



LGAZ NEWSLETTER

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PROJECT ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

*Strengthening Local Leadership, Advancing Adolescent
Health, and Driving Sustainable Development*



“The national voice for Local Government”

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BUILDING A PIPELINE OF WOMEN LEADERS: CAPACITY BUILDING, MENTORSHIP AND ASPIRATION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By LGAZ Staff



Women's leadership in local governance continues to gain momentum across Zambia as the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), through the Partnerships for Municipal Innovation-Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL) Project, intensifies efforts to prepare women to participate meaningfully in elective leadership. During the period under review, LGAZ implemented a series of interlinked capacity-building and mentorship activities in Copperbelt, Eastern and North-Western Provinces, targeting both sitting councillors and aspiring candidates ahead of the 2026 Local Government Elections.

A training workshop held in Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, brought together 50 women drawn from different local authorities, including sitting councillors and first-time aspirants. Facilitated by a local consultant and political science lecturer, the workshop focused on strengthening participants' understanding of the local government system, leadership skills, campaign positioning, public engagement, and personal branding for political leadership.

The workshop officially commenced on Wednesday, 10th September 2025, and was opened by Councillor Annie Kapandula,

Chairperson of the LGAZ Local Government Gender Equality Committee and Council Chairperson for Lufwanyama District. In her opening remarks, Councillor Kapandula shared her personal leadership journey, encouraging participants to remain steadfast despite the structural and socio-cultural barriers women often face in politics. She emphasised that resilience, preparation, and confidence are key attributes for women seeking to lead at community level.

A similar capacity-building initiative was simultaneously rolled out in Chipata, Eastern Province, where 45 women aspirants from various districts convened for an intensive leadership and governance workshop. Participants expressed interest in contesting positions as Councillors, Mayors, and Council Chairpersons.

The Chipata workshop was officially opened by His Worship the Mayor of Chipata, Councillor George Mwanza, in the presence of His Worship Councillor Maxon Nkhoma, LGAZ Vice President for Eastern Province and Council Chairperson for Chipangali District. In his keynote address, Councillor Mwanza urged participants to lead with purpose and

integrity, stating, “You must know and own your message. Let your campaigns be driven by a passion to serve the people and not personal gain.”

Councillor Nkhoma echoed these sentiments, encouraging the women to remain grounded in community service. “You are not just aspiring to hold positions; you are aspiring to make a difference. Leadership is about listening, learning, and leading with integrity,” he said.

Across both workshops, participants underwent training in campaign strategies, governance processes, public speaking, community mobilisation, and ethical leadership. These interventions are part of LGAZ’s broader strategy under PMI-WILL, funded by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) with support from the Government of Canada, to enhance women’s representation and participation in local governance.

To consolidate the gains from these trainings, LGAZ convened an introductory mentorship meeting in Solwezi, North-Western Province, targeting women who had previously participated in PMI-WILL leadership trainings and had declared interest in contesting in the 2026 elections. The meeting created a platform for peer learning, mentorship, and sustained engagement with women aspirants as they transition from training to active political participation.

The mentorship meeting was officially opened by His Worship the Mayor of Solwezi, Councillor Remmy Kalepa, who commended the women for stepping forward and taking leadership responsibility. He was joined by His Worship the Mayor of Kabwe, Councillor Patrick Chishala,

who encouraged participants to remain resilient, noting that “the country needs the voice of women in decision-making.”

On the second day, the meeting was graced by Ms. Mainga Kabika, Permanent Secretary – Gender Division, who reaffirmed Government’s commitment to supporting women in political leadership. She highlighted policy and legal measures aimed at creating a safer political environment for women, including frameworks to address political violence, the Cyber Security Law to curb online harassment, and upcoming leadership strengthening programmes.

Through these integrated training and mentorship efforts, LGAZ continues to demonstrate its commitment to nurturing a strong pipeline of capable, confident, and community-driven women leaders under the PMI-WILL Project.

and markets, while small and medium enterprises, cooperatives, and franchise companies were subcontracted to service residential areas. With 32 wards and 74 service zones, efficiency was assessed monthly by analysing subscriptions, waste volumes, illegal dumpsites, sensitization, and enforcement.

The key activities undertaken included systematic data collection from service providers, monitoring of illegal dumpsites, waste collection, transportation and disposal, community engagement to gather feedback, and dissemination of public information. Having demonstrated clear benefits in the Public Health Department, the Council was now working to scale up the dashboard to other departments such as Housing, Social Services, and Development Planning.



