

Getting results in the education sector

Zambia Ministry of General Education



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About the Results Papers

ZESSTA's six high quality results papers aim to give a taste of the facility's impact as well as distil the hard-earned lessons about implementation throughout its life. Each paper presents an in-depth look at a challenge faced, the responses considered, and the results achieved with the support of the facility. The results papers are aimed at stakeholders across the education sector and provide opportunity for lesson learning.

To download soft copies, visit www.moge.gov.zm and www.britishcouncil.org.zm/zessta.



Results Paper 1:
Planning brings the future into the present



Results Paper 2:
Using technical assistance to get things done in a busy organisation



Results Paper 3:
Towards a learning and accountable ministry: Strengthening M&E capacity in MoGE



Results Paper 4:
Zambia adopts a new approach to strengthening school leadership



Results Paper 5:
Improving learning for all: Developing assessment policy and changing practice



Results Paper 6:
Developing teacher performance through national professional standards

Planning brings the Future into the Present¹

Implementation of the Zambia Ministry of General Education (MoGE) Revised Curriculum

This is the first of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** ZESSTA's work with a wide range of stakeholders strengthened the planning for curriculum implementation and lent weight to the advocacy for funding.
- 2** This supported MoGE in taking evidence-based decisions on how to implement the revised curriculum.
- 3** Providing options, rather than prescribing recommendations, ensured that MoGE retained ownership of the decision making process.



The challenges

MoGE commenced the phased roll-out of the revised curriculum for primary and secondary education in January 2014. Teachers and academic professionals saw it as a great improvement on the previous curriculum. To identify appropriate support, MoGE carried out a situation analysis which highlighted the following challenges:

- Only soft copies of the revised Curriculum Framework documents and syllabi were sent to schools;
- Delays in the provision of textbooks to learners and teachers;
- Insufficient support materials and resources for students to learn well through the revised curriculum;
- Insufficient or lack of training for teachers, school managers and MoGE staff in effective approaches for learner centred education;
- Lack of effective and efficient systems and processes for monitoring and evaluating curriculum delivery; and
- The need for a comprehensive programme of continuous assessment.

"Are you the expert from the Ministry who is responsible for the roll-out of this revised curriculum with no teacher training and no resources for us to teach our students with?"

A teacher interviewed during the 2015 Joint Annual Review (JAR) field visits

¹ Adapted from Alan Lakein, author on time management

The response

MoGE commissioned technical assistance (TA) through the ZESSTA Facility to develop curriculum implementation scenarios that could be rolled out at three different cost levels (low, medium and high) and would address the identified challenges.

Needs assessment

ZESSTA worked alongside MoGE officers from the Directorate of Standards & Curriculum (S&C) and the Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) to undertake a situation analysis for the curriculum roll-out. This analysis led to the mobilisation of a larger team of national and international specialists to work collaboratively with MoGE officers who used participatory approaches to gather more detailed information regarding the challenges and to identify possible solutions.

Planning

Following this assessment, the perceived challenges were categorised and three scenarios (low, medium and high cost) for overcoming them were developed with an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each. The scenarios covered Teacher Education; Teaching and Learning Materials; Special Educational Needs; Adult Literacy / Distance and Open Learning; Management and Support Services. The purpose of this exercise was three-fold:

- (i) Ensure sustainability and optimise the learning outcomes of learners and their teachers;
- (ii) Support the identification of sufficient resources from the national budget and cooperating partners (CPs); and
- (iii) Provide the 2015 JAR with evidence of the challenges of curriculum implementation and the potential impact of each scenario.

Further TA-supported tasks were identified to ensure effective implementation of the revised curriculum:

- A comprehensive map of the support for curriculum implementation provided by partner organisations, to facilitate increased coordination of activities;
- A comprehensive and costed teacher training programme for curriculum implementation;
- A Teachers' Curriculum Implementation Guide;
- A National Learning Assessment Framework.

Stakeholder consultation

Following the development of the costed scenarios, MoGE solicited feedback through consultation with key stakeholders. This took place at the 2015 JAR and a workshop with government officers and CPs. This validation exercise led to a report submitted to MoGE Top Management.

Implementation planning

ZESSTA provided further TA to support the S&C and TESS Directorates to review the proposed options and to develop a detailed costed implementation framework to enable easier comparison. During the earlier planning stage, ZESSTA was also asked to provide TA for specific activities to support curriculum implementation. These were launched in late 2015 and are expected to be completed by mid-2016.

Decision making

The Directors S&C and TESS presented the costed curriculum implementation framework to MoGE Top Management in September 2015. This led to the decision to opt for a hybrid solution in which elements of the low, medium and high cost options were selected. Meetings were also held with CPs in order to secure additional funding to ensure that the activities could take place as planned.



Above: Lusaka schoolboys playing chess during their break.

*"It's not only about ideas...
it's about making
ideas happen!"*

Scott Belsky,
Author and Entrepreneur

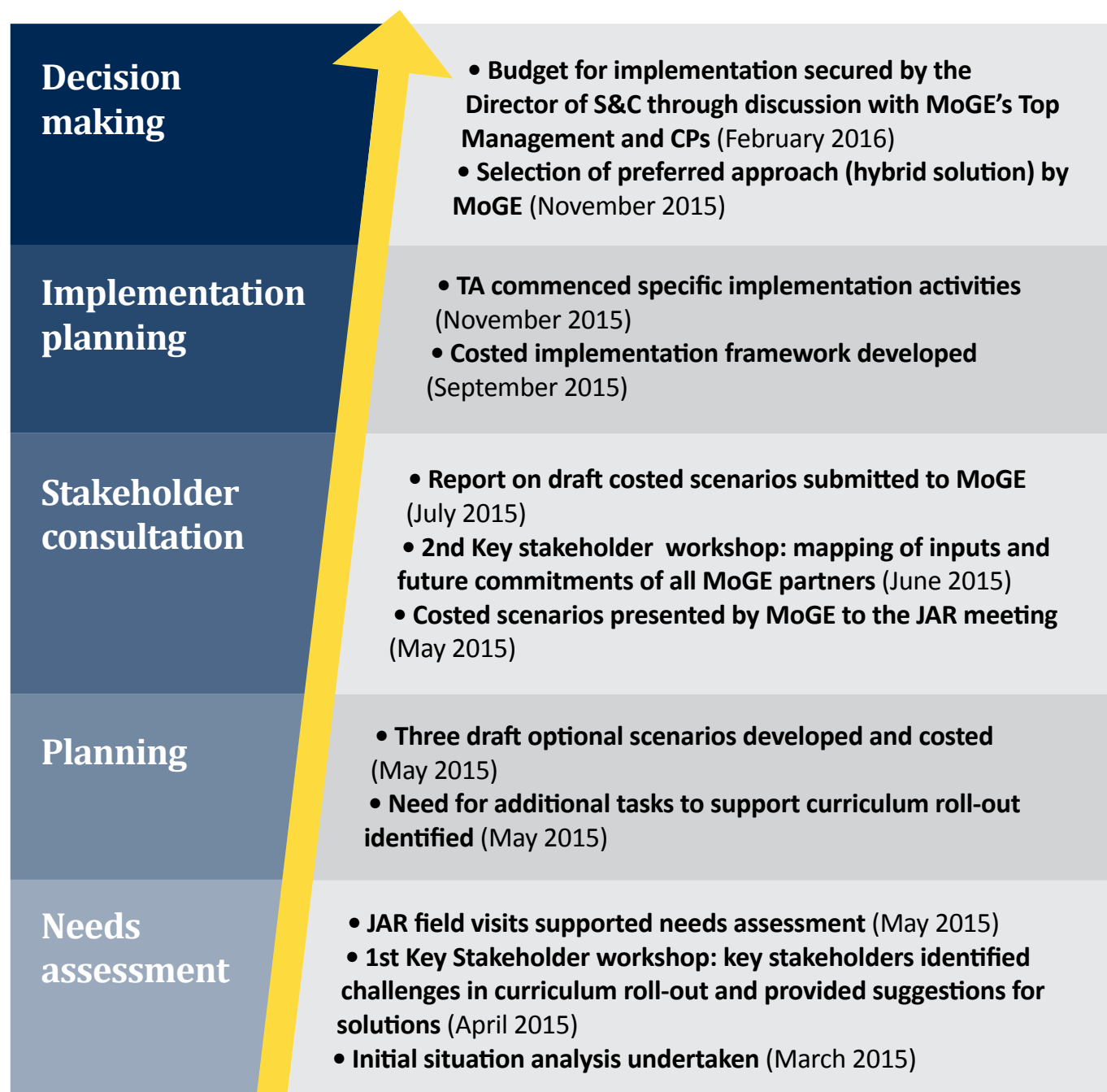


Above: Girls at school.

