS PARTICULARLY FARMER COOPERATIVES.

UPON BEING SELECTED IN LINE WITH THE CRITERIA CONTAINED IN THE FISP IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL, THE FARMERS HAVE TO DEPOSIT THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS BEFORE THEY CAN ACCESS THE INPUTS. KEY CRITERIA FOR FARMER SELECTION INCLUDE:

- I. BEING A REGISTERED SMALL-SCALE FARMER AND ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FARMING WITHIN THE CAMP COVERAGE AREA
- II. CULTIVATING UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 5 HA OF LAND
- III. HAVING THE CAPACITY TO PAY THE PRESCRIBED FARMER CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE TOTAL COST OF THE PACK
- IV. NOT CONCURRENTLY BENEFITING FROM THE FOOD SECURITY PACK; AND
- V. NOT BEING A DEFAULTER FROM THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY AND/OR ANY OTHER AGRICULTURAL CREDIT PROGRAMME

MR SPEAKER,

I WISH TO REITERATE THAT SUCCESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM WAS GOING TO BE DEPENDENT ON:

- A. LEVELS OF RESISTANCE IN SOME AREAS OF THE PILOT DISTRICTS
- B. PREPAREDNESS OF THE PARTICIPATING BANKS
- C. PREPAREDNESS OF THE FARMERS IN MAKING THEIR FARMER CONTRIBUTIONS ON TIME
- D. PREPAREDNESS OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE STAFF

MR SPEAKER,

DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC VOUCHER SYSTEM, THE MINISTRY HAS ENCOUNTERED A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES THAT INCLUDE:

- a. LATE SUBMISSION OF BENEFICIARY NAMES FOR ONWARD SUBMISSION TO BANKS BY THE DISTRICTS AND ERRORS IN THE SUBMITTED BENEFICIARY LISTS
- b. POWER LOAD SHEDDING WHICH AFFECTED THE TIMELY TRANSMISSION OF DATA FROM THE DISTRICTS
- c. DELAYED PRINTING AND DELIVERY OF CARDS BY THE BANKS
- d. THE SUDDEN RISE IN THE PRICE OF FERTILISER

WHICH IN TURN RESULTED IN GOVERNMENT HAVING TO SOURCE FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO INCREASE ITS CONTRIBUTION ON THE CARDS.

MR SPEAKER,

REGARDLESS OF THESE CHALLENGES, THE PROGRAMME HAS STILL BEEN SUCCESSFUL AS INDICATED IN THE TABLE BELOW:

FIGURES AS AT 18TH FEBRUARY, 2016

Sn	District	Planned # of beneficiaries	Number of beneficiaries selected	Number of cards produced	Number of cards distributed	Cards not distributed/ Recalled due to death, relocation	UBA cards yet to be distributed	% cards distributed	Number of cards activated	% cards activation of received cards
	Total	241,000	242,683	241,041	219,891	9,151	11,992	91.23	198,004	90.05

THE EXTRA 1.683 SELECTED FARMERS WERE DUE TO THE ADDITIONAL 5,000 BENEFICIARIES ALLOCATED TO KABWE DISTRICT.

MR SPEAKER,

THE FOLLOWING SUCCESSES HAVE BEEN RECORDED DURING THE PILOTING OF THEE-VOUCHER PROGRAMME:

- a. FOR THE FIRST TIME UNDER THE FISP PROGRAMME. FARMERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCESS A WIDE RANGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK INPUTS OF THEIR CHOICE

INCLUDING DAY OLD CHICKS, LIVERSTOCK FEED. DRUGS AND CHEMICALS, HERBICIDES, SEEDS FOR VARIOUS CROPS AND FERTILISER AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL REQUISITES.

- b. THE TREASURY RELEASED ALL THE REQUIRED SUBSIDY FUNDS ON TIME
- c. THROUGH IMPROVED SCREENING OF BENEFICIARIES, THE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN ABLE TO REMOVE SOME GHOST FARMERS
- d. AGRO DEALERS AND INPUT SUPPLIERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DELIVER INPUTS TO WHERE THE FARMERS ARE.
- e. MORE INPUT SUPPLIERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PARTICIPATE ON THE FISP PROGRAMME SINCE INCEPTION.
- f. FISP IMPLEMENTATION RELATED PRESSURE ON MINISTRY STAFF HAS REDUCED AND SHOULD LEAD TO THE OFFICERS ALLOCATING MORE TIME TO OTHER EQUALLY IMPORTANT MINISTRY ACTIVITIES SUCH AS PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES.
- g. THE INCREASED TRADE VOLUMES FOR AGRO-DEALERS HAS LED TO JOB CREATION AS THE AGRO-DEALERS HAVE HAD TO EMPLOY MORE WORKERS.

