



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY
BUILDING FOUNDATION

FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT
DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE

ACBF's cooperation with **Zambia**



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ACBF STRATEGIC PLANNING	
PHASE 1	1991-1997
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INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Zambia became a member and partner of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in 2002. Since then, partnership between the Foundation and the Republic of Zambia has grown and to date, Zambia has been a shareholder and member of the African Capacity Building Foundation for 21 years. The country is represented by its Minister of Finance and National Planning in the ACBF Board of Governors.

ACBF'S INVESTMENTS IN ZAMBIA

The Foundation's investment in Zambia has reached about US\$14.08 million. ACBF is proud to have supported human and institutional development in the country. The Foundation has to date funded national programs in Zambia to the tune of US\$6.56 million. This support has gone to key institutions such as the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR), the Zambia Chamber of Small and Medium Business Associations (ZCSMBA) and the Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI), to mention a few. The Foundation has also invested about US\$7.53 million to regional programs and projects implemented in Zambia, from which institutions like the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), benefited.

With this support from ACBF, the aforementioned national and regional institutes have become more valuable and are playing significant roles in the country's development agenda and institutional strengthening.

Table 1: ACBF-supported projects and programs in Zambia (US\$)

NATIONAL PROJECTS/PROGRAMS	PHASES	INVESTMENTS
Zambia Directorate of Macroeconomic Policy Analysis (DMPA)	Phase I	1,403,248
Zambia Chamber of Small and Medium Business Associations (ZCSMBA)	SMTP I	1,529,462
Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council for Gender and Development (NGOCC)	SMTP I	1,262,043
Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR)	SMTP I	1,289,960
ZIPAR	ACBF Strategy 2017 - 2022	4,832
Capacity Building National Focal Point (NFP)	Phase II	50,000
Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council for Gender and Development - phase two (NGOCCII)	SMTP II	934,722
ZIPAR (Additional)	SMTP III	95,319
Zambia Research Institute (ZARI) [CTCA]	ACBF Strategy 2017-2022	50,000
TOTAL		6,619,586
REGIONAL PROJECTS/PROGRAMS	PHASES	INVESTMENTS
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA I)	SMTP I	1,398,815

COMESA II	SMTP III	2,840,736
Economic Policy Management (EPM – ZAMBIA)	SMTP II	1,999,044
EPM - ZAMBIA II	SMTP III	1,216,442
EPM - ZAMBIA II (Additional)	SMTP III	70,000
COMESA	ACBF Strategy 2017-2022	94,122
Total		7,619,159

Table 2: Current ACBF-Supported projects benefiting Zambia (2023)

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT DETAILS
African-Finnish Partnerships on Taxation Capacity in Africa	The aim is to strengthen the capacity of selected African governments and pan-African organizations to increase Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) through informed policy-making and effective tax administration
African Union Transformative Climate Finance program	The project aims at addressing the capacity gaps in climate change adaptation in Africa. Key activities include scoping and mapping of green growth landscape in Africa, conducting of a Capacity Needs Assessment and Development of a Capacity Development Program.

The Foundation has also conducted several research studies to inform policy formulation and implementation in Zambia. Some of the knowledge products and services prepared for Zambia are detailed in Annex 1.

ZAMBIA’S CONTRIBUTION TO ACBF

The Foundation has benefitted from the African and global political influence of the Government of Zambia. The country has over the years been one of the leading African contributors to ACBF, with a cumulative contribution of US\$1.25 million, to date. With this support from the Government of Zambia, ACBF has been able to leverage resources from the international community to support capacity development across Africa and to achieve significant results in support of the continent’s development process. Particularly, ACBF has been catalyzing change in Africa by investing in capacity development initiatives in the public and private sectors as well as in civil society organizations; providing technical assistance in implementation of capacity development interventions; generating, managing and sharing knowledge on best practices in capacity building and development management.

The Foundation has strengthened public policy across Africa, produced highly skilled public sector economists and managers, strengthened institutions of financial accountability, and enhanced the effectiveness of non-state actors. ACBF has also supported the creation of platforms for dialogue on, and coordination in capacity development, supported improvements in trade and regional integration, empowered women and strengthened parliaments.