"We are very happy with the results achieved through working collaboratively with the ZESSTA Facility. We have achieved many of our key milestones."

James Chilufya
Chief Curriculum Specialist, MoGE

Outcomes at each stage



The ZESSTA story is not complete without reference to the late Chishimba Nkosha, Permanent Secretary of MoGE, whose guidance ZESSTA has successfully followed. His vision was that ZESSTA TA would *“work diligently with ministry staff in overcoming performance bottlenecks, working together ‘elbow to elbow’, in a collaborative manner”*, asserting that *“MoGE staff will take the lead in identifying the needs, articulating the activities and managing the reporting process.”*

Lessons learned

Zambia’s experience of curriculum renewal offers some ‘lessons learned’ for future efforts and to others embarking on a similar journey:

Upskill staff responsible for curriculum development and roll-out at the start of the process.

Consult within the Ministry, elsewhere in government, NGOs and CPs at all stages of the process.

Plan for curriculum implementation and its funding once the broad scope of change is identified.

Provide capacity development for teachers, teacher educators, inspectors etc. prior to roll-out.

Launch discussions to secure funding as soon as plans for the development and implementation of the curriculum start to emerge.

Learn from and replicate good practice in implementation of the revised curriculum, such as that evidenced in the 2015 JAR.

Identify and plan for TA for all stages at the beginning of the process.

ABOUT ZESSTA

The Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility supports the Government of Zambia to strengthen the education sector and improve learning outcomes for children. We focus on capacity strengthening as sustainable support to improved service delivery in the education sector. Our work is demand-driven and linked to ministerial annual planning processes, focused on education sector priorities and responsive to current and emerging needs. The ZESSTA Facility is funded by (i) UK aid from the UK government and (ii) the Global Partnership for Education, and delivered by the British Council.



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Using technical assistance to get things done in a busy organisation

This is the second of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** Once a required output is identified, begin the process of 'getting it done' by carrying out a stakeholder analysis to understand the decision making environment.
- 2** Next, set up a reference group and task team with clear roles and responsibilities to do the task.
- 3** Use a task-focussed approach to deliver the outputs, with technical assistance working side by side with MoGE officials.
- 4** All meetings held must be short and well prepared with an identified outcome.



Ministry of General Education, Lusaka © ZESSTA

"There are times when workshops are a good way to work, but it's often better to get the work done here in our offices and then discuss in meetings. We should only have workshops when necessary."

Senior official from the Directorate of Planning and Information

The challenge

The MoGE is a busy organisation which strives to lead and manage an effective and efficient education system. Policies direct the strategies MoGE puts in place; its numerous employees at all levels of the education system are required to implement these strategies. Many stakeholders also interact with MoGE to make known their own expectations of their role in supporting education. This presents MoGE with a number of challenges:

Competing demands

MoGE HQ must meet the competing demands of day to day administration; other government ministries and institutions, cooperating partners; officials and staff at provincial, district and school level; as well as strategy identification, budgeting, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Challenge management

There is so much to be done that prioritising work is often difficult; attention is focused on what is most urgent rather than what is most important. Challenge management is an inherent and time consuming task of officials in any modern organisation like MoGE where contexts are complex, resources (especially time) are constrained and change is constant.

Attending workshops

Workshops are not usually an effective way of getting things done. They are most effective when used as a means of sharing ideas, identifying actions to be undertaken and building consensus, resulting in a report of what needs to be done. But there is often no systematic follow up to ensure that these actions are integrated into the relevant workplans. Workshops are also expensive and take

officials away from their desks for days at a time, reducing the time available for getting things done.

Ambitious workplans

Officials see the need for so much to be done and develop ambitious workplans in order to meet targets that have been set. Often, these plans do not take account of the time officials will spend on crisis management and other activities, nor the availability of required resources.

Steps to getting work done



The response

The approach described below **evolved** while providing support for three initiatives (see *The results* below), assisting different MoGE directorates to “**get work done**” while building **ownership and accountability for implementation**.

1. Analyse the issue

In each case MoGE requested ZESSTA support for a workplan activity which had not been completed. The starting point for the technical assistance (TA) was to convene a **brainstorming session** with a few key officials to identify and agree on the:

- **problem or issue** to be addressed
- **important stakeholders** and how they should be involved
- **authorising environment** – those who make decisions and allocate resources
- **MoGE champion** who will get the necessary agreements
- members of a **reference group (RG)**
- **resources** required to get the job done – time, people, effort and funding
- **concept note** which captures all the above

2. Set up a reference group

The role of the RG is to provide guidance and support in moving work forward. The RG is five or six **senior MoGE officials** who are critical for approving the outputs of the task team (TT). It can include **external stakeholders** who bring relevant resources, access or expertise. The RG is chaired

by the MoGE champion and will meet only 3 or 4 times for no more than 1-2 hours, its role being to:

- **Review** and **comment** on the concept note
- **Recommend** membership of the TT
- **Review** ideas presented or work done - they do not **‘do’** the work

3. Establish a task team to get the work done

The TT consists of officials authorised by their seniors to commit time to the work and TA to provide expertise or inputs. The role of the TT is to:

- **Complete** a specific task – the TT is disbanded on completion of that task
- **Agree** tasks to be completed by each person or pair (MoGE official & TA) and review the outcome
- **Identify** one member to pull together the work of the TT (reviewed by MoGE counterpart if done by TA)
- **Review** and **accept** each draft before it is presented to the RG

4. Secure approval from the reference group

The TT presents its work to the RG for review:

- Documents are required to be read in advance of meetings and include clear questions to be discussed during the meeting
- Members not available for a meeting can email their responses to the questions
- The RG agrees on next steps e.g. further revisions or finalisation of the document for the champion to take forward for approval and implementation

5. Integrate into Directorate workplans for implementation

Once approved by the RG, the champion takes the matter forward for authorization. It should go to the relevant Director, Senior Management Team or Permanent Secretary for sign-off, with a clear action plan indicating who is responsible for doing what, by when, and with what resources.