Solwezi Mayor Cllr. Remmy Kalepa, Kabwe Mayor Cllr. Patrick Chishala and LGAZ Executive Director pose for a group photo with participants after a training in Solwezi





L-R: LGAZ Vice President for Eastern Province, Councillor Maxon Nkhoma, LGAZ President, Councillor Vincent Lilanda, High Commissioner of Canada to Zambia and Tanzania Ms. Emily Burns, Chipata Mayor, Councillor George Mwanza and LGAZ Executive Director, Ms. Mpatanji Namumba making their way to the event

LGAZ AND CANADA FUND FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES EMPOWER WOMEN LEADERS THROUGH MICRO-PROJECTS

By LGAZ Staff

The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) has announced the successful applicants under the Strengthening Women's Leadership in Local Governance Project, a K1.5 million initiative supported by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). The announcement was made on Friday, 26th September 2025, during an event held at Protea Hotel in Chipata.

The event was graced by Honourable Reuben Mtolo Phiri, MP, Minister of Agriculture, and attended by Her Excellency Ms. Emily Burns, High Commissioner of Canada to Zambia and Tanzania; Chipata Mayor, Councillor George Mwanza; LGAZ President, Councillor Vincent Lilanda; LGAZ Vice President for Eastern Province, Councillor Maxon Nkhoma; LGAZ Executive Director, Ms. Mpatanji Namumba; and NGOCC Executive Director, Ms. Anne Mbewe-Anamela, among other distinguished

guests.

In his remarks, LGAZ President Councillor Vincent Lilanda stated that the initiative is designed to empower women leaders and aspiring candidates ahead of the 2026 local government elections through small but high-impact micro-projects. The projects will provide technical and financial support to women Mayors, Council Chairpersons, Councillors, and aspiring leaders to address issues of gender equality, social inclusion, climate action, human dignity, and the prevention of gender-based violence.

He noted that the initiative complements the ongoing six-year PMI-WILL Project, implemented in partnership with FCM, and expressed gratitude to the Government of Canada for its continued support towards advancing inclusive governance.



NGOCC Executive Director Ms. Anne Mbewe-Anamela highlighted NGOCC's four-decade commitment to women's empowerment and unveiled the Her Time Is Now campaign, aimed at nurturing a new generation of female political candidates in nine districts. She further announced the launch of an online donation platform to support women candidates, citing campaign financing as a major barrier to women's participation in politics.

In her remarks, High Commissioner Emily Burns reaffirmed Canada's commitment to gender equality and inclusive governance. She cited achievements under PMI-WILL, including 881 women registered for leadership training, 568 trained to run for office, and 190 women mentored across four provinces, with more than 60 currently undergoing mentorship in Chipata. She emphasised the need for systemic change, noting that gender quotas could play a transformative role if effectively implemented.

The ten successful CFLI micro-project recipients were announced during the event, representing all provinces of Zambia, and their initiatives span political leadership,

entrepreneurship, water and sanitation, GBV response, and access to social services. The following were the awardees:

1. **Esnai Ngala** – Mumbwa (Central Province)
2. **Charity Chinjeli** – Chikankata (Southern Province)
3. **Regina Mulenga** – Mungwi (Northern Province)
4. **Gift Chola Nachizya** – Nakonde (Muchinga Province)
5. **Inonge Mubika** – Shangombo (Western Province)
6. **Rachael Lupiya** – Lusaka (Lusaka Province)
7. **Canner Ndongo** – Mufulira (Copperbelt Province)
8. **Doris Ding'ombi** – Manyinga (North-Western Province)
9. **Faith Nawa Nasilele** – Mansa (Luapula Province)
10. **Annie Malumbe Njobvu** – Lusangazi (Eastern Province)

TRADITIONAL LEADERS ACROSS PROVINCES CHAMPION WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

By LGAZ Staff



Traditional leaders in Eastern Province pose for a photo after the workshop

Traditional leaders across Eastern, North-Western, Central and Copperbelt Provinces have pledged to support women's participation in local governance following a series of engagements convened by LGAZ under the PMI-WILL Project. The engagements mark a significant step in strengthening collaboration between local government and traditional leadership structures in advancing gender equality at the grassroots level.

In Eastern Province, traditional leaders met at Protea Hotel in Chipata on 26th September 2025, where LGAZ President, Councillor Vincent Lilanda, highlighted the urgency of addressing women's underrepresentation in local government, currently standing at 7.9 percent of all elective positions nationwide. He called on chiefs to act as allies in transforming community norms and promoting inclusive leadership.

Speaking on behalf of the chiefs, His Royal Highness Chief Mnu kwa of Chipangali District emphasised that meaningful development cannot be achieved when women are excluded from leadership. He urged chiefs to champion girl-child education, oppose early marriages and gender-based violence, and actively support women aspiring for public office.