Table 3: Zambia's contributions to ACBF (US\$)

FINANCING PHASE	PLEDGE	PAYMENTS
SMTP I (2002-2006)	250,000	250,000
SMTP II (2007-2011)	250,000	250,000
SMTP III (2012-2016)	500,000	500,000
ACBF STRATEGY 2017-2022	250,000	250,000
TOTAL	1,250,000	1,250,000

ANNEX 1: ACBF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BENEFITING ZAMBIA

ACBF SUPPORT TO ZAMBIA- PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name	Key objectives/Focus
Zambia Directorate of Macroeconomic Policy Analysis (DMPA)	To support the creation of the Directorate of Macroeconomic Policy Analysis within the Ministry of Finance to become an effective macroeconomic “think tank” for the Government of Zambia. To create sustainable human capacity for macroeconomic policy analysis and research, policy formulation and monitoring in support of the short-term stabilization and long-term adjustment programmes. To create sustainable institutional capacity for effective training in macroeconomic policy analysis and management training in Zambia.
Zambia Chamber of Small and Medium Business Associations (ZCSMBA)	To professionalise the voices and actions of the Zambia Chamber of Small and Medium Business Associations (CSMBA) and the Zambia Indigenous Business Association (ZIBA) to meet the needs of their constituents and effectively interface with the public sector in the private sector development policy-making process in Zambia.
Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council for Gender and Development (NGOCC)	To strengthen women's organizations and their institutional unification. To develop women's capacities to lead and raise gender awareness in the civic and political fields. To help women acquire skills in economic empowerment through training.
Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR)	To establish a semi-autonomous economic policy and research institute. To provide training to Government officials. To conduct research in areas of economic policy formulation and management. To provide policy advice to Government and promote policy dialogue within Zambia.

Table A: Selected knowledge products to support the African Union (AU) agenda, policy and development programmes where Zambia was covered

Year	Type of Knowledge Products	Title/Theme	Coverage for Zambia
2019	Africa Capacity Report 2019	Fostering Transformative Leadership for Africa's Development	Zambia Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2019	Continental Strategic Study	Capacity Imperatives for the SDGs: In line with African Union's Agenda 2063	Case Study on Zambia
2017	Africa Capacity Report 2017	Building Capacity in Science, Technology and Innovation for Africa's Transformation	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2016	Occasional Paper	The Challenge of African Youth Unemployment	Case Study on Zambia
2015	The Africa Capacity Report 2015	Capacity Imperatives for Domestic Resource Mobilization in Africa	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2014	Africa Capacity Report 2014	Capacity Imperatives for Regional Integration in Africa.	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2013	Africa Capacity Indicators 2013	Capacity Development for Natural Resource Management	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2012	Africa Capacity Report 2012	Capacity Development for Agricultural Transformation and Food Security	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2011	Africa Capacity Report 2011	Capacity Development in Fragile States	Zambia country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics

Table B: Selected knowledge sharing events and networking to support the African Union (AU) agenda, policy and development programmes which Zambia has benefitted from.

Year	Knowledge Event	Title/Theme	Coverage for Zambia	Date and Venue
2019	African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP-MfDR)	AfCoP 2019 Forum on MfDR	1 staff from Ministry of Planning sponsored to attend	29-30 October Dakar, Senegal
2019	African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP-MfDR)	AfCoP 2019 General Assembly	1 staff from Ministry of Planning sponsored to attend	28 February – 2 March, Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire
2018	Africa Think Tank Summit	Tackling Africa's Youth Unemployment Challenge: Innovative Solutions from Think Tanks	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	5-7 April Accra Ghana
2018	African Community of Practice on Managing for	Preparatory provisions for the Fourth MfDR Forum	1 staff from the Ministry of Planning sponsored to attend	24-26 October Dakar, Senegal

