



ECZ

IN PERSPECTIVE

News about the Examinations Council of Zambia

Issue No. 17

July to December 2020

ECZ Expands Service Provision to North-Western



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The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) was established in 1983 by an Act of Parliament Number 15, Chapter 137 of the laws of Zambia with a mandate to set and conduct examinations and award certificates and diplomas to successful candidates.

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VISION

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An Examining Body of Excellence.

MISSION STATEMENT

Efficiently Conduct Assessments and Award Certificates of Comparable International Standards.

VALUES

Accountability

Efficiency

Integrity

Confidentiality

Transparency

Teamwork

Competence

Innovation

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EDITORIAL



Dear Readers,

We are happy once again to bring to you the second publication for the year 2020. As you may be aware, we publish this newsletter twice a year (January to June and July to December). I urge you to take time and read other editions available from our website at www.exams-council.org.zm to acquaint yourself with current happenings in the Examinations Council of Zambia and assessment in general.

2020 has been a difficult period for most individuals and businesses due to the Corona Virus Pandemic. A lot of businesses have been disrupted around the globe. The effects of this pandemic cannot be overemphasized. However, what has kept all of us till now is the fact that we put hands together and found strategies to keep floating. It is not yet known when COVID will be defeated, hence the need to put frantic efforts to observe the guidelines that prevent or minimize the spread of this Corona Virus.

Through it all, ECZ has functioned as mandated and delivered to the people of Zambia the much needed education services in terms of assessments. This happened at Grade 7, 9, 12, General Certificate of Education and Teacher Education levels. Working with stakeholders, we are pleased to have conducted leakage free examinations in 2020. Indeed, this will remain in history books as we strive to promote Zambia's school qualification internationally.

We take this opportunity to share our excitement with you our readers on the award given to the ECZ for this very publication "ECZ IN PERSPECTIVE" by the Zambia Public Relations Association (ZAPRA) in Livingstone on 9th October 2020. The ECZ's newsletter was awarded Best Publication following a tightly contested category for this award.

As a public institution, ECZ has continued to bring services closer to the people by opening Service Centres in provincial towns. We promise to add to the list of our innovations and bring you Information Communication Technology platforms for improved service delivery.

As we come to the end of the ECZ Strategic Plan (2016-2020), the ECZ has implemented various examination reforms aimed at improving operational efficiency, capacity building of staff and service delivery. Without doubt, ECZ has achieved milestones much to the satisfaction of our stakeholders in the past five year period. Through stakeholder consultations and promotion of the Zambian school qualification within and beyond borders, ECZ has set itself as a key education partner in the development of our nation.

In conclusion, we encourage you to continue subscribing to this publication were you will get valuable information on Examination Administration and Management by the ECZ. We thank you for your support.

The Council, Management and Staff of the ECZ wish you a Prosperous 2021.

Enjoy reading!

Nicolas Nkhuwa

Acting Public Relations Specialist

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Dr Michael M. Chilala

Success over COVID – 19 and Rains

Despite the effects of the COVID -19 Pandemic on our examinations business, we remained resolute to conduct clean examinations in the second half of the year 2020. Having opted for postponement of the examinations by about one month, the Grade 9 External and GCE examinations were planned to run from the end of August to mid-September, while the Grades 7, 9 and 12 examinations were planned run from the beginning of December to the end of December, 2020.

This shift brought a number of challenges that required careful coordination among the Examinations Council of Zambia, the various structures of the Ministry of General Education, security wings and all other stakeholders. In order to succeed, we had to plan together with the Ministry of General Education and all the Ministry's stakeholders.

Once we had agreed, we observed that we were going to receive all the examination materials for the end of year examinations before the examinations begun. This caused us to think about how to prolong the period for storage of examination materials at ECZ headquarters and reduce the period in which they would be kept in the strong rooms at District level before they were actually administered to the candidates. To solve the problem of storage, we had to transform our processing room into another of our strong room within one week.

The next challenge to overcome was the hazardous conditions under which the examination question papers were to be distributed, as the examination was to run deep into the rain season for the first time. While we were able to deliver the materials to the provinces and districts, we were unable to ensure delivery by road to all schools because the routes to some of the schools were flooded. With the support of Zambia Airforce and the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit of the Office of the Vice President, we were able to airlift the materials to and from the schools whose routes were flooded.

By the end of the 2020 examinations session, we had succeeded in a number of ways, as follows: (1) We had successfully introduced School Based Assessment (SBA) and College Based Assessment (CBA) with clear Guidelines for the teachers, lecturers and learners to

follow. This step saw the integration of marks obtained by learners during teaching and learning contribute into the final grades the learners obtained; (2) For the first time, St. Jeff College Primary School of South Africa presented candidates for our Grade 9 examination, expanding our export brand of examinations to two, after the Grade 7 examination, which had been running in South Africa since 2017; and (3) For the first time ever, learners of the Chinese Language were successfully examined in the Chinese Language, bringing the total number of foreign languages to two, namely French and Chinese, exclusive of English which is the official language of instruction in Zambian schools.

We had once again, by God's Grace and Planning, managed to achieve a leakage free examination in 2020. We as management and staff, pay special appreciation to Government, through the Ministry of General Education, the Council of the Examinations Council of Zambia, security wings and all stakeholders at National, Provincial, District, Zone and School levels, for working together as a team to achieve this important milestone.

The innovations we undertook during the period from July to December, 2020 included the development and launch of the Online Payment Gateway (OPG), which enables online payment of examination fees and payments for other services using mobile money and visa; and development and launch of the Online Results Verification System (ORVS), which enables online verification of results. We also embarked on development of the Strategic Plan for the period 2021 to 2025, to replace the once whose life-span ended on 31st December, 2020.

We therefore conclude that by the Grace of God, COVID-19 and heavy rains did not hinder our progress in 2020. We hereby invite you to continue following us through our Newsletter publications, Facebook page and website to keep abreast with the developments in the Examinations Council of Zambia.

"We as Management and Staff, pay special appreciation to Government, through the Ministry of General Education, the Council of the Examinations Council of Zambia, Security Wings and all Stakeholders at National, Provincial, District, Zone and School levels..."

ECZ Expands Service Provision to North-Western

By Nicolas Nkhuwa



The newly opened ECZ Solwezi Service Centre

31st December 2020 was a joyous day for residents of North-Western Province when yet another ECZ Service Centre was opened to mark the 8th Service Centre opened by the ECZ since 2014. The Solwezi Service Centre was officially opened by the North Western Provincial Permanent Secretary, Mr Willis Mangimela. The colourful launch of the Service Centre was attended by various stakeholders from the education sector and residents from within the Province.

The ECZ Solwezi Service centre which is located near the Provincial Education Offices (PEO) is part of the decentralisation plan by the ECZ and owning up to government's agenda of taking public services closer to the people.

"The opening of this Service Centre will improve service delivery in North-Western."

"We are grateful to ECZ for opening this service centre Mr Mangimela said. In order to realise meaningful development, people will no longer travel long distances to access Council Services as they have now been brought closer to the people in different provincial towns. By taking services closer to the people, education support services such as verification of results and replacement of lost or damaged certificates will easily be accessed. Other services such as accumulation of GCE certificates, combinations

of Grade 9 statements of results, equating of foreign qualifications to the Zambian standard, renewal and registration of examination centre status, as well as pre and post examination queries can be accessed from the newly opened Service Centre for residents based in North-Western Province.

So far, the ECZ has opened Service Centres in the following Provincial towns: Lusaka, Kitwe, Mpika, Mongu, Livingstone, Chipata, Kasama and now Solwezi.

The ECZ is hopeful that it will conclude the establishment of Service Centres in all Provincial Towns by March 2021.



North Western Province Permanent Secretary Mr Willis Mangimela



ECZ Director Dr Michael M Chilala

LAUNCH OF SOLWEZI SERVICE CENTRE IN PICTURES



1. ECZ Director and Provincial Educational Officer hands over a present to Regional Commander Zambia Army, Brg. General Nyoni

2. Provincial PS Mr Willis Mangimela checks on services provided at the Solwezi Service Centre

3. ECZ Officers pose for a photo after the official opening of the centre

4. Service Centre Officers checking on the system for verification of results and other services

5. Invited guests witnessing the opening of the Service Centre

6. Project committee finalising the works at the Solwezi Service Centre

What is the “Curriculum”?



By Mr William M Kapambwe - ECZ Deputy Director

The debate around the interpretation of “curriculum” is long-standing. As far back as 1975, Stenhouse observed that the educationist is confronted by two different views of the curriculum. On the one hand the curriculum is seen as an intention plan or prescription, an idea of what one would like to happen in schools. On the other hand it is seen as the existing state of affairs in schools, what does in fact happen (Stenhouse, 1975).

When we ask what “curriculum” means we get different answers according to the views, background and experiences of the respondent. At a general level, an explanation can be understood in relation to what is included and/or excluded in the description. For example, Eisner (1985) defines a curriculum as a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one more learners, whereas Fraser (1993) has a much wider interpretation of curriculum as the inter-related totality of aims, learning content, evaluation procedures and teaching and learning activities, opportunities and experiences that guide and implement didactic activities in a planned and justified manner.

The older, narrower definition says that when studying a curriculum, we must look at the curriculum plan i.e. the document that sets out the intention of what, how and why something should be taught. In this definition, a curriculum is a “course of study” or “study programme”, whereas the broader definition is a more inclusive concept that comprises all the opportunities for learning and is viewed in historical perspective in its socio-political context. Narrow definitions are likely to foster a conception of curriculum change as a limited and largely technical exercise.

Grundy (1987), Goodson (1984,1989) and other educationist argue that an awareness of the different interpretation is important in developing our understanding of what a curriculum is. Goodman (1998) in particular says that the struggle over the definition of “curriculum” is a matter of social and political priorities, as well as intellectual discourse, otherwise the study of schooling will leave unquestioned assumptions that should be at the heart of the intellectual understanding and practical operation of schooling.

Another broad definition is that on the

Republic of South Africa National Education Policy Initiative (RSA, 1993): “Curriculum refers to the teaching and learning activities and experiences which are provided by schools”. The definition includes:

- The aims and objectives of the education system and the specific goals of the school.
- The selection of content to be taught, how it is arranged into subjects and what skills and processes are included.
- Ways of teaching and learning and relationships between teachers and learners.
- Forms of assessment and evaluation used.

