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WEEKLY EDITION | 9 TO 13 NOVEMBER 2026 | 24 SITE STORIES

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GROW ZAMBIA ON TOUR

THE WEEK IN REVIEW | A WEEK AFTER THE BUDGET

Debt down 5 per cent. Copper target backed in Washington.

External debt fell in the first half, the United States endorsed the three-million-tonne copper goal and the President told Choma farmers to plant despite El Niño. Our contributors asked who pays for the growth.

US$15.35bn	3m t	16.5%	1.25m	Feb 2027
External debt, 30 June	Copper target, backed by US	Proposed VAT, from 16%	Facing acute food insecurity	First A-Level intake

By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The week the targets went on tour

The Grow Zambia Agenda spent the week on the road. President Hichilema opened a working visit to Southern Province in Choma and told farmers to plant despite El Niño. In Lusaka, his Trade Minister read his call for value addition to the French Business Circle, and in Washington the State Department backed the target of three million tonnes of copper a year.

The money moved too. Central government external debt fell about 5 per cent to US$15.35 billion by the end of June, after Zambia retired its US$1.36 billion Bond B at a discount. About US$275 million of future debt-service savings is earmarked for the power grid, and the IMF Board is expected to consider a US$1.472 billion facility in December.

A week after the Budget, our contributors looked at who pays. Lewis Chingi argued that higher VAT, a new 39.5 per cent PAYE band and new duties fall hardest on households. Meamui Mwendaweli found youth unemployment at 23.9 per cent even as the national rate fell to 9.9 per cent.

The ACC charged a Catholic priest over K1.5 million in suspected proceeds of crime, ZAMRA held three travellers at KKIA over unregistered medicines, and the Education Ministry set February 2027 for the first A-Level intake. This edition gathers every story we published from 5 to 12 November.

READ EVERY STORY *Click here to browse the full articles on our website*

INSIDE THIS EDITION

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WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

- IMF Board decision on the US$1.472bn facility
- Finance Bills and the PAYE threshold question
- Rains and planting in Southern Province
- Invest Zambia conference in December



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External debt falls 5% as Eurobond savings go to the grid



PAGE 9

The Zambian Economist is now an app on Android



PAGE 5

ACC charges a priest over K1.5m in suspected proceeds of crime

MINISTER IN FOCUS | PAGES 7 AND 8

Harry Kamboni: the teacher now in charge of Education

Fifteen years in Botswana's classrooms, a decade on Parliament's education committee, and now the A-Level rollout.

New this week: a two-page profile from the public record

NEXT **Page 2** | *From the editor, and the week day by day*

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The week the targets met their bills

Every target in the Grow Zambia Agenda carries a cost. This week's stories show who is being asked to pay it, and when.

Last week's edition went to print on Budget Day. This one picks up the stories we published from 5 November, including the first reactions to the 2027 Budget, and runs to Thursday 12 November. In that time we published 24 stories on zambianeconomist.com.

The Government spent the week selling its targets. The President took them to Choma and, through his Trade Minister, to the French Business Circle. In Washington, the State Department endorsed the copper goal. The Finance Ministry reported that external debt fell 5 per cent in the first half, with Eurobond savings set aside for the grid.

Our contributors asked harder questions. Lewis Chingi set the Budget's new taxes against the households that pay them. Meamui Mwendaweli asked whether a degree still leads to a job. Sonia M. Kagoli argued for budgeting nutrition like infrastructure, and Dr Kelvin Kamayoyo weighed what the contest between China and the West means for Zambia.

As before, the edition is arranged by desk rather than by date. Each story is condensed from the full article, and the link under it opens the original. Where a figure is a target or a pledge, we say so. Where a case is under investigation or before the courts, the charges are allegations until a court decides.

Several announcements came without amounts or dates: the Sweden talks, the French water meeting and the Mandevu pledges among them. We report what was said and note what is still missing.

New this week is Minister in Focus, a two-page profile built only from the public record: parliamentary files, published interviews and official announcements. We begin on page 7 with Education Minister Harry Kamboni, whose A-Level announcement leads our education desk.

