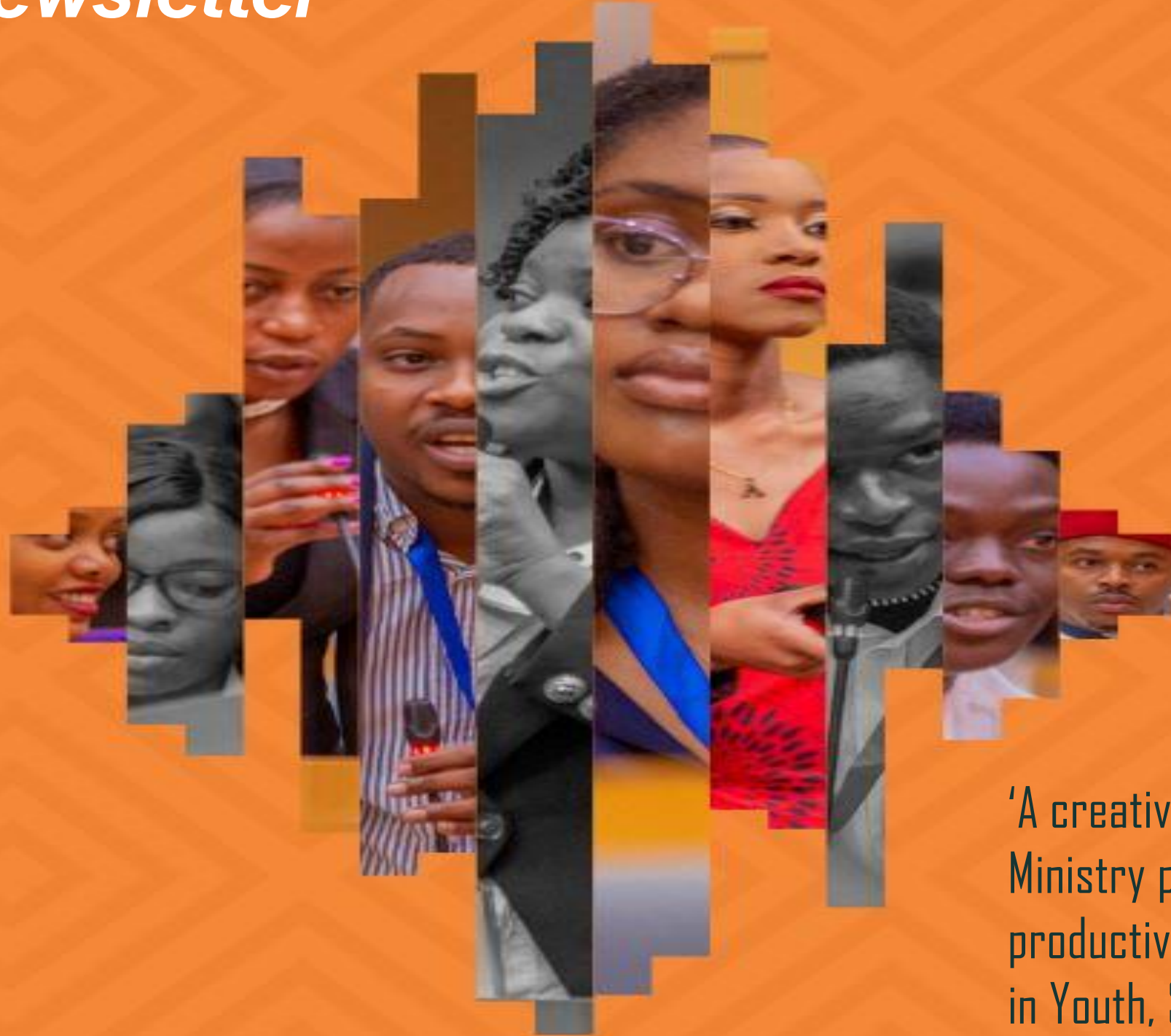


STATE OF THE YOUTH REPORT *Newsletter*



'A creative and innovative
Ministry promoting
productivity and excellence
in Youth, Sport and Arts'

2023



STATE OF THE YOUTH REPORT LAUNCHED



“However, let me also take this opportunity to challenge the youth of this country to make a difference by engaging in civil and viable activities that would add value to their wellbeing.”

