



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
CABINET OFFICE

THE NATIONAL DECENTRALISATION POLICY

Realising Local Development through Citizen Participation

I ALSO EXPECT TO SEE MORE MONEY BEING SET ASIDE TO FIX OUR BRIDGE AND STREET LIGHTS.

I WISH WE CAN HAVE IMPROVED TOWNSHIP ROADS, REHABILITATED DIP TANKS AND A BOREHOLE FOR OUR CLEAN AND SAFE WATER.

I AM VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE UNPLANNED BUILDING GOING ON IN OUR TOWNSHIP WHICH IS CAUSING FLOODING. I THINK THE COUNCIL SHOULD BUY A VEHICLE FOR THE BUILDING INSPECTORATE.

I AGREE WITH YOUR CONCERNS. I ALSO WISH TO SEE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES CREATED FOR OUR YOUTH.

CITIZENS VERSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Acronyms	iii
Introduction	1
Guiding Principles of Decentralisation Policy	2
What is Decentralisation?	3
About Decentralisation in Zambia	3
History of Decentralisation in Zambia	4
The Devolution Process	5
Strategic Areas and Policy objectives	6
Decentralised governance	6
Administrative decentralisation	9
Fiscal decentralisation	11
Policy coordination and legal arrangements for decentralisation	13
Implementation framework	15
Institutional arrangements	15
Resource mobilisation for effective policy implementation	15
The role of citizens in the decentralisation process	16
Participation in planning and decision making	16
Monitoring of Projects	16
Enhanced accountability for public service delivery	17

ACRONYMS

CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CDFC	Constituency Development Fund Committee
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LED	Local Economic Development
LGEF	Local Government Equalisation Fund
MoFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
WDCs	Ward Development Committees



FOREWORD

The National Decentralisation Policy in Zambia is premised on our aspiration to attain the status of a prosperous middle-income nation by 2030. Through this revised Policy, the Government envisions "Citizen-driven local governance within a unitary State for sustainable development". Citizen and community participation in local governance is a key pillar for our country's socio-economic transformation agenda.

The National Decentralisation Policy was last reviewed in 2013. Since then, a number of developments have taken place that have also necessitated the revision of the 2013 Policy. Among the developments, are the amendment of the Constitution of Zambia in 2016 and the enhancement of community participation in local development in 2022.

This Policy, therefore, provides a clear strategic direction for the implementation of decentralisation in Zambia. It prioritises community engagement, citizen-driven local development and inclusiveness in the implementation of programmes. Further, the Policy empowers the citizens to hold their representatives accountable for service delivery and local development. Additionally, the Policy prioritises the strengthening of subnational institutions, and the improvement of relationships at all levels of governance.

This National Decentralisation Policy endeavours to build on the successes of past implementation and seeks to address previous implementation challenges.

Our collective effort towards realising a devolved system of governance is critical. We should, therefore, take-up the challenge to elevate this country to a level where citizens can freely participate in matters of national development.

A handwritten signature in red ink, which appears to be "H. Hichilema". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Hakainde Hichilema
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The development of the revised National Decentralisation Policy ensured the aspirations of stakeholders at the national, provincial, and district levels were incorporated through various consultative forums.

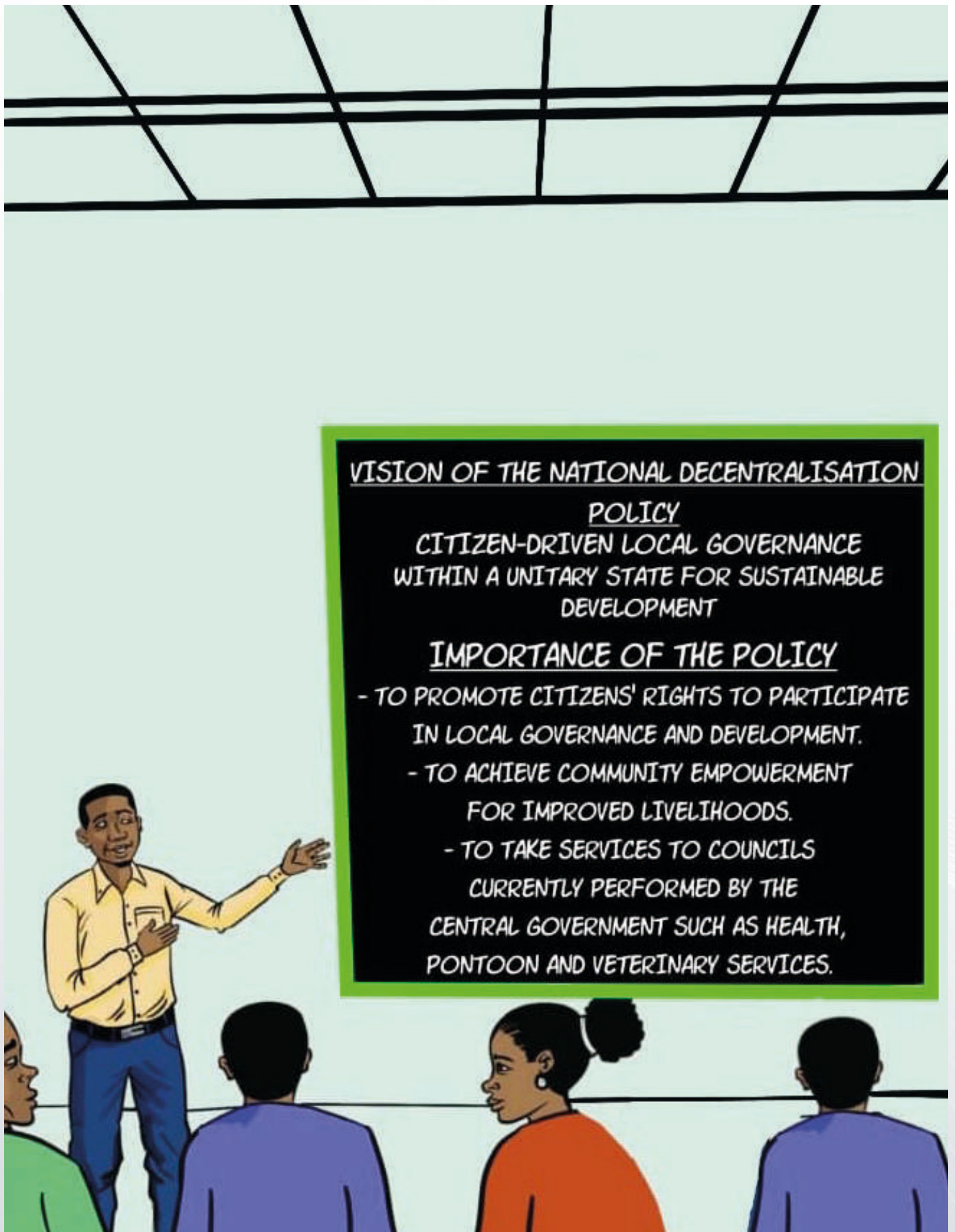
I wish, therefore, to acknowledge the line Ministries, Councils, Members of Parliament, and representatives of Traditional Leaders, Constituency Development Fund Committees as well as Ward Development Committees, who contributed to the successful formulation of this Policy. I also recognize the contribution from the Local Government Association of Zambia, private sector, academia, research institutions, and civil society organisations. The Multi-Sectoral Technical Team, which facilitated the formulation of this Policy, also deserves acknowledgment.

Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to our Cooperating Partners for their financial support and invaluable technical assistance to this process.

Government welcomes the participation of all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of this Policy.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Patrick K. Kangwa". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Patrick K. Kangwa
SECRETARY TO THE CABINET



VISION OF THE NATIONAL DECENTRALISATION
POLICY

CITIZEN-DRIVEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE
WITHIN A UNITARY STATE FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

IMPORTANCE OF THE POLICY

- TO PROMOTE CITIZENS' RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE
IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT.
- TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT
FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS.
- TO TAKE SERVICES TO COUNCILS
CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY THE
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SUCH AS HEALTH,
PONTON AND VETERINARY SERVICES.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE DECENTRALISATION POLICY



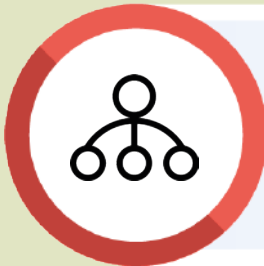
Good Governance

- Promote democratic, effective and coherent governance systems and institutions.
- Promote citizen participation in decision-making.
- Promote transparency and accountability in the use of public resources.



Equity

- Promote fair distribution and application of public resources for the benefit of the community.



Subsidiarity

- Ensure that government decisions and functions are performed at the lowest possible level to improve the delivery of public services.



Constitutional Jurisdiction

- Promote respect for exclusive and concurrent functions of each level of government.



Co-operative Governance

- Ensure that different levels of government coordinate and interact in a cooperative manner.



Sustainable Local Development

- Promote social and economic development at national and local levels, while taking care of current and future impact(s) of climate change.

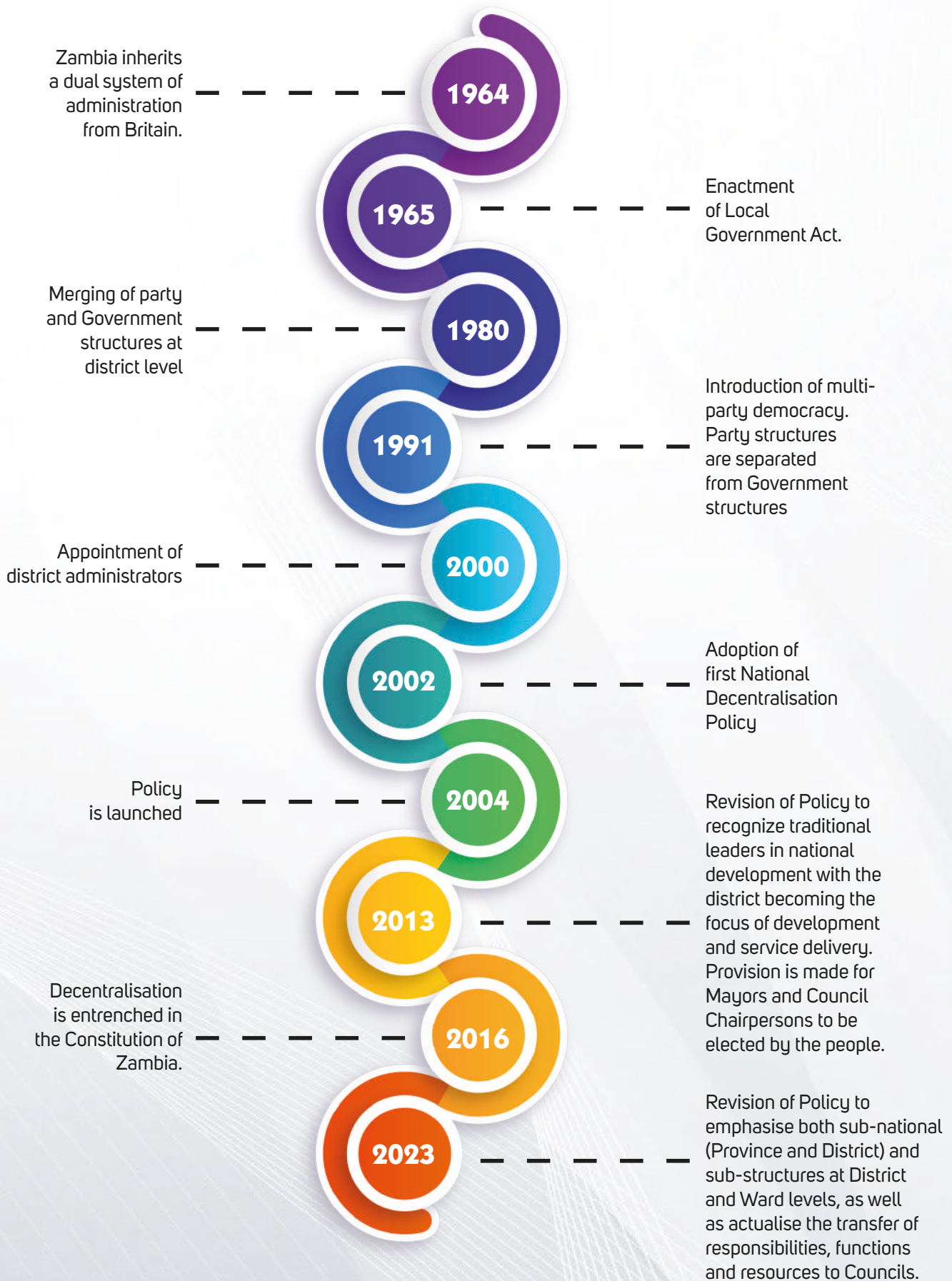
WHAT IS DECENTRALISATION?