A similar engagement was held in Solwezi, North-Western Province, on 13th September 2025, bringing together several distinguished royal highnesses, including Senior Chief Mujimanzovu of Mushindamo, Senior Chief Ndungu and Senior Chief Ishindi of Zambezi, Senior Chief Museli and Chief Mumena of Kalumbila, Senior Chief Sailunga of Mwinilunga, a representative of Senior Chief Kalilele and Chieftainess Chikola of Mushindamo, as well as a representative of Senior Chief Sikufele of Manyinga. LGAZ Vice President for North-Western Province, Councillor Presley Makayi,

described the meeting as a milestone and appealed to traditional leaders to help dismantle cultural barriers that hinder women's political participation.

The chiefs resolved to support community sensitisation, advocate for reforms that enhance women's participation, engage political parties to adopt more female candidates, and encourage positive media coverage of women's leadership.

In Copperbelt Province, traditional leaders convened in Ndola under the leadership of LGAZ Vice President for Copperbelt Province and Chingola Mayor, Councillor Johnson Kang'ombe. The engagement brought together Senior Chief Chiwala and Chief Nkambo of Masaiti, Senior Chief Ndubeni, Chief Machiya, Chief Kalunkumya, Chief Mwinuna, and Chieftainess Malembeka of Mpongwe, as well as Chieftainess Shimukunami, Chief Lumpuma, and Chief Mukutuma of Lufwanyama.

The leaders committed to intensifying sensitisation within their chiefdoms, promoting girls' education, engaging political parties, and working with the media to amplify women's leadership stories.

Across all provinces, the engagements reinforced the critical role of traditional leaders as custodians of culture and change agents in advancing inclusive and gender-responsive local governance.



Copperbelt traditional leaders pose for a photo after the workshop



North-western traditional leaders pose for a photo after the workshop

LGAZ STRENGTHENS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AT THE 2025 ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES CONVENTION

LGAZ participated in the 2025 Convention of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) held from 25th to 27th November 2025 in Winnipeg, Canada, under the theme Leadership in Motion. The Association was represented by a five-member delegation led by LGAZ President, Councillor Vincent Lilanda, under the PMI-WILL Project.

The convention provided a platform for peer learning and knowledge exchange, with key lessons emerging on cooperative governance between central and local governments, the importance of predictable municipal financing, leveraging technology for efficiency, and building strategic partnerships with the private sector.

The delegation also participated in sessions on women's leadership and local economic planning, gaining insights relevant to Zambia's local authorities as they work to expand own-source revenue and strengthen inclusive service delivery.

Prior to the convention, LGAZ engaged in a knowledge exchange on revenue enhancement, female representation, and advocacy strategies. The delegation further paid a courtesy call on the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg, His Worship Scott Gillingham, who commended FCM for facilitating international peer learning and collaboration.

The engagement reaffirmed LGAZ's commitment to strengthening institutional capacity, advancing women's leadership, and leveraging global partnerships to improve local governance outcomes in Zambia.



LGAZ team, led by LGAZ President Cll. Vincent Lilanda pose for a photo with Mayor of the City of Winnipeg, His Worship Scott Gillingham (on his left) and AMM Executive Director Denys Volkov (on his right)

LGAZ KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS UNDER PMI-WILL: ADVANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

By LGAZ Staff

The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) has developed two key Knowledge Products aimed at strengthening the capacity of women elected leaders and enhancing inclusive, accountable local governance across the country.

The first product, the Electoral Guide for Women Potential Leaders, provides practical guidance and user-friendly resources to support women aspiring for leadership in local government. The guide equips potential candidates with essential information on the electoral process, leadership preparation, campaigning strategies, and navigating competitive political environments. It is intended to increase women's confidence, readiness, and participation in local government elections.

The second product, the Community Score Card, is a participatory social accountability tool designed to empower communities to evaluate, monitor, and improve municipal service delivery. By creating structured spaces for dialogue between communities and local authorities, the tool promotes transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness to the diverse needs of citizens, including women, youth, and other marginalised groups.

Together, these knowledge products contribute to building institutional capacity within local authorities while strengthening citizen engagement and gender-responsive governance at the local level. They also align with broader national and global commitments to gender equality, inclusive leadership, and effective decentralisation.

The knowledge products were developed under the Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL) Project, with financial support from the Government of Canada, reaffirming the project's commitment to advancing women's leadership and strengthening democratic local governance in Zambia.

