

# Celebrating our education sector

Tafadzwa Kadani

**With only one university in Rhodesia, it was almost impossible for the vast majority of blacks in what are now the independent states of Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi to get a degree.**

**P**RE-INDEPENDENCE Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) was not favourable for the black majority when it came to access to education.

This changed enormously in post-colonial Zimbabwe with Government improving access to education for every Zimbabwean.

Zimbabwe currently boasts of having the highest literacy rate in Africa thanks to President Mugabe's drive to educate every Zimbabwean.

Since Independence in 1980 the number of tertiary institutions in the country has increased exponentially and this has seen an increase in the number of students graduating with diplomas and degrees.

Deputy Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development Dr Godfrey Gandawa says, "The number of universities has significantly changed from having just one university to having a total of 15 universities in the country and we have more coming on board."

There are a further five universities whose Bills are yet to be approved: the Defence, Pan-African Minerals, Gwanda, Manicaland and Marondera

universities.

"We want the whole country to be educated and that every province has its own university so that every citizen is catered for, no one should be left out," adds Dr Gandawa.

Education is important to equipping nations with the necessary skills to move forward and improve peoples standards of living.

In 1980, education was declared a basic human right by President Mugabe.

Dr Gandawa says the fact that President Mugabe was himself a teacher ensured education remained at the centre of Government's development efforts.

"We thank His Excellency for his passion and zeal to see every citizen in the country being educated and we continue to want to imitate his great leadership skills," Dr Gandawa adds.

President Mugabe, who turns 92 this month, continues to be an icon to the nation and the world over for his immense contribution to the growth of education.

Zimbabwe has not only built universities. It has also rolled out many vocational training centers, polytechnics, and teachers colleges.

"To date we have 42 vocational training centers, nine polytechnics, two industrial colleges and 15 teachers colleges."

All these institutions help in human capital development that the country needs in order to progress, says Dr Gandawa.

Having an increase in the number of institution for higher learning has not only improved access to education but has also helped address the problem of gender equality in Zimbabwe, having equal opportunities for all.

It is well known that in colonial Zimbabwe education was for the males while the females were relegated to the kitchen but this also has greatly changed, Dr Gandawa explained.

"In teachers' colleges about 55 percent of the students are females and in universities females dominate in the humanities and commercial pro-



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grammes while more practical programmes are still male-dominated."

He also emphasised that Government and his Ministry are pushing for more women to enroll for practical subjects, making reference to STEM.

"If you have realised, the STEM campaign is more aligned to women and this is meant to encourage young women to take up these subjects and programmes."

Mr Robert Gundani, president of the Zimbabwe Teachers Association, applauds Government for boosting teacher training nationwide.

"Government not only built these colleges but even went on to send some to Cuba to be trained to teach science subjects, that is to be greatly appreciated because we are where we are thanks to those initiatives."

and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development to ensure that the students produced are relevant to industry.

He also added that they have established focus groups which consist of industrial experts who then discuss practical issues that will in turn inform curriculum development for colleges and universities.

Dr Gandawa also commended the work done by churches such as the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (Zaoga), Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) in

complementing the efforts by Government to provide education to the nation.

"There are some churches that have built universities and this is very commendable," Dr Gandawa said. "However, I encourage universities to train more of the practical courses such as entrepreneurship so that they produce a wholesome student who will not only look for attachment but will also create employment for himself/herself and also for others in the process."

**NYAMUZUWE HIGH SCHOOL**  
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**VENUES**

- 1. Inner City United Methodist Church (Harare Street)**
- 2. Mutoko Centre District Superintendent Offices**
- 3. Nyamuzuwe High School**

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**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION,  
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**S T E M**

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- Science kits designed for science lessons
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STEM in action at Nyadire Teachers' College.

STEM in action at NTC refers to:-

- ✓ Integration of existing curriculum and STEM concepts across the board;
- ✓ Provision of computer hardware and software for STEM related aspects;
- ✓ Introducing hard sciences i.e Physics, Chemistry and Biology as main subjects;
- ✓ Engaging student teachers in STEM exchange programmes with other institutions;
- ✓ Construction of ECD Complex that has a STEM Laboratory

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<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>TEAM WORK</b>	<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	<b>ANALYTIC THINKING</b>	<b>INNOVATION</b>	<b>COLLABORATIVE SOLUTION</b>
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*WITH "STEM" A NEW LIFE BEGINS*

inserted by  
Nyadire R.  
Principal

**ZIMBABWE MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**STEM**  
*Ngazviende Mberi*

## STEM INITIATIVE

The Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF) fully embraces the transformation of the national education system through the deepening of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The world is increasingly becoming fluid, complex, and digitalized, driven by technological creativity and innovation. Today countries compete on the basis of STEM knowledge and skills. With that knowledge, the global community has become a digital village. Young generations must be equipped with 21st Century Skills crucial for industrialization.

Under the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, ZIMDEF mobilises financial resources for skilled human capital development through the 1% Training Levy contributed by employers. ZIMDEF is proud to be associated with the STEM education revolution, a future focused initiative whose aim is to produce a human capital base with the much needed creativity to spur Zimbabwe's industrial growth and development.

We are committed to the STEMATISATION of our education system towards a Knowledge Economy.

**IF WE STEMATISE, WE INDUSTRIALISE.**  
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