

Decentralisation for Development (D4D) IV

Strengthening the implementation capacity, especially the financial capacity to act, of the Zambian local government system.

The challenge

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, commissioned by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is a long-term partner for decentralisation reforms and local governance in Zambia. GIZ has been supporting capacity development of local authorities as well as the decentralisation reforms of the administrative and financial architecture between the central and local government for over two decades.

In 2013, the Zambian Government embarked on a decentralisation policy reform, which culminated in 2016 in the amendment of the constitution anchoring devolution as the governing principle. Since then, several subsidiary laws have been adjusted and a basic fiscal instrument to fund local authorities – the Local Government Equalisation Fund (LGEF) – was introduced.

However, the reform slowed down from 2017 until the current administration of President Hakainde Hichilema came to power in August 2021. As one of its first measures, the new government increased the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) 17.5-fold, with the goal of providing capital investment funds for small local projects and improving local service delivery. However, the increased and expanded fund has resulted in administrative bottlenecks and high workloads for local authorities.

The main challenges of the reform implementation that have to be addressed are the fluctuating political will, inadequate coordination, and technical capacity to manage the complexity involved.

Our approach

The objective of the D4D IV programme is to strengthen the capacities of local governments in Zambia and especially their financial capacity to act. The programme follows a multi-level and multi-stakeholder implementation approach to achieve its objective. At national level, the programme aims at strengthening the implementation capacity for the decentralisation reform, improving multi-level communication and financial frameworks, enhancing knowledge management as well as curricula development for local government officials regarding decentralization reforms and their implementation.

Project name	Decentralisation for Development (D4D), Phase IV
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Southern and Luapula Provinces until 12/2021: North-Western Province
Lead executing agency	Cabinet Office through the Decentralisation Secretariat (DS)
Duration	04/2021–03/2025

At subnational level, the focus is on support for

- the development and implementation of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) at district level;
- capacity-building of local authorities to improve own source revenue mobilisation and utilisation;



Picture left: Council Secretaries brainstorming with GIZ on improving their budget performance, Luapula Province, Samfya, 2022

Picture right: COVID mitigation material distribution, 2020



Dr. Wolff-Christian Peters,
Programme Manager
wolff-
christian.peters@giz.de

*Budget Consultations in Samfya, Luapula
Province. 2022*

- civic engagement in annual budget planning processes at district level
- the improvement of citizen-friendly service provision by local authorities.

Decentralization Conference as a platform for agenda-setting.

In reference to the new CDF Act (2018), D4D conducted training workshops to strengthen the financial capacity to act within the guidelines from the CDF Act (2018).

Activities and Results

Covid-19 response

To alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a COVID-19 Advisory Centre for local authorities was established through the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ). The centre provided advice on the development of emergency plans and encouraged innovative responses to the pandemic. D4D also supported improvement in water supply and hand-washing facilities in urban markets as a preventive measure against the spread of the pandemic, which received high endorsement. In 2022, the national Covid-19 Vaccination Campaign was supported with a focus on informing and mobilising rural districts in Luapula, North-Western and Southern provinces, targeting 3 Million people through radio and social media messages, public meetings as well as information material. In addition, 1,000 multipliers were formally trained on Covid-19 related topics.

Supporting reform efforts on national level

The GIZ D4D project engages in improving the national framework for decentralisation implementation. Support has been provided towards the revision of the National Decentralisation Policy, updating of the Decentralisation Implementation Plan, amendment of the Constituency Development Fund Act, development of a change management framework for local authorities and to the holding of the annual

Strengthening capacities at local level

To bridge the information exchange gap between national and local level a Local Management Information System has been developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. It is currently in use for human resource and payroll management in Local Authorities, own source revenue collection and project implementation monitoring. The system is evolving to include e-billing and e-payment systems which have been piloted in Southern Province.

D4D assists local authorities in developing Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), which are a legal requirement for the preparation of local budgets and thereby constitute a significant step in local development efforts. The development of IDPs encompasses extensive citizen consultations which have also been extended to budget consultations in Southern and Luapula provinces, bringing together council members and civil society representatives.

In addition, the application of a GIZ supported self-assessment tool has helped local authorities to determine their strengths and weaknesses regarding finance and human resource management.

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

GIZ Decentralisation for Development
Stand No 5760, House No 9
Private Bag RW 37X, 15102 Ridgeway
Kabompo Road, Kalundu
Lusaka, Zambia
d4d@giz.de
www.giz.de/zambia

As at

February 2023

Photo credits

page 1: Denise Endres/Jennifer Kohel
page 2: Elina Chanda Halwindi

Text

Dr. Wolff-Christian Peters

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)