Follow the link below to view the knowledge products:

www.lgazambia.org.zm/hub/resources/guidelines-on-how-to-work-with-a-community-score-card-for-local-authorities

www.lgazambia.org.zm/hub/resources/an-election-guide-for-women-potential-leaders

RAPHIZ PROJECT ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

LOCAL LEADERS STEP UP THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV AND ADOLESCENT PREGNANCIES IN KATETE AND MONZE

By LGAZ Staff

Momentum is steadily building across Eastern and Southern Provinces as local leaders intensify efforts to protect adolescents from HIV, early pregnancies, and gender-based violence under the Reducing Adolescent Pregnancies and New HIV Infections in Zambia (RAPHIZ) Project.

Community dialogue meetings held in Katete District from 2–3 October 2025 and Monze District from 6–7 October 2025 brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including traditional leaders, Councillors, religious leaders, devolved government departments, District HIV and AIDS Committee (DHAC) members, and adolescents. The dialogues provided a safe and inclusive platform for open discussion on the drivers of adolescent vulnerability and the urgent need for collective, community-led action.

The engagements were spearheaded by UNAIDS, in collaboration with the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) and the National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council (NAC). Through facilitated dialogue, participants confronted deep-rooted social norms and structural barriers that continue to limit adolescents' access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), HIV prevention services, and protection from gender-based violence (GBV).

With Zambia's HIV prevalence estimated at 9.8 percent among adults aged 15–49, and rural districts such as Katete and Monze recording rising cases of adolescent pregnancies and new HIV infections, the dialogues underscored the urgency of localized responses anchored in leadership accountability and community ownership.

Traditional, religious, and civic leaders reaffirmed their role as custodians of community

values and protectors of young people. Beyond identifying challenges, the sessions culminated in the development of locally grounded action points aimed at strengthening adolescent-friendly services, improving access to information, and promoting protective social norms. As the RAPHIZ initiative continues to gain traction, the dialogues affirmed a powerful message: when communities lead, change is sustainable and lasting.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ACTION AND DATA SYSTEMS: RAPHIZ DIALOGUES AND NACMIS REFRESHER TRAININGS IN KATETE AND MONZE

By LGAZ Staff

In a complementary effort to strengthen Zambia's decentralized HIV response, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), through AMICAALL, in collaboration with NAC and with support from UNAIDS, conducted integrated community dialogues and National HIV and AIDS Council Management Information System (NACMIS) refresher trainings in Monze and Katete Districts under the RAPHIZ Project.

Community Dialogue Meetings

The community dialogues, conducted in Katete (2–3 October 2025) and Monze (6–7 October 2025), aimed to identify and address social, behavioural, and structural factors contributing to HIV infections, teenage pregnancies, and GBV among adolescents. Participants included Council Chairpersons, Councillors, chiefs, religious leaders, youth representatives, council officers, DHAC members, and representatives from government departments and civil society organisations.

The discussions highlighted several interlinked drivers of adolescent vulnerability, including unprotected sexual activity, limited access to SRHR information, poverty, peer pressure, weak parental guidance, alcohol and substance abuse, harmful cultural practices, misuse of social media, and limited awareness of available support mechanisms such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). Participants also noted gaps in psychosocial support services, youth-friendly spaces, and recreational facilities.

Special attention was given to sexual and gender-based violence, with the Victim Support Unit (VSU) outlining key contributing factors such as jealousy, cruelty, poor communication between partners, cultural beliefs, and technology-facilitated abuse. It was observed that survivors of abuse, including some sex workers, face heightened vulnerability to exploitation and HIV infection due to stigma and fear of reporting.





To address these challenges, participants proposed a range of community-driven solutions, including strengthening parental and community engagement, regulating alcohol outlets, establishing youth-friendly spaces, promoting cultural reform dialogues, expanding access to comprehensive SRHR and HIV prevention services, and enhancing collaboration among civic, traditional, and religious leaders.

NACMIS Refresher Trainings

To complement the community engagement component, NACMIS refresher trainings were conducted in Monze from 27–31 October 2025 and Katete from 10–14 November 2025. The trainings were designed to strengthen DHAC members' technical capacity in HIV data management, analysis, and utilization for evidence-based planning and decision-making.

Participants were trained in user account management, system navigation, data entry and reporting procedures, interpretation of key indicators, and the use of dashboards on the DHIS2 platform for real-time monitoring. Practical sessions on data analysis, visualization, and the use of pivot tables enabled participants to translate data into actionable insights.

In Monze District, participants reviewed and entered outstanding Quarter 3 and 4 data for 2025 and were supported to analyse trends using dashboards and visualisation

tools. In Katete District, 22 DHAC members participated, with new user accounts created for members who had not accessed the system for over a year. Missing data for Quarter 3 and 4 of 2025 were entered, analysed, and presented, while District Coordinators were capacitated to lead quarterly data presentations during DHAC meetings.