The results

NIF III Review and NIF IV Situation Analysis

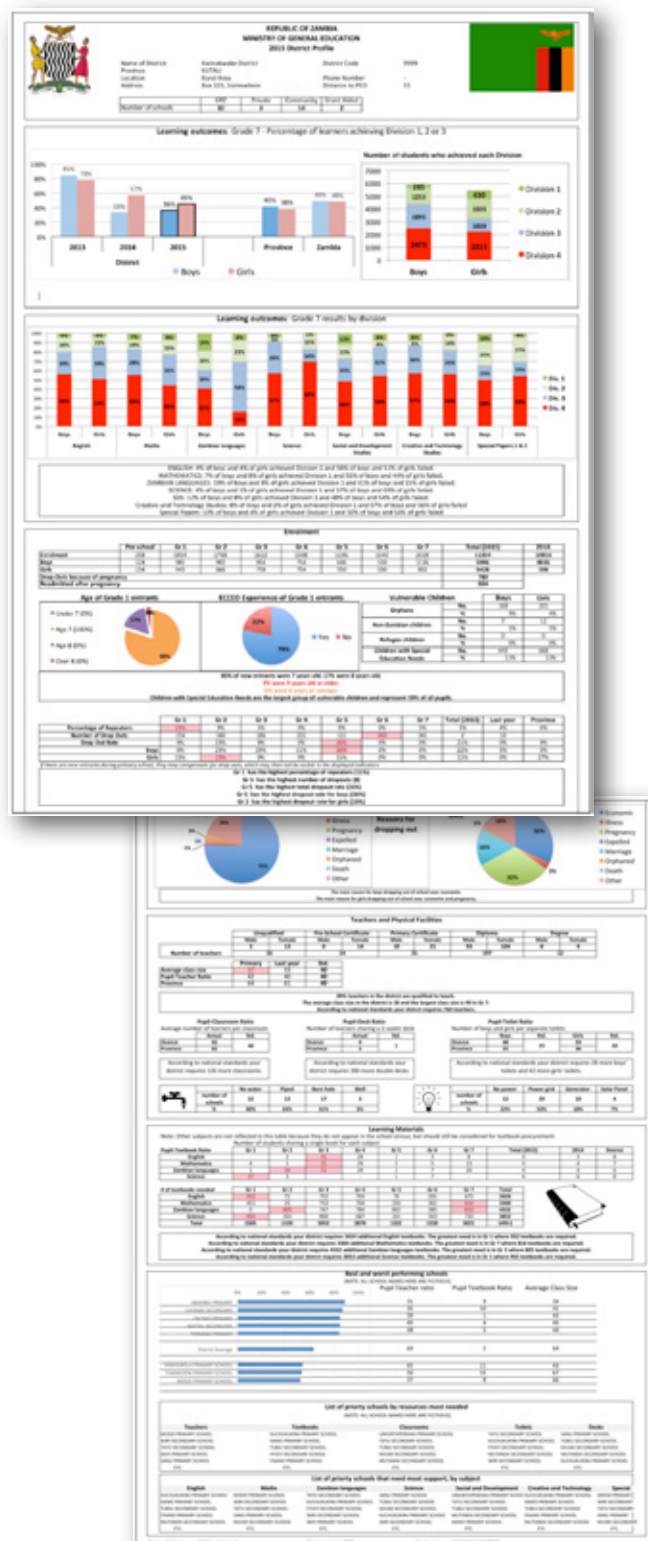
These documents were reviewed and commented on by the Programme Implementation Technical Committee (PITC), then presented to the Joint Annual Review and signed off by MoGE to provide the basis for the team developing the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP).

Early Childhood Education Policy Implementation Plan (ECE-PIP)

The costed ECE-PIP has been completed and submitted by the ECE Directorate to the Director of Planning and Information for the preparation of the Cabinet Memorandum. ECE staff believe the costed PIP is implementable and affirm that they were fully involved in the process.

District Education Profiles (DEP) Toolkit

The DEP toolkit provides an overview of the performance of each district in comparison with national performance. The tools have been reviewed by the RG and will be circulated by MoGE to all Districts in early 2017. The tools require Districts to ensure that the profiles are reviewed and discussed with their key stakeholders. A summary report on what actions each district is planning to take will be submitted by every district office through the provinces to HQ, providing a national and provincial profile of issues and planned actions. The use of the evidence provided by the DEP is thus institutionalised in the MoGE management and reporting system.



Above: Format of the District Education Profile (DEP)

"It was not always easy" ...but... "now, we understand the procedure of costing better because we understand the components we have costed, we were involved in the whole process."

ECE Officers



Early childhood education classroom
© VVOB Zambia Teacher Education

Lessons learned

Identify relevant decision makers and ensure they are engaged early in the process.

Hold short task team meetings to agree the work to be done and ensure officials are given time to do it.

Ensure that possible overlap with other initiatives is identified and addressed at the start of the process.

Tasks are best completed with ministry officials and technical advisers working side by side.

Make a clear distinction between the functions of the task team and reference group.

Prepare for reference group and task team meetings and distribute the relevant documents in time so that they can be read and reflected upon in advance.

ABOUT ZESSTA

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Towards a learning and accountable ministry: Strengthening M&E capacity in MoGE

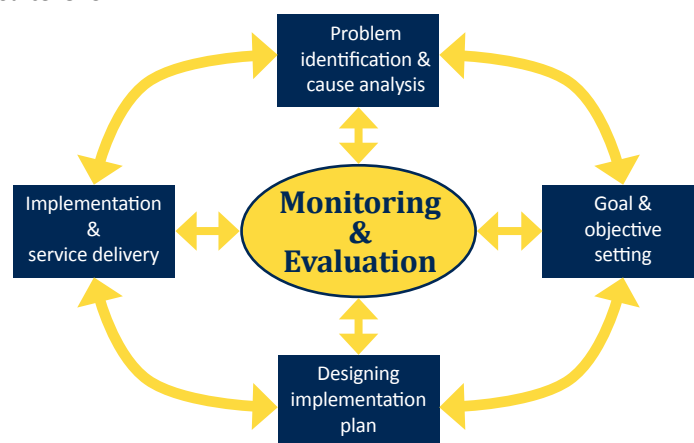
This is the third of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** Capacity to use M&E as an instrument for learning and accountability within the strategic and day-to-day operations of MoGE has been strengthened.
- 2** Supporting UNZA to carry out a training needs assessment (TNA) and involving MoGE staff in the design of the materials ensured the development of a course relevant to the needs of MoGE staff.
- 3** The participatory process of carrying out the TNA, designing the training programme, developing the Course Reader and undertaking the post-course tracer studies has enhanced UNZA's capacity to deliver high-quality M&E courses and contributed to the professional development of individual members of their staff.
- 4** The selection of UNZA to deliver this ZESSTA-facilitated support has ensured stronger motivation for undertaking the programme – UNZA co-issues the certificate – as well as sustainability of M&E training in the education sector.

Figure 1: M&E's role in the policy/programme cycle

Source: OECD



"The best practice approach to course development that ZESSTA required us to use has not only strengthened the capacity of MoGE staff, it has also enabled us to be a more effective and responsive provider of M&E training for the education sector. Understanding the importance of a participatory approach to course development has also enhanced our capacity to design tailored training for other government sectors."

Dr Lemba, University of Zambia,
Department of Population Studies

The challenge

Many MoGE staff had become concerned about the lack of systematic capacity strengthening in M&E in the Ministry over the last 5-10 years. Also, a perception had grown in some quarters that M&E is solely the responsibility of the Directorate of Planning and Information (DPI), which led to a reduction in the use of M&E as a critical tool for learning and accountability at all levels of MoGE.

More recently, external pressure for more accurate and timely information to support performance management (e.g. Quarterly Performance Reporting to the Presidency) and national development reporting (e.g. in relation to the National Development Plan), has also led to a growing recognition across MoGE that improved M&E systems and skills are required at all levels.

The DPI approached ZESSTA for technical assistance in the design and implementation of an M&E capacity strengthening programme to address these challenges. ZESSTA tries at all times to offer sustainable solutions, which also bear in mind the absorptive capacity of the Ministry — this added an interesting element to the dynamic of the challenge in hand.

The response

1. Identifying the best service provider and enhancing its offer

To meet the identified challenges, ZESSTA worked with MoGE's DPI to plan a cost effective, sustainable and best practice approach to capacity development in M&E for MoGE staff at national, provincial and district levels. To ensure sustainability of support in future, the University of Zambia (UNZA) Department of Population Studies (DPS) was contracted to design and facilitate the training programme. With a long track record of providing M&E training (mainly in the health sector), UNZA is the acknowledged market leader in Zambia and its course offering has definite 'brand appeal'. However, it had little experience of M&E capacity-strengthening in the education sector. The DPI and ZESSTA worked with UNZA-DPS to design and carry out a TNA of MoGE HQ staff. The TNA used a questionnaire and interviews to gather detailed information about the type of M&E activities carried out and the perceived training needs according to the position held by the respondents. It found that 67% of respondents had no previous training in M&E.

