

THE STATUS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN ZAMBIA

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ABBREVIATIONS

CBCCs	Community Based Childcare Centres
CPCs	Community Pre-school Centres
ECCs	Early Childhood Centres
ECCDE	Early Childhood Care, Development and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

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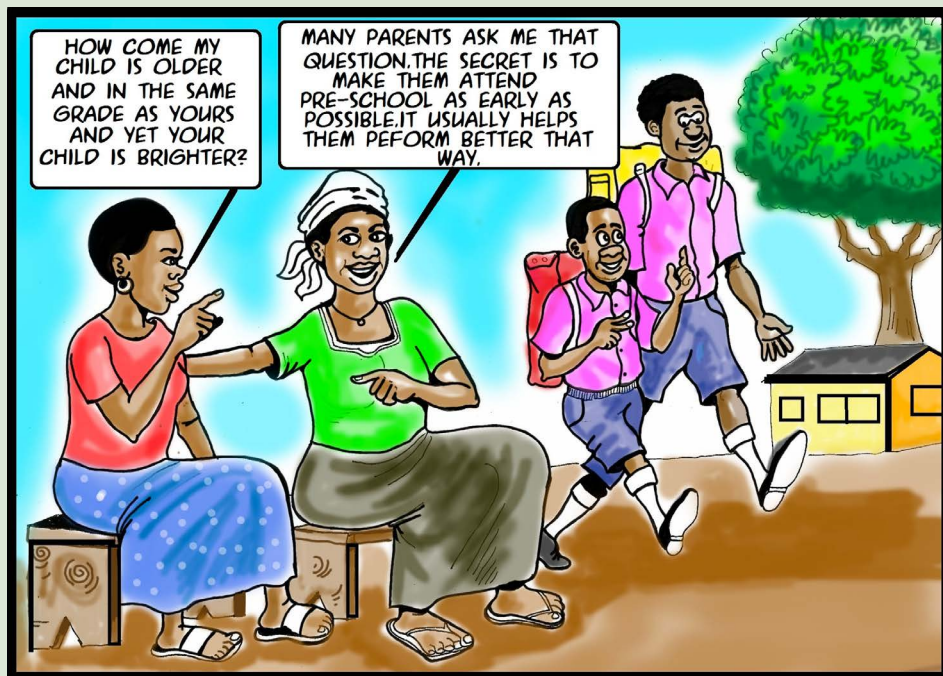
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INTRODUCTION

Education is key to driving a nation's development agenda and has always been given high priority in Zambia. Government education policymakers around the world are increasingly aware of the positive relationship of Early Childhood Education (ECE) on a child's further development. Several countries have implemented reforms of their early childhood systems, generally focusing on a strong emphasis on education and preparations for school (Bertram .T, 2016).

In 2014, Zambia commenced with the provision of early education in Government schools, which was previously private or church owned, with centres mainly located in urban areas. This document, provides the status of early childhood education in Zambia, following its integration into the education system. Its main focus will be on the curriculum put in place and current enrolment statistics by province. It further highlights Government's efforts in improving ECE as well as lessons learnt from best practices.

BACKGROUND

Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE) is a term that is used interchangeably worldwide but refers to the same concept of early childhood education and cognitive development. The World Bank for instance refers to it as Early Childhood Care and Education, whereas UNESCO refers to it as Early Childhood Development Care. ECCDE is defined as the level of education, both informal and formal, which a child from birth to age six undergoes prior to reaching the compulsory age (seven years) of entry to a primary or basic school (Ministry of General Education, 2006).

ECCDE is not relatively new in Zambia, as the colonial government came up with Day Nurseries Act of 1957, which was Zambia's first policy with regards to the provision of early childhood education. The Act facilitated the establishment, registration and regulation of day nurseries for children aged between zero and six years. Zambia like many other countries has started out with a split system of ECCDE divided between childcare services and early education services among three ministries namely;



THE MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

which provides early childhood education to **CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 3-6 YEARS OLD.**



THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE

which provides care to **ORPHANS IN CHILD-CARE FACILITIES**



THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, SPORTS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

