

Zambia

Zambia will undertake its 1st Voluntary National Review in July 2020. With a focus this year on development accelerators and transformative action, it is a key moment to consider activities and tools which can unlock progress, for all, across the board.

Access to information – understood as the physical possibility and right for all to seek and find information, and the skills to use it – can make just such a contribution. This access can help at all levels. It supports individuals to take better decisions about how to farm, where to look for work or how to look after their own and their families' health. It gives governments the possibility to define better policies. It allows researchers to understand the world around us, establish new insights and innovate. Libraries are a key part of the infrastructure for ensuring that this is the case.

But where does Zambia stand today as concerns its libraries and access to information? This data sheet provides background based on data from the Development and Access to Information report produced by IFLA in partnership with the Technology and Social Change Group at the University of Washington, as well as IFLA's own Library Map of the World.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- *Available figures suggest that that Zambia has a lower density of public libraries and public library workers than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa. However, given that it has a decentralised library system, data may be incomplete. At the level of individual libraries, there are positive examples of using technology to reach out to and support communities effectively.*
- *Under the Development and Access to Information framework, Zambia is a strong performer on rights, and scores around regional averages on equality, although there is room for improvement here. Key areas for focus will need to be on education and providing more opportunities for all citizens to get online, in order to take advantage of the possibilities that access to information brings for development.*

LIBRARIES IN ZAMBIA

According to data available on the Library Map of the World, Zambia has a total of 45 public libraries, with information about other library types not

available. This represents a total of 0.3 per 100 000 people, compared with an average for Sub-Saharan Africa of 0.5. With 135 public library workers, there are 0.8 per 100 000 citizens, compared to an average for Sub-Saharan Africa of 1.8. Nonetheless, given the decentralised nature of libraries in Zambia, these may well represent under-estimates.

Zambia also has academic libraries which work, notably, with Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) in order to provide access to materials for students and researchers, as well as school libraries, usually supported by parents.

Working also with EIFL, training programmes are helping public librarians build the skills and confidence to work with technology, and use this to increase the impact of services offered to communities. More information is available on Zambia's country page on the [Library Map of the World](#).

DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN ZAMBIA

The Development and Access to Information report draws on a range of indicators highlighting where countries stand on four key pillars of access to information: connectivity, equality, skills and rights. For meaningful access to information to be a reality for all, performance needs to be strong across all of these categories.

