

LEARNING BRIEF

Learning from what we've done and how we did it

Strengthening Zambia's educational ecosystems for developing agency for sustainable development

<p>Date: July 2021</p> <p>Author Patricia Martin</p> <p>Contact bashni@miet.co.za</p> <p>Key words Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL); <i>Child and Youth Agency Framework (CYAF)</i>; co-educators; education for agency; educational ecosystem; Southern African Development Community (SADC) <i>Policy Framework on CSTL</i></p> <p>References See list at the end of the document</p>	<p>Key points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SADC Member States, including Zambia, have committed to developing child and youth agency to address persistent development challenges. • The <i>CSTL Policy Framework</i> and complementary <i>CYAF</i> provide a road-map for developing an education “ecosystem” for youth agency. • Developing agency requires a range of <i>co-educators</i> who are responsible for developing child and youth agency, under the leadership of the education sector. • To build agency, educational ecosystems must be systematized across the following “systemic building blocks”, which are described briefly by their strengths, biggest gaps and actions required to strengthen them in Zambia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International instruments that mandate the development of educational ecosystems for child and youth agency ▪ Enabling national and policies and laws ▪ Programmes at scale for delivering agency by a continuum of <i>co-educators</i> through schools as hubs ▪ Qualified co-educators themselves ▪ Appropriate teaching and learning materials and infrastructure ▪ Adequate budgets to sustain the system ▪ Information management systems ▪ Leadership and coordination structures 	<p>MIET AFRICA's learning briefs are developed to share new ideas, best practices and learnings arising from our specific experience in implementing a project or through some other activity, so as to grow knowledge and share learning, with the ultimate aim of <i>improving the lives of children and youth</i>.</p>
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Introduction

By 2050, Africa will be home to a billion children. This represents an unprecedented opportunity to

... reap the demographic dividend and accelerate Africa's sustainable and equitable development. Children have the potential to transform Africa—but if neglected they could also increase the burden of poverty and inequality, whilst posing a serious risk to peace, security and prosperity.¹

By adopting *Africa's Agenda 2063* and *Africa's Agenda for Children 2040*, African States have committed to build human capital by realizing the right of all children, including the most vulnerable, to develop to their full potential. They have committed to do so through strengthened education systems that provide 21st century education that prepares children to be active, engaged, responsible 21st century citizens with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to bring a permanent end to the continent's greatest development challenges. Notably, they have committed to strengthen integrated transformational education and health systems to end persistent development challenges such as poverty, HIV&AIDS, early unintended pregnancies, gender inequality and climate change.

Various measures have been taken to fulfil these commitments, but progress has been slow. The UN's 2020 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) report confirmed that sub-Saharan Africa is at risk of not achieving the SDGs. Progress had slowed substantially even before the COVID-19 pandemic and has since deteriorated further.² The UN has declared this the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030 and has called on all

Member States to take extraordinary measures to ensure accelerated, sustainable progress. Furthermore, 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*—the treaty whereby Member States of the African Union (AU) collectively committed themselves to reap the youth dividend.

Reaping this dividend requires urgent action to strengthen integrated education systems that build the agency of every child—in Zambia, all other SADC Member States and the wider African region. This can and must be achieved through the operationalization of the *SADC CSTL Policy Framework* and supporting *Child and Youth Agency Framework (CYAF)* that were developed as vehicles to strengthen education systems to build human capital for sustainable development.

The CSTL Policy Framework and the Child and Youth Agency Framework

Most SADC Member States have undertaken curriculum reform to provide *21st century education* to prepare children for tackling *21st century challenges*. However, this has not developed child and youth agency adequately to address critical, persistent development challenges, such as high levels of HIV&AIDS among girls and young women, gender inequality, and early unintended pregnancies. Nor has it not secured the knowledge, competencies and opportunities required to empower children and youth to make responsible, informed decisions and to act to bring a permanent end to these challenges. This is evidenced by ongoing development challenges—for example, the persistently high risky sexual and social behaviour, high HIV&AIDS transmission rates among girls and young women, low antiretroviral therapy (ART)-adherence rates, high early pregnancy rates, exclusion of girls from school because of pregnancy and early marriages, and persisting gender inequality—despite the development and delivery of a combination of life skills, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools and national adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programmes.³ Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has eroded the fragile human capital foundations that had been built and has weakened the capacity of existing education and health systems to develop adolescent and youth agency. It has also deepened the vulnerability of children and pre-existing educational access and learning inequalities, access to health services, poverty and prevalence of harmful social and cultural behaviour.⁴ As a result, development challenges (such as early pregnancies, early marriages, child labour, school drop-outs, exposure to HIV&AIDS, non-ART adherence, and gender-based violence and abuse) have increased in the period 2020–21.⁵