MR SPEAKER,

IN HIS POINT OF ORDER ON THE FLOOR OF THIS HOUSE THE HONOURABLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR MONZE CENTRAL, HON. JACK MWIIMBU, INDICATED THAT 5,400 FARMERS THAT HAD PAID THE REQUISITE DEPOSIT HAD NOT BENEFICTED FROM THEE-VOUCHER SYSTEM.

THEE-VOUCHER SYSTEM WAS DESIGNED SUCH THAT FARMERS ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO DEPOSIT THEIR CONTRIBUTION AFTER RECEIVING THEIR CARDS. THEREFORE NO FARMERS THAT HAVE NOT RECEIVED THEIR CARDS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO DEPOSIT THEIR CONTRIBUTION.

FURTHER MR. SPEAKER, THE RECORDS WE HAVE AS AT 11 TH FEBRUARY, 2016, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CARDS THAT HAD NOT YET BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO FARMERS IN MONZE DISTRICT WAS 3,839. THESE CARDS WERE PRINTED AND DELIVERED LATE TO THE DISTRICT DUE TO LATE SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF BENEFICIARIES FROM THE DISTRICTS OFFICE.

MR SPEAKER,

THE SUBMISSION OF BENEFICIARY NAMES FROM THE DISTRICTS WAS DONE BETWEEN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2015. HOWEVER, FOR MONZE DISTRICT, THE FINAL LIST OF BENEFICIARIES WAS ONLY SUBMITTED ON 9TH NOVEMBER, 2015. THIS SUBMISSION WAS EVEN MADE LATER THAN THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE E-VOUCHER SYSTEM ON 12TH OCTOBER, 2015 BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, MR. EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU.

UPON REALISING THE LIMITED CAPACITY BY THE INITIAL TWO BANKS TO PRODUCE THE REMAINING VISA CARDS, THE MINISTRY DECIDED TO BRING ON BOARD UBA BANK TO HELP WITH THE PRODUCTION OF THE BANKS.

IT IS FROM THESE UBA BANK CARDS THAT THE YET TO BE DISTRIBUTED 3,839 CARDS CAME FROM.

EVEN WITH THIS LATE SUBMISSION, BY THE 11TH OF FEBRUARY, 2016. MORE THAN 90% OF THE TARGETED 27,427 CARDS FOR MONZE HAD BEEN PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED.

I WISH TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT GOVERNMENT HAS TO DATE RELEASED ALL THE REQUIRED FUNDS FOR THE K700 TOP UP FUNDS. HOWEVER, THE MINISTRY HAS BEEN INFORMED BY THE BANKS THAT THEY ARE BEING EXTRA CAUTIOUS IN EFFECTING THE TOP UP FUNDS IN ORDER TO AVOID DOUBLE LOADING.

MR SPEAKER

THE HONOURABLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR MONZE CENTRAL WONDERED, AND I QUOTE 'WHETHER THE FARMERS ONCE GIVEN THE TOP UP, WILL BE ABLE ACCESS THE FERTILIZER'.

THE E-VOUCHER SYSTEM IS MEANT TO HELP MOVE FARMERS AWAY FROM DEPENDING FROM RAIN FED AGRICULTURE TO OTHER FARM ENTERPRISES.

WITH THIS FLEXIBILITY, FARMERS IN M O N Z E DISTRICT ARE ALREADY ACCESSING A VARIETY OF INPUTS INCLUDING VEGETABLE SEEDS, LIVESTOCK FEED, HEIFERS AND CHICKS.

MR SPEAKER,

IN CONCLUDING, I WISH TO INFORM THE HOUSE THAT THE E-VOUCHER PROGRAMME IS ALSO BEING MONITORED BY EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION I.E THE INDABA AGRICULTURAL POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (APRIL). MY MINISTRY WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM THE DOCUMENTED LEARNING POINTS AS WILL BE PRESENTED IN THE EVALUATION REPORT.

I WISH TO COMMEND ALL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TOOK KEEN INTEREST IN THIS E-VOUCHER MATTER. TO ALL THOSE WHO SAT BACK AT THE BEGINNING, I WISH TO INVITE THEM TO COME ON BOARD FOR THE COMING SEASON

THE GOVERNMENT IS VERY HAPPY WITH THE POSITIVE RESPONSE THAT FARMERS HAVE SHOWN FOR THIS PROGRAMME IN ALL THE PILOT DISTRICTS.

MR. SPEAKER, I THANK YOU