ABOUT DECENTRALISATION IN ZAMBIA

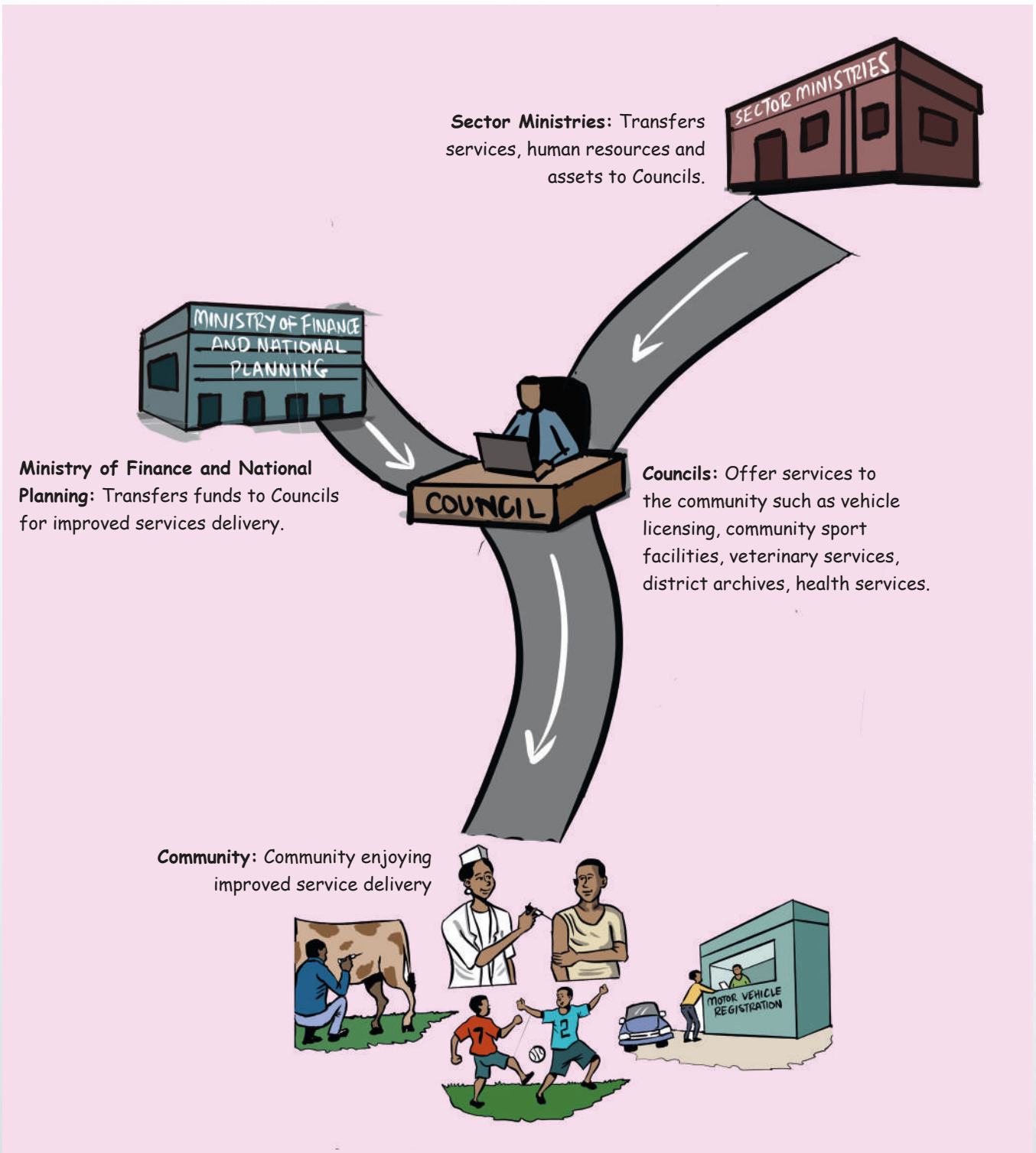


HISTORY OF DECENTRALISATION IN ZAMBIA



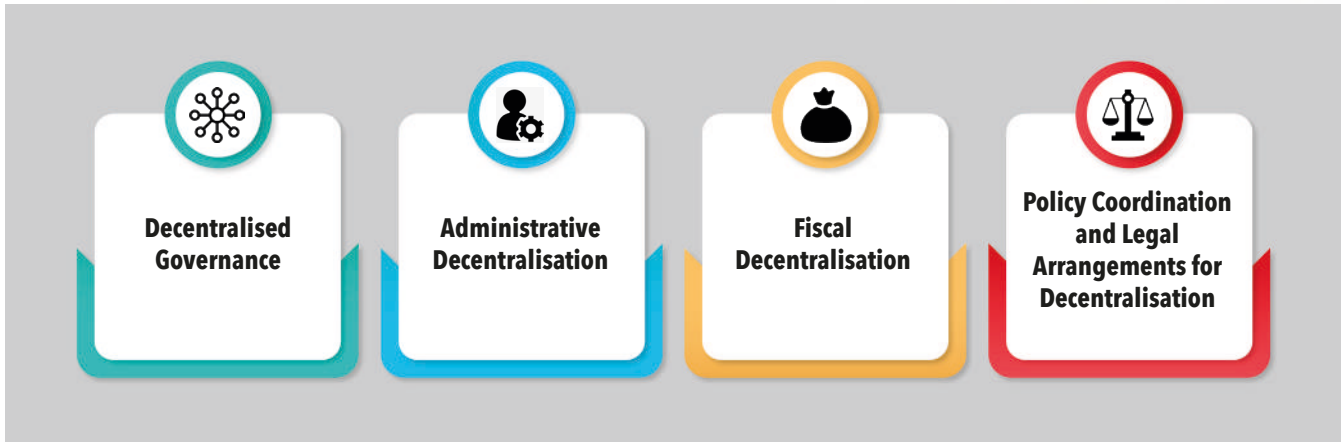
THE DEVOLUTION PROCESS

Zambia has chosen devolution, a form of decentralisation which means the transfer of rights, powers and functions from the central government to sub-national level (Councils, Wards and Zones).



