



INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 2023

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday 8th September, 2023

The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) joins the global community in commemorating World Literacy Day on September 8th, 2023, under the theme **“Empowering Literacy for a Changing World: Establishing the Bedrock for Sustainable and Harmonious Societies”**, a theme that recognises literacy’s profound influence in the face of a swiftly evolving global landscape.

Beyond its core definitions of reading and writing, literacy acts as a catalyst for transformative change, enabling empowerment, communication, and growth across various societal domains. In a world marked by unprecedented transformations-technological progressions, economic shifts, and novel dimensions of interconnectedness, literacy remains the foundational element upon which sustainable and harmonious societies are constructed.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored literacy’s critical importance in adapting to a dynamic world. Digital learning platforms emerged as vital tools, reshaping the

educational paradigm and extending their reach beyond geographical confines. This year's theme underscores the urgency of cultivating digital literacy, ensuring that every individual remains integrated in this swiftly progressing epoch.

It is evident, however, that various barriers obstruct universal access to literacy. Irrespective of gender, ability, socio-economic status, and cultural diversity, these barriers should not be allowed to curtail access to the empowering facets of literacy. The journey towards sustainable and harmonious societies mandates dismantling these hindrances and promoting equitable literacy opportunities for all.

In Zambia, as mirrored in the 2018 Demographic Health Survey, advancements have been achieved in literacy rates. Nevertheless, discrepancies endure, particularly between urban and rural areas and among genders. These discrepancies impede personal growth and hamper collective advancement. The commitment to "Empowering Literacy for a Changing World" signifies the dedication to addressing these gaps and ensuring that every Zambian possesses the tools to thrive in a progressing society.

PMRC lauds the Government's endeavours, encompassing teacher recruitment and deployment, augmented learning resources, and the amplification of educational infrastructure. However, challenges persist, bringing into sharp focus the need for sustained investment in the education sector, specifically in digital literacy initiatives that can lay the foundation for a more inclusive and prosperous Zambia.

On this World Literacy Day, best wishes are extended for a future where literacy is embraced as the cornerstone of progress. Collectively embarking on the journey to empower individuals, bridge divides, and lay the groundwork for sustainable and harmonious societies is a shared commitment. Through collective dedication and collaboration, a world wherein literacy flourishes, ensuring a brighter future for all, can be nurtured.



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