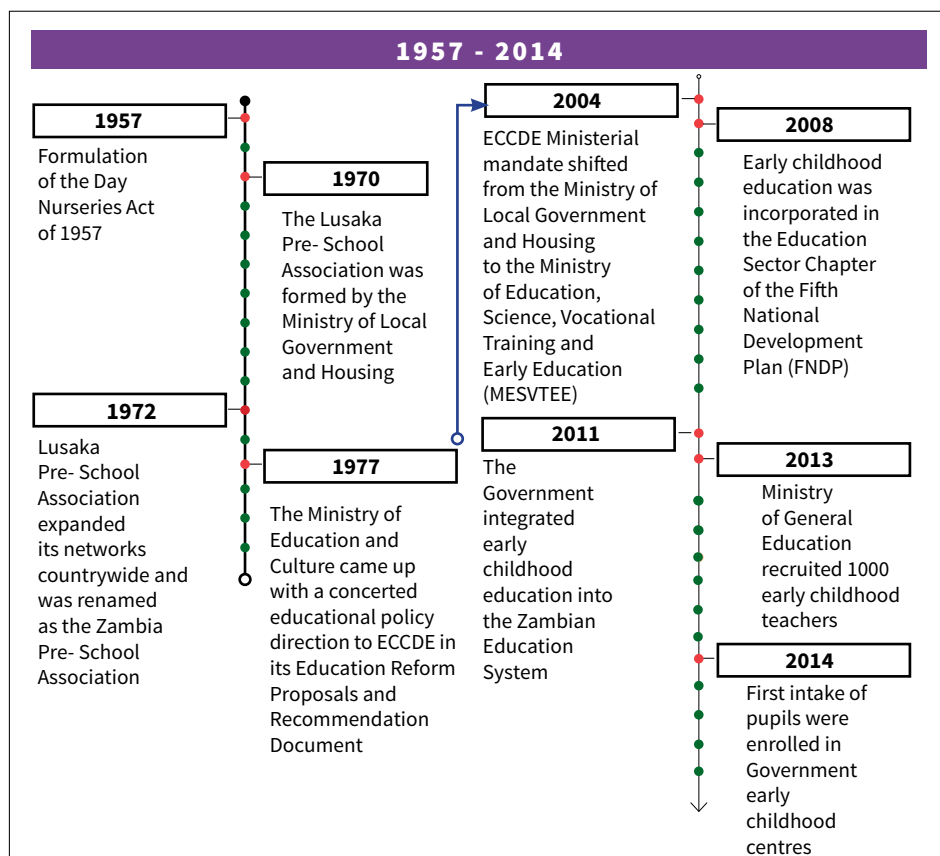
which is mandated to provide child care development for **CHILDREN AGED 0-2 YEARS.**

Some countries such as the United States of America have moved towards an integrated system where one lead department or Ministry has a responsibility for early childhood education. This approach has proven to be advantageous for policy implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of service delivery within the sector.

The benefits of ECCDE cannot be over emphasized, studies have proven on how ECE can impact greatly on an individual as well as a nation at large. Some of these benefits include; low dropout rates, better academic performance, as well as the development of brain cells.¹

Equally, a study done by Munthali (2014), explained how early cognitive development determines school performance and progress at a later stage in life. It further went on to explain the strong association between early childhood factors and primary school performance, such as; school retention and the unlikelihood of repeating classes. ECE also contribute towards low fertility rates as the incidence of childbearing for girls aged 10-18 is much less among those who attended pre-primary programs as children, compared to girls of the same age who had not attended pre- primary programs.

HISTORY OF ECCDE IN ZAMBIA



1 The brain research field has been especially influential, as it has highlighted the role of the early years in the formation of the human brain. The neurons (brain cells) as well as the synapses, which connect the neurons, develop rapidly and are shaped by the stimulation from the environment in early years

CURRICULUM FOR EARLY EDUCATION

According to the Zambia Education Curriculum framework (2013), ECCDE focuses on the holistic development of the child in the following areas;

1. Physical development- fine and gross motor skills development;
2. Social, emotional, spiritual and moral development;
3. Language development (receptive and expressive language);
4. Aesthetic development or appreciation of beauty; and
5. Cognitive and intellectual development.

ECCDE caters for two broad levels and these are Day Care which caters for children aged 0-2 years and Early Childhood Education for **AGE RANGE OF 3-4 AND 5- 6 YEARS**. These are nursery and reception.

NURSERY

The nursery level caters for learners **aged 3 to 4 years to develop socially, physically, mentally and emotionally** by providing them with playmates and play resources. The focus of nursery centres is promotion of social interaction of young children from different social backgrounds.

RECEPTION

The Reception level caters for learners **aged 5 to 6 years**. This is a preparatory **stage for entry into Grade 1**. Therefore, the teaching and learning at this level is largely informal through guided and unguided play with formal teaching (pre-academic) taking about 40 percent of the programme. The academic component prepares them for smooth transition to formal education at Grade 1.

The early education curriculum is dominated by play and pre-learning activities based on the following learning areas as well as time allocation.