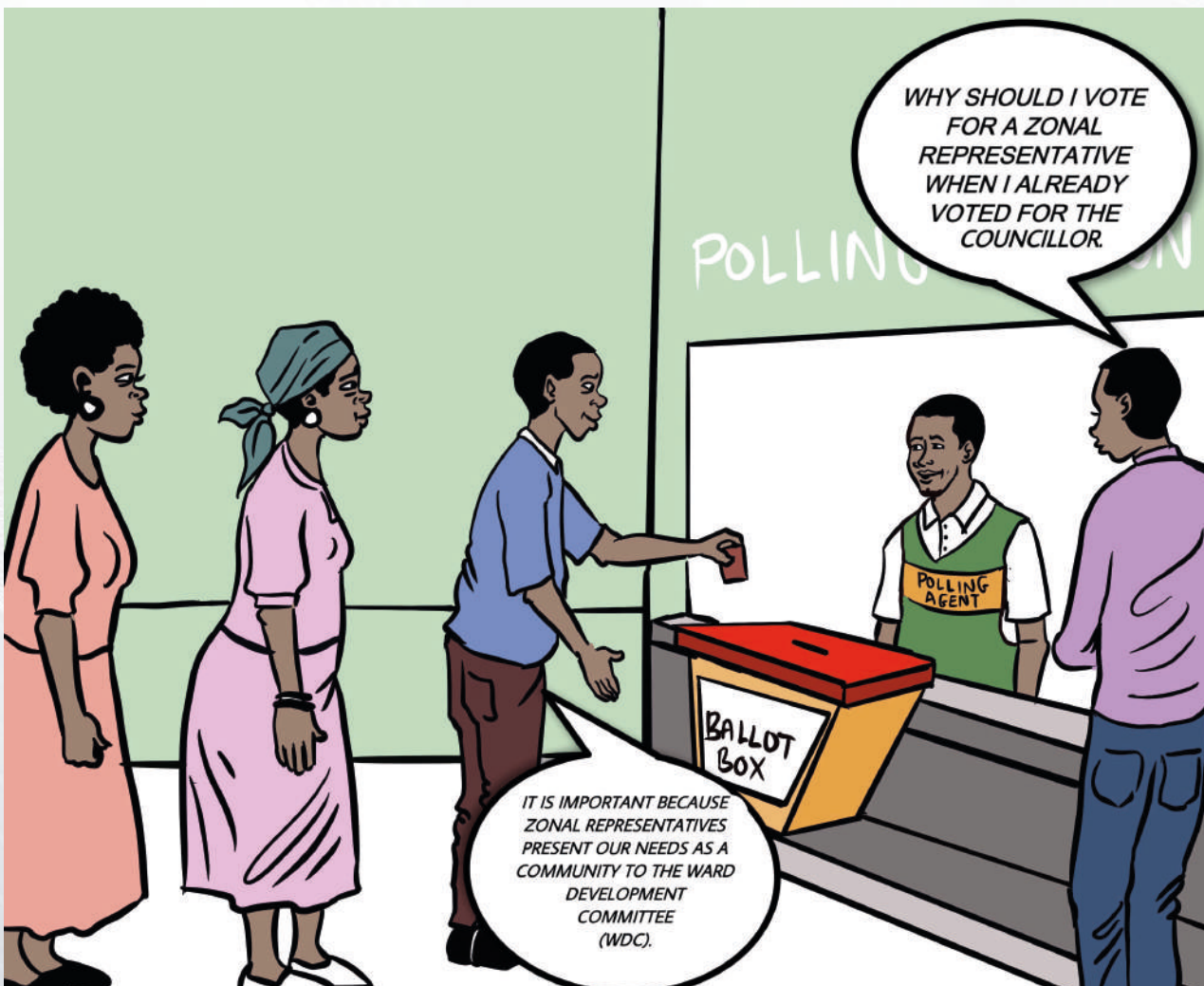
STRATEGIC AREAS AND POLICY OBJECTIVES

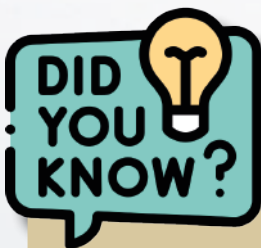
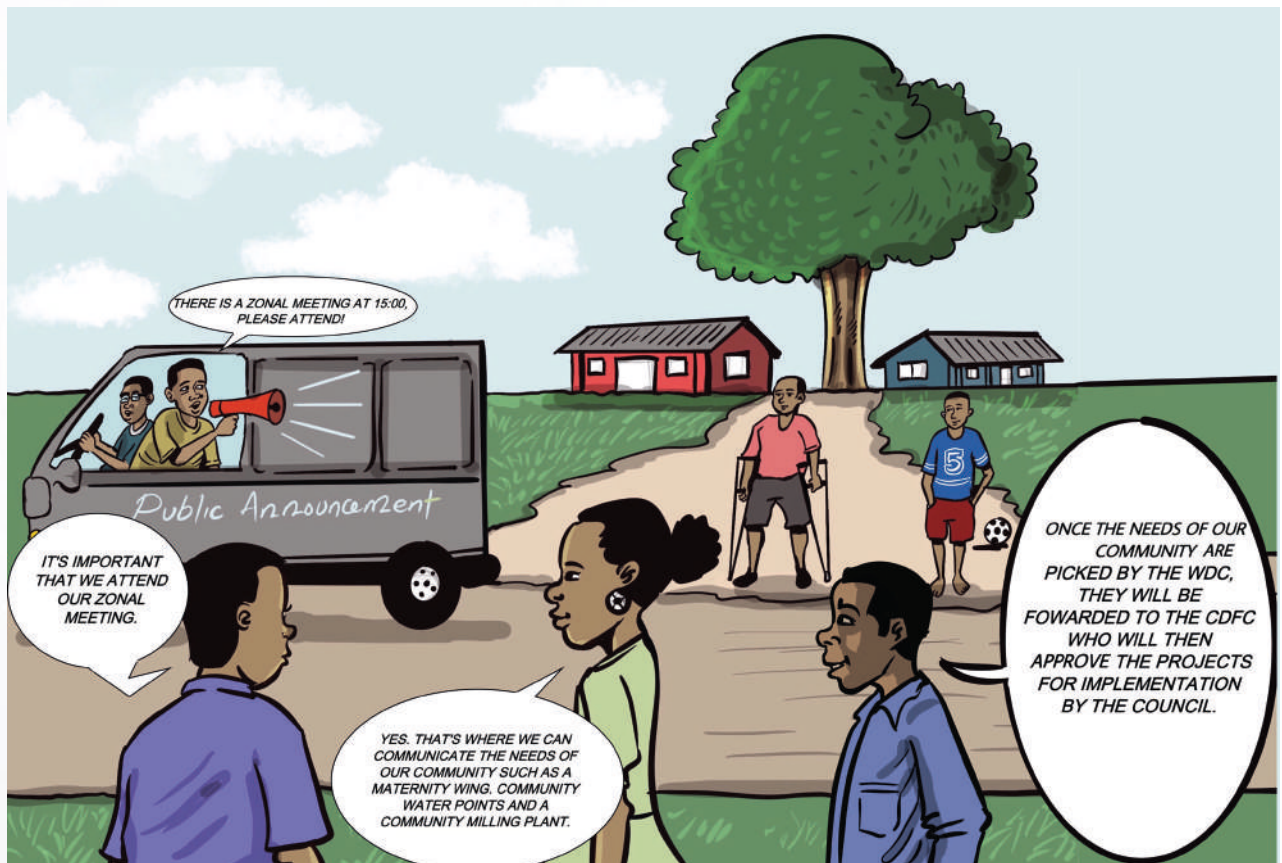
To achieve the Government's Vision, the following Policy objectives shall be pursued:



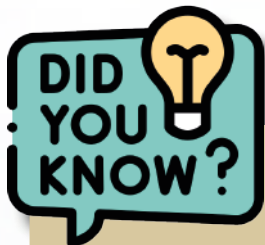
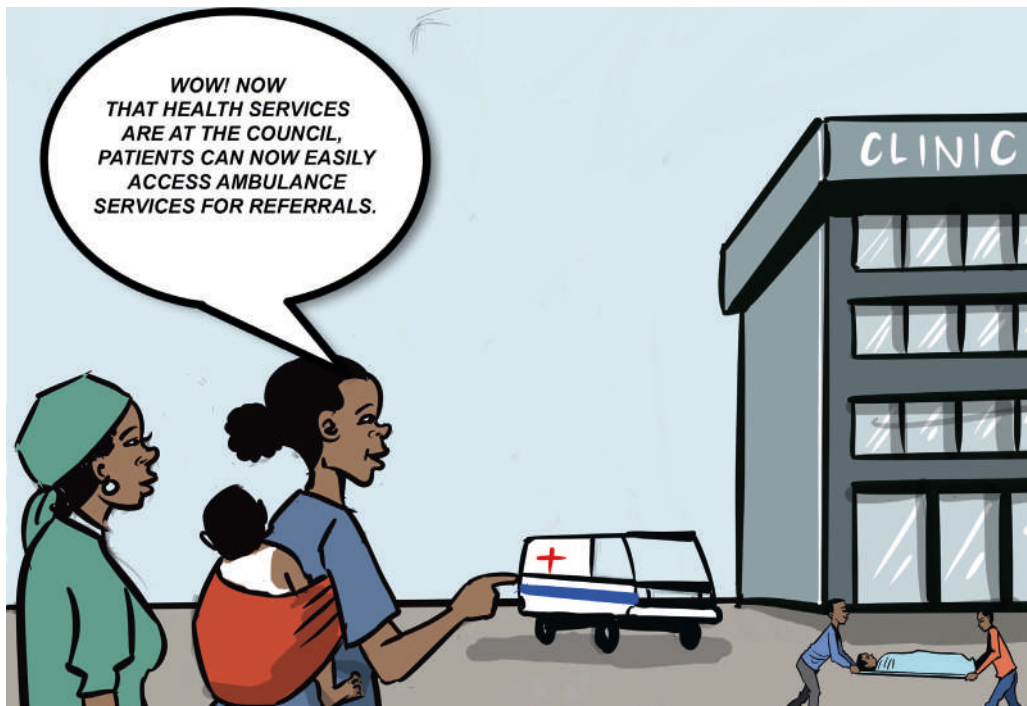
Decentralised Governance

Objective 1: To promote inclusive citizen and community participation in democratic governance at the local level with the aim of enhancing local development.





- At district level significant progress has been achieved in enhancing citizen participation in decision-making through the enactment of the Local Government Act of 2019, which established the Ward Development Committees (WDCs).
- A Ward Development Committee member is a link between community members, the Council and development agencies operating in the Ward. For example, CDF project proposals for community projects and empowerment loans are submitted to the WDC.
- Their role is to effectively coordinate all developmental processes taking place in the Ward.
- Elections for Zonal representatives are held within two months of a General Election.
- Following the election of Zonal representatives, a Ward Development Committee is constituted and executive members are voted for by the elected members. Positions voted for are the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and four committee members.
- If a WDC is not performing to people's expectations, members of a community can pass a vote of no confidence (via a two thirds majority).
- The Constitution also provides for the election of Mayors and Council chairpersons, as well as Councillors by the people. The people must hold these officials accountable.