MIET AFRICA's recent study on the impact of COVID-19 on children and youth confirms that the pandemic has deepened the vulnerability of children and youth to risks and their ability to overcome them, and as a result, increased risky behaviour that have exacerbated the development challenges in Zambia and other SADC Member States. The study found that COVID-19:

... led to loss of livelihoods, significant stress on families, increased gender-based violence (GBV), and lack of access to safe spaces and services for youth, particularly girls and young women. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the six SADC Member States under review have all recorded higher rates of child, early and forced marriages, early pregnancies and school dropouts.*

The UN's 2021 call to action requires all SADC Member States, along with the rest of Africa, to pursue a “deliberate policy of human development and put human development at the centre of their growth and development strategy.”⁶ This entails all Member States, including Zambia, strengthening their education systems to build the *agency* of every child, adolescent and youth to act to bring an end to development challenges—specifically, to build their agency to make sound evidence-based decisions, act responsibly, provide leadership and advocate for supporting decisions and changes among their peers, homes, schools and communities.

* Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe

The SADC Policy Framework on Care and Support for Teaching and Learning

The *CSTL Policy Framework* mandates and commits all Member States to strengthen their educational ecosystems to be effective inclusive vehicles for developing human capital for sustainable development. It provides a roadmap on what the ecosystem should achieve and describes its components to achieve the two main outcomes:

- Universal access to basic education
- Quality, transformative education for developing agency of every child

It requires the development of integrated educational ecosystems coordinated by the Ministry of Education that bring together a diversity of role players to provide a combination of services and support to overcome access, participation and retention barriers and provide quality education for agency. CSTL schools are tasked with serving as facilitative hubs that coordinate the provision of quality education by all co-educators working in synergy to develop the agency of every child. However, while the *CSTL Policy Framework* provides detailed guidance on the partners and socioeconomic support that should be provided to address access barriers, it does not provide the same guidance on who the partners or co-educators are, and what is required to develop and deliver quality, relevant education to develop children's agency.

Child and Youth Agency Framework

The complementary *CYAF* was developed to address this gap. It provides a roadmap for the development and delivery of education for agency through an appropriate 21st century curriculum supported by appropriate, enabling national policies, laws and systems. It describes the 21st century curriculum for developing agency, the requirements for implementing it, and key features of the supporting national system. It is being piloted in 40 schools across four Member States, including Zimbabwe,* which are being supported to operationalize the *CSTL Policy Framework* and *CYAF*. Both frameworks describe the building blocks that must be in place in all schools, as well as the systemic building blocks that must be in place at a national policy level within the relevant Ministries of Education, Health, Children, Youth and Gender (for example) to mandate, enable and support schools to become sustainable hubs for agency.

Given the impact of COVID-19 on education systems, increased vulnerability of children, and deepening development challenges, it is more important than ever that SADC Member States operationalize the CSTL Policy Framework, as augmented by the CYAF, to "reap the child and youth demographic dividend" to recover lost ground and accelerate Africa's sustainable and equitable development in this Decade of Action for achieving sustainable development.

Purpose of this brief

MIET AFRICA conducted research in the four pilot Member States (including Zambia) to identify current strengths and weaknesses in the national educational ecosystems as measured against the *CSTL Policy Framework* and *CYAF*. This learning brief provides an overview of the causes of limited youth agency, the required responses, key gaps and recommended actions for strengthening the policy environment to mandate, enable and support the development of all schools as CSTL coordinating hubs that:

- Facilitate provision of services and support to ensure inclusion, retention and completion of school by vulnerable children
- Facilitate the provision of quality, relevant 21st century education for agency to address pressing development challenges

It also provides an overview of the gaps and actions that must be taken to strengthen the following standard systemic building blocks:

- International instruments

* The others being Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia

- Enabling policies and laws
- Programmes
- Human resources
- Learning materials and Infrastructure
- Financial resources
- Information systems
- Leadership and coordination