Year	Knowledge Event	Title/Theme	Coverage for Zambia	Date and Venue
	Development Results (AfCoP-MfDR)	and review the draft AfCoP Strategic Plan		
2017	Africa Think Tank Summit	African Think Tanks and Industrialization in Africa	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	6-8 April Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire
2017	7 th Consultative Forum of the Policy Institutes Committee	Sustainability and funding of think tanks for informed policymaking in Africa	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	9 April Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire
2017	Data collectors' training workshop	Fostering Transformative Leadership for Africa's Development	1 Data expert from Zambia hired and sponsored	29-30 May Harare Zimbabwe
2017	High-Level Panel	New developmental approach to natural resources governance in Africa	1 MP from Zambia sponsored	5 May Midrand South Africa
2017	Training/ Capacity Development Workshop for Regional Parliamentary Bodies	New Developmental Approach to Natural Resources Governance, Formulation of Model-Laws and Socioeconomic Integration of Africa	1 MP from Zambia sponsored	22-25 August Yaoundé Cameroon
2016	Africa Think Tank Summit	Creating a Sustainable Future for African Think Tanks in Support of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	8-9 April Victoria Falls Zimbabwe
2016	6 th Consultative Forum of the Policy Institutes Committee	Effective utilization of knowledge products for policy impact in Africa	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	10 April Victoria Falls Zimbabwe
2016	Capacity Development Forum	Developing Capacity for Africa's Economic and Social Transformation	EPM-Zambia, ZIPAR and staff from Ministry of Finance attended	3-5 May Harare Zimbabwe
2015	Africa Think Tank Summit	The Rise of Africa's Think Tanks: Practical Solutions to Practical Problems	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored by ACBF to attend	6-8 April Addis Ababa Ethiopia
2015	Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Building Capacity in Science, Technology and Innovation for Africa's Transformation	1 Data expert from Zambia hired and sponsored	16-19 November Harare Zimbabwe
2015	4th Consultative Meeting of the Policy Institutes Committee	The Policy Institutes Committee and ACBF:	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	9 April

Year	Knowledge Event	Title/Theme	Coverage for Zambia	Date and Venue
		Effective Partnership for Capacity Building in Africa		Addis Ababa Ethiopia
2015	5th Consultative Meeting of the Policy Institutes Committee	Knowledge and Experience Sharing for Effective Capacity Building in Africa	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	21-23 October Kigali Rwanda
2014	Africa Think Tank Summit	Think Tanks and the Transformation of Africa	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored to attend	3-5 February Pretoria South Africa
2014	Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Capacity Imperatives for Domestic Resource Mobilization in Africa	1 Data expert from Zambia hired and sponsored	17-21 October Harare Zimbabwe
2014	Inaugural meeting of the ACBF Strategic Studies Group (SSG)	Launch of the SSG Network	Hosted in Zambia	7-8 March Lusaka Zambia
2014	Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Capacity Imperatives for Regional Integration in Africa	1 Data expert from Zambia hired and sponsored by ACBF	12-13 February Harare Zimbabwe
2014	2 nd PIC Meeting	ACBF's Policy Institutes Committee (PIC) – Rethinking Capacity Development Solutions in Africa”.	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored by ACBF to attend	25-26 April Nouakchott Mauritania
2014	Think Tank Network	Validation Workshop of the Position Papers on the US-Africa Relations	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored by ACBF to attend	18-19 July Addis Ababa Ethiopia
2014	3 rd PIC Meeting	Toward Africa's Sustainable Development: Role of ACBF's Policy Institutes Committee	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored by ACBF to attend	24-25 October Mbabane Swaziland
2013	ACBF Policy Institute Committee (PIC)	Inaugural PIC meeting	Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) was sponsored by ACBF to attend	13-14 June Addis Ababa Ethiopia

ANNEX 2: SUCCESS STORIES

1. ACBF enables marginalized women gain graduate degrees

For historical and cultural reasons, African women in general have had limited access to university education which curtailed their ability to get into leadership and decision-making positions. Through scholarships for economically disadvantaged women funded by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), 18 Zambian women were able to graduate in 2012 with Bachelor's Degrees in Sociology and Gender Studies from the Women's University in Africa (WUA) based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Ms. Tamba TAMBATAMBA is one of the beneficiaries whose life changed after receiving the scholarship. Orphaned at a young age, being awarded a degree opened the door for her to become a Site Coordinator for the Population Council.

"The WUA-ACBF scholarship was a very good intervention as it helped me to get a degree in Sociology and Gender Development Studies which is beneficial in that I gained knowledge on issues that I never knew before. I now work for Population Council, an International NGO as a Site Coordinator on a Project called Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program (AGEP)," says Ms. Tambatamba.

The Population Council and its partners have implemented a social, health, and economic asset-building program for vulnerable adolescent girls in Zambia. Ms. Tambatamba supervises mentors that teach rural girls on health, financial education, reproductive health, and basic life skills.