Thank you to this week's contributors: Lewis Chingi, Sonia M. Kagoli, Dr Kelvin Kamayoyo, Meamui Mwendaweli and reader Douglas Vandergraph. Thank you also to Ten Soccer Academy, whose advertisement appears on page 10, and to all the partners who keep this edition free.

The Editor, The Zambian Economist

Stories on zambianeconomist.com, 5 to 12 November 2026.

THE WEEK, DAY BY DAY

Date	What happened
5 Nov	President Hichilema directs Mandevu MP Adrian Banda to address sanitation. Iris Kaingu delivers her maiden speech as Mwandi MP.
6 Nov	ZAMRA intercepts three travellers with unregistered medicines at KKIA. Dr Kelvin Kamayoyo on China and the Global South. The 2027 Budget is presented.
7 Nov	Lewis Chingi on the household cost of the 2027 Budget.
8 Nov	ICU graduates 15 police officers in digital forensics. A reader on unclear deadlines and small traders. Inside the LDF master classes.
9 Nov	Sonia M. Kagoli on child nutrition. The Labour Minister receives the Emoluments Commission.
10 Nov	Value addition call at the French Business Circle. Minister Matambo meets a French delegation on water and sanitation.
11 Nov	The President opens his Southern Province tour in Choma. UNHCR's new representative presents credentials.
12 Nov	External debt down 5%. US backs the copper target. Sweden talks, A-Level start date, ACC charges a priest. Our Android app launches. Evening: the policy rate and your loan, the Zamtel and ZRA challenge, Musokotwane on housing.

BEFORE AND AFTER

What changed this week

External debt US$16.15bn to US$15.35bn
VAT 16% to 16.5%, proposed
Top PAYE band 37% to 39.5%, proposed
Unemployment 12.9% in 2024 to 9.9% in 2025
Bond B US$1.36bn retired at a discount
A-Levels First intake set for February 2027

NEW IN THIS EDITION

- Pages 7 and 8: Minister in Focus, a profile of Education Minister Harry Kamboni.
- Page 9, late news: what the policy rate cut means for your loan.
- Page 9: Zamtel and ZRA offer K100,000 to student innovators.
- Page 9: Musokotwane links affordable housing to better jobs.

24 stories on our website, 5 to 12 Nov

8 dates on the timeline

12 figures with sources on page 9

5 contributors and guest writers

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NEXT **Page 3** | *Money and the Budget: debt, tax and pay*

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Less owed abroad, more asked of the payslip

External debt fell in the first half of the year. A week after the Budget, contributors asked who carries the new taxes, and the Labour Minister set out where pay talks now sit.

US$15.35bn	US$800m	US$275m	K67.6bn	K10.8bn
External debt, 30 June	Fall since end of 2025	Savings for the grid	Debt service, 2027 Budget	Extra revenue expected

DEBT | 12 NOVEMBER

External debt falls 5% as Eurobond savings go to the grid



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Central government external debt fell to US$15.35 billion at the end of June, from US$16.15 billion at the end of 2025. Finance Minister Situmbeko Musokotwane put the drop of about US$800 million down to the Eurobond buyback and slower disbursement of external loans. Domestic obligations of US$15.54 billion took the central government total to US$30.89 billion.

Zambia retired its US$1.36 billion Bond B at a discount with a US$600 million African Development Bank loan and its own funds. About US$275 million of future debt-service savings is earmarked for a 15-year Grid Resilience Programme. The proposed US$1.472 billion IMF facility still needs prior actions and Board approval, expected in December.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

> ***"You can be hungry in December, and you still do not touch the bag you set aside for planting."***
>
> *Lewis Chingi, on why the 2027 Budget should not tax the household seed bag*

OPINION | 7 NOVEMBER

When national growth causes household suffering



By Lewis Chingi

The 2027 Budget raises VAT from 16 to 16.5 per cent, adds a 39.5 per cent top PAYE band and brings new duties on sugar, cooking oil inputs and mobile money transfers. Treasury expects about K10.8 billion more. Lewis Chingi argues that much of it is household spending that keeps small businesses open: the seed a farmer should not eat.