Limited child and youth agency

The problem and causes

SADC Member States face common persistent development problems, including high HIV&AIDS infection rates among young people, especially girls, low ART adherence rates, high numbers of early marriages and pregnancies, gender inequality and climate change. An immediate cause of *some* of these problems is risky and unsustainable behaviour by young people. So the solution requires sustained changes in child and youth behaviour. Member States, including Zambia, have committed, through various instruments and initiatives, including the following, to provide quality and inclusive education to develop the agency of adolescents and youth:

- East and Southern Africa (ESA) Ministerial Commitment
- *Agenda 2063: The Africa we want* and *Africa's Agenda for Children 2040*
- SADC Regional Strategy for HIV prevention, treatment and care and sexual and reproductive health and rights among key populations (2018)
- *SADC Policy Framework on CSTL*

These commitments have led to curriculum innovations, including the introduction of subjects such as Life Skills, CSE and environmental studies. However, this has not resulted in the required change in behaviour among the growing young population. The reasons are many, but in summary, many vulnerable children still do not access and complete school because of social, economic and health-related barriers. Furthermore, those who are in school are not acquiring the requisite competencies and afforded the opportunities to apply their learned knowledge.

Teachers cannot, nor are they expected to, provide the full package of services and support and teaching necessary for developing agency. This is the responsibility of a range of other role players—or *co-educators*—from whom children learn and who are responsible for providing care, support and services necessary for developing their agency. These co-educators, who make up an educational ecosystem for developing agency, include:

- Their caregivers* and families
- Their friends and peers
- Their teachers
- The media
- Community and religious leaders
- Politicians

* In this brief, "caregivers" is used to designate parents, other members of the family, guardians or other adults who provide daily care to the learner.

- Service providers, such as healthcare workers and social workers
- NGOs and development partners

However, many co-educators cannot provide the support and continuing education and opportunities children need because of their own circumstances, such as poverty, harmful traditional and religious values and practices, lack of knowledge, lack of a mandate, support and resources to provide the required services, support and education.