The definition covers more than the stated aims and subject specific documentation, which can be referred to as intended curriculum. The curriculum also involves the consideration of actual classroom practices and experiences-the enacted curriculum, which results from the interpretation and implementation of the curriculum. Having the same curriculum on paper does not mean that all school or learning institutions experience the same curriculum. This is profoundly affected by resources (e.g. laboratories and libraries) and materials that support the learning process(e.g textbooks). It is also affected by experiences of disruption or continuity, and by the quality and morals of teachers. This means that improving teachers’ knowledge and skills may have an effect on the way they will interpret and implement the intended curriculum.

If the definition of “curriculum” includes activities, opportunities and experiences, we

can ask whether the following are part of a curriculum:

The preference for a subject because of a teacher’s knowledge on the field and choices of teaching strategies.

The Principal locking the gates at 08:00hrs because she wants to force the children to be punctual.

The fact that Mathematics lessons are never scheduled for last period on Friday, but Life Orientation Lessons often are.

The impact of teachers teaching subjects that they never studied themselves.

Classes that consist mainly on weak learners and repeaters

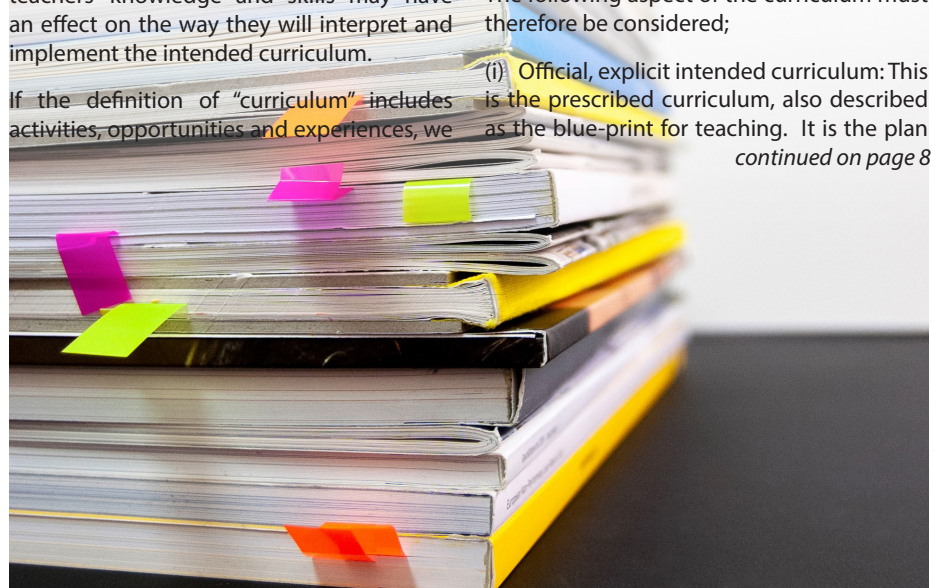
The above are all example of the enacted, experienced or lived curriculum, which can explain why the same prescribed curriculum can generate very different results in different schools. In other words, the enacted curriculum is the actual process of teaching and learning, the operational aspect of implementing the curriculum which is based on how the teachers perceive and interpret the curriculum.

In short, the curriculum can be defined as an organized framework that delineates the content that learners are to learn, the processes through which learners achieve the objectives/goals and the context in which teaching and learning occurs.

The following aspect of the curriculum must therefore be considered;

- (i) Official, explicit intended curriculum: This is the prescribed curriculum, also described as the blue-print for teaching. It is the plan

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Minister Commends ECZ and MoGE Staff for Professionalism



Minister of General Education. Dr Dennis M. Wanchinga MP

“I wish to commend all the members of staff of the Ministry of General Education and the Examinations Council of Zambia for maintaining the professional way of conducting examinations despite the challenges experienced due to COVID-19” said Dr. Wanchinga.

The commendation came during the press briefing as the General Certificate of Education (GCE) and Grade 9 External Examination results were announced to the nation by the Minister of General Education.

As you may be aware, various examining boards in different countries have had to either vary the time, method, type or strategy for examining candidates in 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic. We have followed how various education systems of the world have experienced reactions from their candidates and the people they serve based on the alternatives they took in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In some countries, candidates were made to repeat grades.

The Minister said the successful conduct

“Ministry of General Education and Examinations Council of Zambia are capable of navigating serious challenges to still serve the mandate of providing credible and leakage free examinations to the Zambia people”

of the 2020 Grade 9 External and GCE examinations gives confidence to the Government and Zambian people that the Ministry of General Education and Examinations Council of Zambia are capable of navigating serious challenges to still serve the mandate of providing credible and leakage free examinations to the Zambia people.

Meanwhile, the Minister also applauded Teacher Unions, Security Wings and all other stakeholders that were involved in monitoring the conduct of the 2020 Grade 9 External and GCE Examinations for a job well done.

What is the “Curriculum”?

Continued from page 7

or intention of, for instance the Ministry of General Education. A single plan can be used for different learners, although its contexts can differ greatly.

(ii) Enacted curriculum as practice: This is the curriculum as it is experienced. It is also referred to as the non-official, implicit curriculum as implemented by a teacher, and is what is actually taught and learnt. Misunderstandings, resource constraints and so on can interfere with the teacher’s abilities to implement a curriculum plan exactly as intended.

(iii) Covert curriculum: This is teaching that is implicit (not spelt out) but nonetheless deliberates on the part of the teacher or school. It is especially important in early schooling when consideration for others, order and obedience, team-work and cooperation are focal points. “Play” in early schooling is a deliberate curriculum strategy to develop important attitudes and skills such as fine motor skills, spatial differentiation and various pre-numeracy skills.

(iv) Hidden curriculum: This is learning that is hidden from the teachers as well as from the learners. It is another form of implicit learning which the teachers did not intend and are probably not even aware of. We consciously learn many things about the world, or learn to see the world in particular ways, simply by spending a lot of time in the sort of environment that schools and classrooms present to us.

(v) Assessed Curriculum: This is the knowledge and skills that are measured to determine learner achievement or what objectives or learning outcomes have been attained. Assessment is an important element of a curriculum because it establishes how learners will be measured on performance.



ECZ conducted a training of stakeholders in preparation for the launch of the Payment Gateway. The training was important for ensuring effective use of the system and avoid system failure due to lack of knowledge by those appointed to work under various examinations related assignments using this system.

The Payment Gateway is an ICT Innovation and platform that will allow Examination Centres and eligible candidates to make payments for examinations at the time of registration using multiple payment options other than the traditional cash payments or bank deposits only. This system will serve to bring efficiency in the collection of fees and accountabilities in the entire process. The training was conducted in all the ten (10) provinces of Zambia.

This is an ECZ innovation in collaboration with INFRATEL.



Discussion during the training session



ECZ officers leading the training

ECZ Focuses More Examination fees Payment Methods



With the world evolving in global service delivery, a shift from traditional means of transacting where cash is involved is slowly reducing. It can also be seen as one way in which institutions are gearing up to be efficient and effective in the management and administration of organizations through improved systems.

As a service organization, the ECZ has improved its service delivery by way of introducing innovative and cost effective systems for conducting business with its clients.

Paying Examination fees will soon be

made easy once the payment Gateway is launched. This will see candidates pay for their examination fees from anywhere using services such as Mobile money, Visa payment options other than traditional bank system.

For a long time, ECZ has depended on candidate to make cash payments at the school for examination fees. Later, this cash would be deposited in ECZ accounts at designated Banks. It was a system which would see parents give their children money to pay examination fees. However, the risk of moving with cash was high in that some candidates would end up losing the money even before they made a payment at the

school. Parents would also send money to their children using different means which increased the costs on their side in the process. With the payment Gateway, Examination fees will be easily deposited and accounted for throughout the registration process.

The system will among others correct challenges faced in the auditing of examination fees at school levels. The system brings efficiency in the candidate registration process. Over and above, the issuing of hardcopy receipts when one pays examination fees will be a thing of the past.

INDEED, TEACHERS HAVE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN REIMAGINING THE FUTURE



By Akakulubelwa Nalishuwa

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly left and remains to exert devastating impacts on the education sector. The 'alternative' classroom, the internet, is still not accessed by all learners. A wide digital divide both in terms of access and usage is in existence. "Globally, some 826 million learners (50% of the total number of learners) kept out of the classroom by the COVID-19 pandemic, did not have access to a household computer and 43% (706 million) had no internet at home", (UNESCO, 2020a). In Sub-Saharan Africa, "216 million learners (89%) of learners, did not have access to a household computer, 82 percent (199 million) did not have household internet and 11 percent (26 million) were not covered by mobile networks", (UNESCO, 2020a). In Zambia, according to the 2018 National Survey on Access and Usage of ICTs by Households and Individuals (ZICTA, 2018), 91.9 percent of households did not own a computer, 82.3 percent did not have access to internet, 60 percent did not have access to Radio, 63 percent did not have access to television and 70.4 percent of participants (Aged 10 and above) did not own a smart phone.

The consequence of the global, Sub-Saharan and Zambia access statistics is that, over 80 percent of learners did not have access to alternative modes of learning during school closures. The implication of this status quo was well explained in the joint statement by the UNESCO Director-General, UNICEF Executive Director, ILO Director General and the Education International General Secretary, on the commemoration of this year's (2020) World Teachers' Day. The statement among other issues, pointed out the, "urgent need for attention and increased investment in the education sector, if the learning crisis caused by COVID-19 is not to turn into a catastrophe", (UNESCO, 2020c).