Debt service takes K67.6 billion of the K284.8 billion Budget. He notes that the speech and its annex disagree on the PAYE threshold (K37,000 against K34,000), company tax and tile duty, and asks Government to delay the VAT rise and new band, index tax bands to inflation and clear K60.3 billion in VAT refunds.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

SMALL BUSINESS | 8 NOVEMBER

When a deadline is unclear, the smallest trader pays



By The Zambian Economist Analyst, from a

A trader can follow every rule on the notice and still lose a day's income when a closing time, filing date or permit procedure is stated vaguely or changed without warning. Small businesses are commonly estimated to provide about 70 per cent of Zambia's jobs, and few have an accountant to decode a confusing notice.

The reader's standard is modest: plain-language requirements, a named contact person, early notice of changes and agreements confirmed in writing. None of it needs a large budget. It needs someone who owns the follow-up.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

LABOUR | 11 NOVEMBER

Unions keep their bargaining rights, Nyambose says



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Labour and Social Security Minister Misheck Nyambose said the Emoluments Commission does not take away trade unions' right to negotiate pay and conditions. He spoke on 9 November when Commission Director General Chembo Mbula paid a courtesy call, and said the arrangement is consistent with ILO Convention No. 98.

Mr Mbula said the Commission sets remuneration parameters for State institutions and does not sit at the bargaining table. Employers and unions negotiate within those limits. He cited past cases where parastatals and councils awarded increases they could pay for only one month.

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US$30.89bn	16.5%	39.5%	K60.3bn
Total central government debt	Proposed VAT rate	New top PAYE band	VAT refunds owed

NEXT Page 4 | *Grow Zambia: copper, farms, water and food*

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Washington backs the copper target, farmers told to plant

The targets went to Choma, Washington and a French business gathering. Each depends on power, rain, water and processing.

3m t	820,000 t	10m t	10,000 MW	80%+
Copper target a year	Copper produced in 2024	Maize target	Power target	Chance El Niño lasts to 2027

DIPLOMACY | 12 NOVEMBER

US backs Zambia's three-million-tonne copper ambition



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Jason Grubb, Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs at the US State Department, said Washington supports the Grow Zambia Agenda and the target of three million tonnes of copper a year. He said Washington now prefers trade to aid.

Ambassador Chibamba Kanyama invited American firms to the Invest Zambia conference in December. Zambia produced about 820,000 tonnes in 2024, so output would need to nearly quadruple. Financing and offtake deals will show whether the endorsement brings capital.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

TRADE | 10 NOVEMBER

Process at home, Hichilema tells French investors



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

In a speech read by Trade Minister Dr Caroline Kaunda Katotobwe at the French Business Circle in Lusaka, the President said Zambia must process more of what it grows and mines.

He restated targets of 10 million tonnes of maize, 3 million tonnes of soya beans and 10,000 MW of power, more than double today's capacity. Electricity will decide whether processing plants follow.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

AGRICULTURE | 11 NOVEMBER

Plant despite El Niño, Hichilema tells Choma farmers



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Opening a working visit to Southern Province, the President said idle fields would put the national food supply at risk. He asked farmers to follow agricultural and weather experts on what to plant and when.

Southern Zambia is forecast to be drier than normal, and about 1.25 million people are projected to face acute food insecurity to March 2027.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

> ***"Zambia's economic diplomacy is increasingly focused on building mutually beneficial partnerships."***
>
> *Chibamba Kanyama, Zambia's Ambassador to the United States*

WATER | 11 NOVEMBER

Matambo seeks French support on water and sanitation



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Water Development and Sanitation Minister Elisha Matambo met French representatives in Lusaka on 10 November and said the Government wants stronger partnerships to widen access to safe water. France's AFD has financed a €50 million water and sewerage programme on the Copperbelt.

No project, amount or agreement was announced.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

OPINION | 9 NOVEMBER

Feeding a child is an economic decision



By Sonia M. Kagoli

After the Global Child Nutrition Forum in Lusaka, economist Sonia M. Kagoli argues that child nutrition should be budgeted as an investment in human capital, not a welfare cost met when money allows.

She wants budgets, school feeding and farm policy to work together.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

10m t	€50m	K31.7m	Dec
Maize target, 2031	AFD Copperbelt water programme	Relief food disbursed	Invest Zambia conference

NEXT Page 5 | *Accountability, governance and the law*

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A priest charged, medicines seized, 15 officers trained

The ACC followed the money, ZAMRA stopped unregistered medicines at KKIA and two MPs set out their plans.

