

Ex post evaluation

Strengthening parliamentary oversight, Zambia



Title	Strengthening of Parliamentary Oversight in Zambia		
Sector and CRS code	Democratic participation and civil society (CRS code: 1515000)		
Project number	2011 665 60		
Commissioned by	BMZ		
Recipient/Project-executing agency	National Assembly of Zambia		
Project volume/financing instrument	EUR 4.0 million		
Project duration	2011 - 2019		
Year of report	2021	Year of random sample	2021

Objectives and project outline

The objectives at outcome level were to improve contact between members of parliament (MPs) and voters and to make parliamentary activity more transparent and better understood. At impact level, the project aimed to strengthen the public's political influence as well as the National Assembly's supervisory and legislative functions.

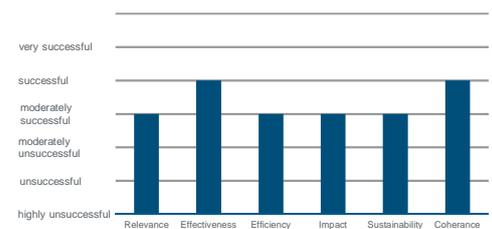
Seventeen constituency offices (COs) were built and equipped, informational materials about parliamentary work were made available throughout the country, while the country's parliamentary radio was expanded and a parliamentary televi-

Key findings

The project was effective from a development perspective. From the EPE's perspective, however, its sustainability is at risk. Nonetheless, there is a high degree of ownership on the part of the executing agency, and the budget for the COs is due to be increased by 50%. Under these conditions, we can expect a considerable improvement in the use of the capacity that was created.

- The objectives were achieved at target group level when viewed more narrowly, focusing on the population of the constituencies in which the COs were set up using DC funds. However, it should be noted that use of the COs started from a very low baseline, so the overall level of use remains very low despite a 39% increase in user numbers.
- The project had an unquantifiable but positive impact on the transparency of political activity and, by extension, on the political influence of the public. This is also evident from voter turnout in the 2021 election year, which was higher (+14.6%) than in the previous elections.
- After the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the COs had to be closed to the public. However, on account of their central location, they were used to distribute masks, sanitizer and generally provide information about the virus.

Overall rating:
moderately successful



Conclusions

- An understanding of politics is a key factor in ensuring that a population can make use of its opportunities to exert political influence. However, we cannot assume that this will automatically be reflected in better perceptions of how the parliament exercises control, which depends on additional conditions being met.
- In the case of non-income-generating infrastructure, a high degree of ownership, and sufficient partner budget are essential so that the necessary financial resources are provided for maintenance and regular operation, which in turn is crucial to the project's sustainability.

Rating according to DAC criteria

Overall rating: 3

Ratings:

Relevance	3
Effectiveness	2
Coherence	2
Efficiency	3
Impact	3
Sustainability	3

		Project (Planned, 2012)	Project (Planned, 2014)	Project (Actual)
Investment costs (total)	EUR million	2.60	4.15	4.10
Counterpart contribution	EUR million	0.10	0.15	0.15
Funding	EUR million	2.5	4.00	3.95
of which BMZ budget funds	EUR million	2.5	4.00	3.95

Relevance

Policy and priority focus

The project was in line with the partner country's priorities. Improving governance is seen as an important prerequisite for successful poverty alleviation in Zambia, making it highly pertinent in the political discourse. The initial outlook for the planned measures was very good at the time of the project appraisal (PA) in 2011, with the Zambian economy developing in a stable manner, which had a positive effect on the government's budget. Parliamentary and governmental discourse tended to focus on working to reform and ensure a better separation of powers for more effective democratic oversight of the government. Democracy is firmly established in Zambia, and reform efforts aimed at broadening the participation of civil society actors in the political process and increasing the transparency of parliamentary activity. These objectives and a process for operationalising them were made an integral part of Zambia's long-term Vision 2030 strategy and its sixth (2011–2015) and seventh (2017–2021) national development plans. In addition, the project took into account the overarching objective (promoting the public's understanding of democracy to improve its ability to provide oversight of the executive). As a result, it fully complied with the priorities of the international donor community (action guidelines of the Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia II (JASZ II) and the BMZ (in accordance with the German Federal Government's Africa strategy and country strategy paper)). In this priority area in Zambia, the BMZ's goal is for "the Zambian government to be focused on development as well as expanding and safeguarding civic participation and transparency in governmental and administrative activity". In line with the priorities set by the Federal Government in 2011, German development cooperation (DC) in Zambia played a role – as it continues to do to this day – in bringing about good governance in the priority area's three action categories: (i) citizen participation in reform processes and poverty alleviation, (ii) decentralisation and local governance, and (iii) good financial governance. This project focused on action categories (i) and (ii).