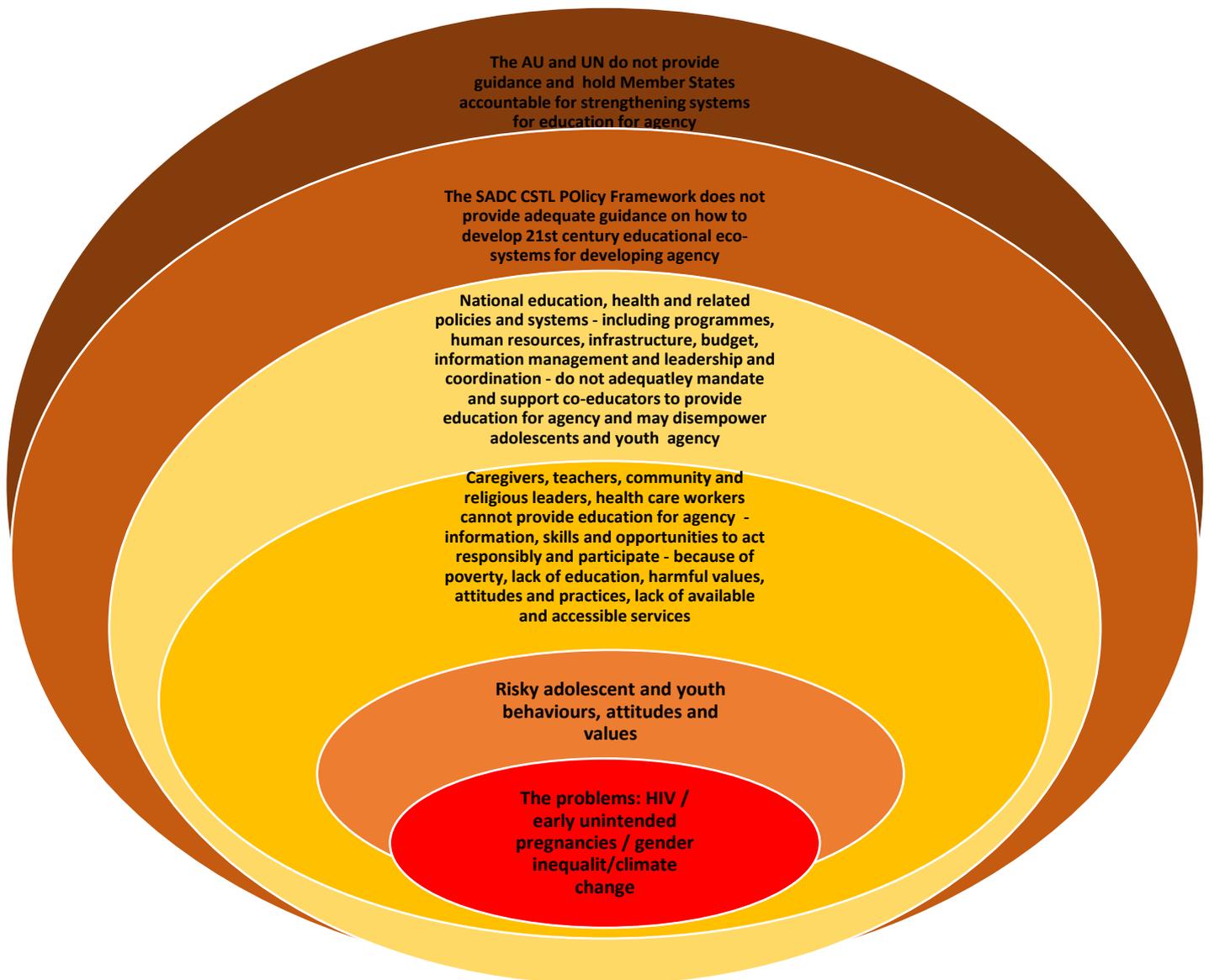


FIGURE 1: THE ECOSYSTEMIC CAUSES OF PERSISTING DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES DRIVEN BY RISKY BEHAVIOUR

The solution

To address the immediate cause of the problem, the whole educational ecosystem must be strengthened across all levels to enable sustained delivery of education for agency by the continuum of co-educators in all schools in Zambia. This requires that national educational ecosystems:

- Be strengthened to ensure all co-educators recognize and understand their role
- Are mandated and supported to provide the required support, education and opportunities

This in turn requires the strengthening of an *enabling system* made up of:

- Laws, policies and strategies that mandate and enable co-educators, and do not create legal barriers to children and youth acting responsibly
- Programmes at scale to provide co-educators with the support they need to fulfil their roles and that secure the provision of quality education for agency facilitated through a national network of CSTL schools
- The required human resources to implement the programmes in the form of adequately mandated, trained, supported, and accountable co-educators
- The required infrastructure
- The required financial resources
- Leadership, coordination and supporting institutional arrangements to oversee the educational ecosystem and co-educators

To ensure that all national systems are developed to provide education for agency of all children in the region, SADC and the UN must enable, guide, support and hold Member States accountable for developing the required system through, for example:

- Adopting the CYAF as an addendum to the *CSTL Policy Framework*
- Developing General Comments on treaty implementation responsibilities
- Holding General Days of Discussion and facilitating sub-regional and regional policy dialogues, seminars and webinars on the importance of, and how to develop educational ecosystems for, child and youth agency

Child and youth agency in and through the system

It is crucial that children and youth themselves be enabled to participate meaningfully in the development and delivery of an effective national educational system as they are both beneficiaries and co-educators. They must therefore be included in all system's strengthening planning and decision-making.

Advocacy and system–strengthening priorities

Inclusive, evidence-based and responsive system's strengthening measures

All SADC Member States, including Zambia, must strengthen their educational ecosystems across the systemic building blocks by understanding:

- Their legal responsibilities and mandates, and fulfilling them in the design, development and operationalization of their systems
- The biggest challenges that prevent adolescents and youth from accessing the information they need, developing the skills to understand and apply it in their daily lives to make responsible decisions in their best interests and those around them
- What works and what does not, so as to strengthen their systems to address the challenges

System's strengthening priorities to build agency to end HIV infections

SADC Member States, including Zambia, have signed global and regional instruments committing to ensure that children and youth are empowered through integrated education systems to alter their risky behaviour that drive high HIV and infection rates, especially among girls and young women. However, the measures taken have not achieved the promises made. The policy audit found that all co-educators are not enabled to provide support and teaching and learning for the development of agency.

Available evidence points to the need for developing prevention programmes that address the multiple and intersecting causes through integrated responses that reach the key populations.⁷ Systems must be

deliberately designed to address the *multiple* risks faced by key population—including social, economic, political, not just biomedical, risks. A review of best practices confirms the need for multi-faceted advocacy and communication interventions that address the combination of adolescent-specific factors, rather than just one or the other. It also found that the current system does not respond to the most pressing challenges preventing children and youth from acquiring the knowledge, skills and opportunities to act responsibly in their homes, schools, communities and countries.