K1.5m	K5.6m	3	15	3%
Property in ACC charges	Linked October case	Held at KKIA by ZAMRA	Officers in digital forensics	Local share of medicines used

ANTI-CORRUPTION | 12 NOVEMBER

ACC charges priest over K1.5 million in suspected proceeds of crime



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The Anti-Corruption Commission has charged Fr. Titus Malama Sande, 45, of Lusaka Archdiocese, with four counts of possessing and concealing property suspected to be proceeds of crime. The ACC alleges he held bonds worth K538,000 and registered two vehicles worth about K1 million on behalf of a former Ministry of Community Development officer.

The case is linked to last month's arrests over properties worth K5.6 million. Fr. Sande is on bond and expected in court soon. The charges are allegations until a court decides.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

MEDICINES | 11 NOVEMBER

Three detained at KKIA over unregistered medicines



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

ZAMRA says two Indian nationals and a Lebanese national who landed at KKIA on 6 November had unregistered medicines in their luggage and no import permits. The medicines were seized. No charges have been announced.

The offence carries up to three years in prison, a fine, or both. With local products covering about 3 per cent of consumption, border checks carry much of the load.

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CYBERCRIME | 8 NOVEMBER

ICU graduates 15 police officers in digital forensics



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The Information and Communications University has trained 15 Zambia Police officers to extract and examine evidence from phones and computers.

Inspector General Graphel Musamba named online fraud and identity theft as growing threats. Fifteen analysts is a start, not a national capacity.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

LUSAKA | 5 NOVEMBER

Hichilema directs Mandevu MP to address sanitation



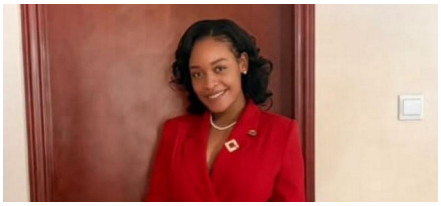
By The Zambian Economist Analyst

At a community meeting on 5 November, the President asked Mandevu MP Adrian Banda to work with residents and the council on waste management and public spaces. Pledges on roads and security came with no budget or timetable.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

PARLIAMENT | 5 NOVEMBER

Iris Kaingu delivers her maiden speech for Mwandi



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Mwandi MP Iris K. Kaingu said she gave her maiden speech on 5 November, a second generation of Kaingus in Parliament after Michael Kaingu's terms from 2006 and 2011. She pointed supporters to the Grow Mwandi Agenda and the national 10-10-5-3-3-1-1-1 targets.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

WHAT TO WATCH

- When Fr. Sande first appears in court.
- Whether ZAMRA and the DEC bring charges in the KKIA case.
- A list of Mandevu roads and a refuse collection schedule.

> ***"A person shall not import any medicine or allied substance without an import permit."***
>
> *Medicines and Allied Substances Act, 2013, s.35(1)*

K538,000	3 years	15	5 Nov
Bonds named by the ACC	Maximum jail, unpermitted imports	Police officers trained	Mandevu visit and maiden speech

NEXT Page 6 | *Diplomacy, education and ideas*

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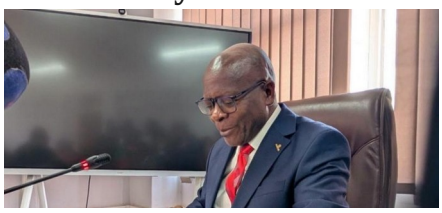
New partners, a new qualification and an old question about who is ahead

Sweden and UNHCR met the Foreign Ministry, A-Levels arrive in February, and contributors asked whether degrees still pay and whether the West is losing the Global South.