2. Developing a relevant and multi-level programme

Following the TNA, the training programme was developed in a workshop setting facilitated by DPI and attended by staff from MoGE, M&E facilitators from UNZA-DPS and ZESSTA's National M&E Adviser. This was to further ensure the relevance of the course content to the needs of the education sector and specifically MoGE's HQ staff. The workshop was also useful in raising awareness among UNZA-DPS about broader needs and issues in the education sector as well as helping to strengthen relationships between key individuals that would later prove important during the roll-out of the course. UNZA-DPS used the inputs from this workshop to develop a comprehensive suite of tailored training materials, including a stand-alone Course Reader to be used as a reference by participants both during and after their training. The first training programmes were held with MoGE HQ staff and a pre- and post-test was carried out each time in order to measure participants' immediate learning from the programme.

After the training of MoGE HQ staff, a further TNA was carried out to establish the needs of provincial and district staff. The programme was also refined based on feedback from the facilitators and participants in the HQ training and to meet the specific needs of district and provincial staff identified by the TNA. To date, six training programmes have taken place; two with staff from HQ and four with mainly district and provincial staff.

3. Tracking impact

A tracer study is carried out approximately six months after each course. This helps identify the effectiveness of the training programmes as well as the institutional challenges which may prevent staff from implementing what they have learned.

The results

The initiative was found to have benefited both the MoGE staff who participated in the training and the facilitators from UNZA-DPS who delivered it.

The UNZA team has stated that the TNA and the participatory approach to course development was critical to the success of the programme; it increased their understanding of the M&E needs of the general education sector and enabled them to develop training materials and a Course Reader that are specific to the needs of MoGE staff. UNZA particularly valued the development of the Course Reader and have approached MoGE with a proposal for a joint publication.

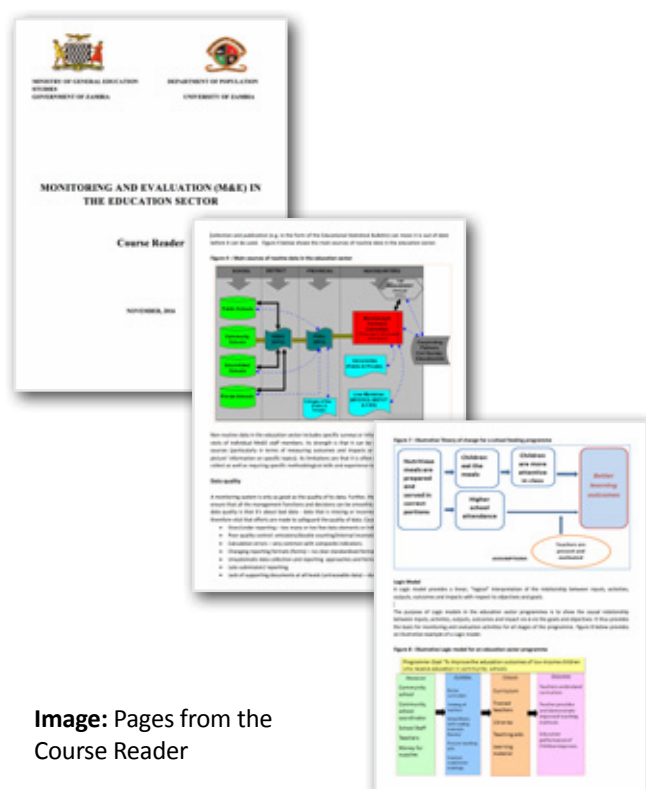


Image: Pages from the Course Reader

The pre- and post-test administered at each training event found that while all participants benefited from the programme, those who had the lowest scores in the pre-test had the greatest increase in scores in the post-test. For example, in one cohort the lowest scoring group in the pre-test increased their score by an average of 19% in the post-test, while the highest scoring group increased by only 2%. This shows that the course has been most valuable for those with a limited understanding of M&E.

Through the evaluation exercise undertaken at the end of each training course, participants indicated that they were very positive about the value of the course and its relevance for their work. The course was successful in developing momentum for more emphasis on M&E, as evidenced by the course participants who stated that they would like a course on advanced M&E techniques and the large volume of other MoGE officials, particularly at the district and provincial levels, who sought to attend the training.

The results of the tracer studies for MoGE HQ staff (figure 2) has been very positive — it found that:

- all participants would recommend the course to colleagues in the education sector;
- the skills and competences they developed in the training are relevant to their work and they have consulted the training materials after attending the course;
- almost all participants have had the opportunity to discuss the course with colleagues.

However, 38% of participants identified barriers which prevent them from applying the skills and competencies to the maximum extent possible:

- M&E activities not budgeted for;
- Limited capacity of other officers to engage in M&E;
- M&E is the responsibility of a specialised department;
- No M&E plan yet.



"The training course and the associated Reader have made an important contribution to strengthening MoGE's M&E capacity."

Stephen Zimba, Senior Planning Officer, MoGE

Figure 2: Results from the tracer study of HQ staff

I would recommend this course to other colleagues in the education sector

During the course I acquired skills and competences that I am already using in my current job

I have had the opportunity to discuss with colleagues the content of the training and its relevance to my Directorate or Unit's work

I have consulted the training material (hand-outs and course documentation) in the period since the training

There are factors which prevent me from applying the skills and competences learned to the maximum extent possible

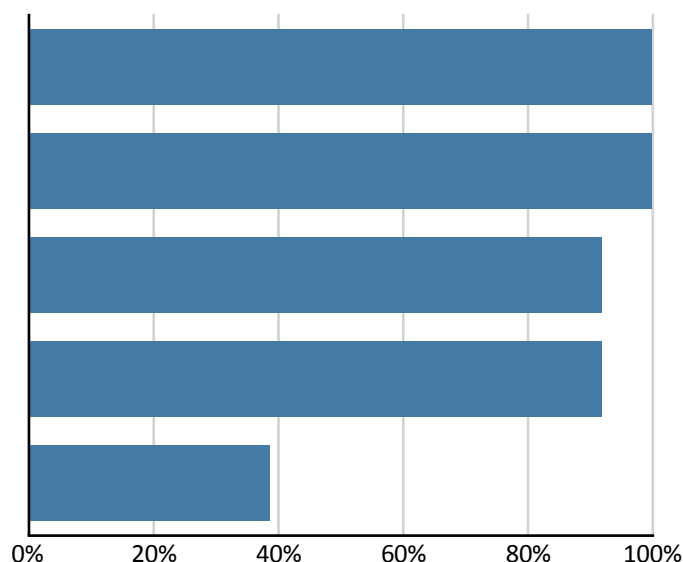
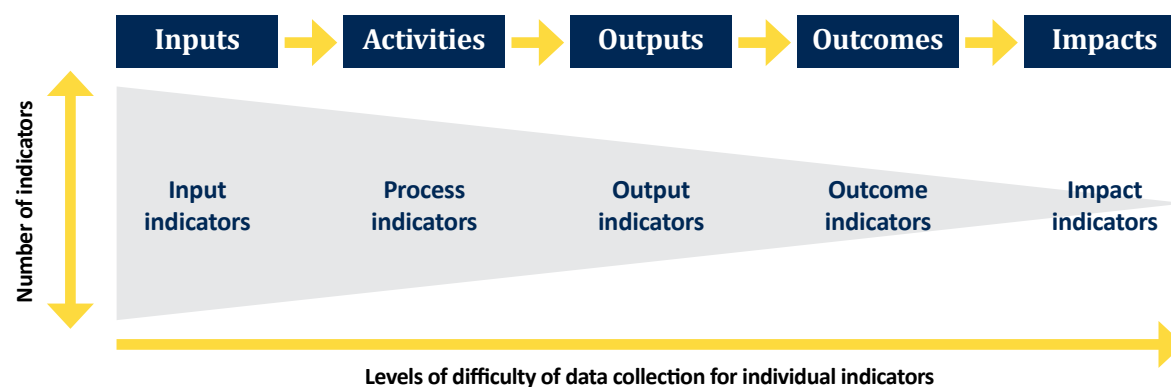


Figure 3: Indicators and programme/project logic (Course Reader page 32)



Lessons learned (and possible options for future action)

Working through a local institution with an established reputation such as UNZA brings benefits in terms of the course's appeal to prospective participants and long-term sustainability.