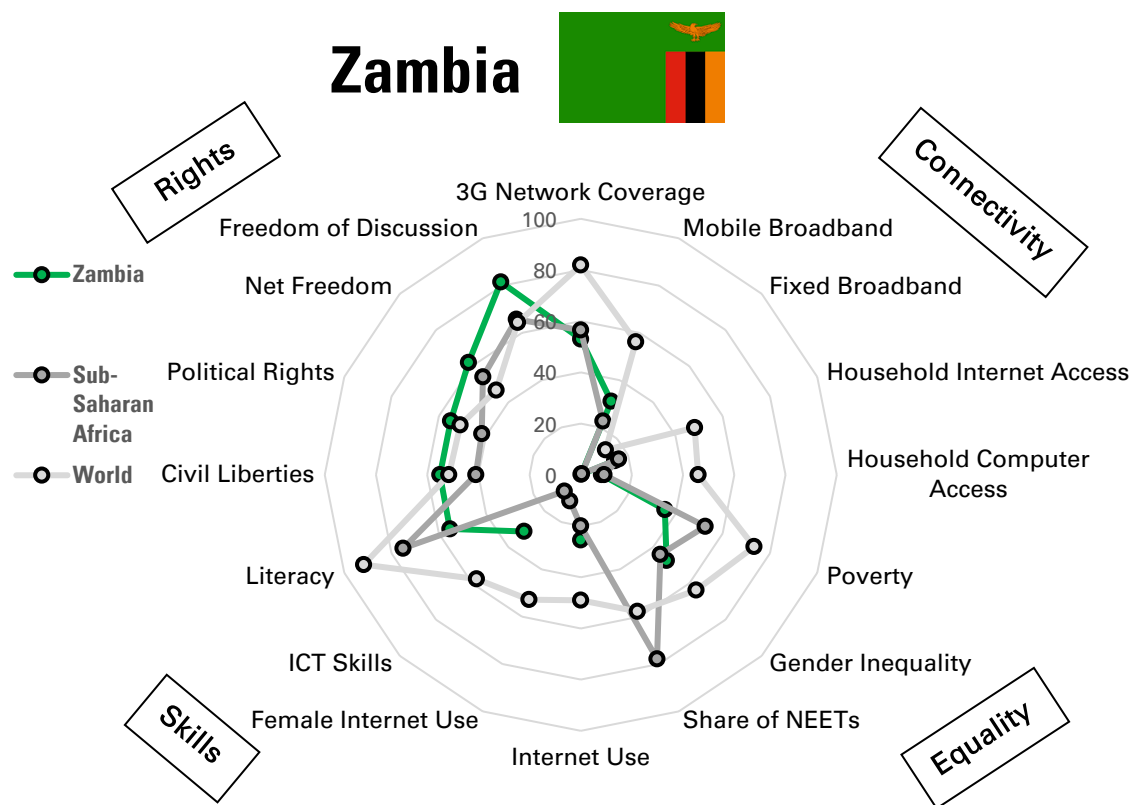
Zambia's performance across the four pillars of the development and access to information framework has both positives and negatives. Concerning **connectivity**, Zambia has a lower coverage of 3G networks, but a higher number of mobile broadband subscriptions than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa. This may compensate for lower rates of household internet and computer access, giving the country a higher rate of internet use (25.5%) compared to the regional average (20%). Nonetheless, this remains a low share of the population.

The picture is also mixed on **equality**, where higher poverty rates come alongside better scores on gender equality than for the region, although on both, the country scores below global averages. On **skills**, there is considerable work to do, with a literacy rate of just over 50%, and low scores on the skills pillar of the ICT Development Index.

The picture is more positive on **rights**, where Zambia scores above both regional and global averages on all indicators, and particularly highly on freedom of

discussion, indicating that those who do benefit from connectivity and skills face few other restrictions in accessing and sharing information.

Overall, the results from the DA2I framework suggest that work will be needed to bring more people online. This in itself can help people learn and find work, providing opportunities to move out of poverty. The fact of a relatively high level of rights protection implies that once progress is possible on indicators of connectivity and skills, there is scope for rapid progress towards access to information.



How to read the graph: this graph displays a range of indicators used within the DA2I framework, adjusted to fit on a scale of 0-100, where 100 is the most positive outcome in terms of access to information.

TABLE OF DATA

See below for explanations. * = or latest available year. Regional averages are based on available data.

PILLAR	INDICATOR	ZAMBIA	Year	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	Year	WORLD	Year
CONNECTIVITY	3G Network Coverage	53.00%	2016	56.54%	2016	81.92%	2016
	Mobile Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	31.08	2016	22.70	2016	56.22	2016
	Fixed Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	0.19	2016	0.54	2016	13.71	2016
	Household Internet Access	14.33%	2016	16.04%	2016	48.16%	2016
	Household Computer Access	8.14%	2016	9.11%	2016	45.88%	2016
EQUALITY	Poverty (Share of pop'n below national poverty line)	64.42%	2010	47.34%	2015*	26.69%	2015*
	Gender Inequality (0 = More equal, 1 = Less equal)	0.53	2015	0.56	2015	0.36*	2015*
	Share of NEETs			11.07	2015*	21.12%	2015*
	Internet Use	25.51%	2016	20.00%	2016*	49%	2016*
	Female Internet Use			11.07%	2016*	52.79%	2016*
SKILLS	ICT Skills	3.13	2017	0.91	2017	5.76	2017
	Literacy	55.30%	2015	75.09%	2015	91.75	2015
RIGHTS	Civil Liberties (0 = least free, 60 = most free)	33.00	2018	24.59	2018	30.9	2018
	Political Rights (0 = least free, 40 = most free)	22.00	2018	16.73	2018	20.37	2018
	Net Freedom (0 = most free, 100 = least free)	38.00	2016	45.95	2016	53.29	2016
	Freedom of Discussion	0.82	2016	0.66	2016	0.64	2016