President Hichilema added that government recognizes the importance of active youth participation in the democratic processes and by understanding the current state of civic engagement; ‘we can now implement initiatives that encourage and facilitate the meaningful involvement of our youth in decision-making processes that affect them.’

The State of the Youth Report highlights opportunities, challenges and interventions aimed at addressing issues affecting the youth and, what interventions can be enhanced in order to improve youth access to employment and empowerment programmes.

The Report is available for your reading in soft copy and will be uploaded on the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts official website, link below

www.mysa.gov.zm



The State of the Youth Report Launched as President HH says youths need more decision making positions

Republican President Hakainde Hichilema says more youths need to be put in key decision making positions as opposed to the current situation.

And President Hichilema says civic engagement among young people is also one of the key areas of concern that The State of Youth Report highlighted.

In a speech read on his behalf by Minister of Youth, Sport and Arts Hon. Elvis Nkandu, MP, President Hichilema challenged the Youth to engage in activities that will add value to their wellbeing.

“As government, we recognise that youth representation in key positions of decision making have been limited and we are willing to address this by allowing the young people take up more responsible positions,” he said.

FOREWORD



The Government of the Republic of Zambia, through the Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Arts (MYSA), in collaboration with other line Ministries and with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is pleased to release the country's State of the Youth Report. This report presents opportunities and challenges faced by youth and makes recommendations that government and its stakeholders should undertake to harness youth's creative potential to improve the youth's wellbeing and contribute to the country's economic progress. Anchored on the principles of human rights, gender equality and equity, and inclusive sustainable development, the report highlights the state of education, employment, livelihood, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, financial inclusion, disability, and programs implemented by government and stakeholder to improve youth's wellbeing.

Given that youth are an invaluable resource, which, if well managed, have the potential to contribute to national transformation. It is imperative from time to time to assess how the economic and development policies are impacting on youth and the progress government is making to enshrine young people's contributions and commitment to inclusive and sustainable development. It is my expectation and that of all stakeholders that you will find the report's contents a useful resource in your respective organisations. The report makes recommendations on what ought to be done not only to reduce poverty in the country but also to enhance youth's skills that are necessary for industrialization, job creation, and for evolving a healthy and productive citizenry.

Lastly but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to all youth, key informants in various government line ministries, and all stakeholders that took time to actively participate in providing the necessary information for the report.

Mr. Elvis Chishala Nkandu, MP

HON. MINISTER OF YOUTH, SPORT AND ARTS



Process.

The process leading to the production of the 2023 *State of the Youth Report* was inspired by the need to align the Ministry's programmes with the current situation that youth face. Only when a problem is well understood can policies and programmes be tailored to address such a problem effectively and efficiently. Young people who constitute 26.4 % of the Zambian population are a valuable human asset that if well leveraged can significantly contribute to achieving Zambia's 2030 vision of a middle-income country.

I am, therefore, grateful to have the honor and privilege to convey my gratitude to the individuals and organisations that participated in consulting, researching and documenting the findings that have been included in this report. Your contributions are highly appreciated.

Special thanks go to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the financial support rendered to the Ministry to supplement Government efforts. My gratitude would be incomplete if I do not recognise the critical role that line Ministries and various government departments played during the consultation process. Thank you for the valuable contribution without which this report would not have been possible.

*Kangwa Chileshe (Mr.)
Permanent Secretary – (Youth & Sport)*





Two Records broken:

Africa's Strongest Woman Cherry Muchindu has broken two Records at the just ended Africa's Strongest Man and Woman 2023 Championship held in Livingstone.

She beat the 250 KG record for Southern Africa by lifting 260 Kilo Grams and went further to break her record by lifting a whopping 270 Kilo Grams.

She however failed to beat her new record when she attempted to lift 280 kilograms.

Congratulations Cherry.

Employed Population: is the number of people who have a paid job either in cash, in kind or both; are in self-employment or are in contributing family work (either currently at work or not). Workers who have a paid job and are on leave, as well as those in self-employment but are absent from work during the reference period due to various reasons such as inadequate raw materials, labour dispute, absence of business opportunities, etc., are considered employed.

Entrepreneurship: is a process of an individual setting up a business where they will apply their skills to generate financial resources.