Feb 2027	9.9%	23.9%	63.4%	1966
First A-Level intake	Unemployment rate, 2025	Unemployment, ages 15 to 24	Jobs that are informal	Mayukwayukwa opens

EDUCATION | 12 NOVEMBER

First A-Level intake starts in February 2027



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Education Minister Harry Kamboni said Advanced Level classes will start in February 2027 under the 2023 curriculum framework. Learners who completed Grade 12 in 2024, 2025 or 2026 are eligible and may take up to four subjects. From 2029, holders can apply for degrees built to accept it.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

OPINION | 12 NOVEMBER

The educated but unemployed



By Meamui Mwendaweli

ZamStats put unemployment at 9.9 per cent in 2025 but 23.9 per cent among people aged 15 to 24. Meamui Mwendaweli asks whether education can still be the great equaliser when the wait for a first job depends on who can afford to wait.

She wants colleges to publish graduate outcomes by programme.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

DIPLOMACY | 12 NOVEMBER

Zambia and Sweden discuss trade, investment and debt



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Permanent Secretary Etambuyu Anamela Gundersen met Swedish Ambassador Per-Ola Mattsson at Charter House and presented SADC and COMESA membership as a route to regional markets. Mr Mattsson said completing the bilateral debt restructuring agreement could draw more Swedish firms. No signing date was given.

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REFUGEES | 12 NOVEMBER

Zambia reaffirms refugee protection as UNHCR envoy arrives



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

Foreign Affairs Minister Mulambo Haimbe received the credentials of Zephania Mburuki Amuri, UNHCR's incoming representative, on 11 November. He asked for continued support as conflict nearby brings more people to Zambia.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

GUEST ANALYSIS | 6 NOVEMBER

Is the West losing its influence in the Global South?



By Dr Kelvin Kamayoyo

Dr Kelvin Kamayoyo argues that the Western-led order faces questions of fairness and representation, while Chinese infrastructure finance has widened Africa's options. For Zambia, the aim is the best terms, not loyalty to one bloc.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

COMMUNITY | 8 NOVEMBER

Inside the LDF master class series



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The Library Development Foundation has held four free online master classes since October. Dr Simataa Kenneth Soonga spoke on counselling, Zambian Premier League chief executive Joseph Chimpampwe on forms of intelligence, and Enita Nawa Machichi on the money decisions that shape our lives.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

4	2029	60 years	4
A-Level subjects per learner	A-Level route to degrees	Zambia hosting refugees	LDF master classes so far

NEXT Page 7 | *Minister in focus: Harry Kamboni*

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Harry Kamboni: a teacher takes charge of the schools

He taught for 15 years in Botswana, runs a primary school in Kalomo and chaired Parliament's education committee. Since 28 October he has led the ministry he used to question.

1966	2016	29,511	15 years	28 Oct
Born, 15 February	First elected, Kalomo Central	His votes, August 2026	Teaching in Botswana	Sworn in as Minister



Education Minister Harry Kamboni at a media briefing this month, where he set out the February 2027 start of A-Levels.

PROFILE AT A GLANCE

- Born: 15 February 1966
- Constituency: Kalomo Central, Southern Province
- Party: UPND
- In Parliament: elected 2016, re-elected 2021 and 2026
- Training: Art Teacher's Diploma and a BA in Education
- Profession on the parliamentary record: academic and businessman
- Interests listed: debate, reading and looking after cattle
- Office: Minister of Education from 28 October 2026

KALOMO CENTRAL, AUGUST 2026

- Harry Kamboni (UPND): 29,511 votes
- Pearson Hamachila (Independent): 4,059 votes
- UPND won all three Kalomo district seats

FROM THE CLASSROOM

Harry Kamboni came to politics from teaching. He spent 15 years as an educator in Botswana before returning to Kalomo, the Southern Province district he now represents. He also runs Mayake Primary School in Kalomo, which teaches more than 200 children.

He won Kalomo Central for the UPND in 2016, holding a seat the party had kept since 2001, and was re-elected in 2021. In August 2026 he polled 29,511 votes against 4,059 for an independent, Pearson Hamachila.

HOME GROUND

Kalomo Central covers the town of Kalomo and the surrounding area in Kalomo District. Before him, Request Muntanga held it for the UPND for three terms from 2001. In August the party took every parliamentary seat in the district.

THE COMMITTEE YEARS

Parliamentary records place him on the Committee on Education, Science and Technology from his first session in 2016. He later chaired it. He has also sat on the committees on Local Government Accounts and on National Guidance and Gender Matters.

