



**SPEECH BY THE ZIPAR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR HERRICK MPUKU
READ FOR HIM BY MR SHIMUKUNGU MANCHISHI (ACTING RESEARCH
FELLOW I – TRADE AND INVESTMENT) AT THE TWO DAY ZIPAR-UNICEF
PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT (PFM) TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR
JOURNALISTS IN LIVINGSTONE AT THE DAVID LIVINGSTONE SAFARI
LODGE ON 14th APRIL 2023.**

Ladies and gentlemen of the media and press.

ZIPAR Staff facilitating the training.

UNICEF in Absentia.

Welcome to this training workshop on Public Financial Management.

Let me start by thanking UNICEF for partnering and supporting ZIPAR in this important undertaking of training business and finance journalists in Public Finance Management.

The need for increased transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public funds may not be realised without the full participation and involvement of the media.

It is for this reason that I commend UNICEF for supporting ZIPAR in this noble cause.

On this training platform therefore, ZIPAR will empower the participating Journalists with the critical understanding in Public Finance Management to help the media effectively play their watchdog role.

At the end of this training, we expect the journalists to have new and better insight of various basic economic fundamentals to aid their effectiveness in conducting investigative journalism and reportage in Public Finance Management.

Colleagues from the media, as you may already be aware, ZIPAR is a public institution, whose mandate is to conduct research and policy analysis on socio-economic themes in order to provide objective, credible and timely policy advice to support the policy process in Zambia.

ZIPAR was established by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) with the support of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in 2006, and evolved to an autonomous, grant-aided institution under the ministry Finance in 2009.

Over the years ZIPAR has undertaken research and policy analysis interventions in a wide range of areas, and has significantly impacted the policy space. This has been acknowledged by a wide range of our stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, non-government organisations, the media, and our external cooperating partners. ZIPAR has conducted capacity building exercises to government, civil society, media and professionals in varied areas of economic analysis.

Quite significantly, in the last two years ZIPAR has conducted training on budget analysis to members of parliament and permanent secretaries. And most recently, we conducted a training for Lusaka based business and finance journalists equipping them with the ability and capability to understand, comprehensively research, and effectively report on macroeconomic issues of the country.

Additionally, ZIPAR is called upon by Members of Parliament on a consistent basis to make submissions and comments on a multitude of policy issues affecting the country which include the Efforts of Illicit Financial Flows on the Budget and its Sustainability; Implementation of the National M&E Policy in Zambia; and Achieving 50/50 Gender Parity in Governance and Decision-making in Zambia.

ZIPAR understands fully and takes pride in knowing the footing it has on the policy space in Zambia and more importantly, the impact it creates with the various sectors, both public and private, in spearheading the value of evidence-based research for effective policy formation that overall will have a positive outlook on Zambia.

In the end, I believe we all have the same wish for our country which is a strong macroeconomic base, prosperity for our people, and raised standards of living for all. This work provides for a solid foundation to achieve these outcomes and we as ZIPAR, will strive to continue providing the essential tools and necessary voice to realise this objective.

Therefore, in pursuit of evidence-based policy and developmental interventions, ZIPAR is happy to engage with the Media as a key stakeholder to enhance their capacity in public finance management. In this way, these professionals are able to factually and accurately report and evaluate these developments for the benefit of the public.

I cannot overstate the importance of this capacity building training for members of the media. Zambia is currently facing a time where the proverbial Eagle Eye watches closely on Government and the various wings in Government towards ensuring it operates with integrity, transparency, and above board. Having the ability and skill to collect, analyse and report the information is an important part by the media to ensure the maintenance of accountability in the public sector spending by government agents.

Our commitment as ZIPAR is to work closely with our varied stakeholders to enhance their capacities to be key players in opinion formation, policy making and decision-making. In wider terms, this will also enhance and consolidate the democratic space in Zambia by building a strong spirit of intra-society dialogue. Key in this journey, is the media and its role.

We are therefore very delighted to engage in this training workshop for business and finance journalists. We are confident that in the medium to long term, this will yield significant social, economic and political dividends.

The media, or the fourth estate is therefore expected to play an increasingly powerful role in the economic, political and social transformation of our society as well as entrenching the democratic tenets which the Zambian people jealously espouse.

Dear colleagues,

As I conclude my speech, may I implore the members of media who are taking part in this programme to put in their best. You should participate actively in the programme and share your experiences with each other and our facilitators.

With these remarks, I thank you for your kind attention.