What then can be done? Policy formulators and Teachers should lead the way. Teachers' should straightaway ensure that no learner is left behind. With most schools having reopened, teachers should remember that this is no time to relax. It is important however, to note that, the adjustments in teaching and learning schedules, such as multiple sessions and alternate reporting days, all

aimed at creating opportunities for learning, with social distancing in mind, created another burden of reduced teacher-learner contact time. Learning from the UNESCO International Institute for Education Policy (IIEP) Policy toolbox (UNESCO, 2020a), the burden of reduced contact time can be lessened among other options, increasing out of school learning time and through the effective use of school and community infrastructure. Lost learning time as a result of adjusted schedules can be compensated by making sure that learners continue studying out of school using strategies such as homework, assignments, textbooks, using lesson notes prints outs or available educational technology, via mediums such as internet, televisions and radio. With the ZICTA 2018 findings that 63 percent of households did not have access to television, the village Satellite television project launched by the government in 2018 (Xinhua, 2018), to provide satellite TV to over 500 sites (Villages, Schools and Community centres) across Zambia, becomes instrumental infrastructure that can be utilized in promoting learning out of the classroom, especially for learners from households and communities that do not have access to television. For instance, learners at the end of their shift, that is in a multiple sessions' arrangement, can compensate for the lost contact time by spending the rest of school time listening to lessons presented on the educational channel via the satellite television. Maximum utilization of school halls, labs and libraries among other school infrastructure, should be enhanced so as to provide extra-rooms that learners can use for their home or remedial work, far away from home distractions.

Policy formulators and Teachers should lead the way.

To conclude, the power of re-imagining the future, inherent in teachers cannot be overemphasized. It is therefore, important that teachers utilize all strategies available to their disposal to ensure that no learner is left behind. Teachers' should be encouraged to fully exploit the use of School-Based Assessments as they are an important tool in close monitoring of the progress of learners. Assessment feedback from SBA will provide teachers reliable information to rely on when making instructional or learning decisions. For instance, if a teacher identifies loss of learning, catch-up strategies such as teaching at the right level and/or blended learning can be employed to correct the situation. Teachers are further encouraged to enhance their skills and potential by utilizing professional development opportunities available within schools and zones. It is through enhanced skills and realized potential that teachers' would be able to fully create a caring and optimistic school environment that supports the holistic development of learners out of the Covid-19 crisis.

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Providing Assessments of Comparable International Standards

Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) is charged with the mandate to set and conduct examinations and award certificates and diplomas to deserving candidates. This is achieved through the support from government and education partners who amalgamate resources and closely monitor their utilization to support education assessments.

As an Examining Body, ECZ is a member of associations that promote best practices in assessment and education service delivery. Such organisations include: the Southern Africa Association for Education Assessment (SAAEA), Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) and the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA).

Every year, conferences are held to bring together educationist, researchers and stakeholders in education to share best practices and research results. These play part in policy formulation and works to improve assessment at regional, continental and global levels.

For the past few years, ECZ has hosted the regional and continental conferences; a lot has changes in the way business is conducted

in Zambia in as far as assessment is concerned. Innovations have sparked, moving to ensure that assessment brings out true skills and competencies in learners.

So far, ECZ has developed Assessment Schemes aimed at providing learners and teachers with a chance to understand assessment criteria. ECZ has further trained a number of staff in different programmes such as adaptive English for learners with Hearing Impairment (HI). In house trainings have also been conducted to ensure continued professional development of staff in order to meet the ever increasing public demands in assessment.

Working with the Ministry of General Education, School-Based Assessments have been rolled out in schools. The aim of SBA is set to bring true skills and knowledge acquisition in learners that otherwise is difficult to determine through a one off test.

These strides are meant to promote the Zambian school qualification and maintain it as a creditable qualification on the global spectrum.

Facebook Messages on the Opening of ECZ Solwezi Service Centre



Coster Chisala Katwishi

ECZ has greatly improved. We are expecting every government department to improve in this way.



1



Enock Mendasi

We really appreciate to have ECZ service center office in North-Western province.



1



Mulenga Ngoma

I visited today, I was impressed with the hospitality. Brovo!



Bupe Esther

Wow this is really a good news for our friends from North Western province.



5



Getrude Kangwa

Thank you so very much for remembering us Job well done



IMPORTANCE OF THE GRADE 7 COMPOSITE EXAMINATION



By Dr Michael M. Chilala

There have been comments on several media, arguing for or against the abolition of the examination. Some of the reasons given are the following: (1) Since everyone passes, it makes no sense to continue with the examination; (2) since no one requests for the Grade 7 Certificate, it is of no use to continue with the examination and later on, produce the certificate; (3) the Grade 7 Composite Examination is too expensive for nothing, since everyone proceeds to Grade 8; (4) the Grade 7 Composite Examination comprises multiple choice (Objective Type) questions, therefore one can pass the examination even just through guess work; (5) The Grade 7 Composite Examination cannot be used to assess higher order skills and competencies because of the use of multiple choice questions. These are the main lines of thought, among those who are against continuation of the Grade 7 Composite examination.

I have taken time to analyse the comments and observed that the public are basically questioning the economic value of the examination considering the cost, its perceived inability to separate learners who achieve the set standards and those who do not; and the validity of the examination based on the types of test items (questions) used in the question papers. In responding to this matter, I thought it wise to explain as follows:

The Value of the Grade Composite Examination

The Grade 7 Composite Examination enables the primary school learners to have equitable opportunities to self-development and career growth, regardless of their geographical location and social - economic situation. It may, therefore, be argued that the Grade 7 Composite Examination is the greatest equaliser in Zambia. It is not an exaggeration to argue that a good proportion of well celebrated public servants and entrepreneurs came from

underprivileged, rural communities where opportunities were and are still very limited. Real opportunities dawned after they had written the Grade 7 Composite Examination and based on competitive performance, they were selected to the prestigious secondary schools, together with those from the affluent families. In the secondary schools they went to, they wore the same uniform and formed their career paths and character to become who they are today. This is what we call in education, Social Mobility. Without the Grade 7 Composite Examination, I have no doubt in my mind that such would, most probably have remained in their impoverished communities, despite the potential in them, as there would have been no known fair and reliable way of identifying them for placement in the schools they went to.

It is clear that even today, the same examination still fishes out the learners with exceptional potential from typical rural and underprivileged communities for placement in the same secondary schools with those from the privileged communities, based on the Grade 7 Composite Examination results. It may not be wrong to argue that abolishing the Grade 7 Composite Examination may just increase the inequities that exist between our rural and urban communities. This is because the children from rural and underprivileged communities may be permanently sentenced to their environment, regardless of their potential due to lack of objective ways of identifying and placing them in competitive schools. On the other hand, children from affluent communities will dominate all competitive education institutions, from secondary schools to universities, thereby increasing the gap between the rich and the poor.

It is therefore clear that the Grade 7 Composite Examination is as relevant today as it was when it was introduced as it plays a pivotal role in ensuring that equity is achieved in the

placement of learners as they transitioned from primary education to secondary education. The examination provides an opportunity for the all learners regardless of their gender, location or social-economic background, to be placed in the appropriate secondary schools to optimise their personal and career development potential for their personal and national good.

Validity of the Grade 7 Composite Examination

In simple terms, refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is intended to measure. There are different forms of validity such as face validity, content validity, construct validity and predictive validity.

Face Validity refers to the extent to which on face value, the test should appear to be measuring what it is supposed to measure. I should indicate that most public comments have discredited the Grade 7 Composite Examination based on the objective type (multiple choice) questions (items) that comprise the question papers for this examination. There are arguments that one can pass the examination through guess work, thereby causing the public think that higher order skills cannot be measured through objective type test items. In order to respond to this kind of thinking, we need to analyse the other forms of validity:

Content Validity is the degree to which an assessment instrument or test is representative of the entire content or domain it is designed to measure. In order to ensure representativeness of the test, ECZ maps all the learning outcomes of the different subjects across Broom's Taxonomy of learning objectives. Once mapped, the content is quantified to determine the number of questions per topic, ensuring that the test covers all content. It should be noted that objective type test items enhance the validity of the test as they enable the test to

cover more content than any other type of test items.

Construct Validity may be considered to be the rational process of determining the inherent attributes the test intends to measure in the learners, in this case, according to the learning outcomes as they are stated in the teaching and learning curricula. In the case of the Grade 7 Composite Examination, the content are mapped against Bloom's Taxonomy, according to what they require the learner to demonstrate. The learning outcomes are therefore mapped at the mere knowledge (recall); understanding (showing comprehension by explaining); application (using concepts, symbols and knowledge on real life and maiden situations), and higher order skills such as analysis (breaking body of knowledge into smaller units for easy understanding), synthesis (building a body of knowledge from smaller units or component parts) and evaluation (making judgements). Once the mapping is done, the number of items per topic and per set of learning outcomes are quantified to determine the number of test items that will comprise the test. The test plan (test specification) is then developed, just like a house plan, to ensure that all tests have test items of similar quantities set at the similar level of difficult. The test items are then pre-test and item analysis is done to ensure that they meet prescribed standards of difficult and discrimination ratios. Additionally, the potency of the options (distractors) to distract the correct answer (key) is measured through distractor analysis during pre-test.

Those options (distractors) that are found to be way off the proportions of pre-test candidates that selected the correct answer (key) are discarded, other options are included and the items are sent for pre-test again. Other validation efforts include screening of options (distractors) in terms of length of words and number of words, to eliminate any characteristics among the options (distractors) that could sell off the correct answer (key). Differential item analysis is done to ensure that all items used meet similar standards across location (rural or urban) and gender (male or female). The information generated from the item analysis during pre-test is used to ensure

that only items that are free from bias and meet the statistically determined validity indicators are included in the final Grade 7 Composite Examination question papers. We may, therefore, argue that the ECZ maintains examination of high construct validity and reliability because of the process of developing its test items.

Predictive Validity, in simple terms, refers the extent to which the scores on a particular test predict future behaviour. In the context of the Grade 7 Composite Examination, we want to understand its predictive validity in terms of the extent to which the candidate's scores in Grade 7 will predict their performance during the Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination at Grade 9 level. We can comfortably state that the Grade 7 Composite Examination has a high predictive validity for the performance during the Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination. For example, there were 149,307 Grade 7 candidates who were in Division Four (which should have been a Fail Grade). When these learners wrote their Grade 9 examination in 2020, there were 119,552 candidates who failed to obtain the Junior Secondary School Leaving Certificate. Similarly, a total of 139,237 candidates were in Division Four in 2017, and when the same cohort of candidates wrote the Grade 9 examination in 2019, a total of 133,606 candidates failed to obtain the Junior Secondary School Leaving Certificate. During the 2016 Grade 7 Composite Examination, a total of 137,172 candidates were in Division Four; when the same group wrote the Grade 9 examination in 2018, a total of 138,833 failed to obtain the Junior Secondary School Leaving Certificate. As demonstrated in the trends above, the Grade 7 Composite Examination is capable of separating the candidates according to their abilities and has a high predictive validity on the performance of learners in the coming examinations.