"I really appreciate all the assistance that I got as without the WUA-ACBF scholarship I would not be where I am today. My thanks also go to all the Lecturers and staff at the University," she adds.

The scholarships sponsored by ACBF were awarded in September 2009 under the WUA and the University of Zambia (UNZA) Memorandum of Understanding signed in July 2009. They covered fees, stipend, and accommodation for the first semester of each academic year.

Every first semester of an academic year, students attended tuition at the WUA and spent the second semesters were at the UNZA, through Open Distance Learning (ODL). Students also catered for their own fees at the UNZA. The scholarship program ran from September 2009 to June 2012.

As a step towards transformative change in Africa, the ACBF is keen to support African women with a strong education to articulate and debate issues affecting their communities.

2. Vulnerable communities in Zambia and Zimbabwe benefiting from ACBF-supported Australian program

In January 2014, the Australian Government contracted the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) to provide logistical and administrative support to the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES), which contributes to reducing poverty in Africa through food security, maternal and child health, and community-based interventions in water and sanitation; with particular attention to women, children and people living with disability. As a Resource Facility for the AACES, ACBF provides administrative and technical support to the program. This program is improving many lives on the continent.

In Zimbabwe - Mashonaland East, Masvingo and Manicaland provinces, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) funded under the AACES have supported the improvement in the health of more than 13,000 women and children. This was achieved through modern family planning methods, child vaccinations, and safe and clean baby delivery services. Nearly 5,000 women smallholder farmers have also improved their agricultural productivity;

thanks to the Australian funding for fertiliser and seeds, as well as access to agricultural extension services. Further, more than 17,000 people accessed safe and sustainable water, appropriate sanitation and safer hygiene practices.

“NGOs supported by Australia under the AACES program have made a significant contribution to improving women’s and children’s access to clean and safe water, and health services. This has had positive impacts on children’s day-to-day activities such as going to school, while for pregnant women, it has meant safe delivery of healthy babies. We encourage them in their important work in making people’s lives better.” said H.E. Mr. Matthew Neuhaus, then Australia’s Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Democratic Republic of Congo.

One key actor in the program is the Community Technology Development Trust and Plan International Zimbabwe, which works with private sector healthcare clinics to provide sustainable, cost-effective sexual and reproductive health services. An increase in access to health services means women can make informed decisions on the family planning methods they want. Being able to control how many children they have saves women’s lives and gives them greater control over education for themselves and their children.

The construction of Maternal Waiting Homes has eased the burden for women, reduced maternal and neonatal deaths, transmission of HIV from mother to child and the risk of HIV transmission between those assisting and conducting deliveries. Since the first home was constructed in 2012, there has been significant reduction in the number of babies born HIV positive to 1 percent from an alarming 10 percent before the homes were built. The provincial and districts government is now rolling the Maternal Waiting Homes to other areas as a model for enhancing maternal and child health.

“The provision of a safe place to deliver has changed our lives. We no longer have to worry about walking long distances while in labour and incurring costs of going to Mutoko District Hospital to deliver. The home has brought a lot of benefits such as learning which we did not think initially,” says an expectant woman at the Kawere Maternity Waiting Home.

At the Mongu and Kaoma districts in neighbouring Zambia, the same transformation has been observed. With funding from AACES, Oxfam which implements the AACES program in Zambia has provided close to 27,000 people access to safe and sustainable water, appropriate sanitation, and safer hygiene practices.

“Australia’s support to Oxfam will help improve the health and quality of life of women, children, the elderly and people with disability in Kaoma and Mongu Districts. We want to see these communities enjoy better access to clean and safe water and sanitation services, as well as fewer inequalities in the impact of water and sanitation challenges on women, men, girls and boys, and vulnerable groups,” says H.E. Neuhaus.

The program has brought about positive initial outcomes by training women in construction, giving them skills to build and maintain water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure, thereby increasing their access to income-generating opportunities. Women comprise 44 per cent of the membership of the Water and Sanitation Management Committees, giving them greater voice to demand their rights and influence policy changes.