The process of expanding the public's access to political participation via constituency offices (COs) began in 2008, with premises rented for this purpose in all 150 of the country's parliamentary constituencies. The COs were staffed and equipped with literature on democracy. The goal was and continues to be for the COs to be a non-partisan location in which citizens and their members of parliament (MPs) can speak about matters of public policy. Citizens should be given the opportunity to inform themselves and to voice

their concerns so that their MP can best represent their constituency's interests in parliament. As the condition and location of the rented COs were often unsuitable with expensive rents, fully owned COs were gradually built – albeit very slowly due to less funding being available. At the same time, the parliamentary radio service was expanded. This was intended to give the predominantly rural population better access to parliamentary decision-making processes. However, parliament's ability to exercise oversight of the government has always been constitutionally weak. For example, to this day, it is the president rather than parliament that has control over the tight national budget. At the time of the PA, this situation was already known, although it was not identified as a risk to the project's success. Instead, it was assumed that the economic upturn would continue, creating the necessary conditions for sufficient financial capacity and for reform efforts to take place.

Focus on needs and capacities of participants and stakeholders

In a broader sense, the target group was the Zambian public; in a narrower sense, it consisted of those living in the constituencies where the COs were built and equipped. The project was designed with the target group in mind and fitted neatly into the social framework. For instance, the Zambian population was and remains very active, and lively dialogue takes place through various groups and actors within civil society.¹ Surveys conducted by Caritas Zambia after the turn of the millennium showed that the population wanted more transparency in the political process and that, at the same time, different ideas were circulating about the National Assembly in terms of its role, function and remit.² With the mix of measures taken to share information and educate people about politics, this was where the project's objectives were focused. At the time of the PA, the core problem identified was the "lack of integrity on the part of the government", which, it was stated, was rooted in the people's lack of understanding of democracy and the lack of transparency from the legislature. Consequently, the PA contended that there would be an improvement if the popular understanding of democracy was sharpened and parliamentary action became transparent. From today's perspective, the core problem was only partially identified. By the time of the PA, Zambian politics since 1991 had already been characterised by a multi-party system, five regular, democratic elections, and the acceptance of election results with very orderly transfers of power. Yet every government has been accused by civil society of corruption, judicial-branch failure, and mismanagement. In hindsight, the EPE has shown that the "core problem" is primarily a combination of insufficient separation of powers or executive dominance and the inability for citizens to have their voices heard in the political system, all of which hinders the country in its efforts to achieve good governance.

Zambia was and remains a multilingual, multi-ethnic state but without conflict drawn along ethnic, cultural, religious, etc. lines. Deprivation and vulnerability in the predominantly poor country is therefore primarily a question of income security. The proportion of people living in poverty in rural areas is more than twice as high as in urban areas. The mix of instruments chosen for this project is aimed at fostering an inclusive approach. Ethnic, gender, geographical, party-political and economic factors were taken into account in equal measure in the process of selecting locations for the promoted COs. At the time of site selection, all 16 locations were classified as rural. Today, two of these locations are classified as semi-urban and one as urban. With a view to gender equality, four constituencies with female MPs were selected for the construction of FC-financed COs. However, due to the high turnover of MPs, this was not a suitable means of positively advancing gender equality. Currently, these four COs are run by male MPs. The other selection criteria continue to appear suitable.

Appropriateness of design

The results chain assumes the following:

- Component I: Building and equipping selected COs will improve contact between MPs and voters, as MPs will be present in the constituencies more often, citizens will be able to visit the COs more often,

¹ Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Politische Parteien und Parteiensystem in Sambia; Die Funktionen zivilgesellschaftlichen Engagements für die demokratische Transformation in Afrika – am Beispiel Sambias (Friedrich Ebert Foundation specialist report, Bonn, 2004); report by Caritas Zambia on the operations of the parliamentary constituency offices in Zambia, 2009.

² Catholic Centre for Justice, Development and Peace (CCJDP) Research on the Community Response to the Parliamentary Constituency Offices Pilot Project, 2004.

and this will result in better dialogue between MPs and members of the public, meaning they can better represent citizens' interests in parliament;

- Component II: Equipping all COs with informational materials and trained staff will enhance the public's knowledge about the role and workings of parliament through information campaigns and public-facing educational activities focusing on politics; and
- Component III: Expanding parliamentary radio and television services will improve the transparency of parliamentary activity, as voters will be able to follow parliamentary debates live.

As a result, voters would be better able to express informed political opinions, and they would have improved access to bring their interests into the political process. This would increase the public's influence on parliamentary activity – and from the perspective of the MPs representing the interests of their constituencies, it would result in better parliamentary oversight of the executive, ultimately making progress towards good governance.