It should however be noted that, regardless of the ability of the examination to differentiate the learners according to their potential and abilities, and its high predictive validity of learner performance in future examinations, the Grade 7 Composite Examination has been deemed as a No-Fail Examination. This is because everyone that

sits the examination obtains the Certificate, to facilitate implementation of the 9 years of Universal Basic Education, as domesticated in Zambia's Education Policy Document, Educating Our Future of 1996, arising from the World Declaration of Education For All (EFA) at Jomtein, Thailand in 1990. It should be noted that candidates in Division Four would have been failed the examination, without this policy. If they had failed, they would not have appeared on the Selection Lists for Grade 8, hence preventing them from being selected to Grade 8, even when there was space. This would have been against the policy of automatic progression to Grade 8, and the nine years of Universal Basic Education.

Conclusion

it may therefore not be erroneous to conclude as follows: (1) The Grade 7 Composite Examination is an extremely important ingredient in the pursuit of provision of equitable education opportunities for all learners in Zambia, regardless of where they are located (rural or urban) and their sex (male or female); (2) The Grade 7 Composite Examination results are of high validity and reliability because of the quality assurance processes followed in developing the question papers; (3) The Grade 7 Composite Examinations are able to differentiate learners according to their potential; (4) The government policies of nine years of Basic Education and Automatic Progression, as domesticated in Zambia's Education Policy Document, Educating Our Future of 1996; require all primary school learners to progress to Grades 8 and 9 as long as there is space; and (5) Progression of learners who cannot read, write or carry out simple calculation to Grade 8 is not a result of the failure of the Grade 7 composite Examination to differentiate learners according to capabilities, but a failure of policy to use assessment results to improve learner performance.

ECZ STRATEGIC PLAN 2021



Some ECZ employees reviewing the Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Principal Planning officer- Mr Angel Kaliminwa making a presentation on the plan



ECZ Director Dr Michael M. Chilala addressing employees during the development of the Strategic Plan Process

Assistant Director ICT, Ms Christine Simfukwe making a presentation on the balanced score card



The Planning Unit under the Examinations Council of Zambia commenced the process of preparation of the 2021-2025 ECZ Strategic Plan. The development of this plan precedes the 2016 to 2020 plan which comes to an end in December 2020.

ECZ Management considered the development process to include member of staff as part of the stakeholders in order to accord them a chance to share their views and ideas for the development of ECZ. Employees were gathered together in order to chat on the desired plan for the institution. In order to guide the process and not to chock the daily operations, Management grouped employees in difference groups who then were taken on a retreat to discuss the performance of the previous plan and suggest the next course.

On 28th December, 2020 ECZ Council held a meeting in Lusaka to review the final draft of the ECZ Strategic Plan for the next five years. Add pictures of Councillors

The Strategic Plan will guide the operations of the ECZ in fulfilling its mandate as enshrined in the Act. The Plan is set to help ECZ continue on the path of growth, innovations, quality service provision and promoting the Zambian School qualification within and beyond borders.

TO 2025 DEVELOPMENT

IN PICTURES



1. ECZ Councillors in a group discussion headed by Councillor Beard Mwanza

2. Councillors review the draft Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025

3. Council Chairperson Prof. Frank Tailoka addresses the Strategic Plan Review Meeting of Councillors

4. Councillors critically look at sections of the Draft Strategic Plan

5. Group discussion of Councillors during the review meeting

6. Councillors pose for a photo with ECZ Management team after the successful review meeting of the Draft Strategic Plan

Appreciating the Role of an Invigilator

By Edith Talimi



Invigilation of Examination in progress

The successful conduct of examinations cannot be achieved without the involvement of invigilators. But who is an invigilator and what is their role in an examination? An invigilator is someone appointed to observe, oversee or preside over the affairs of an examination.

For Examinations under the ECZ, teachers from different schools are usually appointed and orientated to supervise examinations. The unmatched relationship between ECZ and the Ministry of General Education in running national examinations ensure that human resource is provided. ECZ continues to value these efforts for the delivery of quality assessment to the people of Zambia.

Some of the salient roles of an invigilator include but not limited to administering the materials to the candidates, monitoring the adherence to the examination rules and coordinating the safe conduct of the examinations. An invigilator ensures that candidates are searched before entering the examination room and ensures each candidate is seated in the rightful positions as expressed on the register. Some also ensure that candidates with special needs are provided with the necessary requisites to sit for the examinations. During the examinations, the invigilator acts as an

observer attending to all candidates with impending challenges.

At the end of the examination, the invigilator ensures all candidates have written their details on the scripts before collecting and packaging them. The invigilator will also ensure every script is accounted for according to the number of candidates present during the examination and mark any candidate absent from the examination on the register before sealing off all materials in safety envelopes. The invigilator will also prepare reports and work with other team members to run the examinations smoothly.

During the 2020 Grade 7, 9, and 12 examinations conducted in December, invigilators remained committed to their work despite the rains and other challenges related to weather conditions in different parts of the country. This role can be demanding due to the time one spends in the examination rooms and the need to pay attention to detail to deliver on set benchmarks. The efforts of every invigilator involved in assessment are valued. Without their involvement, the much desired success of examinations would not be achieved.



Kalulushi Whatsapp Group Administrator Arrested

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) working with Zambia Police and other security wings apprehended a Kalulushi resident of the Copperbelt Province for being in possession of suspected 2020 Examination related materials after being tracked for some time.

Male, Evans Mwewa aged 24 of unknown house number but resides in Kalulushi was apprehended on 13th August 2020 in Ndola by a team of ECZ Officers and Police. Mwewa has been advertising the 2020 Examination related materials on social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp groups named "August 31 GCE Exam", "GCE News" and "ECZ Real Data 2020" where he happens to have been soliciting for payments for the said materials from unsuspecting members of the public. The suspect is in police custody awaiting court appearance.

As ECZ, we continue monitoring the physical activities on the ground and those on social media platforms that threaten the smooth conduct and credibility of all examinations at all times.

We sternly warn all the perpetrators of examination malpractices that the ECZ is working tirelessly with law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders to ensure that all those found wanting are prosecuted in accordance with the law.

The public is equally asked to join the fight against such vices in order to protect the integrity of the education system in Zambia.



By Nicolas Nkhuwa

“ECZ IN PERSPECTIVE” GETS ZAPRA BEST PUBLICATION AWARD

Since 2012, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) with continued goodwill and support from the Government, Zambian people and Cooperating Partners introduced a publication dubbed “ECZ IN PERSPECTIVE”. Yes the publication you are currently reading.

On 9th October 2020, ECZ was awarded the Best Publication Award at the 2020 Zambia Public Relations Association Conference which was held from 7th to 9th October 2020 at the Avani Victoria Falls Resort in Livingstone. Mr Nicolas Nkhuwa, Corporate Affairs Officer received the award on behalf of the ECZ. The conference was held under the theme: “Organisational Strategy and Return on Investment- A Case of Climate Change Communication.”

ZAPRA is a professional body for Public Relations and Communications Practitioners

in Zambia whose objective is to promote professionalism, knowledge sharing and ethical conduct among its members.

The ECZ IN PERSPECTIVE newsletter has been a consistent publication tailored to provide information on assessment and the operations of the Council. Through it, the ECZ has reached out to thousands of its stakeholders and the general public with messages on various happenings within ECZ and on topics within the region and beyond. The ECZ IN PERSPECTIVE Newsletter is published twice a year and is available in both electronic and hard copy versions. The targeted audience for this publication includes but not limited to teachers, schools, learners, politicians, academicians, parents and the community at large.

Through the newsletter, we have seen rewards for our efforts so far and look

forward to doing more to create better futures for our clients, partners, employees and our communities. The positive feedback received from the stakeholders has been part of our building blocks for growth. Due to this initiative and positive impact realised, the ECZ deserves the Award.

Find all editions of our great publication to learn more about ECZ and Assessment from the website or simply type the following link in your web browser:

www.exams-council.org.zm/newsletters/



PHOTO



ECZ Chairperson Professor Frank Tailoka talks to ECZ Staff and Management during the staff meeting at ECZ Headquarters in Lusaka



Director and Deputy Director inspecting one of the holding facilities for examination Materials



Assistant Director Certification - Dr Kunda Kuku (L) and ECZ Corporate Affairs Officer - Mr Nicolas Nkhuwa (R) on Radio Kabangabanga in Solwezi



Chipili District Security Committee Members during the 2020 GCE and Grade 9 External Examinations

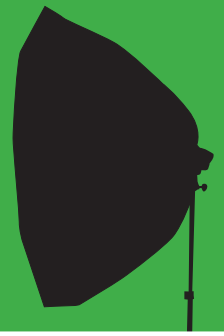


Client completing a form to access Services at the ECZ Solwezi Service Centre



Courtesy visit at the Provincial Administration Office in Northwestern Province prior to the Launch of the Solwezi Service Centre

FOCUS



ECZ Director, Dr Michael M. Chilala having a light moment with some clients at Headquarters in Longacres



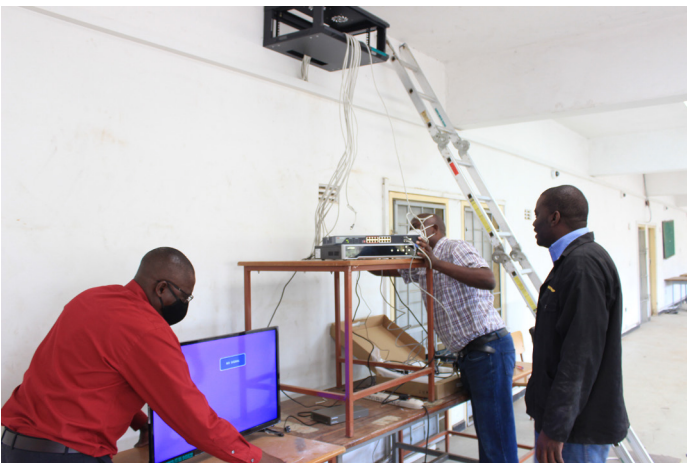
ECZ Director-Dr Michael M. Chilala pays courtesy call on Northwestern Provincial Permanent Secretary



ECZ officers during the loading & dispatch of Examination materials



ECZ Officer preparing pre Examination Materials for dispatch to Examination Centres



Network upgrade at ECZ Main Offices in Lusaka



Officers during the offloading of examination materials

ECZ Commemorates 2020 Virtual National Library Week

By Milimo Mweemba

The Honourable Minister of General Education, Dr Dennis Wanchinga -MP launched the Commemoration of the virtual National Library Week running from 21st to 25th September 2020 under the theme – Libraries: Your partners for Life.