- 1,858 WDCs started working fully in 2022 countrywide. The WDCs are key because they facilitate community-led development.

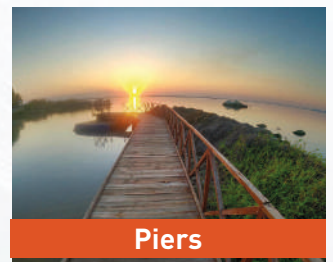
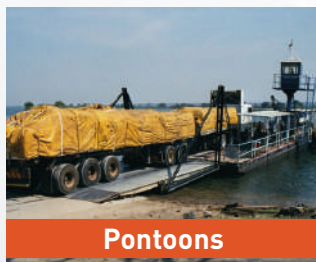
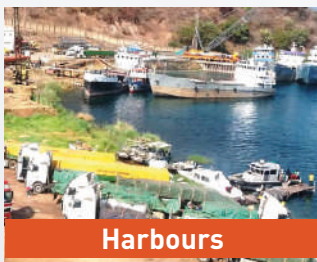


Administrative Decentralisation

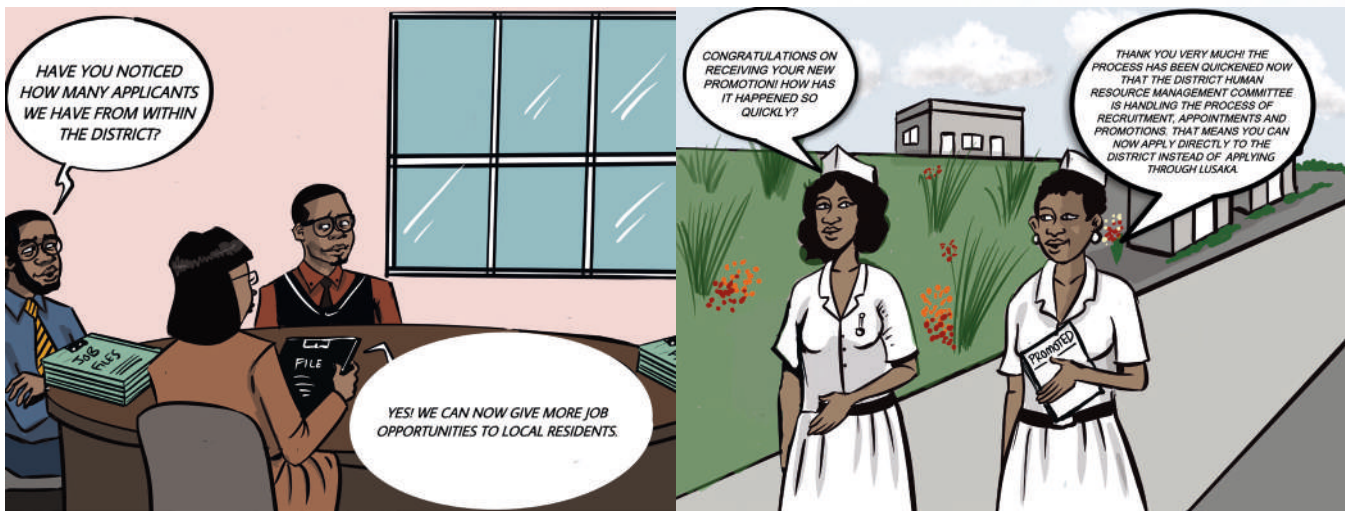
Objective 2: To take services closer to the people from the national level in order to enhance efficiency in the delivery and access to public services.

Administrative Decentralisation involves:

- Transfer of functions to the Councils such as; health services, veterinary services, vehicle licencing, cultural matters, harbours, pontoons, jetties, ferries and piers etc., with the necessary resources (Human, Financial, and assets).
- Promotion of local economic development planning.
- Strengthening of human resources management and institutional capacity at the local level.



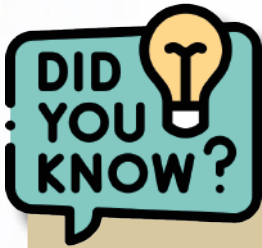
Objective 3: To develop and manage human resources in order to enhance performance.



Objective 4: To promote participatory integrated development planning in order to achieve inclusive, sustainable and climate-resilient local development.

An Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a document that identifies the development needs of a district.





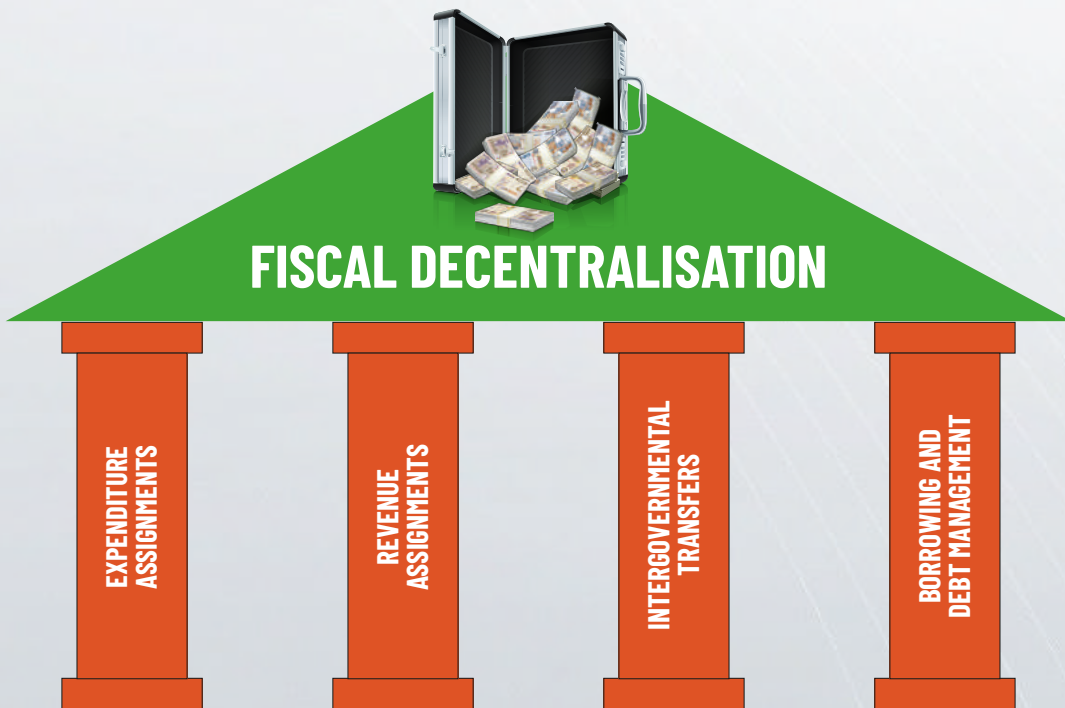
- The development of IDPs for the district requires input from ordinary citizens, traditional leaders, the private sector, interest groups and other stakeholders.