This results chain assumes that establishing and equipping COs and giving parliamentary radio and TV better geographical coverage would strengthen the public's influence in such a way that more effective oversight of the executive could "automatically" be achieved. On the other hand, the project did not take into account other factors standing in the way of more effective oversight (such as insufficient separation of powers, lack of budgetary control by parliament, enforced party discipline and, with this, a reduced ability for citizens to have their voices heard in the political system). In retrospect, this contributed to the project's minor influence at impact level.

Response to changes/adaptability

By the BMZ's decision, EUR 1.5 million in additional FC funds were reprogrammed to the project under review from a variable tranche of general budget support that had not been disbursed. The additional funds available were used to offset cost increases in the media infrastructure and in equipping the offices with radio antennas. Furthermore, the estimate of quantities was expanded to include the construction and supply of equipment to 5–7 additional COs, meaning that it then covered 15–22 COs. With the estimate of quantities being flexibly adjusted in this manner, the project was able to respond to the changing financial conditions that surrounded it.

In summary, the project was very well aligned with the political priorities on both the partner and donor sides. However, the results chain is only partially plausible. Specifically, the project attempted to influence developments in society as a whole by considering one aspect of society in isolation (political participation) without taking into account and mitigating other significant risks to target achievement. All in all, we rate the project's relevance as moderately successful.

Relevance rating: 3

Coherence

Internal coherence

The project covers two categories of action: (i) citizen participation in reform processes and poverty alleviation, and (ii) decentralisation and local governance under the Federal Government's 2011 Africa strategy, which dovetails with the GIZ project "Civil Society Participation in Governance Reform Processes and Poverty Reduction" in the governance priority area. The GIZ project primarily supports the civil society organisations (CSOs), which crucially accompany the political development process. Although the TC project does not envisage direct cooperation with parliament, the CSOs supported in the project focus their work on influencing parliament and its committees to address the public's priorities. This includes monitoring legislative changes as well as oversight of the budget process. The COs are among the premises used by these CSOs for their activities.

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) works with trade unions, political parties, the media, civil society and the National Assembly in Zambia. Its cooperation with the latter is focused on educating and training staff working in parliamentary administration and technical support as well as MPs. The FES had already

worked in close partnership with the National Assembly in this context to produce a series of informative and didactically prepared brochures for some of the COs in advance. For this reason, the FES was directly commissioned to carry out component II with a view to harnessing synergy and increasing efficiency.

External coherence

In addition to German DC, up to 15 bilateral and multilateral implementing organisations (IOs) are regularly represented in Zambia. A scheme for their division of labour is set out in JASZ II. The project under review is also geared towards JASZ II. With the donors' activities and this project aligned with JASZ II, the project complements other donors' activities. The project supports the partner's own efforts by funding the construction of additional COs and improving the COs' equipment, adding informational materials.

The project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are largely aligned with the partner's M&E, which includes extensive monitoring from the COs with ongoing reporting on a quarterly basis. Over the course of the EPE however, it became apparent that the partner's monitoring was patchy and that the individual COs' data collection was inconsistent in places due to a lack of specifications (see also the "Effectiveness" section).

In summary, the project's coherence is high. The project fits seamlessly into the existing landscape of support from the international donor community and plays a complementary role in advancing the overarching goal of good governance, in turn bolstering the partner's own efforts. The programme under review also uses the partner's systems for M&E. We rate the project's external coherence as successful.

Coherence rating: 2

Effectiveness

The objectives at outcome level, which were adjusted as part of the EPE, were:

- (i) to improve contact between voters and MPs,
- (ii) to increase understanding of parliamentary activity, and
- (iii) to make parliamentary activity more transparent.

The original objective at outcome level was to increase popular understanding of parliamentary work along with the public's ability to influence it and make the National Assembly's oversight and legislative functions more efficient and effective. However, this target goes beyond the level at which the created capacities are used, and addresses the benefits resulting from its use. Given this state of affairs, the original outcome objective was modified as part of the EPE, and partly shifted to impact level.