A well-designed course can tap into previously unmet demand, as exemplified by the rising interest in the course after each course edition; by growing interest among course participants in advanced M&E training (a demand which ZESSTA is seeking to meet); and interest in North-Western Province in utilising the course materials to deliver their own M&E training.

While the training programme has improved the competences of participants, it has also helped us see that it remains necessary to address the institutional challenges that prevent staff from implementing M&E as effectively as they would wish.

Spin-off benefits can derive from unlikely sources, which can be met with the flexibility of a programme like ZESSTA. It was not the intention that the Course Reader be published but, if this happens, it will be read by a far larger audience.

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Zambia adopts a new approach to strengthening school leadership

This is the fourth of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** The baseline study was essential in identifying the concerns of learners and highlighted the fact that teachers were unaware of these.
- 2** The identification of learners' concerns supported the development of tools to address them.
- 3** The engagement of MoGE staff at the school, district, provincial and HQ level in developing the Zambia Education Management Toolkits (ZEMT) has resulted in a strong writing team committed to national implementation and sustainability.

The challenge

The Ministry of General Education (MoGE) is implementing an ambitious and comprehensive programme to strengthen access to and quality of education. International research has highlighted the link between learner outcomes and the quality of institutional leadership and management of those schools. The challenge for MoGE is to provide cost effective and efficient support to all school managers to strengthen the leadership and management skills they require to lead change and improve the performance of learners.

The current approach to the professional development of school leaders is through a diploma programme funded by MoGE. No evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme has taken place but anecdotal evidence has found that it is useful for headteachers and of good quality. However, the programme provides a number of challenges for MoGE:

- It is expensive and can only be offered to a small number of headteachers each year
- It is residential and takes headteachers away from their school
- It is predominantly theoretical and assessed through examination
- It requires reflection on practice but not evidence of practice.

MoGE identified the need for a programme that could reach all headteachers and their senior management teams (SMTs), build collaborative management styles to enable widening participation and ownership of school plans and, as far as possible, use existing continuing professional development systems. It was also felt to be important that the programme would immediately address challenges in the management of key systems and the implementation of strategies to combat the weaknesses identified by learners, teachers and parents.

"This intervention has come at the right time as Lusaka Province is trying to find ways of improving learner performance in our schools. In 2016, the province did not perform well in the Grade 9 and 12 examinations and literacy levels are low among young learners; this very much points to the capacity of our leaders to manage their schools. The baseline study conducted with support from ZESSTA found low levels of understanding of learners' concerns among teachers and school managers. This situation cannot be allowed to continue. Implementation of the toolkits will address these challenges."

Former Lusaka Province PEO, Mr. Felix Ngoma, introducing the first toolkit at Lusaka Resource Centre, February 2017

The response

The Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) identified an innovative and cost-effective approach of providing school leaders with toolkits which give step-by-step guidance on implementing effective school management systems and strategies. A costed roadmap for the roll-out of three toolkits was also developed.



Mr Muyangwa Kamutumwa,
Director TESS

Process to develop the toolkits and support implementation

Step 1: Baseline study

A baseline study was carried out in 12 pilot schools in Lusaka and Central Provinces. These schools were selected to ensure a cross section of rural, peri-urban and urban schools. As part of the study, each group of learners, parents, and teachers were asked to use an innovative card game to identify areas which they were most concerned about in order to provide information to schools, zones and districts on the problems they need to address. The participants in the 'game' sorted the cards three times until they had identified which of the concerns were true for them and bothered them the most. Focus group discussions were also held with parents and teachers. While the baseline sample was small and therefore lessons learned cannot be generalised to all schools in Zambia, the information was critical in identifying topics for the toolkits being prepared for the three pilot districts concerned. The first toolkit was developed to support improvement in two areas which bothered learners most: learner behaviour and the condition of the toilets.

Step 2: Creating the toolkits

The topics for three toolkits were identified based on the findings of the baseline survey and perceptions of MoGE staff.

Each set of tools was developed in a workshop with writers drawn from school, district, provincial and HQ offices as well as partner organisations. Lesson learning and materials developed in other countries was used to enrich the development of the toolkits. A further meeting was held to review and validate materials.

Step 3: Orientation of school teams

A two-day meeting was held for headteachers, district and provincial officers who would lead the orientation of school teams from the pilot schools. Following this meeting, each District held a one-day orientation meeting with a school team comprised of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher or senior teacher, the school in-service coordinator and a community or PTA member. The school team were then tasked with implementing the toolkits in their school.

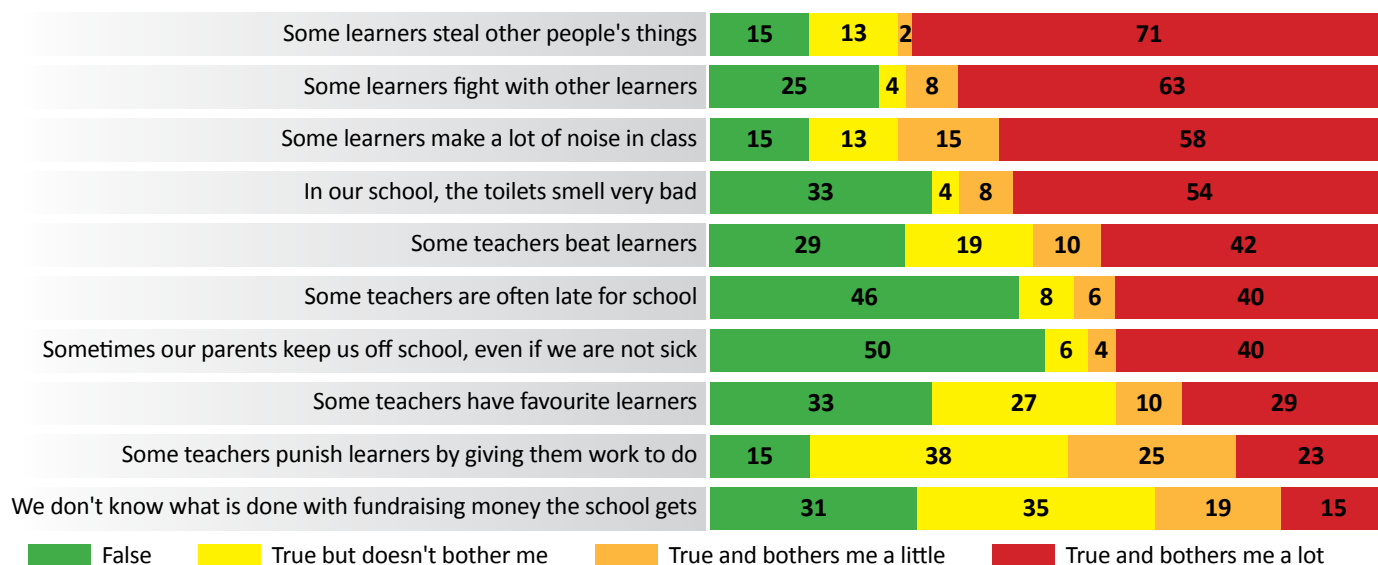
Step 4: Monitoring implementation in schools

Interviews and focus group discussions with members of the SMT, teachers and learners combined with observation of the school environment were used to identify the extent and success of implementation of the first toolkit in the pilot schools. This monitoring was carried out by officers from TESS and district and provincial offices as well as a ZESSTA adviser.

Step 5: Toolkit revised

The first toolkit has been revised by the writing team based on feedback from the monitoring.