Despite progress made, challenges such as staff turnover, delayed data submission by some implementing partners, weak coordination with health facilities, and poor internet connectivity were noted. Participants recommended regular quarterly DHAC review meetings, timely and complete data entry, periodic refresher trainings, and continued financial and technical support to sustain data quality.

Conclusion

The integrated RAPHIZ activities in Katete and Monze demonstrated the value of combining community-led dialogue with data-driven capacity building. While the dialogues strengthened leadership ownership and collective accountability for adolescent health and HIV prevention, the NACMIS trainings enhanced districts' ability to plan, monitor, and respond using reliable evidence. Together, these interventions reinforce Zambia's decentralized HIV response framework and contribute to building resilient, informed, and protective communities for adolescents and young people.

STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERSHIP FOR AN EFFECTIVE HIV RESPONSE: CAPACITY BUILDING UNDER RAPHIZ IN MONZE AND KATETE

By LGAZ Staff

As part of efforts to strengthen district-level leadership and systems for a more effective and sustainable HIV response, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), through AMICAALL Zambia and with support from UNAIDS, conducted a capacity-building programme for local leadership under the Reducing Adolescent Pregnancies and New HIV Infections in Zambia (RAPHIZ) Project.

The capacity-building sessions were facilitated by renowned HIV and AIDS Consultant, Dr. Kenneth Mwansa, and held in Monze District from 20–21 November 2025 and Katete District from 25–26 November 2025. The engagements targeted Chiefs, Councillors, council management, DHAC members, and representatives from devolved government departments, with a focus on strengthening leadership, planning, and reporting in the context of decentralisation.

Adolescent Vulnerabilities: Key Issues and Challenges

Dr. Mwansa highlighted that adolescents and young people continue to face significant social and economic pressures that increase their vulnerability to early pregnancies and new HIV infections. In Monze and similar districts, peer pressure was identified as a major driver, with adolescents feeling compelled to engage in early sexual activity to fit in.

The sessions further revealed the prevalence of intergenerational sexual relationships, where adolescents engage with older partners who provide financial or material support. This has fuelled transactional sex, particularly among vulnerable groups such as learners in boarding schools, mobile populations, transit traders, and fishing communities. In some cases, learners engage in relationships with so-called “sugar daddies” to meet basic needs such as food, toiletries, transport, or school fees.

Proposed Community and Institutional Solutions

To address these challenges, the capacity-building programme emphasised the importance of:

- Meaningful engagement of adolescents and young people, including the creation of safe spaces for dialogue where young people can openly discuss their realities and co-create solutions.
- Continuous community- and school-based sensitisation on sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, using drama and peer education to deliver messages in relatable and impactful ways.
- Training teachers on adolescent health issues to strengthen school-based support systems, alongside enhanced condom programming to improve access and correct use.
- Integrating mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment into adolescent programming to address underlying drivers of risky behaviour.
- Strengthening workplace wellness programmes within district institutions to reach adult populations, with policies designed for implementation across all devolved departments.

Decentralisation, Inequality and the HIV Response

Under the theme “Structural and Organisational Options for Local Government Planning and Reporting in View of Decentralisation by Devolution,” Dr. Mwansa challenged participants to critically reflect on how local government structures are organised to respond to HIV.

He underscored that inequality remains one of the biggest obstacles to ending AIDS, noting that access to services remains uneven across communities. “Ending AIDS requires interrogating how we are organised and how equitably services are delivered,” he stated, emphasising that treatment and prevention services must be accessible to all, without social or economic barriers.

Dr. Mwansa further stressed the need to integrate HIV into broader health and government systems, cautioning that excessive deconcentration and weak coordination undermine local impact. He urged local authorities to interrogate political, financial, and institutional barriers that prevent communities from fully accessing services.

Decentralisation and Local Governance Context

The sessions placed the HIV response within Zambia’s decentralisation framework, noting that Zambia operates as a unitary state where local authorities are agents of central government, yet are constitutionally mandated to drive development through devolution. With 116 local authorities expected to perform devolved functions, participants were reminded that decentralisation aims to deepen democracy, enhance citizen participation, and make government tangible at community level.

Dr. Mwansa emphasised that local planning and policy formulation are critical to addressing inequalities, cautioning that constituencies without sound plans often access resources at the expense of better-prepared districts. He called for stronger local planning, prudent financial management, and deliberate efforts to remove exclusionary practices that alienate communities from development processes.

Key Challenges and Way Forward

Participants identified several systemic challenges affecting the local HIV response, including limited financial support to District AIDS Committees, weak partner coordination, resistance by some consultants to mainstream HIV within broader development projects, sustainability gaps, and limited familiarity with NACMIS among some stakeholders.