The table below provides a summary of how well the project target indicators were achieved:

Indicator	Status PA	Target value PA	EPE
(1) The number of visitors of the 16 newly built COs has increased. ³	Unknown.	+25% ⁴	Achieved.
(1.1) Citizens use all 150 COs ⁵ to educate themselves about politics.	-	+25%	Achieved. ⁶
(1.2) Citizens use all 150 COs to address political issues.	-	+12.5%	Achieved. ⁷
(2) All 150 COs conduct public-facing activities once a month.	Unknown.	12 activities p.a. per CO.	Achieved. ⁸
(2.1) All the COs regularly conduct public-facing activities that involve educating people about politics.	-	12 activities p.a. per CO.	Achieved. ⁹
(2.2) All the COs offer regular opportunities for a direct conversation with the local MP when the legislature is not in session.	-	COs allow for direct conversations with the local MP at least once a month when the legislature is not in session.	Achieved. ¹⁰
(2.3) When appropriate, MPs inform their constituencies about important parliamentary debates.	-	Regularly/when appropriate.	Achieved. ¹¹
(2.4) MPs air political issues from their constituencies in parliamentary discourse.	-	+5%	Not achieved.

³ Indicator 1 exclusively examines KfW COs so we can ascertain whether there was any change from the period when alternative COs were still being rented.

⁴ 2012 was chosen as the baseline year in the PA. However, no ex ante data was collected. 2019 was selected as the comparison year in the EPE, because this is the only year in which KfW-financed COs could be examined following 12 months of regular operation. In mid-2018, the first 16 KfW COs were completed and occupied. Subsequently, from March/April 2020, every CO across the country was closed to the public as part of Zambia's measures to contain the coronavirus. Annual reports from the National Assembly on all CO activities were only provided retrospectively up to 2017 as the basis for data in the EPE, so there is no reliable baseline data available. A 39% increase in visitation from 2012 to 2019 was reconstructed by the local consultant on site together with the employee of the nine visited COs and applies only to the aforementioned COs.

⁵ Indicators 1.1. to 2.3. include all 150 COs, as this is particularly intended to assess the public-facing nature of the activities financed by component II – training and informational material.

⁶ Based on average values from data collected by KfW in 2019, Caritas in 2017 and via CO reports for 2017–2019.

⁷ Based on average values from data collected by KfW in 2019, Caritas in 2017 and via CO reports for 2017–2019.

⁸ Based on average values from data collected via CO reports for 2017–2019.

⁹ Based on average values from data collected via CO reports for 2017–2019.

¹⁰ Based on average values from data collected via CO reports for 2017–2019.

¹¹ Based on average values from data collected via CO reports for 2017–2019.

(3) Sessions of the National Assembly are regularly broadcast on parliamentary radio and television.	Unknown.	At least five times a month.	Achieved.
(3.1) Parliamentary radio and television can be received in all KfW-financed constituencies.	-	Yes/no	Partly Fulfilled.
(3.2) Members of the public use the broadcast service to obtain information.	-	Yes/no	Achieved. ¹²

Indicator 1: There is no reliable baseline data available that includes all of the KfW COs. Consequently, as part of the EPE, the number of visits for 2012 had to be reconstructed by the local consultant on site together with the employees of the nine COs visited. According to this reconstruction, the number of visitors in these nine COs increased from 1,651 to 2,300 between 2012 and 2019 – an increase of 39%. As a result, the indicator was achieved. The average number of visitors across all COs was 2,173 in 2019, with 36,209 visitors in total (0.2% of the entire population). KfW COs were slightly more frequented than the national average. Nonetheless, we can confirm that a risk identified at the time of the project appraisal – insufficient use of the COs by the public – did indeed materialise.

Indicators 1.1 and 1.2: These indicators were achieved. Studies conducted by KfW in 2019 and Caritas Zambia in 2017 show that COs are mostly used as intended. The majority of the CO visitors who were surveyed stated that they visit these offices with the intention of speaking about political matters or finding out information. The majority of the surveyed library users confirmed that they had learned new things about how the COs worked, the role of parliament, democracy, the rule of law and the role of MPs. In addition, a large sub-section of visitors (around 30%) stated that they visit the COs for their own purposes (e.g. donations for school fees, medical or funeral expenses). 35% of visits were intended to help bring issues into the political discourse. In 2019, the public addressed around 8,900 topics of concern during CO activities or directly to their local MP. This impression is confirmed by interviews at nine COs as part of the EPE.

Indicator 2: This indicator was achieved. Although the frequency and type of activities carried out varied (depending on the availability of financial resources), in purely mathematical terms, there was more than one activity per CO per month. The quality of the public-facing activities carried out also ranges from highly formalised, regular community meetings (around 8–10%) to spontaneous activities such as political theatre and public forums (70%). This shows that the activity level at a CO also depends on the levels of motivation and education among the staff and MP.

Indicator 2.1: This indicator was achieved. On average, activities of an educational nature take place every two months.

