

## Features/Columns

# Govt makes bold decision to slash school fees

By MARTIN NYIRENDA

**K**NOWLEDGE can be gained only through education, so says one ancient maxim. But then so too is education a way to close the gap between rich and poor society, the maxim should have added.

One of the main reasons why Government has directed that pupils in rural areas from grades eight to 12 should pay K150 user fees per term for both day and boarding secondary schools while those in urban areas should pay K200 is that it is conscious of the importance of education for complete development of a society.

Nothing can be further from the truth. Apart from offering the ability to earn a living through professional skills, the outcomes of education are multifarious which, among others, include promotion of a democracy through breeding of a civilised society which often accelerates the harmonious national development process.

As Indian freelance content writer Viji Athreye says, it has indeed been truly said that "the value of life can be measured by how many times your soul has been deeply stirred" and it is knowledge, through education, that stirs one's soul.

It goes without saying that education is essential for creating equality and eliminating barriers and discrimination on the basis of race, gender and economic status.

A nation's progress and development depends on the availability of this basic civil

right of education to all its citizens.

It was for education that a Pakistani schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai, defied threats from the Taliban to campaign for the right to education. She survived after being shot in the head by the Taliban (a hardline Islamic movement) and has since become a global advocate for human rights, women's rights and the right to education.

In one of his documentaries looking at why Africa is underdeveloped despite having a reservoir of human and natural resources, Africanist scholar Professor Ali Mazrui once argued that education helps a person realise their potential, which in return helps foster a stronger and cohesive society.

In a way, Government is running away from denying one access to education as this is to deny one the very basic right to be a complete human being.

The importance of education has to be permeated at every level of human society: the family, the community and the state at large.

General Education Minister David Mabumba said his ministry has also directed that pupils should pay an amount not exceeding K1, 000 per term as boarding fees, but that

schools charging less than K1, 000 per term were at liberty to maintain their current fees.

"With this guidance, no additional charges should be demanded from learners either in cash (administration fee, affiliation fee, registration fee, practical fees, computer fees, learning material fees...) or in kind (cement, realm of paper, cobra, paint, slasher, hoe, mattresses...)." Mr Mabumba said.

On project fees, Mr Mabumba said school head-teachers, Parents Teacher Committees and school boards with a compelling need to undertake a project at school should request for permission from the

General Education Permanent Secretary to charge project fees.

Regarding General Certificate of Education, Mr Mabumba said, effective 2020, the Government had also massively reduced on the entry fee, subject fee and fees for combining Grade 9 Statements of Results following a public outcry.

These announcements represent an embodiment of all that those belonging to economically weaker sections and fail to send their children to school for education need to hear.

Martha Nhkata, a single mother of four children and trader at Pamodzi market in Ndola, welcomes the Government directive to slash school user fees, contending that some school in the District were notorious for sending away pupils who fail to pay

school fees.

"It shows that the Government is concerned with the plight of poor people who are not affording paying exorbitant school fees, let alone buy books, shoes and uniforms and also pay for project fees and so on. Those who fail to pay fees were often sent away," she recoils.

Her concerns cannot be any familiar.

Many other parents welcome the reduced school user fees, saying more children will be absorbed in the education system so that they become responsible future leaders and help reverse high levels of poverty in their families.

Former Eastern Province Permanent Secretary Chanda Kasolo recently implored school authorities in the region not to send away pupils who have not paid school fees.

Mr Kasolo said he had received reports from traditional leaders that some farmers were selling maize to briefcase buyers at very low prices in order to raise funds to pay for their children's school fees.

He advised head teachers in schools especially in rural areas not to send back pupils for failure to pay fees.

Not long ago, about 100 pupils from Kaoma Secondary School in Western province who were said to be in Grade Twelve examination classes were sent back to their various homes for failing to pay boarding and other school fees.

In an interview with ZANIS, one of the concerned parents Jack Biemba charged that the situation is bad because the

throwing out of boys and girls into the streets will result in the increase of early pregnancies and teenage marriages in the district.