NO.	LEARNING AREAS	TIME ALLOCATED PER WEEK
1	Social Studies	2 hours
2	Environmental Science	2 ½ hours
3	Pre- Literacy and Language	3 ½ hours
4	Pre- Mathematics	3 ½ hours
5	Expressive Arts	3 ½ hours
	TOTAL	15 HOURS



Source: 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework

STATISTICS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

LUSAKA PROVINCE

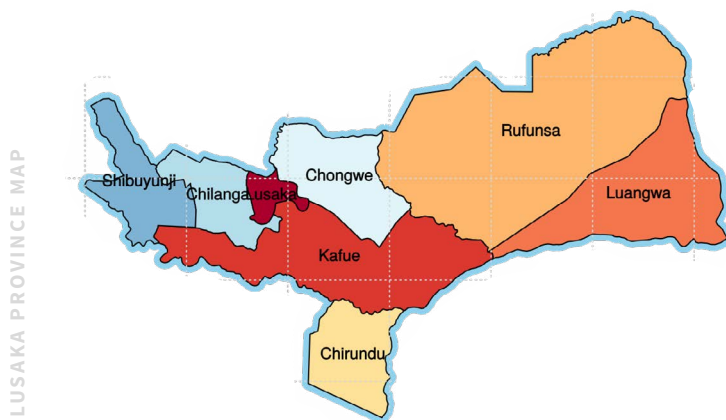
Districts

Chilanga	Chirundu	Chongwe	Kafue	Luangwa	Lusaka	Rufunsa	Shibuyunji
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Total ECE Pupils

346	809	718	588	522	561	755	259
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Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lusaka_Province#/media/File:Districts_of_Lusaka_Province_Zambia.svg

Lusaka Province had 77 ECCs with an enrollment of 4,548 pupils in 8 districts namely; *Chilanga, Chirundu, Chongwe, Kafue, Luangwa, Lusaka, Rufunsa and Shibuyunji*. The district with the highest number of ECC was Rufunsa with 16 ECC with the lowest being Shibuyunji district with 4 ECCs. Lusaka Province had more **female (2,395)** than **male (2,153) pupils** enrolled in the 77 ECCs and had an average enrollment rate of 30 pupils per centre. The district with the largest number of enrolled pupils was Chirundu (809) and the district with the lowest number of enrolled pupils was Shibuyunji (259).

NORTH- WESTERN PROVINCE

Districts

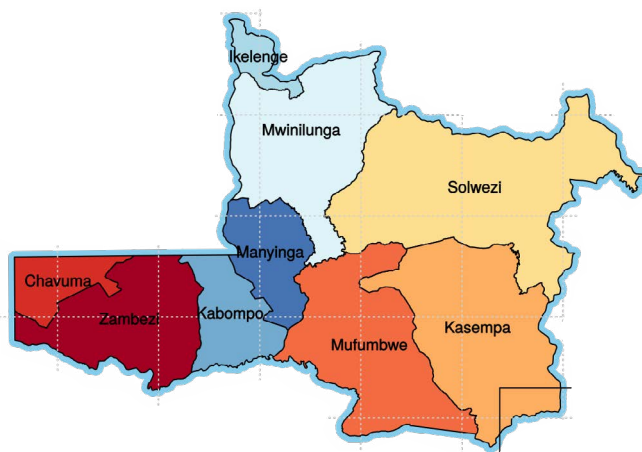
Chavuma	Ikkelenge	Kabompo	Kasempa	Manyinga	Mufumbwe	Mwinilunga
Solwezi	Zambezi					

Total ECE Pupils

396	568	471	370	261	403	612
279	365					

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database

NORTH - WESTERN PROVINCE MAP



Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Districts_of_North-Western_Province_Zambia.svg

North- Western Province had 78 ECCs with an enrollment of **3,816 pupils** in 10 districts namely; Chavuma, Ikkelenge, Kabompo, Kalumbila, Kasempa, Manyinga, Mufumbwe, Mwinilunga, Solwezi and Zambezi. The district with the highest number of ECC was Zambezi (12) with Kalumbila being the lowest (3). North- Western Province had more **female (1,988) than male (1,830)** pupils enrolled in the 78 ECCs and had an average of 24 pupils per centre. The district with the largest number of enrolled pupils was Mwinilunga (612) and the district with the lowest number of enrolled pupils was Kalumbila (92). Some centres such as Chitokoloki ECC, Mpidi ECC, Mwange ECC and Nyakulenga ECC had no pupils enrolled as teachers had just been sent, in preparations to open new ECC in 2017.