As an institution in the education sector, providing education assessment for both school and tertiary education, we value Libraries as partners in promoting research and providing education resources to learners.

The Minister said “The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about a lot of changes in the way we operate at all levels of society. Despite the pandemic, there is need to ensure that provision of services especially library services continues in order to promote a reading culture and improve literacy at all levels.”

The Library week is commemorated on different days across the world and the Examinations Council of Zambia continues to provide Library Services at Its Headquarters in Lusaka for various researchers and members of staff in a bid to promote research and knowledge acquisition. This in turn helps to make better organizations in both human skill and service delivery.

We encourage learners, researchers, teachers and all education partners to continue accessing authentic information in libraries in order to bring out the real thinking values that will foster social-economic development in the Country.

“we value Libraries as partners in promoting research and providing education resources to learners.”



Against All Odds: St Jeff College Shines!

By St. Jeff Correspondent

Against All Odds: St Jeff College shines! The Corona virus pandemic has caused untold turmoil in various communities across the globe. It has exposed the deep inequalities that exist in different nations in terms of haves and have nots. Goals and objectives of many institutions have been brought to a grinding halt by this invisible enemy (coronavirus), nevertheless history has proven that challenges cause some men to break, but others to break world records! They say, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." Against All Odds, St Jeff College has remained second to none in the region.

Founded in 2011 by the visionary, Dr J. M. Chikandi, St Jeff College, a school of integrity, etiquette and a benchmark in the educational sector, is located at Faraday, Johannesburg South – South Africa. It is an Examinations Council of Zambia and a Cambridge Associate School that has an impressive fleet of buses, remarkable enrolment and outstanding Grade 7 ECZ results (2018 and 2019) and preparing to further break any standing academic record in 2020 and beyond.

The chaos caused by the pandemic triggered the founder of St Jeff College, a man of steel, to dig deep and apply his unorthodox ideology and unrivaled innovation in order to float above the corona 'hurricane'. Against all odds, St Jeff College has remained otherworldly good at what it does, with Dr J. M. Chikandi proving that only misfits and oddballs can change the world!

Moving on to the pandemic period, on the 5th March 2020, the S.A National Institute for Communicable Diseases confirmed the first case of Covid-19 in South Africa. As the corona virus began to spread like veld-

fire, President Cyril Ramaphosa declared that all schools and industries be closed on Wednesday 18th March 2020 with the exception of essential service providers. However, Dr Jeff saw it fit to close the school and admin offices two days earlier.

Students and educators worldwide were anxious about the future of their respective institutions. The staff members of St Jeff College were no exception. Panic engulfed every employee of this mighty institution, as they all waited to be addressed by The Director, Dr Jeff in a meeting just before the school closed for the lockdown period.

The Director majestically entered the room, as calm as always. He stood there before them, bold as a lion, with fire in his eyes.

Everyone froze.

All eyes were fixed sternly on him, as if their lives depended on him, well perhaps they did. The tension in the room weighed a few pounds.

"Hear me well," thundered the legendary leader, "I want everyone to relax. I give you my word, regardless of whatever we are going through as a nation as a result of the Covid-19 or whatever the effects of the lockdown will be in this world, none of my staff members will suffer from the Covid-19 economic effects. Furthermore, when we come back after the lockdown, I promise you that we will recover everything we lost – pedagogical/didactical time, exam preparation time etc." The atmosphere changed instantly. There was a round of applause and emphatic smiles across the room. They all knew that he is a man of his words.

Indeed, not a single word of his has fallen onto

the ground. He has bent over backwards to ensure that against all odds, the needs of his staff members are taken care of, the syllabi are covered and the learners are geared up for exams. The institution has thrown kitchen sinks to make all the necessary drastic changes to meet the demands of Covid-19 recommended protocols and logistics in the 'new normal'; albeit, all this cost an arm and a leg!

Homework:

To avoid learners being intoxicated with online hogwash during lockdown, well designed homework was delivered to learners' homes.

Classroom extension and additions:

Classrooms have been extended to comply with social distancing regulations. Additional classrooms have also been built to accommodate the extra classes created in order to be in line with new regulations, that is; a maximum 25 learners per classroom. Incredibly, the extensions of existing classrooms and building of extra classrooms was done and completed within an impressive period of just two weeks!

Fumigation of classrooms and buses:

All classrooms and buses were fumigated. The Departments of Health and Transport inspected the school premises and buses before the school opened and they were all compliant with the Covid-19 regulations. Fumigation is now being done on a monthly basis as a school- initiative.

Acquisition of an additional fleet of buses:

The institution has further acquired additional new buses to ease the number of learners per bus, thus complying with the Covid-19 transport regulations.

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

Extra classes:

Compulsory Saturday classes were introduced to help the learners to recover the lost learning/ teaching time. There are also morning classes for learners who are struggling academically. These learners come earlier than their classmates, to have early morning sessions with a team of dedicated selfless teachers, who are leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that against all odds, St Jeff's high standards are upheld. Furthermore one on one sessions are also done by teachers – giving learners with challenges personalized assistance.

Introduction of two sessions:

Two-schooling sessions were also introduced to ensure social distancing; Grade 1 to 5, 08:00 - 12:30 and Grade 6 to 9, 13:00 -18:00. Upon arrival, all children's temperatures are checked and they are sanitized; and those with abnormal temperatures are isolated for assistance. The school dedicated the entire first week of schooling to educating the learners about the pandemic and how they ought to conduct themselves to prevent its spread.

Discipline:

Discipline is the foundation on which everything is built on at St Jeff. It should be noted that the exceptional conduct by the St Jeff College learners is not by chance! Boy-girl talks are done fortnightly by educators to enlighten the learners on the importance of not bowing down to peer-pressure in this generation dominated by directionless youths caught up in trivial pursuits. Indeed the principal and vice- principal of the school often make some time to conduct motivational talks in which they instill the core values of the school's vision. Virginity testing is done annually to discourage learners from indulging in sexual activities. 'Ethics, Morals and Values' is also taught as a subject to inculcate morals and values in learners.

Henry Ford says, "When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the plane takes off against the wind, not with it." Well, this has been demonstrated by St Jeff College. Like an eagle which soars to exceedingly high altitudes during storms when other birds are hiding, this institution is getting mind-bogglingly stronger at a time when many businesses are being permanently shut-down due to the economical storms brewed by the pandemic. St Jeff College is proving to the world that there are many ways of killing a cat, by continuously using unconventional methodologies to ensure that it shines, against all odds!

Staff Promotion Can Increase Morale, Loyalty And Productivity For The Organisation



By Honester Kabanda

Every organisation considers promotion as an important aspect due to the benefits it attributes to the wellness of an employee as well as the results it yields in organisations. Heathfield (2011) defines promotion as "An act of placing a worker or moving him [or her] to a more important job or rank in an organization". Before promoting or hiring from within the organisation, Leaders of organisations have a number of issues to consider. In most instances, priority is given to employees who may already be playing the roles of the vacant position, those whose last appraisal fits the requirements of the vacant job, employees who connect well with other team members and or those that fit appropriately with the organisation culture by the way they relate with colleagues and superiors.

It is advantageous to consider promoting internal staff before looking outside the organisation as it ensures the utilisation of experiences and skills acquired while in employment. It is also a way to avoid keeping employees in positions where they have become overqualified. It helps avoid situations where valuable employees leave the organisation because they may feel overlooked, and it is cheaper to bring a current employee up speed as against training a new employee.

All in all, it is important for organisations to evaluate the internal candidates before promoting them in order to confirm suitability, and to maintain key employees by providing a good package of benefits than the salary.

When employees are performing exceptionally, they are usually considered for promotion to the next level. Therefore, with a solid retention plan in place, look at your actual succession planning with a thoughtful and continuous strategy for identifying and developing talent which ensure that leadership continuity exists for all key positions.

As organisations are considering filling in vacancies, it is important that they therefore put in place effective good recruitment and promotions policies; provide support, training and coaching to employees; and learn how to identify the employees who have reached the level of incompetency, and help them to acquire the skills that they may need. As they encourage promotions from within, the process will be less expensive, increased employee morale, demonstrated proven loyalty and they will be easy attainment of productivity for the organisation.

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Story from Re-Entry Policy: Redirected to Opportunities from Jaws of Poverty

By Milimo Mweemba



When the sun sets darkness hovers around, it is hard to know whether we will see the other day. It is by faith that we believe we will see the next day.

The year was 1999, a brilliant girl child would work up every day early in the morning preparing herself to go to school, with hopes that one day she would finish school and be whoever she wanted if not the usual aspirations of being a soldier, pilot and/or a Doctor. On a sad note one day sad news broke to Miyanda (not real names), that she was pregnant and as usual she did not stay in school for a long time, she had to go on maternity break. She stopped going to school. Darkness hovered over her future prospects. "This is the end of my life," I think this might have been hovering over her mind. However, thanks to the re-entry policy, it did not take long after giving birth that Miyanda was readmitted into the school.

In 1997 Zambia enacted the re-entry policy that allows girls to return to school after giving birth. The re-entry policy was enacted based on the concepts of equal education for all and equal opportunities for all, thus expanding the future prospects in job opportunities for girls. It is important to

emphasize that Miyanda benefited from the re-entry policy. It was in 2014, when I met Miyanda at one of national health facilities in Lusaka. I sat as we were told to wait for a nurse to come and attend to us. A few minutes I saw a nurse coming, looking at her face she was familiar and I did not hastate,

I asked are you Miyanda? She said yes and immediately also she mentioned my name. What a sigh of relief it was considering that I had a patient who needed attention. However, I was overwhelmed by surprise to see a person I never expected to be a nurse. All this long my thought was that she is at the village and married. Then in my mind I started thinking about the re-entry policy and its impact.