Figure 1: Statements identified as 'true' by 50% or more of learners





Developing the second toolkit

The results

The interviews and focus group discussions revealed that schools are successfully implementing the first toolkit. The majority of schools had developed their school improvement plans and teachers had set individual targets as well. Almost all schools had started addressing learner concerns regarding poor learner behaviour and issues of hygiene and sanitation, and the school surroundings in all schools were clean. Two schools had not reached the same level of implementation because they had started the process late.

Toolkits and orientation

- All schools found the toolkit easy to understand.
- Over half the school team members felt that the one-day orientation was too short, some requested at least two days.
- All schools had oriented the teachers on the content of the first toolkit and how it should be implemented.
- Record management in some schools was found to be poor with school improvement plans (SIPs) and other records not stored for easy access. Some teachers indicated that although they had been told about the materials and had been involved in planning and implementation, they did not have access to the toolkit.

School improvement planning

- Nine out of eleven schools had started implementing their SIP at the time of monitoring. Two schools had begun the process of developing the SIP and had identified their priority areas.
- All schools developed their SIP with the participation of the teachers, parents and learners. As a result, school staff members felt that parental involvement in the school had improved and that parents were taking an active role in mobilising resources.

"The community and school are now working together and parents have since begun contributing to hygiene by donating soap for use after using the toilets and they bought handwashing buckets for the learners' toilets." (Senior teacher)

Positive learner behaviour

- Eight of the eleven schools had developed classroom rules with the learners and the rules were displayed on the classroom walls. Three schools reported that they had developed the rules and displayed them but had removed them for the exams.
- Learners felt that bullying, fighting and stealing had reduced.
- Most teachers reported that learner behaviour had improved as a result of making the rules together.

"Boys no longer fight like before since we wrote the rules with our teacher."

"Fighting in class and bullying has reduced."

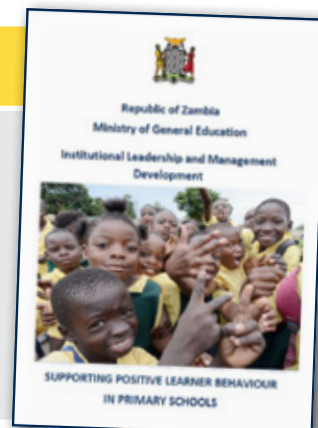
School health management

- All schools have put in place activities to ensure the learners have clean toilets; this includes employing staff to clean them and purchasing chlorine to disinfect them.
- Water buckets for handwashing and flushing toilets are visible near toilets in all schools without running water.
- All schools had clean surroundings and had bins to collect rubbish.
- Many learners still complain that their toilets smell because too many people use them.

"Since the introduction of ZEMT1 in school, the PTA has hired a worker to clean the toilet. As a result our toilets are now kept clean all the time." (School in-service coordinator)

Figure 2: The three toolkits

ZEMT 1	ZEMT 2	ZEMT 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School improvement planning • Supporting positive learner behaviour • School health management • Financial management guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School performance management • Managing curriculum change • Communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing professional development • Resource management • Stakeholder engagement



Lessons learned (and possible options for future action)

The baseline study was a critical stage of the toolkit development process as it enabled the toolkit designers to identify learners' greatest concerns and develop appropriate tools to address those concerns.

The baseline study challenged teachers', school managers' and MoGE staff's perceptions of their own understanding of learners' needs and concerns and has emphasised the importance of learner engagement in school planning and management activities.

The study also raised awareness among MoGE staff that learners have strong views on what bothers them and even the youngest can articulate concerns when supported to do so.

The collaborative process of ZEMT development has helped to ensure that the toolkits meet expectations at all levels of the education system from school to MoGE HQ.

Ideally, the baseline study should be repeated in any provinces and districts rolling out the toolkits, as an intervention that raises awareness of need as well as in order to be able to 'tweak' the toolkits to suit local circumstances.

Distribution of sufficient copies of the ZEMT to each school combined with open access to electronic copies for all school staff, university students, MoGE staff and other interested stakeholders will ensure continued use in future.

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Improving learning for all: Developing assessment policy and changing practice

This is the fifth of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** Involving stakeholders in developing national policy documents provides powerful leverage for change;
- 2** Assessment is not just about measuring outcomes, it is a tool for improving outcomes;
- 3** Learner outcomes are a product of the effective use of formative assessment information to continuously improve learning.

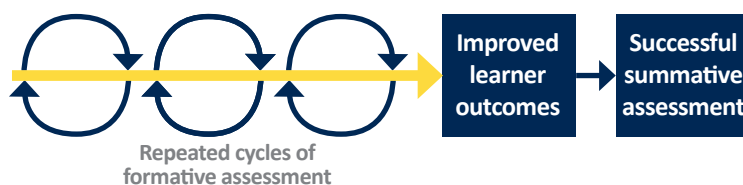
The challenge

At the heart of the challenge is how to ensure that the assessment system is fully exploited to promote learning and improve outcomes.

The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 (ZECF) is underpinned by two guiding principles: that the curriculum should be **learner-centred** and **outcome-based**. These two principles have far-reaching consequences for teaching and assessment.

In a learner-centred outcome-based system, teachers need to be proficient users of formative assessment (assessment for learning) so that they constantly gauge learners' understanding and tailor their teaching to ensure that barriers to learning are overcome. Thus, the effectiveness of assessment for learning (AfL) will require a successful paradigm shift away from the traditional teacher-centred approach common in Zambian schools.

Figure 1: Formative and summative assessment



An indicator of the degree of challenge involved in bringing about this change is the extent to which many practitioners regard assessment as synonymous with formal tests and examinations (assessment of learning/summative assessment). Discussions about assessment often ignore the importance of formative assessment and refer only to the skill of writing good questions for tests and examinations.

Another key practice that has a negative impact is the substantial amount of time that is spent revising for and sitting tests and exams; this is time that could be spent learning.

"Weighing the cattle doesn't make them any fatter."

This metaphor is appropriate for Zambia as cattle ownership plays an important role in the economy. The metaphor can also be applied to assessment to illustrate the problem of educational systems that have a heavy reliance on tests and examinations. Just as being in the fields eating grass fattens the cattle; it is regular nourishing feedback that leads to learning.

The response

Figure 2: Process used in Zambia to support the strengthening of assessment practice in schools



The Zambian Education Curriculum Framework (ZECF) set out what learning is expected to take place in schools in Zambia and the next step was to develop a framework that established how that learning should be assessed. The response of the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) was to request ZESSTA’s support to develop the National Learning Assessment Framework (NLAF). This national policy document was recognised as a means to ensure that the necessary change in assessment practice would be underpinned and accelerated by policy imperatives.

The first step in developing the NLAF was the production of a detailed background paper exploring assessment in relation to the Zambian context. This document highlighted the existing challenges and the need for change. A writing team for the NLAF was identified from MoGE Directorates, the Examinations Council of Zambia and the Zambia Qualifications Authority. The team produced a clear and comprehensive framework, using plain English and covering the whole spectrum of assessment from daily formative assessment in the classroom through national examinations to international tests.