Clean, safe and adequate water was provided to more than 6,948 people through the drilling of 24 new demonstrative inclusive boreholes using low-cost manual drilling technology and rehabilitation of 10 boreholes using community-based enterprises. Continued mentorship and development of women owned construction companies and community-based manual drilling enterprises, ensured the successful building of infrastructure and community-based enterprises, and also increased confidence and competence.

AACES is a partnership of the Australian Government, 10 Australian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and their Africa-based partners. The \$90 million program is being implemented in 11 African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. ACBF boosts COMESA's research capabilities with \$3 million grant

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) launched in August 2014, a US\$3 million project to help the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa's (COMESA) Secretariat address the challenge of inadequate capacity for the conduct and coordination of policy research and analysis – a state of affairs, which had affected the Secretariat's ability to develop and utilize quality, relevant and timely research to inform the bloc's economic and trade policy.

The goal of the three-year project was to improve the conduct and utilization of research through the establishment and resourcing of a research unit that would spearhead the conduct, coordination, and dissemination of economic and trade policy research. In addition, the project incorporates a mechanism for continuous hands-on advisory, technical support, and training to the departments and organs of COMESA.

Significant achievements

The functional Research Unit-the first of its kind - is in full operation and is actively contributing to the production and coordination of research information to feed into the deliberations of the committees, councils and other organs of the trading bloc.

Boosting intra-regional trade

Its establishment has also facilitated the conduct of several strategic studies such as the study on 'Trade Volumes within COMESA', which was motivated by the desire of the secretariat to improve intra-regional trade among member countries as a way of mitigating the aggregate production deficit of food and agricultural goods in the region, in the short to medium term.

The research highlighted several critical strategies for bridging the intra-regional trade gap as well as delineated opportunities and mechanisms by which COMESA can boost trade, especially in food and agricultural products among member countries. The study, among other things, revealed that COMESA can promote intra-regional trade within the short to medium term while allowing the joint volumes to increase, particularly for agricultural products. It noted that the region must balance aggregate production deficit by promoting trade transfers from member countries with excess production to member countries with a deficit. Furthermore, the study showed that unlike food and agricultural products, trade in minerals should target markets outside the bloc given the pattern of demand. Nonetheless, member states needed to develop their industrial base in order to process these commodities locally before they were exported. The proposed strategy was to help the countries to leverage the benefit of value addition, and to create the much-needed jobs for the burgeoning youth population of the region as well as grow the economies of member states.

Since its establishment in 1994, the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has focused on promoting regional integration through trade development, investment promotion and sustainable utilization of natural resources for the mutual benefit of citizens of the region. Developing and utilizing quality, relevant and timely research to inform economic and trade policy has been one of the key priorities of COMESA.

4. Economic Policy Management Program (EPM) improves efficiency of the public sector in sub-Saharan Africa

Interview with Kennedy BWALYA, Economic Policy Management Programme Officer at the University of Zambia (EPM Zambia)

The Economic Policy Management Program (EPM) was set up in 1994 as a response to Africa's needs for skilled experts in economic policy research and analysis that could provide informed opinion to policy makers on various macroeconomic stabilization measures, development management issues and poverty reduction. Two EPM programs were initially established at universities in Canada and France and in 1998 the programs were transferred to four Africa Partner Universities (APUs) in Ghana, Uganda, Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon. The African Building Capacity Foundation (ACBF) in partnership with the World Bank Institute has been the main sponsor of the Economic Policy Management Program in Africa. The overall goal of the EPM program is to improve the efficiency of the public sector in sub-Saharan African countries through the enhancement of capacity for economic policy analysis and management.

5. ZIPAR has made 'significant contributions' to policy making, thanks to ACBF's support - Zambian government

The Zambian Ministry of Finance expressed gratitude to the Foundation for the positive impact the Zambia Institute for Policy Research (ZIPAR) has made in the policy making space in the country. ACBF has made a 10-year investment in capacity building in support of the government of Zambia through ZIPAR. As ACBF's support to ZIPAR comes to a close, the Foundation's investment "has been instrumental in establishing ZIPAR as a pre-eminent and recognized think-tank in Zambia. To date, ZIPAR has scored significant achievements in supporting various aspects of the policy process in government, the private sector and civil society," said the Permanent Secretary in Ministry of Finance, Dr. Ronald SIMWINGA, in a letter to the ACBF.