Policies that support access to education for girls who drop out of school after pregnancy are important to the nation in fostering National development and equal opportunities for all. Without the re-entry policy how, many girls would have been left out of school permanently. According to statistics as reported by the then Minister of General Education Dr. John Phiri who told parliament on 25th September 2015 that "12,617 girls were re-admitted in school

under the school re-entry policy after falling pregnant between 2009 and 2011".

Imagine without the re-entry policy all 12,617 girls including Miyanda would have been excluded completely from school. It is common knowledge that when children become of age, they want to explore and discover themselves mentally, spiritually and physically. These life discoveries in most cases pose risks to young adults. One of the major issues that young adults indulge themselves into is premature sex, as a result girls end up pregnant, hence being excluded from school in the case of the period before the re-entry policy. Without the re-entry policy in place, Miyanda and many other girls would not have had a second chance in Education.

Thanks to the feminism concepts and its advocates. One of the writers and advocate for Feminism Kelly in 1994 said feminism is "a collective term for systems of belief and theories that pay special attention to women's rights and women's position in culture and society". The re-entry policy has its birth roots from such movements and as such there is need to streamline the re-entry policy implementation guidelines. More need to be done for humanity. Otherwise the world would never be the same. All wars and conflicts we have heard, seen and felt are as a result of failing to share what God gave us. The spirit of Ubuntu should be in us and we will foster the principles of equal opportunities for all, weighed by principles of equality and no one will be left marginalized. Education for all is indeed a social status equalizer, Miyanda is a nurse as a result. Equal opportunities for all, a reality we all deserve.





Photo: Taylor Brandon

Exam Cheats Nabbed as ECZ Intensify Monitoring of 2020 GCE and G9 External Examinations

By Nicolas Nkhuwa

Examination malpractices are detrimental to the education system and development of any country. As an assessment body, Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) working with other stakeholders and security wings continues to ensure the smooth conduct of examinations at every level. Various strategies have been implored to safeguard materials both in transit and at points of storage. ECZ has also put in place measures to detect malpractices before, during and after the examinations.

During the conduct of the General Certificate of Education (GCE) and Grade 9 External Examinations, ECZ undertook an intensive monitoring exercise in Examination Centres countrywide. The operation led to the apprehension of twenty (20) people in Lusaka, North-Western and Eastern Provinces for various cases of examination malpractice. Of those apprehended were two (2) teachers, a fifth year student at a known University in Lusaka and some candidates who were found writing examinations on behalf of other candidates using forged National Registration Cards (NRC's) as could be identified from the physical inspection. Others arrested included two (2) suspects believed to have been behind the production of fake NRC's. Some

male candidates were found to be in possession of NRC's belonging to female individuals while others had age differences from those registered as true candidates. Most of the NRC's found also exhibited acts of tempering where the photo was removed and replaced with another one.

The suspects aged between 20 and 46 were apprehended between 31st August 2020 and 3rd September 2020 during the course of the examination from nine (9) schools in different Provinces.

There were no leakages of examination question papers during the conduct of the two examinations. ECZ and stakeholder put up a spirited fight to run a leakage free examination. It must be highlighted that results for candidates who were involved in various malpractices have since been withheld.

Malpractices are a cancer to the development of a nation and as ECZ, we shall continue to ensure we protect the integrity of the education system in Zambia and the Examinations conducted by the Council.

2020 SCHOOL EXAMINATION SESSION DATES

EXAMINATION	START	FINISH
Grade 9 External Examination	31/08/2020	08/09/2020
GCE Examination	31/08/2020	15/09/2020
Grade 7 Composite Examination	21/12/2020	24/12/2020
Grade 9 Internal Examination	07/12/2020	15/12/2020
School Certificate Examination	14/12/2020	30/12/2020

Highlights of the GCE and Grade 9 External Examinations Results

Both examinations were written within the period from 31st August to 15th September, 2020. The examination scripts were marked and results processed between 21st September and 24th October, 2020, and were approved by Council on 27th October, 2020. The following are the highlights of the examinations results:

The 2020 Grade 9 External Examination Results

A total of 127,161 candidates entered the 2020 Grade 9 External Examination, reflecting a growth of **52.03%** over the **83,640** candidates who had entered for the examination in 2019. Of the 127,161 candidates, **59,318 (46.65%)** were boys and **67,843 (53.35%)** were girls;

A total of 115,732 candidates representing 91 percent of the 127,161 candidates sat the 2020 examination. Out of the **115,732** who sat the examination, **53,735 (46.43 percent)** were boys and **61,997 (53.57 percent)** were girls;

Out of the **115,732** candidates who sat the examination, **35,792** candidates, representing 25.83 percent sat for six (6) or more subjects, while the rest sat for less than six (6) subjects;

A total of **11,429** candidates were absent, bringing the 2020 national absenteeism rate to **8.99 percent** compared to the 2019 national absenteeism rate which was at **4.72 percent**, with **3,950** absent candidates;

Of the **115,732** who sat the examination, **96,424 (83.32%)** passed the 2020 External Examinations compared to **55,721 (69.92%)** who passed the examination in 2019;

Out of the **35,796** who wrote six (6) subjects or more, **8,530** candidates representing 25.83 percent obtained Grade 9 Certificates, while **1,9786 (59.90%)** obtained Statements and **4,713 (14.27%)** failed the examination;

Analysis of performance by sex shows the following

The analysis of the performance by subject revealed that the highest percentage mean score was recorded in French at **66.8 percent** while the least performance was observed in Religious Education at **21.7 percent**. Additionally, performance in Mathematics (**25.9%**) and English Language (**26.0%**) continue to be poor as the subjects continue to pose a challenge to the candidates. The Directorates of Standards Curriculum, Teacher Education and Specialised Services and the

Examinations Council of Zambia must work together to devise strategies to improve Numeracy and Literacy levels in the Country.

2020 General Certificate of Education (GCE) Examination Results

A total of **118,225** candidates registered for the examination, reflecting a reduction of comfiture by **-7.24 percent** from the **127,456** candidates who had registered for the same examination in 2019. Of the **118,225** registered candidates in 2020, **39,523 (33.43%)** were male and **78,702 (66.57%)** were female;

Out of the **118,225** registered candidates, **109,547** representing **92.7 percent** sat the examination;

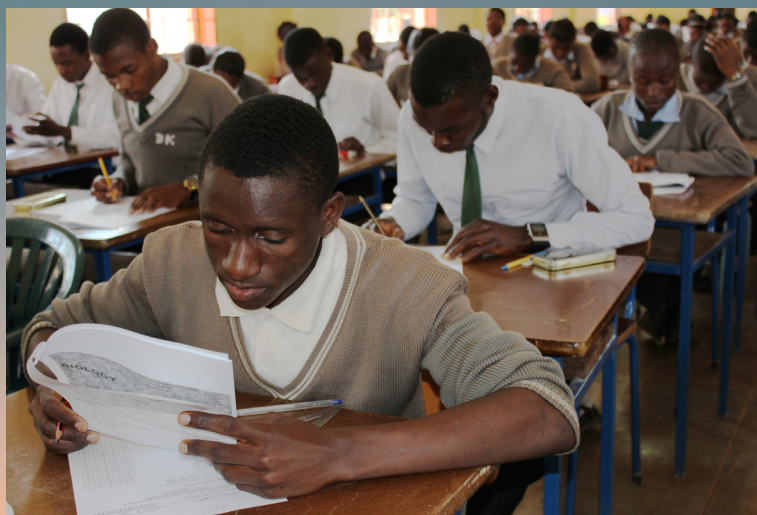
The national absenteeism rate was **7.34 percent**, compared to 2019 when it was at **6.83 percent**. A higher proportion of males (**9.63%**) than females (**6.19%**) were absent from the examination. Eastern Province (**8.87%**) recorded the highest absenteeism rate followed by Lusaka Province (**8.81%**). North-Western Province recorded the lowest absenteeism rate (**4.37%**);

Of the 109,547 candidates that sat the examination, **35,717 (44%)** were male and **73,830 (56%)** were female. The trend of having more female than male candidates sitting the GCE examination has continued;

A total of **98,043 (89.50%)** candidates obtained the General Certificate of Education, representing an increase from **80.9 percent (96,019)** who obtained the GCE in 2019. In absolute figures, more female (**65,735**) than Males (**32,308**) obtained the GCE Certificates;

There was a decrease in the national failure rate examination from **19.14 percent** in 2019 to **10.5 percent**, in the 2020 G.C.E examination;

Analysis of performance by subject revealed that the highest percentage mean score was recorded in French (**87.11%**), while Mathematics recorded the lowest (**15.43%**).



“Examinations and You”

A Platform for Stakeholder Engagement Receives Overwhelming Response from Members of the Public

In order to create continuous stakeholder engagements and interaction, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has been running live discussion radio programmes dubbed “Examinations and You” as a national wide engagement strategy.

On this platform, ECZ has made it possible for members of the public to call in and submit their concerns or get points of clarification. Through the various examination administration and management topics that are discussed every week on the programme, over 3 million people have been reached with messages. Calls continue to be received on the programme from all corners of the country.