To be sustainable and reach all children and adolescents, interventions must be systematized: reaching only *some* of the children *some* of the time will not have the population-scale transformation required. For this reason, responses *through* the education systems are favoured as they have the required education mandate and authority, as well as the reach, for scalability.

The following table provides an overview of some of the features that are essential to address the most pressing and common barriers to developing adolescent and youth agency.

TABLE 1: BARRIERS TO ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH AGENCY

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES	REQUIRED RESPONSES
There is a lack of available, quality prevention services ⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to adolescent and youth-friendly services, <i>plus</i> community-led advocacy • Use systems that ensure they are rolled out at scale to reach the full population, especially the most vulnerable and at risk
Introducing adolescent-friendly services alone is not enough: they must be part of a comprehensive community-led empowerment, communications and advocacy programme that provides services <i>and</i> the required advocacy activities that increase awareness and demand for services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine services with activities that empower adolescents and youth to make positive, informed, responsible and independent use of the services <p>When affected populations are aware of their rights and responsibilities to use the services and supported to do so, and when the service is framed as an empowering prevention method and positive life choice, there is an increase in the uptake of services.⁹</p>
Many young boys and men exhibit low levels of knowledge of their HIV status, in part because of minimal contact by men with the health system.	<p>Develop programmes targeting boys and men that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase their access to the health system to ensure early testing and treatment • Effect attitude and behaviour change to address gender stereotypes and inequality
The heightened risk of infection among adolescent girls and young women could be mitigated by their routine access to effective SRH services, especially modern contraception and family planning.	<p>Prevention efforts must include measures to improve population-scale access to SRH services (especially modern family planning and contraception services) for adolescent girls and young women.¹⁰</p>
Gender inequalities are a key barrier. Improving gender equality has been limited by the failure to address the underlying factors that disempower girls and women.	<p>Improve the power girls and young women have over their bodies and choices through measures to address gender inequality, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing them with cash grants or incentives • Ensuring their enrolment and retention at, and completion of, school, as well as providing academic support to improve education outcomes • Ensuring that should female learners fall pregnant, they be guaranteed the right to return to school and receive support upon their return to allow completion

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES	REQUIRED RESPONSES
<p>Parental attitudes, values and practices are a major barrier to knowledge and the use of SRH services and positive behaviour.</p>	<p>CSE is the responsibility of all caregivers, not just schools and teachers. CSE must therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be provided across the child's life—from the home, in communities, in health facilities, schools and tertiary institutions • Include caregivers, who must be empowered, enabled and motivated to continue and support quality CSE in the home¹¹
<p>Laws that criminalize and prevent access to services for key populations are a key driver of poor access to services and risk of HIV transmission.¹² Harmful laws include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws that criminalize same-sex relationships¹³ • Age of consent to HIV testing laws • Laws that allow child marriages and other harmful practices¹⁴ 	<p>Review and revise enabling laws and policies to ensure they do not discriminate against key populations or prevent their access to services.</p>
<p>Participation of affected stakeholders is vital to success.</p> <p>"Where [affected] communities are able to participate in decision-making and service delivery, outcomes and impacts have generally improved."¹⁵ Conversely, where they are excluded, progress has stalled among key populations—driven by their marginalization.</p>	<p>There must be meaningful and routine participation by adolescents and young women and men affected by HIV&AIDS in decision-making and HIV service delivery.¹⁶</p> <p>Although progress has been made towards the 90:90:90 targets,* significant gaps remain. To escalate and sustain progress, the involvement of the affected populations in facility and national decision-making about HIV&AIDS is required, as well as their participate in service delivery.¹⁷</p>

Developing agency through educational ecosystems in Zambia

The CSTL Policy Framework and CYAF provide a legally mandated roadmap to strengthen Zambia's educational ecosystem for developing agency to build human capital to achieve an HIV-free generation of young people.