To address these gaps, the following actions were proposed:

- ✓ Establish regularly scheduled coordination and review meetings at district level.
- ✓ Build capacity within existing structures, including traditional and faith leaders, to strengthen community ownership.
- ✓ Enhance skills development for local leaders and DHAC members.
- ✓ Conduct targeted orientation programmes for District AIDS Committees to strengthen planning, coordination, and reporting.

The capacity-building engagements in Monze and Katete reinforced the importance of strong local leadership, inclusive planning, and coordinated systems in addressing adolescent pregnancies and new HIV infections. By linking decentralisation, inequality, and HIV programming, the RAPHIZ Project continues to strengthen district-level leadership to deliver people-centred, equitable, and sustainable HIV responses.

STRENGTHENING POLITICAL OWNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE HIV RESPONSE

By LGAZ Staff

On 9th December 2025, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), through the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL), convened a high-level parliamentary engagement moderated by HIV and AIDS Consultant Dr. Kenneth Mwansa to strengthen political ownership, accountability, and coordination in Zambia's HIV and AIDS response.

Held at the Grand Palace Hotel in Lusaka, the engagement brought together Members of Parliament from Mkaika, Pemba, Bweengwa, and Lundazi Constituencies, local government representatives, United Nations agencies, government officials, cooperating partners, adolescents, and implementing partners. The dialogue placed particular emphasis on adolescent and young people's needs, while reflecting on progress and lessons emerging from the Swedish-supported Reducing Adolescent Pregnancies and New HIV Infections in Zambia (RAPHIZ) Project currently being implemented in Katete and Monze Districts.

In his remarks, LGAZ/AMICAALL Director of Corporate Services, Mr. Abraham Moobola,

underscored the importance of political leadership at constituency level, strengthened coordination within local authorities, and increased engagement of Members of Parliament through the Parliamentary Caucus on HIV and AIDS. He cautioned against fragmented governance structures and emphasised the need to integrate HIV and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) considerations into Bills of Materials (BoMs) for public infrastructure projects.

The Director General of the National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council (NAC), Dr. Kebby Musokotwane, highlighted the critical role of local leadership and decentralised responses in achieving national HIV targets, commending AMICAALL and its partners for advancing local ownership and collaboration.

Representing the United Nations, Dr. John Mwale applauded progress made under the RAPHIZ Project and encouraged domestic resource mobilisation to sustain and scale up effective interventions amid declining donor support. Delivering remarks on behalf of the Permanent Secretary of Health, Dr. Kakungu Simpungwe noted that the engagement came at a pivotal time as Zambia transitions toward new



Members of parliament pose for a photo with AMICAALL and NAC staff after the meeting

HIV prevention financing models, underscoring the need for evidence-informed parliamentary action, particularly on adolescent health.

A key highlight of the meeting was a presentation by Mr. Gibson Mizinga, NAC Decentralised Response Coordinator, who provided a national snapshot of Zambia's HIV situation. He noted that while the country continues to move toward epidemic control, adolescents and young women remain disproportionately affected. He further observed that although new HIV infections are declining overall, hotspot districts continue to record high incidence, and viral load suppression among adolescents remains a concern due to stigma, mobility, and limited access to youth-friendly services. He emphasised that strengthening District HIV/AIDS Coordination Committees (DHACs) is critical for driving data-informed local solutions and achieving the 2030 HIV targets.

During the ensuing discussions, Members of Parliament shared constituency-level insights and recommendations. Hon. Brenda Nyirenda, MP for Lundazi Constituency and Vice Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sexual Reproductive and Human Rights (SRHR) Caucus, highlighted growing donor fatigue and noted that incomplete decentralisation continues to impede effective service delivery. She called for full fiscal decentralisation, direct funding to local authorities, streamlined Constituency Development Fund (CDF) approvals, and stronger family and cultural systems to address rising youth vulnerabilities. She also raised concerns around SRHR risks associated with mining-induced migration and weak district-level monitoring.

Hon. Lameck Hamwaata, MP for Pemba Constituency, identified governance challenges stemming from conflicts between elected and appointed officials, limited resources for mandated offices, and the rapid expansion of informal settlements. He stressed the importance of strengthening early childhood development, enforcement mechanisms, and integrated community planning. Meanwhile, Hon. Peter Phiri, MP for Mkaika Constituency in Katete, expressed concern over persistently high teenage pregnancy rates, attributing

them partly to constrained council resources for prevention programming. He emphasised decentralisation and stronger parliamentary advocacy as key to improving SRHR outcomes.