EASTERN PROVINCE

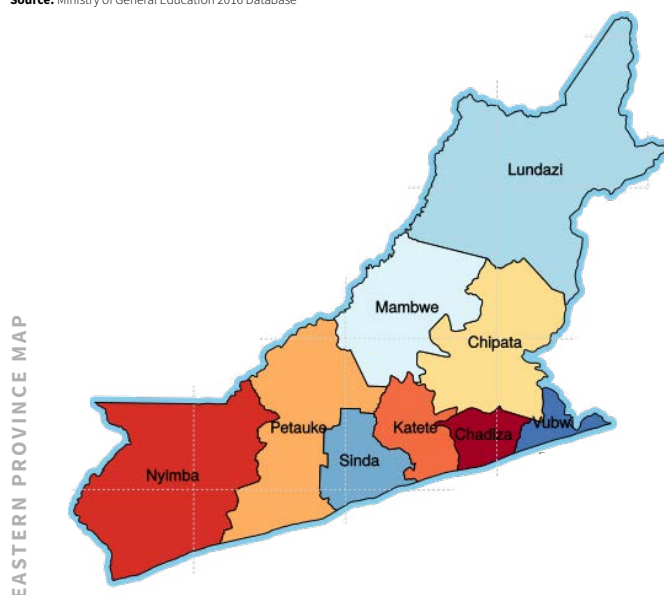
Districts

Chadiza	Chipata	Katete	Lundazi	Mambwe	Nyimba	Petauka
Sinda	Vubwi					

Total ECE Pupils

2084	3467	1485	772	1521	420	916
503	378					

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Province,_Zambia#/media/File:Zambia-districts-eastern_province.svg

Eastern Province had 244 ECCs with an enrollment of **11,546 pupils** in 9 districts namely; Chadiza, Chipata, Katete, Lundazi, Mambwe, Petauka, Sinda and Vubwi. The district with the highest number of ECCs was Chipata (90) with Nyimba and Vubwi recording the lowest (7). Eastern Province equally had more **female (6,271)** than **male (5,275)** pupils enrolled at the ECCs. The district with the largest number of enrolled pupils was Chipata (3,467) and the district with the lowest number of enrolled pupils was Vubwi (378).

SOUTHERN PROVINCE

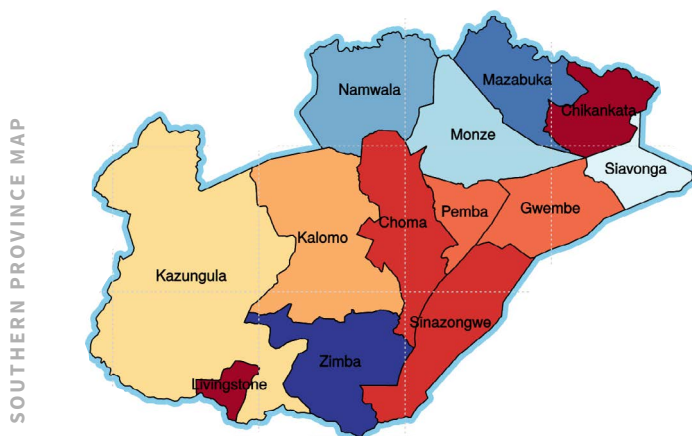
Districts

Sinazongwe	Kazungula	Mazabuka	Gwembe	Siavonga	Choma	Zimba
Pemba	Namwala	Livingstone	Monze	Chikankata		

Total ECE Pupils

2550	3144	1132	1516	1006	4459	1284
2358	2198	1703	4938	1529		

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b5/Districts_of_Southern_Province_Zambia.svg

Southern Province had 635 ECCs with an enrollment of **27,916 pupils** in 12 districts namely; Sinazongwe, Kazungula, Mazabuka, Chikankata, Gwembe, Siavonga, Choma, Zimba, Pemba, Namwala, Livingstone and Monze. The district with the highest number of ECCs was Monze (124) and the district with the lowest ECCs was Mazabuka (22). Southern Province had more **female (14,239)** than **male (13,677) pupils** enrolled at the ECCs with an average of 22 pupils per centre. The district with the largest number of enrolled pupils was Monze (4,938) with Siavonga having the lowest number of enrolled pupils (1,006).

WESTERN PROVINCE

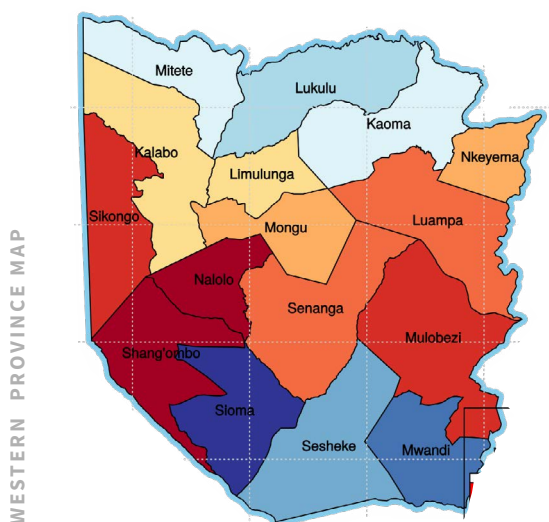
Districts

Kalabo	Kaoma	Limulunga	Luampa	Lukulu	Mitete	Mongu	Mulobezi	Mwandi
Nalolo	Nkeyema	Senanga	Sesheke	Shang'ombo	Sikongo	Sioma		

