



USAID | ZAMBIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

OVERVIEW

PROFILE

Date of Independence: 1964
Population: 11.9 million (2006)
Languages: English, Nyanja, Bemba, Lunda, Tonga, Lozi, Luvale, Kaonde
GDP per capita: \$921 (2006)
Source: U.S. State Department

MISSION DIRECTOR

Melissa S. Williams
P.O Box 32481
Lusaka 10101
Zambia
Tel: 260-211-254-303

DESK OFFICER

Rosalind Best
Tel: 1-202-712-0839
Email: rbest@usaid.gov
Web: www.usaid.gov/zm

BACKGROUND

While Zambia has been a pillar of peace and stability in southern Africa since its independence in 1964, its stability cannot be taken for granted. The potential for instability in Zambia continues to increase as conflict continues in neighboring mineral-rich Democratic Republic of Congo and political strife still hangs over neighboring Zimbabwe.

Two in three Zambians live in poverty. Annual incomes have fallen well below their level at the time of independence and—at \$921 a person—place the country among the world's poorest nations. Social indicators continue to decline, particularly life expectancy at birth (about 37 years) and maternal mortality (729 deaths per 100,000 live births). And the country's rate of economic growth cannot support rapid population growth or the strain which HIV/AIDS related issues place on government resources. Zambia's stability rests on Zambians' continuing faith that government is genuinely trying to address their needs. That faith is now being tested by corruption and service delivery failures, especially in the rural areas.



PROGRAMS

The United States considers democratic governance the highest U.S. foreign assistance priority for Zambia. Zambia is a young country, with half of the population under 18 years of age, but its economic growth has not created jobs for the expanding urban population, the quality of education has declined, and close to 1.3 million young Zambians are at risk of being disenfranchised in the 2011 elections unless voter registration, not conducted since 2005, is fully resumed in 2010. USAID focuses on helping the government increase its capacity to govern transparently, fight institutional corruption, improve service delivery, and protect its citizens.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

U.S. support for good governance aligns with Zambia's national development plans and seeks to provide a system of governance that creates conditions for markets to function, facilitates the efficient and effective delivery of basic services, ensures civil society participation in decision making, and maximizes the welfare of Zambian communities and individuals. Corruption in Zambia is a major constraint in the public and private spheres, threatening the promise of Zambia's national development goals. The 2010 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Zambia 101 among 178 countries. Through investments in systems re-engineering in select government ministries and agencies that directly serve Zambian citizens, USAID will seek to replicate the success of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold program in reducing transactional corruption, improving service delivery, and improving the business climate.



USAID | ZAMBIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

POLITICAL COMPETITION AND CONSENSUS BUILDING

USAID supports activities to increase public confidence and participation in Zambian politics in the lead-up to presidential and parliamentary elections in 2011. The Electoral Commission of Zambia is responsible for the conduct of elections, including registering voters, conducting voter education, accepting nominations, and preparing election materials including ballot papers and boxes. Despite the passage of continuous voter registration legislation, registration lags far behind voter eligibility leading to persistent claims of voter disenfranchisement. Voter turnout has continued to decline since 1991 undermining the credibility of election outcomes. In response, U.S. assistance focuses on enhancing the credibility of elections by increasing participation through improving the voter registration process, assisting the Electoral Commission and supporting organizations engaged in election monitoring and observation.

FUNDING