To develop agency to address the developmental challenges, every child and young person must be provided with:

- *Information* (through CSE, and on gender equality and climate change, etc.) from a diversity of sources on the implications, different approaches, rights and responsibilities, global, regional, national goals, etc.
- *Support to develop analytical, communication and advocacy competencies* to find, analyse, understand and apply information to identify challenges and make responsible, evidence-based and rights-based decisions to change behaviour, attitudes, practices and values for themselves and their families, schools, communities and countries
- *The opportunity* to apply the information, advocate for and implement the plans to bring about the required changes in behaviour, practices, values, policies and instruments

Treaty and development instruments obligate *education systems* to develop agency because they have universal reach. However, schools acting alone cannot ensure universal quality education for agency. What is required *is the delivery of 21st century education for agency by co-educators acting in unity within a national educational ecosystem.* But this requires education ministries to take the lead in systematizing and

* UNAIDS' target that by 2020: 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status; 90% of all people diagnosed with HIV will receive sustained ART; and 90% of all people receiving ART will have viral suppression.

coordinating educational ecosystems that bring the various role players (schools, teachers, caregivers, communities, peers, the media, traditional and religious leaders, healthcare providers, development partners etc.) together to:

- Address access barriers
- Provide quality, transformational education for agency—as co-educators—across multiple educational platforms

To ensure that every child is included, receives quality education and *develops agency*, CSTL schools must be universalized as hubs of the national educational ecosystems. Educational ecosystems must therefore be systematized across eight “systemic building blocks”. The biggest and most common gaps in these systemic building blocks in Zambia are tabulated below.

TABLE 2: SYSTEMIC STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES AND NEXT STEPS FOR ZAMBIA

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>International, continental and regional (SADC) instruments that obligate and guide Member States to develop educational ecosystems for quality education for agency through coordinated action of co-educators under the leadership of the education sector</p>	<p>Zambia has ratified and/or endorsed multiple instruments that can only be implemented through educational ecosystems that provide for developing child and youth agency, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESA Commitment • <i>Africa’s Agenda 2063</i> and the <i>Sustainable Development Agenda</i> • <i>Africa’s Agenda for Children 2040</i> • <i>The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child</i> • <i>The CSTL Policy Framework</i> <p>Not only has Zambia endorsed the Policy Framework, it has also domesticated it by developing a CSTL National Model to ensure inclusive education to address key development challenges, with HIV&AIDS being an express priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN and AU do not have frameworks in place that direct Member States to develop educational ecosystems for developing child and youth agency. • Although the <i>CSTL Policy Framework</i> Policy Framework has been domesticated, the National Model does not address strengthening the quality of education for addressing agency. <p>The National Model and <i>CSTL Policy Framework</i> are not yet universally known and applied as planning tools, nor have they been adequately systematized within the education sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an advocacy plan on the roles and responsibilities of co-educators: education, health, caregivers, communities, the media, etc.
<p>Enabling national and policies and laws that mandate the delivery of education for agency through educational ecosystems to achieving SDGs, HIV targets, and treaty responsibilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 21st century National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCF) • CSE policies and curriculum 	<p>Zambia has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised its curriculum and adopted the National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy 2016–2020 <p>It recognizes the heightened risk of adolescents to HIV&AIDS and early pregnancy, and makes provision for multi-sectoral responses through the education and health sectors. It identifies key risks and makes provision for integrated services supporting the development of agency for healthy and protective behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a costed ESA implementation plan¹⁸ • Developed an Out of School Comprehensive Sexuality Education Framework¹⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the NCF recognizes and seeks to advance agency, the implementation and quality of the curriculum to develop it and to provide comprehensive HIV -related information is limited. • The curriculum framework provides more clarity with regards to economic agency; it explicitly identifies the role of education as preparing learners to support national development aspirations. But it focuses almost exclusively on socioeconomic competencies rather than civic agency. • Zambia’s CSTL National Model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is not yet universally known or applied as a planning tool, nor has it been adequately systematized within the education sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the NCF to make civic agency an explicit priority • Strengthen the supporting 21st century curriculum across the CSTL pillars and systemic building blocks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify civic and political agency as a core competency of the NCF, CSE curriculum and integrated school health policy ▪ Develop programmes delivered in and through schools by co-educators to develop agency with supporting pedagogy and extra-curricular activities ▪ Develop the capacities of co-educators to fulfil their respective agency roles