Incubation Hub: is a collaborative and entrepreneurial facility that supports the development of ideas from basic concepts, into viable business ventures. It is specifically designed to foster entrepreneurship and small business development during the critical start-up phase.

Labour Force Participation Rate: is a ratio of the labour force to the working-age population expressed as a percentage. It measures the country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for and available for work relative to the population of the working-age.

Labour Force: is the population of working-age who are either employed or unemployed at a given point in time.

Population: is the total number of persons of both sexes 0 years of age or older in a given territory/state at a specified point in time.

Sexual and Reproductive Health: is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system. It implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so

Unemployed Population: refers to all people in the labour force who are completely jobless and are available and actively looking for work during a given reference period. Unemployment rate: is the ratio of the unemployed population to the total population in the labour force expressed as a percentage.





PICTURE FOCUS:

RACHEAL KUNDANANJI BAGS REVELATION AWARD IN THE SPANISH LIGA F CHAMPIONSHIP

Copper Queen's prolific striker Rachael Kundananji is making strides on the international turf, she got awarded with the Revelation Award (Breakthrough Player) of the season at the MARCA Women's Sports Awards.

Kundananji made an impressive mark when she scored 25 goals for Madrid CFF in the 2022/2023 season.

She was the second-highest scorer behind Alba Redondo from Levante who had 27 goals.

Keep Soaring Copper Queen!

Working-Age Population: is the number of population above a specified minimum age in a given territory/state at a specified point in time. In Zambia, the minimum age for working-age population is set at 15 years.

Youth: Zambia's Constitution in Article 266 defines youth as "a person who has attained the age of nineteen years, but is below the age of thirty-five years." However, in this report, we adopt the definition of the African Union, to which Zambia is a member state, which defines youth as "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years" as stipulated in the African Youth Charter. Zambia has a youthful population with youth constituting a third (35%) of the total population in Zambia. Youth are a critical mass, when their skills are harnessed and their potential maximised, they are the engine that can drive Zambia's sustainable economic and human development.

Youth Empowerment: is a process where young people gain the ability and authority to make informed decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people. It is a means of encouraging youth to do great things for themselves and to make great impact in their society.

Youth Involvement and Participation: Youth participation in creating youth programmes necessary for them to become active citizens and work along with stakeholders involved in their development.

Youth Resource Centre: is a centre designed to address the holistic needs of the youth in a participatory way to gain relevant skills.

Youth Unemployment Rate: is the number of unemployed youth aged 15 to 35 years expressed as a percentage of the youth labour force.

Youth unemployment: is the proportion of unemployed youth aged 15 to 35 years in the labour force who are without work but available and seeking employment.





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Executive summary



Zambia's Constitution in Article 266 defines youth as "a person who has attained the age of nineteen years, but is below the age of thirty-five years." However, in this report, we adopt the definition of the African Union, to which Zambia is a member state, which defines youth as "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years" as stipulated in the African Youth Charter. Zambia has a youthful population with youth constituting a third (35%) of the total population in Zambia. Youth are a critical mass, when their skills are harnessed and their potential maximised, they are the engine that can drive Zambia's sustainable economic and human development. The Government of the republic of Zambia has taken seriously the role youth can play in national development and has developed programmes to ensure youth's wellbeing and their participation in their own personal and

national development. These include the Youth Policy which cultivates an enabling environment for youth's participation in development, through education, health, and creative industry, with sustained focus on the environment, gender, HIV, and volunteerism; the Education Act that guarantees access to education for all and youth's development; the Employment Act that provides a right to employment, and the Employment of the Young Person's Act that prohibits hazardous work for youth; the Adolescent Health Strategy which ensures a health care system that is responsive and friendly to youth; and the Citizenship empowerment programs which provide financial resources to youth for initiating businesses and other entrepreneurship activities. This report highlights the state of the youth in Zambia. It shows that the state of the youth is concerning in many areas particularly in SRHR, employment, poverty, and participation in governance. The information presented in the report was collected through an extensive literature review, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with youth.



The results are as follows:

Education: Zambia has made progress in ensuring that its youth are educated. Recently government introduced free education from grades one to 12. Zambia has achieved universal primary education with the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) and Net Enrollment rate at 96.6% and 81.8% respectively. However, transitioning from primary school to secondary school remains low at only 53% and completion rate for grade 12 is at 32%. The great majority of youth are not completing their grade 12 they are dropping off along the way. The transition rate from primary to secondary is limited largely because there are more primary schools (9,441) than there are secondary schools (1,290). Also, there are poor educational outcomes. Many learners (69.0%) in grade 2, where a child is expected to know how to read, are unable to read, which makes their education in later grades difficult. There is a need to ensure that education is of high quality and that there are spaces for all.