Total ECE Pupils

986	687	290	780	1148	221	531	134	440
840	616	223	449	351	220	996		

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



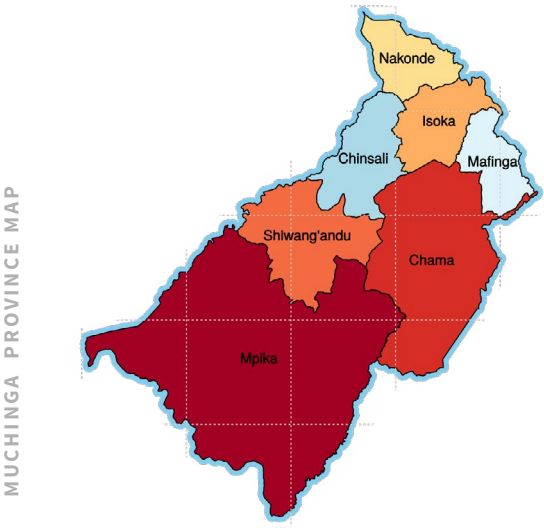
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Province_Zambia

There were 206 ECCs in the Western Province with an enrolment of **8,912 pupils** among 16 districts, namely; Kalabo, Kaoma, Limulunga, Luampa, Lukulu, Mitete, Mongu, Mulobezi, Mwandi, Nalolo, Nkeyema, Senanga, Sesheke, Shangombo, Sikongo and Sioma. The district with the highest number of ECCs was Sioma (30) and the district with the lowest ECCs was Mulobezi (2). Western Province had fewer **male pupils (4,312)** than **female pupils (4,600)** enrolled at the ECCs with an average of 22 pupils enrolled in each centre. The district with the most enrolled pupils was Lukulu district (1,148) and the district with the least number of enrolled students was Mulobezi (134).

MUCHINGA PROVINCE

Districts						
Chama	Shiwang'andu	Nakonde	Isoka	Mpika	Chinsali	Mafinga
Total ECE Pupils						
953	314	1291	1064	1499	949	1431

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muchinga_Province#/media/File:Districts_of_Muchinga_Province_Zambia.svg

Muchinga province had 129 ECCs with a total of 7,501 enrolled pupils in 7 districts, namely; Chama, Shiwang’andu, Nakonde, Isoka, Mpika, Chinsali and Mafinga. The district with the highest number of ECCs centers was Mpika (26) and the district with the lowest number of ECCs was Shiwang’andu (6). There were fewer **male pupils (3,588)** than **female pupils (3,913)** enrolled in Muchinga Province with an average of 29 pupils enrolled in each centre. The district with the highest number of enrolled students was Mpika (1,499) and the district with the lowest number of enrolled students was Shiwang’andu (314).

CENTRAL PROVINCE

Districts

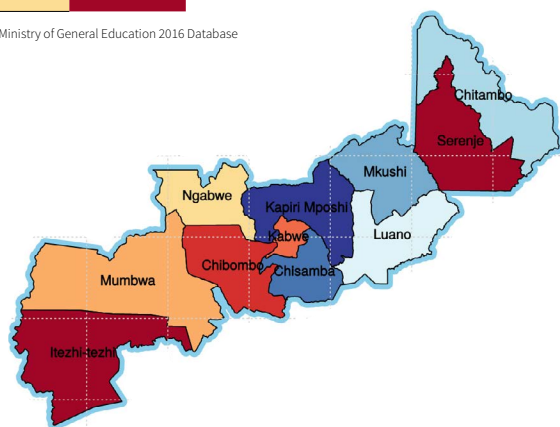
Chibombo	Chisamba	Chitambo	Itezhi-tezhi	Kabwe	Kapiri Mposhi	Luano	Mkushi	Mumbwa
Ngabwe	Serenje							