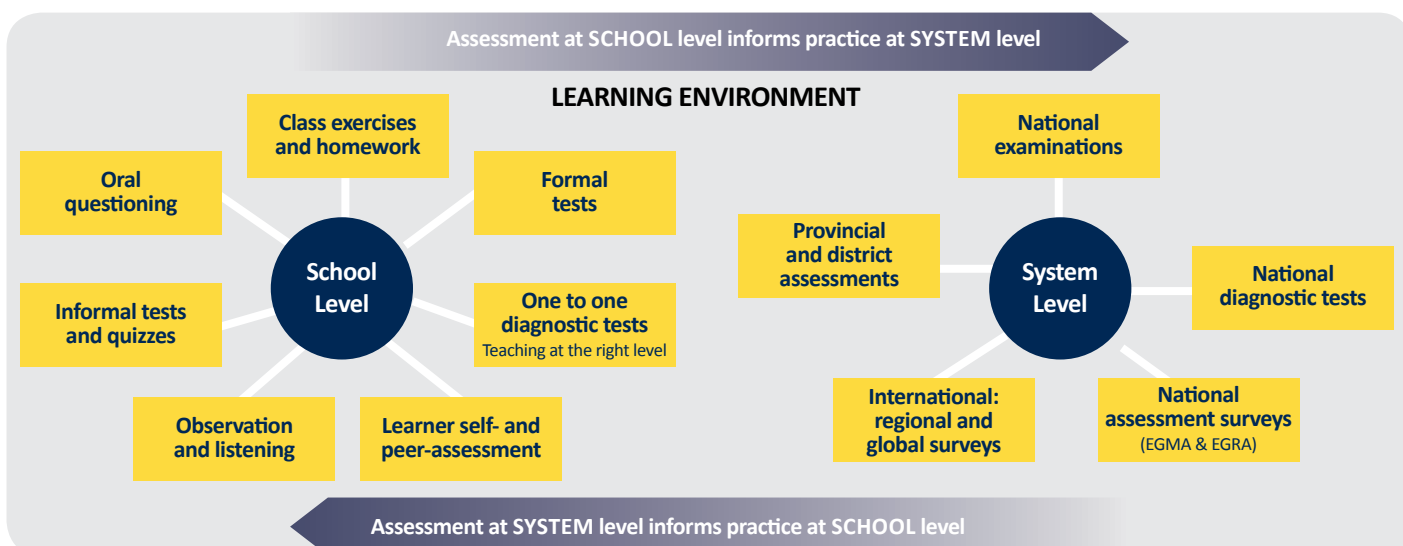
The effectiveness of the assessment framework depends on teachers having a good understanding of what is expected of them and being skilled in assessment techniques. Therefore, once the NLAF was approved, the next step was to ensure teachers were trained and capable of meeting these expectations.

A pre-service training module for assessment was developed by representatives from the colleges of education and universities responsible for teacher education, as well as MoGE officers from the Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) Directorate.

The pre-service module has been piloted in seven colleges and two universities and has now been redrafted taking account of meaningful feedback from teacher educators and trainee teachers. It has been approved for national roll-out by the Director TESS. The next steps are to develop an in-service programme for teachers and an implementation strategy for the NLAF to address all aspects of assessment at both the school and system levels. The overall aim of this strategy will be to ensure that all assessment serves the purpose of improving learning and raising standards achieved by Zambia’s learners.

Figure 3: All assessment should support teaching and learning and contribute to improved learner outcomes.

Assessment should not only be used within each school but should be used to inform strengthening of the whole education system. Similarly, the assessment data generated at system level should be used by teachers and administrators to improve practice at school level.



The results

The full impact of the NLAF will be felt only after several years when all teachers have had training in assessment and sufficient time and experience to develop their skills and confidence in the use of formative assessment techniques.

However, initial feedback from stakeholders to both the NLAF and the pre-service module has been strongly positive. During the development phase, one of the teacher educators said:

"This is just what our teachers need and the time is right."

This sentiment was endorsed by others involved in developing the module and by colleagues in colleges and universities who used the module during the piloting stage.

Both teacher educators and trainee teachers reported that they found the NLAF and pre-service module easy to follow and that the NLAF in particular is understandable to the general public as well as to education professionals. The fact that concepts are explained not only in text but are also clarified with simple, clear diagrams made the documents more easily understood by both tutors and trainees.

All serving teachers have already had some professional development in assessment for learning as part of the training on the use of the Teachers' Curriculum Implementation Guide. This was very well received around the country and one teacher commented:

"So this is what we should have been doing all along."

Similar reactions were reported by teacher educators and trainee teachers involved in the pilot of the pre-service module. The training was described as 'eye-opening' and colleagues from colleges and universities stressed that they themselves had learned a lot. They also reported that their trainee teachers had engaged in some deep and interesting debates and discussions.

"These (debates and discussions) had opened their minds and resulted in changes of mind-set with respect to the nature and importance of assessment and the role of the teacher."





"Teachers need data that gives them a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of each of their learners. This information enables teachers to provide learning activities that suit the needs of individuals and groups of learners. As a result, teachers are equipped to ensure that no-one is left behind, no-one is held back and all learners make progress at every stage of their education."

National Learning Assessment Framework

Lessons learned (and possible options for future action)

Teachers need adequate access to the key policy and guidance documents to support them to successfully implement assessment for learning.

Concepts that are explained not only in text but clarified with simple, clear diagrams make documents more easily understood.

Changes to assessment systems at national level are required in order to encourage teachers to adopt classroom approaches which provide learners with an appropriate balance of formative and summative assessment.

A close partnership between the various MoGE directorates and departments is essential if assessment data is to be processed and fully utilised to lead to improvement at all levels.

The engagement of all key stakeholders through the National Assessment Steering Committee (NASC) will enable relevant colleagues to work together in driving improvements in assessment.

Implementing partners need to be well informed and engaged in initiatives so that they can complement the effort required.

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Developing Teacher Performance through National Professional Standards

This is the sixth of six results papers documenting the experiences and lessons learned from the support provided to the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) by the Zambia Education Sector Support Technical Assistance (ZESSTA) Facility.

Key messages

- 1** The performance of teachers, head teachers and teacher educators is critical to learner success; the use of professional standards can improve professional performance.
- 2** Standards are statements that identify what an individual should 'know', 'know how to' and 'be able to do' to be competent in their role and thus support the assessment and development of performance at these different levels.
- 3** The development of national professional standards requires the input of a very wide range of stakeholders including, most importantly, the professionals themselves.
- 4** Careful consideration also needs to be given to how the professional standards are used to monitor and improve the performance of educators.

"One of the functions of the Teaching Council of Zambia is to develop, promote and uphold national professional standards for education professionals. It has been really important to work with our colleagues in the Ministry, in the Teaching Service Commission, with private education providers and with the teacher unions to develop a first draft of the standards which we can use as the basis of a broad national consultation exercise. ZESSTA support for this project has been invaluable"



Dr. E. Mubanga, Registrar, Teaching Council of Zambia

The challenge

In Zambia, there are many excellent teachers, teacher educators and head teachers. But there are also concerns about underperformance, especially in government schools, where leadership is sometimes weak, appraisal arrangements are uneven, staff development is unfocussed and poor behaviour and attendance is not properly addressed.

The Teaching Council of Zambia was established specifically to improve the professionalism and performance of teachers, teacher educators and headteachers across the country. The Council is required to register all educators and to renew their practicing certificates every three years to confirm that standards of behaviour and performance are acceptable.

The development of existing outline standards into a fully developed set of national professional standards for teachers was proposed at a joint meeting of ZESSTA, the Teaching Council and senior officers of the MoGE. There was agreement that a single standards framework, setting out what teachers should 'know', 'know how to' and 'be able to do', should underpin teacher education as well as teacher appointment and induction, performance appraisal, CPD and inspections, and should be the basis of the issue and renewal of practising certificates.

The need for more effective approaches to performance management of educators had already been identified by the Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) and activities to improve the performance and monitoring of teachers and school leaders were underway. The development of the standards provided a necessary and effective tool to improve this process.

The response

Led by MoGE, a Teacher Standards Steering Group (TSSG) was established to take forward the development of national professional standards. Its initial membership included all MoGE directors, senior representatives from the Teaching Council, the Teaching Service Commission, teacher unions and representatives from the private schools sector. The Permanent Secretary for General Education was nominated as chairperson of the TSSG given its wide remit and its importance.

At its first meeting in November 2016, the TSSG agreed a roadmap to develop national professional standards for teachers and extended the initiative to include standards for teacher educators and institutional leaders.

Following this, a workshop was held with a wider group of stakeholders to consider the value and use of common sets of standards, review examples of standards from other countries and agree the broad shape and scope of a set of standards for Zambian schools and colleges.