Indicators 2.2 and 2.3. Both indicators have been achieved but are difficult to quantify, as the figures collected in the ongoing CO reporting vary enormously across COs. Due to the lack of uniform requirements for logging activities, some COs only take note of “major activities”, such as open days and public consultations at which the MP is present. These offices report numbers in the two-digit range. Meanwhile, others count all the MP’s interactions with their constituents, including posts on social media about parliamentary debates and other political issues as well as telephone calls made by the MP. These offices provide figures in the four-digit range. Either way, the magnitude of the activities reported suggests that the indicator has been achieved nationwide.

Indicator 2.4: Of the approximately 8,900 issues raised from the constituencies in 2019, less than 1% were taken up by the National Assembly. As a result, this indicator was not achieved.

¹² Based on local data collection in 2021.

Indicator 3: This indicator was achieved. The services continue to broadcast while the National Assembly is in session. They report on and document a wide range of political issues and affairs.

Indicator 3.1: This indicator was partially achieved. Parliament TV is available in all the constituencies financed, although it is a pay TV station. At the time of the EPE, most of the FC-financed radio antennas were not functioning properly, meaning that Parliament Radio could only be received in one of nine KfW-financed constituencies visited (Pemba). Parliament Radio is a free-to-air service. However, six of the nine radio broadcast antennas installed were already out of service by the time of the final inspection. This was mainly due to incorrect frequency settings, antennas mounted too low so that their range was not sufficient to reach the constituencies, and similar issues. There is no information available on whether and how these problems were addressed at the time. However, the EPE prompted the executing agency to have technicians check the antennas.

Indicator 3.2: This indicator was achieved. Discussions with CO staff conducted as part of the EPE confirm that the parliamentary radio and television stations are well known and that the public use their programming to inform themselves politically. Particular attention is paid to parliamentary debates in the run-up to the presidential elections as well as controversial issues and legislative proposals. However, the National Assembly does not collect audience figures, so it was not possible to quantify the extent of use nationwide.

Contribution to achieving targets

Under the project, 17 COs were built, staffed and equipped with furniture, computers, radios, televisions and internet (component 1). In addition, training sessions were carried out for the staff at all 150 COs, and informational brochures were prepared, printed and distributed to all 150 offices (component 2). During the course of the third component, nine radio antennas were set up to broadcast the radio programming in the FC-financed constituencies. The National Assembly in Lusaka received funding for the infrastructure to support its own television station, which included setting up a TV studio, transmission technology, technical training, etc.

The outputs were delivered as planned or better except for the installation of the radio broadcast antennas. In some cases, adjustments were made to the scope of services (see also the “Efficiency” section). When the EPE was conducted, respondents with access to Parliament Radio confirmed that the flow of information about parliamentary debates had improved significantly (90%). Furthermore, the FC-financed COs performed better than their counterparts in neighbouring constituencies (in terms of equipment, visitor numbers and outreach activities). Across the country, the public continue to visit the COs for informational and educational purposes and to elevate their issues to the political stage. This, combined with the nationwide availability of Parliament TV, has helped to make democratic processes more transparent in the public’s view and played a role in fostering significantly higher voter turnout in 2021 (+14.6% compared to 2016). During the last elections, one observable nationwide trend was that the level of activity an MP undertook in their constituency had an influence on their own chances of re-election. In constituencies highly satisfied with their incumbent MP, the MP was frequently re-elected, whereas MPs tended to be voted out of office in constituencies with low levels of satisfaction.

The nationwide economic downturn had significant ramifications for the project’s impact. Although the National Assembly still possesses a strong sense of responsibility for maintaining and continuing the outputs created by the FC project, the government’s budget deficit from 2015 until the time of the EPE resulted in chronic underfunding of the COs. Public-facing activities suffered from this in particular. Furthermore, no progress has been made with strengthening the role of the National Assembly, nor with the separation of powers or the ability for citizens to have their voices heard in the political system (structural deficits). Despite an insufficient budget, the project still had impacts at outcome level.

Quality of implementation

The commitment of the executing agency and the consultants was sufficient and the required outputs were delivered with consistently good to very good quality, except for the installation of the antennas. The only shortcoming was the sometimes lengthy decision-making processes on the part of the executing agency. The structural quality of the first 16 COs was found to be good during the final inspection. The

financed COs received the intended equipment in full. In addition, the condition of the 17th CO was found to be good during the EPE.