As a customer centric organization, sharing information with all our stakeholders remains on top of our agenda in creating awareness. Information pertaining to the administration and management of examinations in Zambia

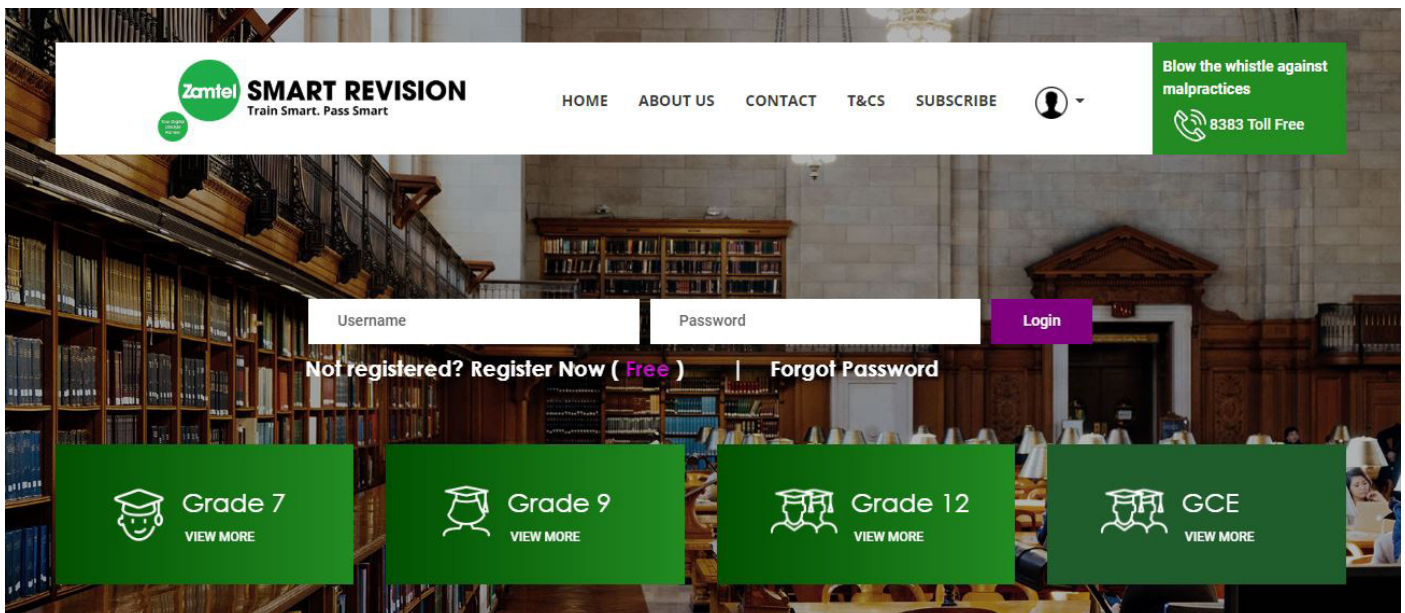


is key in supporting an efficient system for education service delivery and ushers the citizenry to work together in driving the developmental agenda for our nation.

We are aware of the impact of new media and its fast movement of information. Hence, we endeavor to meet our customer needs by sending messages using appropriate means. This strategy will help us segment our audience even better. More and more people will be able to access our information even when they do not have access to a radio set or frequency. Therefore, ECZ will extend these series of live online discussion programmes on its social media platforms aimed at increasing coverage and information reach to our stakeholders.

“Bravo ECZ, we are enjoying the programmes”

one message reads from the ECZ Facebook page



Did You Know?

ECZ has partnered with ZAMTEL to bring you the

SMART REVISION PORTAL

You can now access ECZ Past Examination Questions with Model Answers when you subscribe

Grade 7, 9, 12 and GCE

Visit: www.Smartrevision.co.zm

THE FUTURE OF ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

By Ruth Msoni



ECZ Head of Section SEN - Mrs Ruth msoni looks at Special Education candidate materials for Exams

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) offers assessment to learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) of diverse learning needs and challenges. The learners with special educational needs who write ECZ examinations include the visually impaired, hearing impaired, physically impaired and those in the category of health impairments. Learners with special educational needs are found at every examination levels just like other learners in the regular system.

Providing assessment for learners with SEN calls for dedication just as the learners without SEN, because of the uniqueness and degree of the disabilities they have. The uniqueness of the disabilities and their varying aspect among individuals affected necessitate the use of various strategies and modes of communication for examinations to take place. This implies that access arrangements are made to allow learners with special educational needs access the assessment without necessarily changing the demands of assessment. For example awarding extra time and providing Braille examination question papers creates an enabling environment for assessment of SEN candidates.

Quality assessment is necessary for all learners to perform to the level of their ability and be able to compete favourably well with learners in the mainstream. Contrary to this expectation learners with hearing impairment have a wide range of changes when they take ECZ assessments at all levels of examinations. Hearing impairment is a broad term that refers to hearing losses of varying degrees from hard-of-hearing to total deafness. The major challenge facing learners with hearing impairment is communication which involves language comprehension skill and the skill of expression.

Most of the ECZ assessment currently is oriented towards the use of written question papers and written responses to the assessment questions hence learners with hearing loss experience challenges writing examinations. The challenges faced by these learners with Hearing impairment in assessment can only be resolved by the use of appropriate assessment strategies and Language.

Owing to the communication challenges experienced by learners with Hearing impairment in undertaking assessment, ECZ

has developed modified question papers in a language referred to as ADAPTED ENGLISH. Adapted English question papers are written in a language that candidates with hearing impairment can comfortably use during assessment. Adapted English works are already advanced as preliminary question papers have been developed for grades 7 and 9. The developed Adapted English question papers are still being subjected to different Test Development processes and are yet to be sent to special education schools in form of specimen papers. Specimen papers will be expected to remain deposited in schools for a period of one year before the Adapted English programme could be rolled out for grades 7 and 9.

The general expectation is that, the Adapted English programme will attract funding for it to get started before the year ends or by January 2021. Once the programme gets started it is expected to be extended to grade 12 and Tertiary levels.

ECZ PENSION TRUST SCHEME CHAIRPERSON BIDS FAREWELL

By Pritchard Haboongo



She has not only offered outstanding leadership to the fund, Ms Namwandi leaves the fund at 50 million net worth of assets in 2020 from 16 million when she was appointed on the board of Trustees in 2014. Her legal expertise and careful analysis has been instrumental in leading the fund thus far. It is during her leadership that the long standing Court case involving the fund's property in Olympia area was ruled in favour of the Examinations Council of Zambia Pension Trust Scheme (ECZPTS). Ms Namwandi has led the fund by making sure that Trustees operated in accordance with the scheme rules and applied themselves with impartiality and integrity throughout their course of work and on behalf of the members. She superintend over the development of the board charter.

All possible risks were mitigated and fund investment was prudent leading to the timely settlement of claims to all members that either exited the fund through retirement or resignation and payment to beneficiaries in case of deceased members. She guided the fund to ensure that an actuarial valuation was done in order to ascertain fund stability which has seen the sponsor (ECZ) fund the scheme to guarantee future liabilities and to be in tune with all statutory obligations and requirements. She moves to the Pension and Insurance Authority (PIA) as Board Member hence her farewell.



WORD SEARCH

C	F	T	Y	O	F	X	I	X	E	S	E	I	I	T	A
E	S	T	R	A	T	E	G	I	C	P	L	A	N	A	N
R	E	L	I	S	H	C	H	S	E	U	R	C	T	N	S
T	E	C	Z	K	P	O	X	X	A	L	X	G	I	D	W
I	N	T	T	O	L	L	F	R	E	E	B	Y	M	E	E
F	L	A	S	S	E	S	S	M	E	N	T	S	E	M	R
I	Q	U	S	T	A	T	E	M	E	N	T	P	T	I	S
C	U	R	L	T	Y	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	A	S	C
A	R	E	G	S	R	R	S	L	Y	N	E	N	B	S	H
T	H	V	Q	P	Q	A	N	S	L	E	N	E	L	U	O
E	O	I	X	S	M	A	X	C	H	Q	T	G	E	E	O
S	G	U	I	D	E	L	I	N	E	S	R	Q	S	D	L
O	T	T	A	T	M	E	Z	A	M	T	E	L	E	G	G
N	V	E	R	I	F	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	Y	S	E

Look at the Puzzle above and spot 12 Words that match the statements below. The word search makes you know more about Examinations Council of Zambia

1. Documents given by Examinations Council of Zambia after examinations
2. ECZ partner on the Smart revision Portal
3. Responses given in an examinations
4. Place for teaching and learning
5. Another word for Examinations
6. Mobile Access of Examination Results
7. Document showing dates and time of Examinations
8. 8383 Line
9. Set of rules governing management of Examinations
10. Contains goals and objectives of the ECZ
11. Temporal document show Examination results
12. Process of confirming Results

NEW FACES



Mr Nonde Mukuma

He joined ECZ as Examinations Officer Processing. Prior to joining ECZ, he worked as a teacher of Science and Computer Studies at Musa Secondary School in Kasama, Northern Province for 8yrs. He also worked as a Tutor of Computer Organisation and Architecture at the University of Zambia, School of Education in the Department of Library and Information Science between 2018 and 2019. Mr Mukuma holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Science and currently pursuing a Master's degree in Computer Science at the University of Zambia.



Mr David Chanda

Joined ECZ as Senior Records Officer based in Chipata. Prior to joining ECZ, he worked as teacher of Mathematics for 12 years. He also worked as Career and guidance for 6 years. He has worked as a Part time Lecturer at the University of Zambia and University of Lusaka for more than 4 years. Hold a Master of Education Administration and Management, Degree in Mathematics and Geography both from the University of Zambia and a Diploma in Mathematics and Geography from Nkrumah College of Education.

SEPARATION



Mr Ronald M. Tembo

Mr Ronald Tembo was instrumental in the establishment of the Information, Education and Communications Unit at ECZ. Through his industry experience, he established various tools and resources of communication such as the website, social media platforms, and print media materials among others. During his time at ECZ, he developed several communication strategies and played a key role in marketing ECZ products and services. He was also key in implementing brand promotion strategies, events management and image building activities. Prior to his separation, he served as Public Relations Specialist.

The Council wishes him the best in his future endeavours.

GRADUATIONS



Dr. Michael M. Chilala

He is the Director – Examinations Council of Zambia. Dr Chilala has continued to add to his qualifications and more recently graduated in Masters in Leadership Development in ICT and the Knowledge Society.