Fiscal Decentralisation

Objective 5: To enhance financial capacities at the local level in order to support the implementation of devolved functions.

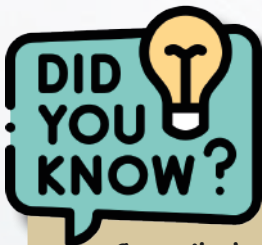
Pillars of Fiscal Decentralisation







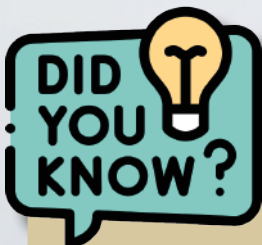
Objective 6: To promote prudent financial management and accountability in Councils and subnational structures in order to enhance service delivery.



- Councils have annual budgets which outline proposed projects for the year. You can request a copy of this budget as well as attend budget hearings.
- For Councils to work at their best, there is a need to manage finances properly, as well as organise their accounting, planning and budgeting systems in line with central government standards.

Policy Coordination and Legal Arrangements for Decentralisation

Objective 7: To develop a comprehensive Policy and legal framework that supports the effective implementation of a devolved system of governance and local development.



Zambia cemented its resolve towards a devolved system of governance through:

1. Signing the *African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance, and Local Development* in 2015.
2. Including decentralisation in the Constitution of Zambia through the (Amendment) Act, No. 2 of 2016.



Provisions of the National Decentralisation Policy:

- Local government is a self-directed level of government with powers to formulate and implement by-laws and policies.
- Councils to administer and oversee programmes and projects in the district.
- The District Administration shall manage concurrent functions for the national and provincial level public sector functions in the district.
- The Provincial Administration shall coordinate Government policies and programmes in the province.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

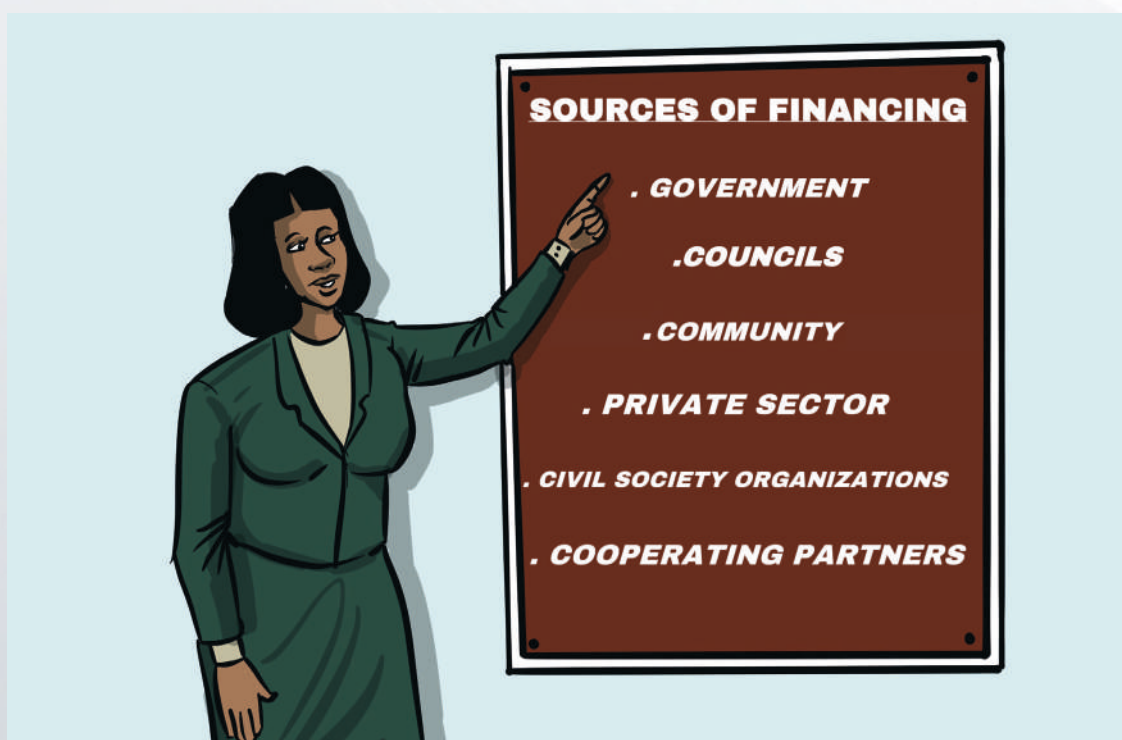
The successful implementation of the National Decentralisation Policy depends on establishing an appropriate institutional arrangement, legal and regulatory framework, resource mobilisation, financing and effective monitoring and evaluation.