Unintended consequences (positive or negative)

There is no government, social, cultural or ethnic discrimination perpetrated using the capacity created (do-no-harm approach). At the same time, the lack of transport options for the poorer population results in a possible disadvantage for them. In particularly remote constituencies, it is not possible for poorer sections of the population to attend CO events. This is partly remedied by the COs' staff using their own means of transport to visit especially remote communities, but the COs are not sufficiently equipped with vehicles, so this deficiency cannot be corrected across the board. Vehicles were not provided to the KfW-financed COs as part of the project. Parliament TV is available everywhere, albeit at a cost, meaning that it potentially discriminates against sections of the population who cannot afford pay TV. Although the channel is available in every constituency, the extent of its use – especially by poorer sections of the population – is not known. Ensuring nationwide radio reception could remedy this because of the service's free-to-air nature, but the antennas provided are not in working order due to a lack of proper maintenance. As a result, only one of the nine constituencies visited was able to receive Parliament Radio at the time of the EPE.

There was an unintended positive effect during the coronavirus pandemic – because of the offices being centrally located within each constituency, they were used to give people information about the spread of the virus and to hand out masks and sanitiser. We can assume that these activities have significantly increased awareness of the COs. It remains to be seen how visitor numbers will progress after the pandemic.

In summary, the objectives were achieved at target group level when viewed more narrowly, focusing on the population of the constituencies in which the COs were set up using DC funds. The indicators relating to COs financed by FC funds are achieved (indicator 1) or partially achieved (indicator 3.1). No data was collected on the use of the parliamentary radio and television services (e.g. audience ratings). However, the surveys conducted as part of the EPE indicate that the project had a positive impact on the transparency of parliamentary activity for those with access to parliamentary radio and television (see also "Contribution to achieving targets" section). It is more difficult to assess target achievement at the broader target group level (the entire population of Zambia). Aside from indicator 2.4, all the indicators measuring target achievement at the broader target group level have been achieved. It is true that use of all the COs around the country increased significantly during the project's term. However, measured against the total population, the use of the COs – and, in turn, uptake of the information provided there – is significantly below 1%, a very low figure. With regard to the parliamentary radio and TV stations, it is not possible to reach any conclusions in terms of broad-based impact. The alternative use of the COs in the context of the pandemic is a positive feature. Taking particular note of the clear target achievement at the narrower target group level and the alternative use of the COs during the pandemic, we just about rate the effectiveness of the project as successful.

Effectiveness rating: 2

Efficiency

Production efficiency

The project had a total budget of EUR 4.154 million. Of this, EUR 4.0 million came from federal budget funds and the remaining EUR 0.154 million was the executing agency's counterpart contribution. Appendix 6 provides a detailed cost breakdown for the individual components. Foreign exchange gains totalled approximately EUR 0.08 million, which made it possible to build the 17th CO.

The selection of locations for the COs was as inclusive as possible in line with the pre-set selection criteria, including condition and location of the rented COs, party strength, geographical stratification, ethnicity, and special consideration of COs with female MPs (Appendix 7). As a result, the building sites were scattered all over the country and sometimes located in highly remote, difficult-to-reach regions. This meant that the costs for transporting materials and supervising works were higher than if the COs had been built spatially contiguous.

At EUR 684,000, the consulting costs for components I and III accounted for a comparatively large share of the FC funds (17.6%). Nonetheless, we view these as reasonable due to the geographical spread, the intensity of support provided with multiple attempts at the final acceptance of the COs under construction (or antennas being installed), and the cost-neutral contract extensions. Consulting costs for component II, including training and preparation of materials, made up 7.5% of the total (EUR 300,000). Production and distribution costs per brochure issued (300,000 copies) came to less than EUR 1, which we consider comparatively inexpensive.

At EUR 1.827 million, the costs for building and equipping the COs represented 45.7% of the FC funds. The specific costs for the construction of an average CO (around EUR 100,000) were in line with the construction costs estimated at the time of the project appraisal; costs were not higher than planned. The type and quality of construction are consistent with standard practice for small public buildings in the country. Plus, the cost of materials, adjusted for inflation, was equivalent to the sums spent by the executing agency when building COs of the same standard from its own funds. When assessing value in construction costs, it is therefore crucial to note how widely the individual construction sites were dispersed across the country. Transport costs and delivery times rose steadily with increasing distance from the capital, as was also the case for antenna installation. When compared with neighbouring countries, construction costs in Zambia are moderate on the whole. Indeed, when the building activities were complete, EUR 80,000 was left over due to exchange rate fluctuations to build the 17th CO.

Overall, from a purely economic point of view, the cost of component I would have been much lower if the construction sites had not been scattered across the country. From a development policy perspective, on the other hand, the sites were selected in the most inclusive manner possible to balance interests on a national scale. The project design that was chosen is preferable to a purely economic approach.

The counterpart contribution, which involved providing plots worth EUR 0.154 million (3.7% of the investment costs), was normal.

The entire term of the project was extended from an original four years to almost eight due to numerous delays.