EXPLANATION OF INDICATORS

3G Network Coverage: this provides a measure of whether one part of the basic infrastructure for connectivity exists, although in itself is not enough to guarantee access (users need a device and a relevant subscription to be able to get online). Source: ITU

Mobile Broadband (Mobile Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how many people can use mobile internet, opening up many – if not all – of the possibilities that internet access brings. One person may have more than one subscription. Source: ITU

Fixed Broadband (Fixed Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how widespread home or business internet access is. Fixed access is often associated with the possibility to connect computers to make more advanced uses of the internet. Source: ITU

Household Internet Access (Share of Households with Internet Access): access to the internet at home allows for access to information at any time without having to go outside, but may be controlled by some members of the family. Source: ITU

Household Computer Access (Share of Households with a Computer): this focuses on access to computers. This is crucial for people to be able to carry out more advanced activities on the internet that might be impossible on a phone, such as writing resumes or analysing data. Source: ITU

Poverty: this indicator measures the number of people living below the national poverty line, which varies from country to country. It is a measure of economic inequality in a country. The indicator is inversed in the chart (i.e. the share of people not under the poverty line). Source: World Bank

Gender Inequality: this is calculated using the Gender Inequality Index. This index uses a basket of indicators in different areas of social development including: reproductive health, proportion of women in parliament, relative shares of men and women with at least some secondary education, and labour market participation in order to provide a broad idea of the extent of gender inequality in a country. The indicator runs from 0 (most equal) to 1 (least equal) and is inversed and adapted in the chart above. Source: UNDP

Share of NEETS (People aged 15-24 Not in Education, Employment or Training): this measures the share of young people cut off from education or the job market. Being 'NEET' can bring long-term scarring effects, and so reducing numbers is a key priority. The indicator is inversed and adapted in the chart (i.e. the share of young people who are not NEET). Source: ILO.

Internet Use (Share of People Using the Internet): looking beyond household access data (which will be affected by the structure of households in general), this gives a figure for the number of people using the internet. Source: ITU

Female Internet Use: this measure, in conjunction with the share of the overall population using the internet, allows us to understand to what extent there is a gender digital divide. Source: ITU

ICT Skills: there are relatively few global metrics of ICT skills, with those that exist only focusing on certain regions. The Skills Sub-Index of the ICT Development Index created by the ITU aims to work in this direction using levels of secondary and tertiary education enrolment, plus mean years of schooling, as proxies. Source: ITU

Literacy: this measures literacy among 15-24 year olds – i.e. people who have finished formal education. While there are online resources available for people with low literacy, being able to read, type, and understand information remains a fundamental skill. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Civil Liberties: this provides an indication of the degree to which citizens of a country enjoy fundamental civic rights, including freedom of expression and association, as well as the strength of the rule of law, based on expert judgements. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 60 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Political Rights: this provides a measure of the rights people have to participate in the political process, including fair and free elections, political pluralism, and the functioning of government in general. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 40 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Net Freedom: this metric assesses the level of restrictions on rights online by both public and private actors. It draws on assessments of obstacles to access (legal, economic and practical), limits on content, and violations of rights. Scores run from 100 (least free) to 0 (most free) and so are inverted in the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.



Freedom of Discussion: this indicator looks at whether people are able to hold private discussions without fear of repercussions either from the authorities or society in general due to cultural restrictions or norms. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 1 (most free), and so are adapted to fit into the graphic above. Source: V-Dem dataset codebook.