Total ECE Pupils

2347	1020	958	780	2215	2173	76	1336	3697
132	745							

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database

MUCHINGA PROVINCE MAP



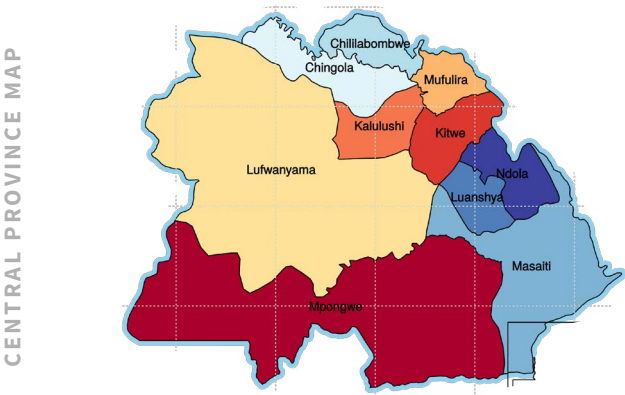
Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/98/Districts_of_Central_Province_Zambia.svg

There were 380 ECCs located in the Central Province with a total of 15,479 pupils enrolled in 11 districts, namely; Chibombo, Chisama, Chitambo, Itezhi-tezhi, Kabwe, Kapiri, Luano, Mkushi, Mumbwa, Ngabwe and Serenje. The district with the largest number of ECCs was Mumbwa (89) with two districts Luano and Ngabwe recording the lowest number of ECCs (3). There were more **female pupils (8,076)** than **male pupils (7,403)** enrolled in ECC in the Central Province with an average of 20 pupils enrolled in each centre. Mumbwa district had the highest number of pupils (3,697) enrolled in ECC with Luano district having the lowest (76).

COPPERBELT PROVINCE

Districts								
Chililabombwe	Chingola	Kitwe	Mufulira	Kalulushi	Lufwanyama	Luanshya	Masaiti	Mpongwe
Ndola								
Total ECE Pupils								
14138	468	1005	867	540	1744	890	792	653
355								

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source:https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Districts_of_Copperbelt_Province_Zambia.svg

There were 220 ECCs located in the **Copperbelt Province**, with 21, 452 pupils enrolled in 10 districts, namely; Chililabombwe, Chingola, Kitwe, Mufulira, Kalulushi, Lufwanyama, Luanshya, Masaiti, Mpongwe and Ndola. The largest number of ECCs (47) were located in Lufwanyama district and the lowest number (13) located in Chingola district. There were more **girls (11,083)** enrolled in ECCs than **boys (10,369)** in the Copperbelt Province with an average of 49 pupils enrolled at each centre. Chililabombwe district had the largest number of pupils (14,138) enrolled in ECCs and Ndola having the lowest number of pupils (355).

LUAPULA PROVINCE

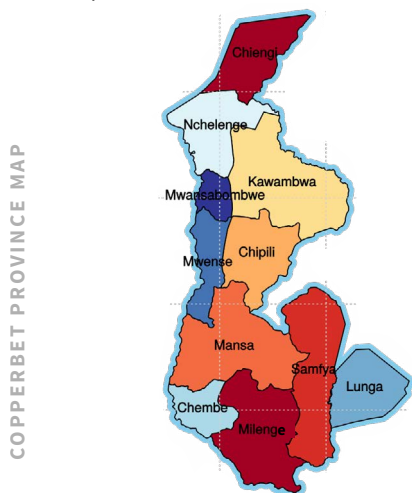
Districts

Nchelenge	Kawambwa	Chembe	Chiengi	Milenge	Mwansabombwe	Chipili	Lunga	Mwense
Samfya	Mansa							

Total ECE Pupils

929	2350	187	1136	761	383	496	20	340
1946	1335							

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



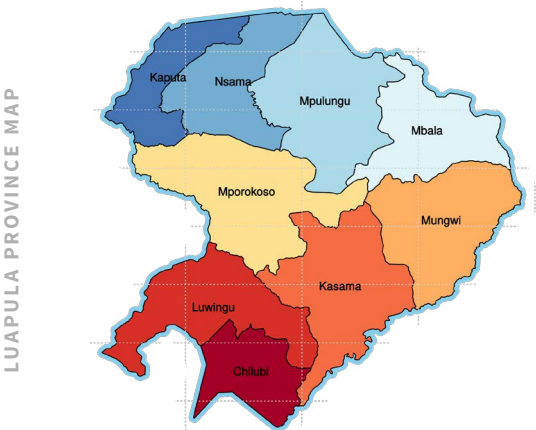
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luapula_Province

There were 210 ECCs in **Luapula Province** with an enrolment of 9,879 pupils in 11 districts, namely; Nchelenge, Kawambwa, Chembe, Chiengi, Milenge, Mwansabombwe, Chipili, Lunga, Mwense, Samfya and Mansa. The district with the highest number of ECCs was Kawambwa (51) and the district with the lowest was Lunga (1). Luapula Province had fewer **male pupils (4,690)** than **female pupils (5,189)** enrolled at ECCs with an average of 24 pupils per centre. The district with the most enrolled pupils was Kawambwa district (2,350) and the district with the least number of enrolled students was Lunga (20).