There were various delays in the construction of the COs (component I), including due to lengthy decision-making processes on the part of the executing agency as well as unclear land rights to the selected plots, lengthy processes for award of contracts and cumbersome payment processing. On aggregate, the first 15 COs were completed with a two-year delay. The construction of the 16th CO delayed the completion of component I by another year. The additional (17th) CO was completed in mid-2021. However, we will not consider this office when examining the question of time efficiency, as its construction was only decided on and implemented using residual funds after the other measures were completed.

Component II was almost completed on schedule, with a delay of just three months.

During component III, there were significant difficulties owing to the poor performance of the contractor, who was overwhelmed with the work they were tasked with and ultimately had to be replaced. This resulted in substantial delays. For example, the remaining work on six of nine antennas financed had still not been completed at the time of the EPE. The television studio went live just under a year late.

Allocation efficiency

In component I, the switch from rented COs to self-built COs plays the smallest role as far as target achievement is concerned due to the limited spatial opportunities for impact; yet at the same time, this accounts for the largest share of costs. In hindsight with regard to allocation efficiency, it would have made more sense to undertake a nationwide review of radio coverage, how much the public uses Parliament Radio, how attractive its programming is, and a possible expansion of its service, as well as carrying out training for MPs similar to that received by the CO staff.

Taking into account the site selection (distribution of built COs across the country), we rate the production efficiency as good. Except for the installation of the antennas, the required services were consistently carried out either well or very well. The construction quality was of the usual national standard and is therefore also rated as good. The project's term doubled from the duration envisaged in planning, but it should be noted that very small-scale projects close to the target group often have longer implementation times. On the other hand, the project did not perform in terms of allocation efficiency. Thus overall, we rate the project's efficiency as moderately successful.

Efficiency rating: 3

Impact

The underlying objectives at impact level as part of the EPE were: (i) to strengthen the public's political influence, and (ii) to make the National Assembly's oversight and legislative functions more efficient and effective.

The objective set out at impact level at the time of the PA was to help advance good governance, including effective oversight of the executive by the legislature. In retrospect, this turned out to be overambitious – even when the low financing volume is factored in. The objectives at impact level were adjusted accordingly.

The achievement of the indicators can be summarised as follows:

Indicator	Status PA	Target value at PA	EPE
(1) The number of legislative proposals based on issues raised within the constituencies increases by 10%.	Unknown	+10%	Not achieved
(2.1) People feel their interests are represented in parliament. There is increased approval of parliamentary work.	-	Yes/no	Unable to evaluate
(2.2) Voter turnout increases.	-	Yes/no	Achieved

Indicator 1 was not achieved. 72 of the 8,047 concerns raised in 2019 were addressed in the National Assembly (<1%). In 2018, five concerns were passed on out of 2,531. None resulted in the formulation of laws. This data was not collected for 2016 or 2017. In 2020, despite temporary closures of the COs in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, 5,296 concerns were raised and 20 were passed on. Although the figures increased from 2018 to 2019, it is not possible to identify a trend over time on the basis of this weak data set.

Indicators 2.1 and 2.2 were not successfully achieved. In 2020, over 80% of Zambians believed that democracy was the best possible form of government, which can be interpreted as meaning that the population fundamentally sees the National Assembly as the right place to represent their interests. Yet public satisfaction with parliamentary work came in at a weak 40%, with only 50% presuming competence on the

part of their government and parliament.¹³ Voter turnout was up significantly in the 2021 election year, increasing by 14.6% from the previous elections in 2016. We can plausibly assume that the project helped by making parliamentary activity more transparent and better understood as well as by improving contact between voters and their MPs.

Overarching developmental changes (intended)

An increase in the number of visits to the COs, the submission of petitions and the significantly increased voter turnout can be viewed as indications of increased influence. In addition, increased interest in the parliamentary TV service was observed in the run-up to the elections. At the same time, the parliamentary reports show that only a fraction of the petitions submitted make it to the National Assembly. As a result, the public's actual influence on government remains low. On the other hand, there seems to be increased awareness of citizens' influence on the National Assembly via the MPs they elect. For example, the EPE confirmed that re-election rates are higher for active MPs than for poorer performing candidates.

Contribution to overarching developmental changes (intended)

We can reasonably surmise that the project has laid important foundations for the public to have stronger political influence and for the National Assembly to fulfil its legislative and oversight functions more efficiently and effectively. However, we cannot infer whether the programme in isolation played a direct role in this development due to the complexity of the factors at play and the heterogeneous bundle of measures (geographically limited coverage in component I as opposed to nationwide coverage in components II and III).

In summary, the project had a positive impact on the transparency of parliamentary activity and the political influence of the public – albeit one that cannot be quantified more precisely. In light of the relatively low funding, this is an astonishing result.