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School–Health policies • CSTL National Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and adopted a CSTL National Model (as noted above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does not prioritize essential CSTL elements that must be strengthened to achieve FutureLife-Now! goals and objectives • While the National Adolescent and Youth Health Strategy and ESA Plan provide a framework of action to be implemented in partnership by the Health and Education ministries, there is no standalone School Health Policy and supporting implementation plan. • It is not clear to what extent the enabling policies and strategies address the issue of boy's vulnerability adequately. • The country does not have a standalone HIV-prevention strategy and supporting costed implementation plan. • The WHO requires every country to develop standardized operating procedures for all sectors to use in the provision of quality youth-friendly SRH services and CSE.²⁰ However, Zambia has not developed the required standardized guidelines yet. • Current laws in Zambia limit agency. For example, the law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows child marriages, with 16 being the legal minimum age of marriage ▪ Only allows children aged 16 and older to access contraception without parental consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen the infrastructure needed for environmentally sustainable practices • Revise the CSTL National Model to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make quality education for agency a priority ▪ Domesticate the CYAF to provide a roadmap to role players and to measure progress • Develop a national adolescent and youth HIV&AIDS-prevention strategy that has as a specific objective the development of agency for safe and healthy behaviour • Review policies to ensure that boys' vulnerability is addressed • Develop a costed school health policy with the specific objective of developing agency for health behaviour • Standardize operating procedures for all sectors to use in the provision of youth-friendly SRH services that comply with WHO guidelines • Advocate for the revision of the laws governing the age of marriage and consent to SRH services without parental consent

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>The following programmes at scale for delivering agency by a continuum of co-educators through schools as hubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum that that builds capacity for advocacy and related skills • School health • CSE for the provision of knowledge and services • Extra-curricular peer groups and clubs • Debating clubs • Child and youth media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zambia has embedded CSE into the education curriculum, and which, through various projects, allows for adolescents to access services that (on paper) are largely aligned to the WHO guidelines. • Climate change is explicitly included in Zambia's Education Curriculum Framework 2013. It obligates all learning institutions to provide Education for Sustainable Development to improve the capacity of learners to "comprehend, participate in and become better at resolving the contentious clash of ecological, social and economic interests."²¹ 	<p>While Zambia has embedded CSE into the education curriculum and provides SRH services aligned to the WHO guidelines, implementation and the quality of the curriculum to develop agency and to provide comprehensive HIV-related information is limited by policy clarity. A 2014 review of the curriculum found the curriculum did not create agency among learners: they were provided with information but were unable to exercise it and access SRH services.</p> <p>The challenge lies in the quality of curriculum content and the delivery of the curriculum, with teacher attitudes, values and practices recognized as a particular challenge. Furthermore, access to the package of services is unequal and not universal because of limited resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a costed implementation plan to operationalize a strengthened NCF for agency and the revised National Model. • Develop a consolidated costed implementation plan to roll out integrated education and health programmes at scale and mobilize adequate resources to ensure sustainable implementation
<p>Mandated and qualified co-educators across the continuum, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers • Teachers • Peers • Health and social workers • Civil society organizations 	<p>Zambia has sought to scale up training of its health workers at a pre- and in-service level. Adolescent-friendly youth health services have been mainstreamed into the nursing and midwifery curriculum rolled out in 2016. There is no data on how many health care workers have been trained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many co-educators do not recognize their role in the educational ecosystem for agency. • A recent evaluation of the joint Health–Education pilot programme indicates that training has improved the attitudes, knowledge and practices of the health care workers. However, the number of workers trained and available to support the programme is too limited to ensure universal reach, especially in rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a human resources development strategy for building the capacity and support for all co-educators (caregivers, teachers, healthcare workers, peers, the media, community and religious leaders, etc.) to enable them to provide education for agency • Develop specific training and support modules for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers in pilot schools ▪ Caregivers as co-educators