Outside Zambia he joined the International Parliamentary Network for Education. In October 2022, at the Inter-Parliamentary Union's assembly in Kigali, he was elected to its Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians for SADC, one of four winners among seven candidates. The seat carries a five-year term.

THE FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING INQUIRY

His best-known work concerns early reading and arithmetic. In 2025 his committee agreed unanimously to hold an inquiry into foundational learning, which he described as the first of its kind on the continent. Expert hearings, school visits and meetings with officials began in January 2026.

The inquiry set out to examine how teachers are prepared to teach reading and maths, whether pupils have textbooks, who reaches the Catch-Up remedial programme and how far rural schools trail urban ones.

He has said a visit to a school in his own constituency changed his view. About 700 of its roughly 1,500 pupils were in catch-up classes, and at another school he found one teacher with 99 pupils. The committee then summoned the Ministry of Education, and he says the national foundational learning budget doubled.

> ***"Learners should see themselves in what they read."***
>
> *Harry Kamboni, arguing for locally written textbooks, October 2025*

He has pressed for textbooks written in Zambia that reflect its culture, and has urged parliamentarians across Africa to treat foundational learning as a political priority. He argues that educating MPs multiplies the effect, because they carry what they learn back to their constituents.

3 terms	88%	2022	200+
Kalomo Central MP since 2016	His share of the vote, 2026	Elected to IPU rights committee	Pupils at Mayake Primary

NEXT Page 8 | *Minister in focus: what he inherits*

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The numbers waiting on the new minister's desk

Mr Kamboni takes over a school system that has enrolled millions more children since fees were abolished but still teaches few of them to read well by Grade 4.

12.7%	14%	2.3m	Feb 2027	2029
Grade 4 reading at the expected level, 2024	Grade 4 able to do basic maths	Children back in school since free education	First A-Level intake	A-Level route to degrees

CAREER TIMELINE

- 1966: born on 15 February
- Before politics: 15 years teaching in Botswana
- 2016: elected MP for Kalomo Central and joins the education committee; re-elected 2021
- 2022: elected to the IPU Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians
- 2023: back on the education committee, which he goes on to chair
- 2025: the committee agrees to a foundational learning inquiry
- January 2026: inquiry hearings and school visits begin
- August 2026: re-elected with 29,511 votes
- 28 October 2026: sworn in as Minister of Education
- This week: announces A-Levels from February 2027

READING AND ARITHMETIC

The figures he cited as a committee chair are now his to change. The 2024 national assessment found 12.7 per cent of Grade 4 pupils reading and writing at the expected level. UNESCO's 2024 Global Education Monitoring report put the share able to do basic maths at 14 per cent.

Free education, introduced in 2022, brought more than 2.3 million children back to class, many of them older than their grade. He has argued that access must come first, even in crowded rooms, because school also teaches discipline, leadership and how to get along with others.

TEACHERS AND CLASSROOMS

In his own assessment, the biggest obstacles are too few teachers and too few classrooms. Some rural schools have two qualified teachers for Grades 1 to 7. Enrolment rose with the population, he has said, but teachers, classroom blocks and desks did not keep pace.

CATCH-UP AND THE NEW A-LEVELS

Catch-Up gives pupils in Grades 3 to 5 an hour a day of lessons grouped by ability rather than age, and the Government has extended it to more than 550 schools. He has called it a second chance, while arguing that the long-term aim is a system that no longer needs remedial classes.

His first big announcement as minister came this week. Advanced Level classes start in February 2027 under the 2023 curriculum framework, open to Grade 12 leavers from 2024 to 2026. Computing and laboratory subjects need equipment and specialist teachers, and the Ministry has not yet said which schools will offer them.

A-LEVEL PATHWAYS ANNOUNCED

- Natural and agricultural sciences
- Computing, and design and technology
- Business, social sciences and languages
- Creative and performing arts
- Physical education and sport
- Hospitality, travel and tourism
- Textile design, and nutrition and food technology

A NARROWER MINISTRY

The October restructuring created a Ministry of Skills and Higher Education, led by his predecessor at Education, Douglas Syakalima. On the face of it, that leaves Mr Kamboni free to concentrate on schooling, from the early grades to the new A-Levels.