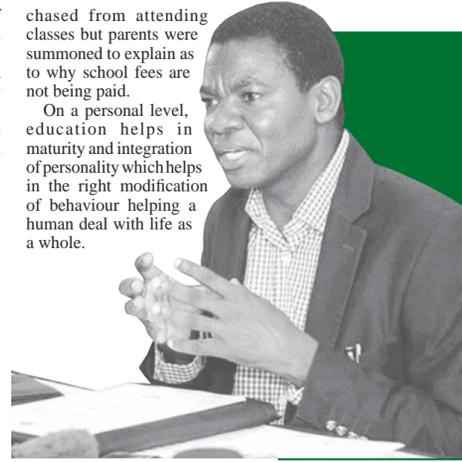
Mr Biemba said some of the chased pupils were coming from the poor of the poorest

families in the villages of Kaoma district that even included handicapped parents.

When contacted for a comment, Kaoma Secondary School Head teacher, Mulambwa Nawa is reported to have said no pupil had been

chased from attending classes but parents were summoned to explain as to why school fees are not being paid.

On a personal level, education helps in maturity and integration of personality which helps in the right modification of behaviour helping a human deal with life as a whole.



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Republic of Zambia



Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

Country	:Zambia
Name of the Project	:Zambia Mining Environmental Remediation and Improvement Project (ZMERIP)
Loan No.	:154683
Assignment Title	:Consulting Services for the Engineering Design and Supervision of Works of the Rehabilitation of TD 10, OB54 and Additional OB
Reference No.	:ZM – MMEWD – 107856 – CS - QCBS

The Government of the Republic of Zambia has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) for the Zambia Mining and Environment Remediation and Improvement Project (ZMERIP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds of the financing to cover payments under the proposed contract for Consultancy Services for the "Consulting Services for the Engineering Design and Supervision of Works of the Rehabilitation of TD 10, OB54 and Additional OB"

The objectives of the assignment are to develop engineering designs, Bills of Quantities (BOQ), cost estimates which will be used for rehabilitation and closure of the aforesaid facilities, and to provide supervising engineer duties to the Contractor during rehabilitation work at each facility.

The consulting firm will be selected using the Selection Based on Quality Cost Based Selection Methods (QCBS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the *World Bank's Guidelines for the Selection and Employment of Consultants dated January 2011 revised July 2014*. The shortlisting criteria are (1) Core business and years in business; (2) Relevant experience of the firm in carrying out similar assignments; (3) Technical and managerial capability of the firm relevant to the assignment; (4) Ten years of experience of the firm's Directors /firms Principals (5) Company registration certificate from the country of origin; (6) Evidence of Past assignments done in similar geographical areas including traceable references. The Consultant should provide specific assignments previously performed on National Plan for Prioritization and Rehabilitation of Mine Waste Facilities.

The Qualifications and Experience of Key Experts is not a requirement at this stage and therefore will not be a factor in evaluating the EOI.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

The duration period of the assignment will be 6 months ensuring full consistency with the TORs referred to in this REOI. The supervision work should commence after award of work.

Detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for this assignment may be obtained from Procurement and Supplies Unit, 14th Floor, Room 16 and 19 Government Complex Building, form 8:30 hours to 16:30hours.

Interested Firms must submit 1. Original and 4 Copies in a sealed envelope to the address below and must be deposited in the Tender Box clearly marked "Consultancy Services for "Review and Development of Technical and Financial Instruments for Environmental and Social Sustainability of Mine Sites and Mine Closure Guidelines for Zambia" by April 15, 2019 at 10:30 hours.

**Address:**  
Chief Procurement Officer  
For/  
The Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development  
P. O. Box 31969  
Nasser Road  
Lusaka, Zambia  
Tel: +260211-235357  
E-mail: gsdalama@yahoo.co.uk, amidad2002@yahoo.com



MEMBER of the university council, Tom van der Zee (middle) looks on as director in governance at Ministry of Justice, Charm Libikani (left) hands over the medal to Justine Mulenga, a Kitwe police officer who obtained a degree in criminal justice and graduated with distinction, taking him to the top of the class of 2019 of the university of Africa.