Amplifying the voices of young people, adolescent representative Mr. Kondwani Nyirenda from Mandevu Health Facility shared compelling reflections on the lived realities faced by adolescents, including persistent stigma when accessing contraceptive services, limited parental disclosure of HIV status, rising mental health challenges, and the urgent need for peer mentorship, youth-friendly spaces, and trained mental health advocates. His contribution reinforced the importance of youth-centred, non-judgmental service delivery models.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Katongo Silwizya, NAC Director of Programmes, commended the quality of deliberations and urged stakeholders to critically reflect on HIV realities within their respective districts. She raised concern over early sexual debut, misuse of emergency contraception, and low uptake of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), calling for strengthened community-driven, multi-sectoral prevention approaches.

The engagement reaffirmed AMICAALL's convening role in fostering political dialogue, strengthening decentralised HIV responses, and promoting accountability across governance levels. Participants collectively underscored the need for stronger political leadership, improved coordination, increased domestic financing, and meaningful youth engagement to accelerate progress toward an HIV-free Zambia.



UCLG / EU SUPPORTED INITIATIVE

LOCAL AUTHORITIES DRIVE SDG LOCALISATION THROUGH VOLUNTARY SUB-NATIONAL REVIEWS (VSRS)

By LGAZ Staff



Beginning on 26th August, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) commenced a comprehensive study on SDG localisation in selected local authorities across Southern, Copperbelt, and Eastern Provinces through the preparation of the Voluntary Subnational Review (VSR).

This important initiative was being implemented by LGAZ with the support of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) with support from the European Union.

The study sought to assess how local authorities were localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contributing to Zambia's

Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, which feeds into the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development.

The initial phase of the study involved engagements with Mazabuka Municipal Council, where the LGAZ team held discussions with council officials on the city's experiences, achievements, and lessons in advancing the SDGs at local level. The team subsequently proceeded to Choma, Zimba and Livingstone, combining key informant interviews with community-level fieldwork aimed at assessing public awareness and participation in SDG implementation.



From 2nd September, the VSR study expanded to include engagements with Lufwanyama, and Kitwe local authorities. Through focus group discussions and interviews with council officials, Copperbelt University staff under the School of Built Environment, community members, and key stakeholders, the study explored how the SDGs are being integrated, monitored, and advanced at district level. Particular emphasis was placed on:

- ✓ Identifying SDGs most relevant to departmental mandates and how they are mainstreamed into district plans and budgets;
- ✓ Tracking progress through available data and identifying gaps that constrain effective monitoring;
- ✓ Examining collaboration across departments to achieve multiple SDGs simultaneously; and
- ✓ Identifying challenges and capacity needs faced by local authorities.

On 9th September, the LGAZ team moved to Eastern Province, marking the third region to be covered following successful engagements in Copperbelt and Southern Provinces. Working in close collaboration with the respective

local authorities, the team held consultative meetings and surveys with a wide range of stakeholders in Chipata, including ZANACO and ABSA banks, Rockview University management and students, Ward Development Committees (WDCs), constituency offices, Eastern Water and Sanitation Company, civil society organisations, market associations, and members of the wider community.

The engagements further examined district-level SDG integration, data collection and utilisation practices, inter-departmental coordination, and institutional capacity gaps. The participatory approach adopted ensured that perspectives from both duty bearers and community members informed the assessment.

Overall, the VSRs study is highlighting the critical role of local authorities in driving sustainable development and localising the SDGs. The findings generated valuable lessons, best practices, and policy insights that will not only inform Zambia's national reporting processes but also guide and inspire other councils across the country. Click on the link to access the VSR Report: [Voluntary Sub National Review Report](#)



WASH FINANCING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

LGAZ and WaterAid Zambia Launch 2026 National Budget WASH Analysis Brief

By LGAZ Staff



LGAZ and WaterAid staff flanked by stakeholders as they launched the policy brief. photos by WaterAid

On 23rd October 2025, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), in partnership with WaterAid Zambia, officially launched the 2026 National Budget WASH Analysis Brief titled “The Price of Progress: Financing WASH for All” at Mika Hotel, Kabulonga. The launch marked an important milestone in advancing evidence-based advocacy for improved water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) financing in Zambia.

The event brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation, the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, local authorities, Ward Development Committees (WDCs), Constituency Development Fund Committees (CDFCs), and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The diverse participation highlighted the growing recognition that effective WASH service delivery requires strong collaboration across national and local government, communities, and development partners.