Dr. Kunda Kuku

He was conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) in Education Management and Administration in 2020. He has among other qualifications Masters in Business Administration with Education obtained in 2016, Bachelor's Degree in Education, Secondary School Teacher's Diploma, Primary Teacher Certificate and an Advanced Certificate in Human Resource Management. He has acquired vast experience in assessment and served both as a teacher and school certificate examiner at one point. Dr Kuku has held various positions in the ECZ. In 2007, Dr Kuku was seconded to the ECZ as Senior Examination Specialist and in 2009 attended training in the United Kingdom under Cambridge in Examination Management and Administration. He has also served as Senior Examination Officer in the Examination Administration Department (EAD). He is one of the few remaining senior officers who saw the establishment of EAD in 2010 and played a key role in laying the foundation of EAD. He served as Head of Section for Grade 9 and 12 in EAD. In 2016, he was appointed as the first Manager of the ECZ Kitwe Service Centre. This was the first office opened by the ECZ outside Lusaka and saw it grow from its inception to what it is now. Dr Kuku was instrumental in the opening of the ECZ Mpika Service Centre and in 2018 he was appointed as Assistant Director in charge of Certification, the position he holds currently.



Mr Mike Hatembo

Studied Bachelor of Science in Information Technology at University of Lusaka (UNILUS). Graduated with a Merit and was awarded Best Graduating Student. Mr Hatembo is currently serving as Applications Developer in the Information Communication Technology Department.

Mr Benjamin Kasweka

Studied Bachelor of Laws (LLB) at Zambian Open University (ZAOU). Graduated with a Credit. Mr Kasweka also holds qualifications in Management of Information Systems (MIS). He is also pursuing a Bachelor of Science Computing with Education at ZICAS University in 4th Year. Mr Kasweka is also enrolled at the Zambia Institute of Advance Legal Education (ZIALE).



Congratulations



Combating Fake News and Information in Crisis

By Milimo Mweemba

Have you ever made a decision you later came to regret after realising that it was irrational and unpopular. One of the purposes of news and information is to guide people in decision making. As long as you leave you will come across some news or information that would guide you in the choice of your actions. But the rationality and outcome of your decision depends on the quality of information utilised upon making that particular decision.

Considering the spread of covid-19 pandemic, people have received all kind of information regarding the pandemic. It is very easy to be cheated when you are in crisis anyone can tell you anything. Some of the information about covid-19 was, and still is somehow hard to determine its authenticity and very misleading to some extent. As the virus is spreading also fake news is spreading through social media platforms such as Twitter, Whatsapp, and Facebook among the most popular platforms. Identifying fake news or information is a serious undertaking and not easy one.

Decisions can be made out of fake information if seriously considerations on how to assess information are not put in place. Irrational, unpopular decisions are made because of fake news and/or information relied upon to come up with such a decision. Take note that decision making translates into efficiency or inefficiency directly. This implies that irrational unpopular decisions may be costly if not deadly.

It is now clear that someone needs to possess some basic skills in identifying fake information and be able to isolate it from information to be used for decision making. Before I highlight the skills needed let me mention here that as information users we should be able to distinguish between opinions and facts. Some of the information we rely on turns out to be expressions of opinions and not facts. An opinion is simply defined as a view or preconceived view or judgement formed about an object or something, not necessarily based on knowledge while a fact is a thing or an object that is known and has been proved to be true or evidence based. These are the first basics to consider before you use information for your arguments or decision making.

Consider the following basic guidelines for you to identify fake news and/or information and determine authenticity and validity of information you come across.

1. Distinguish between an opinion and a fact. You cannot make a decision based on an opinion. For example Covid-19 does not affect blacks. This fake information was received and cherished with both hands dearly by many. The fact is covid-19 affects everyone. Some Blacks become careless because of this fake information.
2. Do reliable source triangulation of your news or information. Let the sources confirm each other in line with the information you have, if they don't confirm each other investigate more

or if you can manage go to the original source, . For example, if you read about something to do with covid-19 and you are not sure, you can visit World health organisation website, Ministry of health and other sources, make sure that they confirm each other etc. The key fact here is to know where to get information and do source triangulation.

3. Consider information from reliable sources. You can ask questions such as who is the author. What is his/her past reputation? What is his/her expertise? If it is the organisation the same questions would apply.
4. Ask questions. Why he/ she wrote the particular article, or spread this news? For who? For what? Here you will get the context and now you can know whether you are dealing with a fact or an opinion.

The above guidelines help in analysing, evaluating information and interpret it intelligently. Do not fall victim of fake news/ information leading to grave mistakes in decision making. Try to analyse each and every sources of information you come across. Above all remember you will not know the fake if you don't know the original. Good reading culture is key. In all this the solutions are read, read and continue reading. Don't get tired to read unless you want to surrender yourself to ignorance deliberately.



By Manfred Chansa

Preparing for the Unusual, The Covid-19 Case

...ECZ Implements IT Service Management

Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) is a concept that enables an organisation to maximise business value from the use of information technology. It positions IT services as the key means of delivering and obtaining value, working across the whole lifecycle of a service, from the original strategy, through design, transition and into live operation.

ICT staff will traditionally need to be physically on the scene to provide the required service during the live operation. This entails that ICT staff will frequently visit various workstations, touch ICT equipment touched by others and also have face-to-face conversations with personnel during service provision.

Considering the serious threat posed

by the Corona Virus, the prevention recommendations set by health authorities such as social distancing has in the recent past caused many companies and institutions to implement remote work solutions. Something which seemed to be an experiment or an appealing benefit for a vast majority of employees just a few months ago now seems to be nothing but daily life.

This means many business processes and human interactions should no longer be framed as personal communication but as telecommunication. The culture shock notwithstanding, is worth thinking what this change brings for IT departments.

Luckily, ECZ has in the last one year been evaluating among other software, the Manage Engine ServiceDesk Plus software. This is a 'Ticketing tool' which allows for users

to request/register for service requirements through mail, web and chat. Solutions can also be delivered through the same channels, thereby reducing the need for direct contact among supporting staff and users.

At ECZ, users usually send email explaining the problem to the help desk. During these 'unusual times' this helps the ICT Department to effectively manage expectations, timely react to issues reported, and successfully prioritise its own actions based on real data.

The use of ServiceDesk at ECZ will significantly reduce the number of requests requiring physical contact between support staff and users thereby reducing or curtailing the possible spread of the deadly COVID-19 virus.

Investing in State-of-the-Art Machines to meet Quality Service Standards



ECZ has enhanced its machine capacity in order to meet quality service standards for both internal and external services. This has so far reduced time taken to produce documents and in responding to client needs. The machines are envisaged to improve institutional efficiency and in turn ensure ECZ delivers services in a timely manner.

Prior to the investment in machines, printing work was manually done using plates. This delayed work for days. The introduction of digital printing has now made printing work easy, print quality improved and printing time reduced.

Your Questions

ANSWERED

Q. My son is sitting for the grade seven exam but he is sitting on someone's name who just quit school? My question, is it possible to change for him the name after the results are out as he will be going to grade 8?

ANS: It is not possible to sit an exam on someone else's number at grade 7. Each candidate is given a unique exam number. Get in touch with the school to normalise this otherwise, your child will not have results.

Q. Good morning, at which office can I get my papers verified?

ANS: Thank you for getting in touch with us. Kindly be advise that the ECZ has opened Service Centres in provincial towns where you can access all council services. We have a service centre in Kasama, Kitwe, Mpika, Chipata, Livingstone, Lusaka, Mongu and Solwezi.

Q. Can I be allowed to certify my statement of results. I wrote in 2016 and 2017 under GCE and I really need to do this and submit my results for GNC indexing.

ANS: Be informed that ECZ has issued Certificates for 2016 and 2017. In this case, a statement of results becomes invalid once certificates are issued. You are advised to visit your former school to collect your certificates and submit copies to any of our service centre to verify them

Q. I completed my secondary school in 2017. I have never seen my results please help me...

ANS: Kindly be advised that ECZ has released results for 2017 through the Ministry of General Education. Certificates for 2017 have since been issued and you are advised to visit your former school to collect it.

Q. I want to find out, my GCE certificate never came. What's the procedure of retrieving it?

ANS: Thank you for getting in touch with us. Please let the school write a letter to ECZ which you can submit at any of our service centre

Q. In a situation where one changes the name through the legal system. Do you change names on the certificate?

ANS: In this case, you will be required to use the court documents together with the academic documents to support the name change every time you are submitting for consideration.



**BLOW THE WHISTLE
AGAINST EXAM
MALPRACTICE**

6

Benefits of Body Exercise

Reduces risk of developing several other diseases e.g Cancer, Diabetes

1

Keeps your body at health weight

2

Reduces feeling of anxiety and depression

3

Improves heart health

4

Reduces feeling of anxiety and depression

5

Reduces joint pain and stiffness

6



Our Service Centres



Access all ECZ Services from our
Service Centres

SOUTHERN REGION

LUSAKA SERVICE CENTRE
Plot 10934, Msuzi Road
P.O. Box 50432
Woodlands,
Lusaka
Contact No.: +260 211 264091

CHIPATA SERVICE CENTRE
Provincial Resource Centre (PRC)
Hillside High School Premises
Along Umodzi Highway,
Chipata
Contact No.: +260 974 815 551
+260 764 273 290

MONGU SERVICE CENTRE
House No. 43A
Independence Avenue
P.O. Box 910202, Mongu
Contact No.: +260 973 597 776,
+260 960 597 776, +260 953 597 779

LIVINGSTONE SERVICE CENTRE
District Education Board Secretary (DEBS)
Next to the High Court of Zambia
Along Akapelwa Street
Livingstone
Contact No.: +260 963 707 007,
+260 777 077 618

NORTHERN REGION

KITWE SERVICE CENTRE
Plot No. 6508, Four C Road, off Jambo Drive,
Riverside
P.O. Box 21075,
Kitwe
Contact No.: +260 955 491615, +260 961 491615

MPIKA SERVICE CENTRE
Farmers Training Centre (FTC)
Along Mpika Chinsali Road
P.O. Box 450271,
Mpika
Contact No.: +260 950 222 445, +260 960 428486,
+260 976 699 058

KASAMA SERVICE CENTRE
Ituna Secondary School
Opposite Kasama Radio Station
Along Kasama-Mungwi Road
Kasama
Contact No.: +260 794 692 393,
260 973 166 942

Solwezi Service Centre
Provincial Education Office
Off Independence Avenue, along
Mushindamo Street
Solwezi
Contact: +26 0954 701 933,
+260 962 159 433,
+260 973 573 301