## Rise of degree-holder cops underscores success of police reforms

By DAVIS MULENGA

**J**USTIN Mulenga, a deputy criminal investigations officer (CIO), Kitwe district, recently obtained a bachelor's degree in criminal justice with distinction, underscoring the positive changing dynamics in reforming Zambia Police Service (ZPS).

The 46-year-old police officer with 23 years of service was also crowned overall best student of the class of 2019 by the Lusaka-based University of Africa, an open and distance learning (ODL) higher education institution. The recognition went with a cash prize of K7, 500.

No doubt the feat gave Mulenga (no relationship at all with the writer) prominent space in the annals of the police service, and helped to bolster its image in the eyes of the public.

Anecdotally, the public can relate to the 'chi ombani mpama' whose English literal translation was 'clap the suspect' era. This captured the local euphemism for police brutality that characterised the police service in the yesteryears, especially before multi-party politics were introduced.

"As you may know criminal justice degrees focus on the criminal justice system, especially, the functions of law enforcement and corrections. Therefore, I'm well equipped to put into practice police reform interventions that reflect the upholding of human rights while ensuring that there was effective policing," says Mulenga.

He spoke in his capacity as the overall best student in the class of 2019 during the university's 6th graduation ceremony held in Lusaka.

Mulenga says criminal justice was broadly aimed at creating robust internal and external checks and balances of policing, ensuring police carried out their duties properly and were held accountable if they failed to do so.

According to him, this ensured upholding of police integrity and deterred misconduct to enhance public confidence

in policing.

"This prevents police from misusing their powers and abusing their rights and privileges. In a lot of ways it ensures that police functions are conducted in a professional way, and just like in the corporate world, their actions and operations need to be regularly reviewed and evaluated by a multiple of stakeholders such as the police command, parliament, the judiciary, civil society and independent oversight bodies such as human rights commission," says Mulenga

Of particular concern was creating space for dialogue and promotion of understanding among groups with conflicting interests. Therefore, it was widely agreed that orienting the police in that space was a major lever.

That prompted advocacy work by NGOs coupled by other stakeholders to provide concrete context for police reforms that started in 1995. It was paramount that Zambia, as a member of the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), both of which acknowledge the right to life and outlawed torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treat of community members by having a professional human rights orientated police.

Matter of fact the UN provided guidelines related to police reforms in democracies. These were published in handbook form in 2011.

The handbook stressed legislation must be in line with international human rights law. Further, it urged adequate police training, both basic and ongoing. Other elements of the handbook included fair and effective procedures and policies on how to deal with police misconduct, including both disciplinary and criminal codes, adequate investigative capacity, procedures for punishment and appeal procedures.

Therefore, reduction of human rights abuses, crime and improvement of public confidence in policing were key

determinants of how success of police reforms would look like.

Consistent with the desire to improve police/public cooperation and partnership, Zambia Police Force changed its name to Zambia Police Service and adopted the Community-based Policing model of law enforcement as part of its image and emphasise its new policing strategy.

However, the sweeping changes required a re-orientation of skills. This gave rise to the significant challenge of equipping the existing and new members of the police service with the necessarily skills while ensuring minimal disruption to day-to-day operations.

Open and distance learning (ODL) flexibility and convenience was identified as a realistic path to accelerate the upskilling of the existing members of the police service.

"It would not have been possible for money to go full-time and obtain a degree because of the demands of work and family," Mulenga says.

He was quick to point out the police reforms being pursued were revolutionary in nature, and as such required rapid results.

He says higher education in the ranks was one way of rapidly implementing the well-intended police reforms.

As a beneficiary of the support inspector general of police, Kakoma Kanganja provided to the men and women in uniform to upgrade their academic qualification, Mulenga encouraged serving officers to take advantage of higher education learning while they retained their full-time jobs.

"There is absolutely no excuse now why one should remain with the same academic qualifications they had when they joined the police services. I feel happy knowing the support our inspector-general Kakoma Kanganja has rendered to me and other officers before me and those following in my footsteps," he says.