During the launch, discussions emphasised the critical role of local government leadership in driving accountability, transparency, and impact in WASH financing. Participants reflected on how decentralised planning, budgeting,

and monitoring can help ensure that WASH investments respond to community priorities and reach the most underserved populations. The engagement also underscored the importance of aligning national policies with district-level implementation to achieve sustainable and equitable outcomes.

The 2026 National Budget WASH Analysis Brief provides a data-driven assessment of Zambia’s WASH financing trends under the 2026 National Budget, which represents the final fiscal year of the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) and a pivotal period ahead of the formulation of the Ninth National Development Plan (9NDP). The brief interrogates whether current fiscal priorities are sufficiently aligned with Zambia’s Vision 2030 and the country’s commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6), which calls for universal access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The analysis further situates WASH financing within the broader decentralisation and local government financing framework. It highlights trends in the Local Government Equalisation Fund (LGEF), whose budget allocation has



WaterAid Country Director, Yanko Mataya addressing stakeholders during the launch. photos by WaterAid

steadily declined over the past five years—from 1 percent in 2021, to 0.8 percent between 2022 and 2024, 0.7 percent in 2025, and 0.6 percent in 2026. Notably, the allocation has remained

constant at K1.4 billion from 2024 to 2026, despite sustained calls for increased funding to support the vitality, operational efficiency, and institutional capacity of local authorities to deliver essential services, including WASH.

In contrast, the brief notes a positive development under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), which has recorded an 11 percent increase in the 2026 national budget—from K5.6 billion in 2025 to K6.2 billion in 2026. The allocation per constituency has also risen from K36.1 million to K40 million over the same period. This increase reflects Government's commitment to fiscal decentralisation, aimed at promoting local action, strengthening community-level decision-making, and improving service delivery outcomes.

Key findings from the analysis reveal that overall WASH allocations have declined to 0.71 percent of the national budget, the lowest level recorded in the past six years. This decline raises serious concerns about the country's ability to accelerate progress towards universal WASH coverage and safeguard gains made in public health, education, gender equality, and climate resilience. Stakeholders observed that inadequate investment in WASH disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, particularly women, girls, and children.

Through this initiative, LGAZ and WaterAid Zambia reaffirmed their commitment to



LGAZ Director Corporate Services Abraham Moobola, making a presentation during the launch. photos by WaterAid

strengthening evidence-based decision-making, enhancing local government capacity, and promoting sustainable and equitable financing for WASH. WaterAid Zambia reiterated that investing in WASH is an investment in Zambia's human capital, productivity, and long-term socio-economic development, and called for increased, predictable, and well-targeted funding to ensure that no community is left behind.

“The Price of Progress: Financing WASH for All”

The launch concluded with a shared call for continued collaboration among government, local authorities, civil society, and cooperating partners to translate national budget commitments into tangible and lasting improvements in WASH service delivery across the country. Click on the link below to view the policy brief:

[2026 WASH Budget Analysis Brief](#)

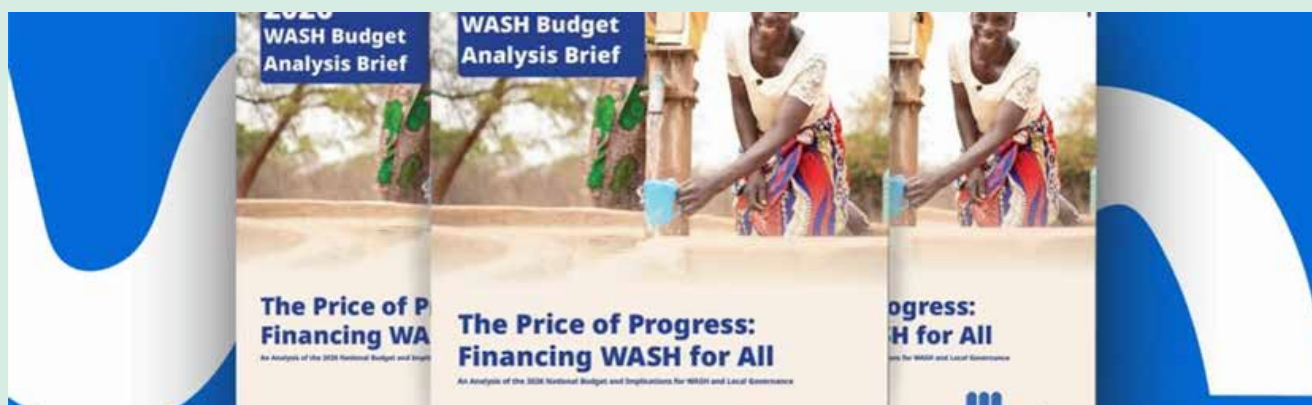




Photo Gallery





Photo Gallery





Photo Gallery





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