LEARNING IN NUMBERS

- 550+: schools running the Catch-Up programme
- 99: pupils with a single teacher at one Kalomo school he visited
- 2: qualified teachers for Grades 1 to 7 in some rural schools

MONEY AND PARTNERS

He has pointed to Rwanda, which he says has met a target of spending 20 per cent of its budget on education. He has also said that cuts in donor aid, including from USAID, mean Zambia needs partners alongside its own funding. As committee chair he used rules that let parliamentary committees review and adjust the budget, which he says helped MPs steer more money to early learning.

WHAT TO WATCH

- The list of schools and subject combinations for the February A-Level intake.
- The report and recommendations of the foundational learning inquiry.
- Teacher recruitment and classroom building in the 2027 Budget.
- Funding for Catch-Up and early-grade textbooks.

QUESTIONS FOR THE MINISTER

- When will the inquiry report be published?
- How many teachers will be recruited in 2027, and where will they be posted?
- Which schools will offer A-Levels, and will families pay anything?
- What Grade 4 reading level does the Ministry aim to reach by 2031?

This profile draws only on the public record: the National Assembly member profile and committee records, interviews published by AllAfrica (October 2025) and the International Parliamentary Network for Education (January 2026), Lusaka Times election and Cabinet reports, and Ministry of Education announcements.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE *Click here to continue on our website*

Grades 3 to 5	20%	2022	4
Catch-Up target grades	Rwanda's education budget share	Free education introduced	A-Level subjects per learner

NEXT Page 9 | *The week in numbers, and late news*

Read the figures with their dates and sources

Targets are not results, pledges are not money in the bank and allegations are not convictions. Each figure carries its source.

Figure	Measure	Source and note
US$15.35bn	Central government external debt, 30 June	Ministry of Finance; from US$16.15bn
US$275m	Debt-service savings for the grid	Over a 15-year programme
US$1.472bn	Proposed IMF facility	Board consideration expected December
16.5%	Proposed VAT rate, 2027 Budget	From 16%; Finance Bills pending
39.5%	New top PAYE band	Speech: above K37,000; annex: K34,000
K67.6bn	Debt service, 2027 Budget	Of K284.8bn total spending
3m t	Copper target a year	About 820,000 t produced in 2024
1.25m	People projected in acute food insecurity	IPC, October 2026 to March 2027
K1.5m	Property in ACC charges against a priest	Allegations, not convictions
23.9%	Unemployment, ages 15 to 24	ZamStats Labour Force Survey 2025
Feb 2027	First A-Level intake	Grade 12 classes of 2024 to 2026
10.75%	Bank of Zambia policy rate	Cut from 13.25% on 30 September

DATES TO WATCH

25 to 26 Nov Monetary Policy Committee meets
Dec IMF Board to consider the US$1.472bn facility
Dec Second Invest Zambia International Conference
Feb 2027 First A-Level classes begin
Mar 2027 End of the IPC food insecurity projection
2029 A-Level holders eligible for degree entry

Sources

The Zambian Economist; Ministry of Finance and National Planning; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; ZamStats; ZAMRA; ACC; IMF; AFD; Ministry of Information and Media; Bank of Zambia; Zamtel; ZRA; National Assembly of Zambia.

Full articles: zambianeconomist.com

LATE NEWS | PUBLISHED THURSDAY EVENING, 12 NOVEMBER 3 NEW STORIES

RATES | 12 NOVEMBER

What the policy rate cut means for your loan



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The Bank of Zambia cut its policy rate from 13.25 to 10.75 per cent on 30 September, after inflation fell to 6.1 per cent. Variable loans reprice first; fixed payroll loans move only if you refinance.

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INNOVATION | 12 NOVEMBER

Zamtel and ZRA put K100,000 behind student innovators



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The 2026 Innovation Challenge is open to university students on four tracks, from digital innovation to financial inclusion. ZRA's last hackathon drew 270 students from 18 universities.

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HOUSING | 12 NOVEMBER

Musokotwane links affordable housing to better jobs



By The Zambian Economist Analyst

The proposed 2027 Budget sets aside K362.9 million for housing development. The Finance Minister said steadier, better-paid jobs would help more households qualify for mortgages.

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