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Media 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher values, attitudes and practices remain a major challenge in the provision of quality CSE. Many (especially older teachers) are not comfortable speaking about sexuality. • Teachers have not been adequately trained or supported to develop 21st century teaching skills and methodologies, which are undermined by a conservative workforce. • Caregivers hold conservative values and attitudes that limit the effectiveness of CSE and SRH education provided at schools and health facilities. Furthermore, many cannot fulfil their critical role as co-educators for agency. • <i>Caregivers as co-educators</i> is a neglected area, and there is little direction or policy in place to formalize and secure their role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health workers
<p>Appropriate teaching and learning materials and infrastructure to support education for agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to diverse media and technology • Enough written and published materials • Environmentally-friendly infrastructure 	<p>Zambia has developed several programmes (as discussed previously) and teaching resources to support teachers and learners: however, supply, scale and sustainability are limited by lack of resources.</p>	<p>Inadequate infrastructure is a crosscutting concern that impacts on the delivery of CSE and SRH services in schools and clinics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of teaching and learning support material to facilitate knowledge and pedagogical practices for developing agency and for learner-centred practices. Materials must be developed, drawing on lessons from other countries where good practices are in place. • Teaching and learning resources and materials that support the application of information and knowledge is inadequate to develop agency. • Opportunities to exercise agency are limited by infrastructure constraints. 	<p>Develop, cost and implement an infrastructure development plan and monitor its progress to support an effective 21st century curriculum and CSTL schools as hubs of educational ecosystems for developing agency.</p>

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth-friendly accessible SRH services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to and the free distribution of information—critical to 21st century skills—is hampered by limited infrastructure, connectivity and electronic equipment. Access to the following infrastructure for agency is inadequate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology Information, education and communication materials Environmentally-friendly infrastructure Adequate water and sanitation facilities 	
<p>Adequate budgets to sustain the system and the suite of services and support at scale</p>	<p>Zambia allocates 28% of its health budget to HIV&AIDS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not clear what percentage of the health and related budgets are allocated to adolescent-targeted interventions, or what percentage of the education budget is allocated to adolescent-focused HIV interventions. There is no data on the percentage of the HIV&AIDS budget allocated to the education sector. However, the allocations are clearly inadequate, with high levels of donor dependency. The 3rd Education Sector National Implementation Plan (NIF 111) aligned planning in the sector to realize its sustainable development obligations. However, implementation was severely limited by inadequate resources. A review found only 50% of goals were achieved, 30% of activities on the workplan were on track, 30% were partially achieved and 9% had not started at all. 	<p>Develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costed implementation plans to support the educational ecosystem in pilot schools and then country-wide A national resource mobilization strategy to ensure adequate, sustained funding of system-strengthening initiatives

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
		<p>The financing gap for the NIF III was US\$238 million, with accompanying significant human resourcing and infrastructure gaps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bulk of budgets goes to human resources; the lack of costed implementation plans contributes significantly to the inadequacy of resources. • The lack of clear and costed implementation plans to establish and support 21st century educational ecosystems makes it impossible to mobilize appropriate, sustainable resources. • Budget cuts post-COVID-19 will aggravate resource inadequacies. 	
<p>Information management systems for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring progress in acquiring agency • Strengthening systems <p><i>The CSTL reporting tool (structured around the existing Policy Framework and implementing mechanisms) addresses many of the issues.</i></p>	<p>There is an existing CSTL monitoring framework that pilot Member States (including Zambia) must integrate into their national education monitoring systems and report to SADC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National educational assessment curriculum frameworks and evaluation systems do not adequately define agency competencies, outcomes and measures of progress. • Global, regional and national monitoring frameworks do not assess improvements in strengthening educational ecosystems for providing education for agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and integrate agency outcomes (including civic and political agency) as a core, measurable educational outcome of the 21st century curriculum, and develop aligned indicators and assessment procedures for monitoring and reporting on the development of skills • Integrate the CSTL reporting framework into the education monitoring and reporting system • Embed system-strengthening indicators for measuring progress in developing educational ecosystem for agency in management information systems

SYSTEMIC BUILDING BLOCK	STRENGTHS	BIGGEST GAPS	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>Leadership and coordination structures that are inclusive, representative and multisectoral, and which engage in the co-identification of challenges and development of solutions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-educators across the continuum • Children and youth • Media 	<p>Zambia has</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established ESA commitment coordination mechanism in the form of a National Adolescent Technical Working Group chaired by Health²² • Established a CSTL and FutureLife-Now! steering committee 	<p>Among the various structures there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential for duplication of roles and responsibilities, and a lack of clarity on how they relate to and support each other • A trend for multisectoral initiatives to be known only by the planners and national ministerial officials <p>This points to weak coordination of plans to drive implementation, resulting in lack of sector-wide knowledge and ownership of the initiatives.²³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited accountability and reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a leadership and coordination framework, strategy and implementation plan to consolidate, align and ensure mutual support across structures to advance inclusive educational ecosystems at national, Education and Health Ministry and school levels • Ensure the structures are adequately led and represented by key ministries

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