NORTHERN PROVINCE

Districts								
Chilubi	Kaputa	Kasama	Luwingu	Mbala	Mporokoso	Mpulungu	Mungwi	Nsama
Total ECE Pupils								
741	396	1237	2658	1254	1313	1387	877	572

Source: Ministry of General Education 2016 Database



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Province,_Zambia

There were 207 ECCs located in the **Northern province**, with 11,016 pupils enrolled in 10 districts, namely; Chilubi, Kaputa, Kasama, Luwingu, Mbala, Mporokoso, Mpulungu, Mungwi, Nsama and Senga. The district with the highest number of ECCs was Luwingu (64) with Kaputa (9) recording the lowest from the rest of the provinces. Northern Province had more female pupils (5797) than **male pupils (4,638)** enrolled in ECCs with an average of 27 pupils per centre. Kaputa and Kasama were the only districts that recorded more male the female pupils. The district with the highest number of enrolled pupils was Luwingu (2658) with the lowest being Kaputa (396).

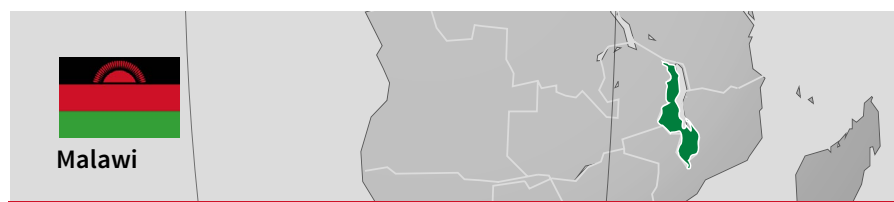
An **overall analysis** of the statistics showed that the highest number of early childhood education centers (635) were located in the Southern Province. There are a total of 12 districts in the Southern Province with approximately 27,916 pupils enrolled in the 635 ECCs. Lusaka Province had the lowest number of ECCs. Lunga district, which is one of eleven districts located in Luapula Province, only has 1 ECC and therefore has the lowest number of ECE centers of all the districts included in this analysis. Copperbelt Province had the highest number of pupils enrolled in each centre with an average of 49 pupils enrolled per centre. The largest disparity between the number of girls and boys enrolled at ECCs can be seen in the Eastern Province.

GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS IN IMPROVING ECE IN ZAMBIA

Early childhood education has been given higher priority in Zambia as compared to child care. This is due to that fact that early childhood education targets children aged 3-6 years of age who are able to receive instructions. At this level the children are expected to demonstrate social interaction, elementary pre- literacy, elementary pre-numeracy as well as fine and gross motor skills² (Cirriculum Development Centre, 2013). The Ministry of General Education has put up the following measures to improve the quality of early childhood education in Zambia;

- I. The Ministry through the Curriculum Development Centre has standardized the early childhood curriculum which has been linked to Grade 1. Previously, centers used different curricula of which some learning activities did not provide a smooth transition to Grade 1. The new curriculum is compulsory to all early childhood centers be it government or private (Cirriculum Development Centre, 2013).
- II. The government has restricted the minimum qualification of early childhood teachers from certificate to diploma level. The government has also come up with a curriculum for early childhood teacher course which prepares teachers to qualify for a Diploma or Degree. The Ministry has also developed a curriculum for early childhood teachers which prepares them to teach children that are aged between 3 to 6 years old.
- III. The Zambian government has introduced, Degree, Masters and PhD programs in early childhood education which are offered at Chalimbana University and Zambia Open University.
- IV. The Ministry of General Education has come up with a policy on ECCDE which will govern the implementation of ECCDE in Zambia.

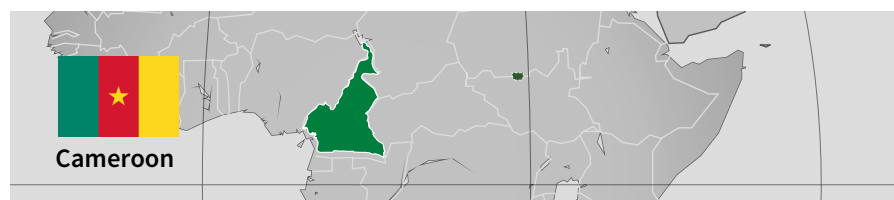
LEARNING FROM BEST PRACTICE



The **Republic of Malawi** Ministry of Gender 2015 Annual Report, showed Malawi as one of the countries with the most extensive network of ECD centres in Africa. These centres comprise of, among others, Community-Based Childcare Centres (CBCCs), pre-schools and day care centres. The Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Welfare (MoGCSW) reported that there were more than 11,000 early childhood centers in Malawi that serve 1.4 million children. Over 8,000 of these preschools are public Community-Based Childcare Centers (CBCC), mostly catering to children in rural areas.