Institutional arrangements



Resource mobilisation for effective Policy implementation

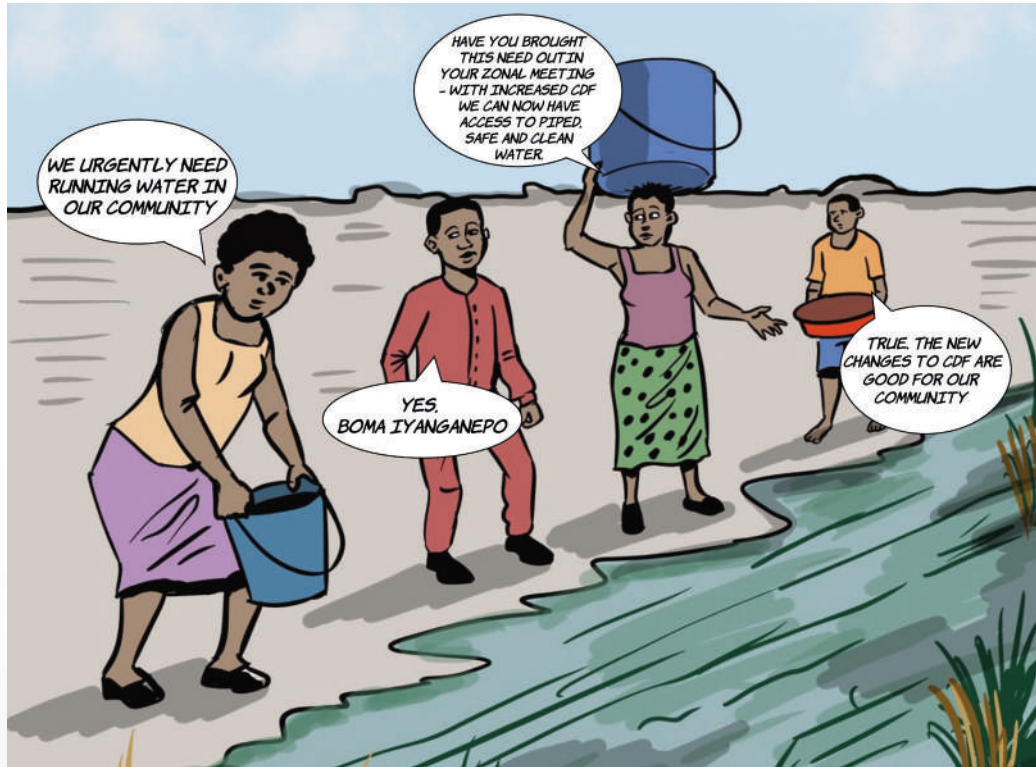
The effective implementation of the Decentralisation Policy requires sustainable financing to successfully achieve its objectives and this will be mobilised from the following sources:



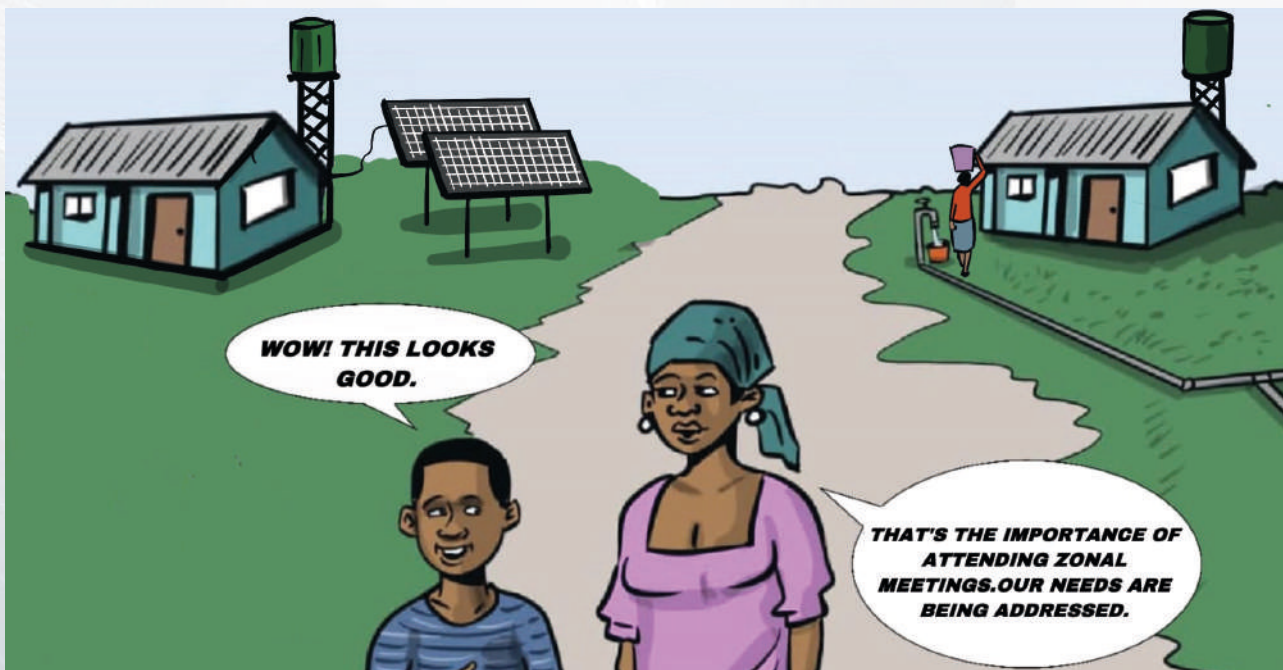
THE ROLE OF CITIZENS IN THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS

- Elect Council, Zonal, and WDC representatives
- Attend Zonal meetings
- Participate in planning and decision-making
- Monitor implementation of projects
- Holding Councils accountable for public service delivery

Participation in Planning and Decision-making



Monitoring of Projects





Enhanced accountability for public service delivery

HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE IN HOLDING YOUR COUNCIL ACCOUNTABLE?

YOU CAN ENSURE THAT PROJECTS ARE DELIVERED:

- **IN A TIMELY MANNER**
- **FOR THE RIGHT QUALITY**
- **AT A REASONABLE COST**
- **ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE**

The illustration shows a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a green blazer and skirt, holding a brown folder. She is looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression, her hand near her chin. The background features a stylized blue and white building with windows.

For the full Policy visit:
www.decentralisation.gov.zm





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