Livelihood, employment, and poverty: Close to half (48.7%) of Zambia's youth are poor. Youth living in rural areas and female youth experience more poverty than their urban and male counterparts. Poverty is high among youth partly because they are unemployed and those employed are in less gainful jobs. The unemployment rate among youth is 17%, higher than the national average of 12%. Those in employment, the largest proportion (70%) are in the informal sector 43% and household sectors (27%) verses only 30% in the formal sector. In the informal sector wages are low and there is no job security. Zambia has approximately 6,531,816 youth, out of these more than half (3,355,155 or 51%) are not in employment or education and training (NEET) while only 48.6% are outside NEET – meaning they are in employment or education and training. Those youth in NEET are generally dependent on others. There is a need to create more jobs and increase opportunities for youth to develop businesses to escape poverty and contribute to national development

Democracy and Governance: participation in democracy and governance is critical because it enables representation and decision making on issues that matter for youth. Youth actively participate in the democratic process, particularly in the voting process. However, they are absent on the decision-making table. Of the 150 MPs only 6 (4%) are youth out of which only one is female. The average age of MPs is 49.2 years. The constitution limits the age of a person to be president to 35 years (just a year of being youth). Nomination fees to be elected for political positions are high which discourage youth to participate. The president has all the power to appoint cabinet with no requirement for him or her to appoint youth. There is a need to find a mechanism to ensure that youth sit at the decision-making table so that policy is made by youth on matters that concern them.



Being physically active throughout the life course helps **prevent and manage noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)** such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and many types of cancers.



Physical Activity

#LetsBeActive

Sexual and reproductive health and rights among youth: HIV prevalence remains high with no change between Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) of 2018 and the 2021 ZAMPHIA survey. It has remained around 11% in the adult population. Among youth HIV affects more women than men. Among females it increases progressively from 1.9% among 15–19-year-olds to 19.4% among 30–34-year-olds while among men it rises from 2.0% to 7.0% in the same age groups. Although contraceptive knowledge is universal (99%), access and use remain limited among youth. Unmet need for family planning is high at 21.5%. Adolescent pregnancies (29% of adolescents have begun childbearing) and child marriage (14% of females are married) remain high and are depriving adolescents an opportunity to enjoy their youth. Gender based violence is persistent. Among youth, experience of physical violence rises from 20.9% among 15–19-year-olds to 40.1% among those that are 25-29 years old. There is a need for government to accelerate its efforts in ensuring that SRHR for youth are respected, protected and fulfilled to ensure their wellbeing.

Mental health: Mental health which is a broader health challenge that encompasses anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, eating disorders, disruptive behaviour, dissocial disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism have been overlooked in Zambia. A study, using attempting to commit suicide as a proxy indicator for mental health challenges, established that 7.8% among people aged 18 years and above considered attempting suicide. Youth, 18-29 accounted for the largest proportion of those who had considered attempting suicide at 8.6%. Generally, women were more likely to have considered suicide (10.4%) than males (5.2%). The younger females (18-29) had a higher proportion (10.8%) of all those who considered suicide compared to 6.4% of their male counterparts. There are limited mental health services in Zambia with the country having only one full-fledged mental health hospital and psychiatric departments in only seven general hospitals across the country. There is a need to improve mental health services to attend to the mental health needs of Zambia's youth.

Information, Communication, and technology: Zambia has rolled out cellular network covering 69.9% of the country with 97.2% of the population residing where there is network. Of the active mobile phone users over half (55.5%) are youth. Youth are also the highest user of the internet at 69.8% of those who actively use the internet on regular basis. This is an important opportunity that government should continue to explore on how to enhance ICT based jobs and businesses. The key challenge however is that ICT is dependent on electricity to charge batteries and run the systems. Access to electricity in Zambia remains low at only 32.9% of households being connected to a power utility company. There is a need to continue expanding the mobile and internet work, at the same time increasing access to power through the national grid as well as alternative energy sources such as cheaper solar products