Prior to 2003, Malawi had no policy on early child development. As the Government progressed with its agenda to eradicate poverty, it became necessary to develop the National Policy on Early Childhood Development in order to integrate ECD into the poverty eradication agenda. The National Policy on Early Childhood called for more investments in ECD in order to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty that was rooted in unequal distribution of resources especially among poor children.

The use of CBCCs can help increase enrollment rates in rural areas in Zambia which have been proven to be lower than those in urban areas. The main reason for this disparity is the lack of exposure to early childhood education in rural areas. Therefore, the use of CBCCs will attract more support from the community by providing linkages between early childhood teachers and households. The Zambian Government can also emulate Malawi and increase investments in early childhood education to ensure that every child in Zambia has equal accessibility to ECCs.



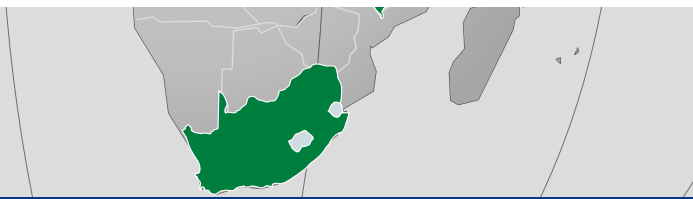
It is claimed that there are Early Childhood Education programmes (ECE) in every village, town and urban area throughout **Cameroon**. This includes both public and private ECE as well as those in urban and rural areas. There is nevertheless, a distinction between urban and rural ECE as there are more schools in towns than there are in rural areas. (Mwamwenda, 2014). Cameroon as a country has put up a system aimed at increasing people's awareness on early childhood care and learning in formal settings, through consciousness-raising seminars and workshops that are organized on primary health care and the management of early childhood programmes.

The provision of ECE in Cameroon has not only been left to the Government as there are many organizations providing early childhood care. Some of these organizations are quasi-government institutions (nursery schools run by the National Social Security Fund, etc.) or private sector, denominational, secular, informal, community-based (Community Pre-school Centres (CPCs)) or run by associations (NGOs).

ECE in Zambia was previously seen as a profit making venture, as a result most of the ECCs were located within urban areas. ECE in rural areas is relatively new, hence the need for extensive sensitization, which can be done through consciousness- raising seminars and workshops as is the case in Cameroon.



South Africa



South Africa's ECD is a comprehensive package which covers the period from conception until children turn 6 years. Some services are targeted at children of a particular age or development stage, some are for children who have particular risk profiles, while others are necessary for all children. Because young children have a broad range of needs that are interdependent, multiple role players should be involved in service delivery, and it is important to have good collaboration and referrals between health, education and social services (Kids Knowledge Information and data Solution, 2016).

South Africa has an obligation to protect the rights of children through the highest law of the country being the Constitution and International law. To make these rights real, South African Children's Act 38 of 2015, as amended, says a comprehensive national strategy must be developed to enable a properly resourced, coordinated and managed ECD system. The Act further states that planning for ECD services must be led by the Department of Social Development in collaboration with the Departments of Basic Education and Health; provincial and local government, and the finance and transport sectors.

There is need for Zambia to have a clear policy aimed at providing care, protection, development and participation of children in early childhood education. A proper strategy needs to be put in place to facilitate for proper coordination among the Ministry of General Education, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Child Development as well as the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of improving ECCDE in Zambia, PMRC recommends that there is need to shift from the split system of three ministries to an integrated system of one ministry mandated to provide ECCDE, for better coordination and goal oriented service delivery.

PMRC further recommends that Government should;

1. Increase budgetary allocation to ECCDE, to improve service delivery and ensure that all children under the age of 6 have access to ECCDE facilities.
2. Increase sensitization on the importance of ECE in rural areas which will improve enrollment of pupils in ECCs.
3. Invest in community based ECCs and provide adequate training for community personnel based on the required teaching standard.

CONCLUSION

Early Childhood education is where the educational foundation of the child is laid. Several studies have proven the benefits of early childhood education, which ought to put an end to the debates on the impact of early education in achieving a nation's development agenda. Many countries have prioritized the integration on early childhood education in their education system. One of the reasons that has attributed to this is political will, which is cardinal to the success of any program. In the same vain, Zambia has the political will and is headed in the right path in terms of service delivery. All that is needed is strict policy implementation at this level as well as an increase in budgetary allocation to ensure the sustainability of early childhood education.

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Unlocking Zambia's Potential

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