ZIPAR is a semi-autonomous Policy Think Tank that fosters effective capacity to undertake economic policy analysis and research in Zambia, provides training and policy advice to government officials, conducts research in areas of economic policy formulation and management' and promotes policy dialogue with Zambia through dissemination workshops, conferences, and publications.

ZIPAR has played a leading role in carrying out research and policy analysis to provide evidence-based policy recommendations and advice to various ministries and government institutions in Zambia. This includes working with the members of parliament by providing their parliamentary committees with well researched and analyzed memoranda on relevant topics to their agenda during their parliamentary sessions.

ZIPAR has also made initial inroads by engaging with the private sector on policy matters through presentations at private sector business seminars, including research topics that contribute to shaping policies affecting the sector.

Despite the initial funding coming to an end, ZIPAR, with the support of the Ministry of Finance in Zambia plans to request for ACBF's continued financial support for the second phase. The second phase of this project is set to scale-up and consolidate the achievements of phase I. "I would like to confirm that the government of Zambia is desirous and keen to ensure that ZIPAR continuous to render its contribution to the policy process in Zambia in order to improve the economic governance of the country," said Dr. Simwinga.

7. Coming in full circle: born and bred of the capacity development efforts of ACBF

This is the story of Dr. Pamela KABASO, the current Executive Director of the Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis (ZIPAR), a semi-autonomous Policy Think Tank supported by ACBF. ZIPAR's mandate is to conduct research and analysis for policy formulation, implementation, and monitoring. Dr. Kabaso is a beneficiary of two ACBF post graduate scholarships. She narrates her story on how ACBF scholarship helped change her life and how it enabled her to contribute to evidence-based policy making in Zambia.

I graduated in 1996 from the University of Zambia with an economics major. Upon graduation, I was awarded a scholarship to study for a master's degree in economics at the University of Nairobi. The scholarship was funded by the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) through a project at the Directorate of Macroeconomics and Policy Analysis (DMPA) in the Zambian Ministry of Finance. The ACBF support to the ministry had just begun and was intended to build capacity in Macroeconomics Policy analysis. When I completed the master's degree, I joined the Department of Economics at the University of Zambia as a lecturer. At that time, the Department was grossly understaffed because of the economic challenges the country was going through.

The University staff development program had been put on hold. In addition, most people who were able to obtain externally funded scholarships to study abroad were not returning to the University or to Zambia. The ACBF support to the Ministry of Finance under the DMPA project enabled more people to be trained within universities in Africa and later join the Ministry and the University of Zambia.

In 2005, I was awarded a second scholarship by the Africa Economic Research Consortium (AERC), another ACBF-supported institution, to study at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa under the Collaborative PhD Programme (CPP). After obtaining a PhD in Economics in 2010, I returned to the University of Zambia. However, armed with new energy. I was looking for something a bit more challenging. When an opportunity opened at the newly established Think Tank, the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis (ZIPAR), I took a leave of absence from the University and joined ZIPAR as a Research Fellow. After working for ZIPAR for only a few months, the Executive Director left and I was appointed acting Director while the Steering Committee, the Board of ZIPAR, was working to fill the position. I acted in the position for over one year and the committee recommended that I be appointed as Executive Director of ZIPAR.

ZIPAR is a semi-autonomous policy Think Tank established by the government of Zambia with the support of the ACBF. It was established as an offshoot of the DMPA Projects at the Ministry of Finance, the same project where funding for the master's programme came from. Therefore, I have come full circle and I see myself as born and bred of the capacity building efforts of the ACBF.

Looking back 18 years ago, the ACBF was hardly known, even to me as I set out for University of Nairobi. But today, many institutions in Zambia have either been directly or indirectly impacted positively by the capacity building efforts of the ACBF. ZIPAR is currently playing a leading role in carrying out research and policy analysis to provide evidence-based policy recommendations and advice to various Ministries and Government Institutions in Zambia. This includes working with the Members of Parliament by providing their Parliamentary Committees with well researched and analysed memoranda on topics relevant to their agenda during their Parliamentary Sessions.

ZIPAR has also made initial inroads by engaging with the private sector on policy matters through making presentations at private sector business seminars, including our research topics that contribute to shaping policies affecting the sector. We are also actively engaged with the media to reach out to the wider public to enrich policy dialogue and debate by providing informative commentary on current and future policy developments.



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