Following this workshop, a drafting team met in smaller working groups to develop the detailed wording of the standards. The standards framework was endorsed, with some useful modifications, by a further meeting of the larger stakeholder group.

The standards framework has six 'areas of practice' which capture the principle areas of responsibility of education professionals. Within each area of practice, a number of standards were described and, for each standard, descriptors were developed that would enable individuals to demonstrate that they met each of the standards, as shown in the extract from the teacher standards, below.

Figure 1: Extract from national standards for teachers

Areas of practice	Standards	Descriptors
2 TEACHING AND LEARNING Responsibility for applying subject and pedagogical expertise and using appropriate resources to ensure successful outcomes for learners	2.4 Teach differentiated content and apply strategies appropriate to characteristics, developmental stages, interests and needs of the learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use applicable learning theories for• understanding stages of learner development• understand content development for the grade level.• evaluate learners according to ability• be aware of different learning styles• appreciate learning difficulties and offer support• be aware of the social and economic diversity of learners• ensure teaching and learning strategies are non-discriminatory
	2.5 Develop and use relevant, sustainable and low-cost teaching and learning materials including ICT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the roles of teaching and learning materials in teaching and learning• possess knowledge and skills in translating curriculum content into appropriate teaching and learning material requirements• apply appropriate skills in the design and development of teaching and learning materials.• use a wide variety of pedagogical strategies (e.g. using ICT, social media, local materials, innovative and creative approaches)

Following the development of the draft standards, the TSSG decided that an extensive and thorough national consultation exercise would be critical for successful understanding and use of the standards. A meeting held by UNESCO led to the opportunity for this to be supported.

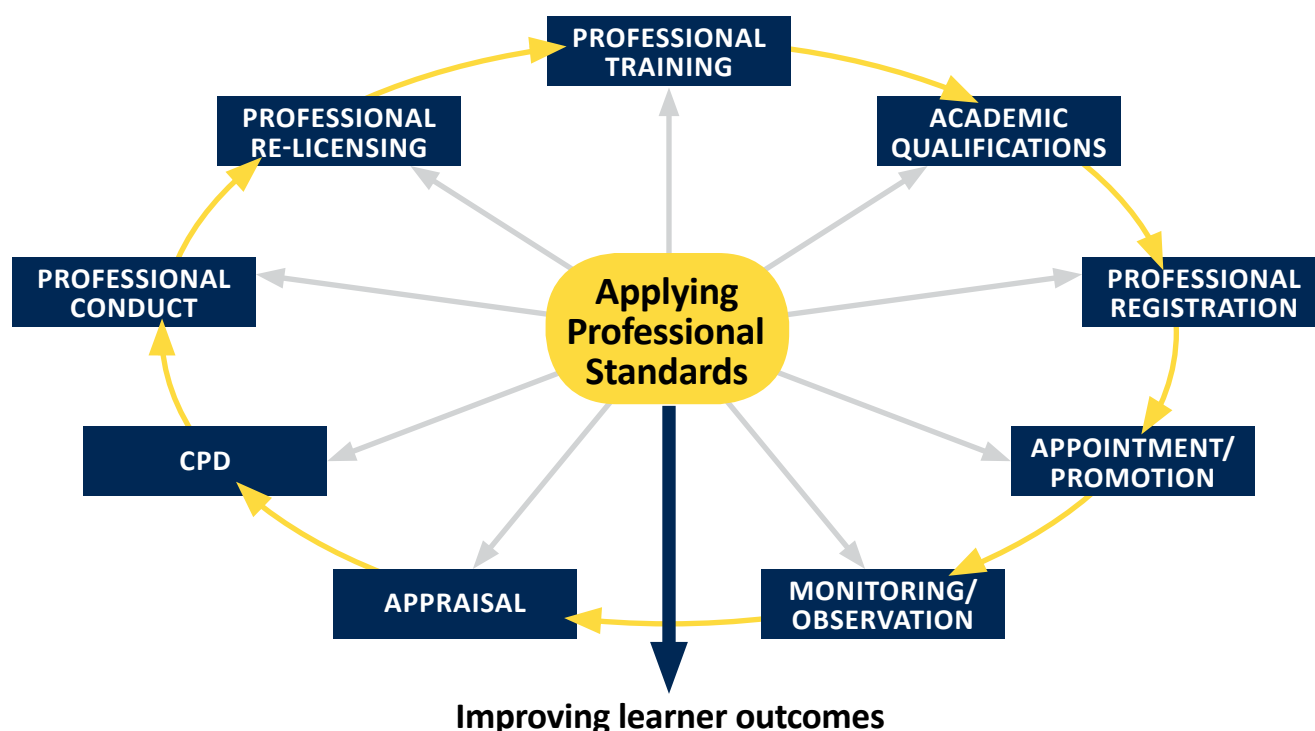
UNESCO is working across southern Africa to support the development of teacher standards. A standards conference organised by UNESCO and held in Lusaka provided an opportunity for Zambia's new draft standards to be successfully shared with other countries. UNESCO agreed to support the proposed national consultation exercise within Zambia and offered its support to align the emerging Zambian standards with a common standards framework for the SADC region.

The TSSG endorsed this approach and a technical committee, supported by UNESCO and ZESSTA, finalised the draft standards ready for national consultation.

This included differentiating the standards expected of education professionals who are newly appointed; at submission for renewal of the three practising certificates; and of 'distinguished' professionals performing at the highest levels.

The following diagram indicates where the standards might be used at various key points in the lifecycle of teachers, teacher educators and education leaders.

Figure 2: How the professional standards can be used at various stages of the lifecycle of teachers, teacher educators and education leaders.



The results

The involvement of ZESSTA provided a momentum for the development of a first draft of professional standards for teachers, teacher educators and education leaders in Zambia. ZESSTA has helped to provide a bridge between the Teaching Council and MoGE directorates and enabled those parties, and other stakeholders including the private sector, to develop a comprehensive set of standards.

Consultation with a range of stakeholders has found that the standards are clear and will enhance performance management. Discussions with UNESCO also confirm that the structure and content of the Zambian standards are broadly compatible with an emerging common model for countries across Southern Africa; this will help shared learning when the standards are implemented across neighbouring countries.

The different agencies involved in the development of the standards in Zambia, including the unions, the Teaching Service Commission, the Teaching Council and directorates within the Ministry of General Education, are already developing a common approach to how the standards will be used at the various stages of the teacher, teacher educator and education leader lifecycles. ZESSTA has worked with TESS and the Teaching Council to identify how portfolios of evidence could be maintained by headteachers to demonstrate

whether they are meeting the standards and how such portfolios could be used in the periodic renewal of practising certificates for head teachers. In their toolkits on performance management and continuous professional development, TESS has already incorporated how school leaders can use the forthcoming standards to monitor and improve the performance of teachers.

The planned national consultation exercise will stimulate interest in the standards and how they will be used, and will provide opportunities for questions to be answered and issues to be clarified before a final version of the standards is approved.

"I am positive that the portfolios we have developed will bring sanity in the teaching profession. I wish to thank the ZESSTA for supporting the Ministry to develop the portfolio as a way of monitoring the performance of our headteachers. This is a good move and I am sure that you shall see more well managed schools."

Workshop participant



"We don't want to create a shiny standards booklet that looks good on bookshelves. We want the standards to make a difference."

Workshop participant

Lessons learned (and possible options for future action)

The stakeholder workshops and the work of the technical committee confirmed the value of a way of working that had a large group consisting of a range of stakeholders setting out broad themes and giving direction; small drafting groups working together on the detailed wording; and then the larger group reviewing this work and making final adjustments.

While working on the detailed wording of the standards is important, it is equally important to have a clear plan of how the standards will be used through the teacher lifecycle to ensure that standards can drive quality improvement.

The standards and how they can be used must be the subject of extensive consultation, dissemination and training because of their significance in bringing about a step change in education performance.

The value of different ministries, government agencies and the private sector working together was clear.

National professional standards can be a driver of quality improvement across a number of dimensions.

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2014-2017

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