Overarching developmental impact rating: 3

Sustainability

Capacities of participants and stakeholders

During the EPE, the KfW COs and the TV studio were found to be in good general condition and still fully equipped. The maintenance of the installed antennas was neglected, on the other hand. At the time of the EPE, only one out of six antennas visited was functional. It was only the discovery of these defects during the EPE that led the parliamentary administration to address the problem (by sending technicians to check). The informational material provided has been used up, and stocks have not been replaced. Specifically, there is a serious need to get back on track with the different language versions, as these were particularly popular with the public.

The regular staff working at a CO include an office manager, an assistant and two guards, all of whom are National Assembly employees. The turnover rate among CO employees hovers around 15% p.a. and can be classified as moderate. Vacancies are usually filled quickly within a few weeks. However, if there are only two members of staff working at a given CO, just one employee leaving will automatically mean a turnover rate of 50%. Due to staff turnover, 225 CO employees (75%) have now been untrained since 2015. We can assume that the level of professionalism will have suffered as a result. In addition, there is a lack of formal requirements, or compliance with existing ones. There are no platforms for CO employees to use as a means of exchanging information, so there is no formalised interaction – for instance, to share examples of best practice or lessons learned. As a consequence, the type and manner of activities carried out are left to chance to a certain extent. Adding to the difficulty, the new Constituency Staff Recruitment

¹³ Afrobarometer: [summary_of_results-zambia-afrobarometer_round_8-29june2021.pdf](#). Reasons given for this are that respondents assume a lack of competence on the part of the executive and the legislature (>50% of respondents), but most notable is the poor economic performance (95% of respondents).

Policy links the duration of CO staff employment contracts to the MP's term of office, and prompts MPs to select their own candidates for CO posts. We can assume that the degree of professionalism among CO staff will continue to decrease, a situation which would be very difficult to improve even with a sophisticated training concept due to regular terms of office lasting five years and the comparatively high MP turnover rate. In the radio studio, 15 out of 22 positions are currently occupied, which currently impairs the efficiency of an operation running at high capacity. There is a lack of staff and resources to maintain the antennas that have been installed.

Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities

The executing agency's chronic shortage of funds makes it difficult to continue the project successfully. The National Assembly has a strong interest in being visible to the public and maintaining the necessary infrastructure for this, so some minimal funding is included in the budget for maintenance. However, the measures are not aimed at generating revenue for the partner. All the operating costs are covered exclusively by allocations from the national budget, which in the past have fallen well short of requirements. In 2019, salary payments to employees in the COs were even partially suspended and maintenance spending was completely discontinued. In 2020, the budget for the COs totalled around ZMW 60.6 million (around EUR 3.1 million). Of this, 80.9% was budgeted for personnel costs, 18.2% for continuing operations, 0.7% for maintenance expenses, 0.3% for public-facing activities, and 0% for staff training and development. It is evident that these funds are far from adequate to maintain the COs that were put in place or the broadcasting equipment over the long term, nor to ensure a continuing dialogue between MPs and the public through appropriate, public-facing activities. Improvement is on the horizon with the new government. It has increased the Constituency Development Fund budget 15-fold for 2022, from USD 100,000 to around USD 1.5 million. If these funds do in fact run out over the next year, proper operation would be possible by catching up on repairs and restocking missing informational materials.

Durability of impacts over time

The political system is stable and has been further strengthened by the problematic economic situation. Afrobarometer surveys¹⁴ confirm that the vast majority of the public is committed to democratic processes and institutions, with scores of 80% and above. There has been increased investment in education on political matters for the population as a whole via the measures financed. We can assume that this level of education will largely continue and that the public will increasingly make use of its political voice – independent of the regular operation of the capacities created. Parliament TV in particular plays a leading role in this. We can assume that if the minimum operational requirements continue to be met, as has been the case since 2015, the effects achieved should continue to hold and the measures financed will continue to contribute to the democratic process going forward. However, it remains to be seen whether the change in the COs' role during the coronavirus pandemic and the associated increase in awareness will cause the public to be more interested in the COs' work when the situation returns to normal.

By their nature, the financed measures cannot generate revenue and will remain permanently dependent on allocations from the government budget. As a result, the project's success will continue to hinge on the economic development of the country and the political will of decision-makers.

As of the EPE, which was carried out during a deep economic recession in the country, the sustainability of the project is at risk. This would justify a "4" rating. Nonetheless, there is a high degree of ownership on the part of the executing agency. This is reflected in the newly elected government's decision to increase the budget for the COs by 50%, meaning we can expect a significant improvement in the operation of capacity created in the short to medium term. This positive outlook merits a better rating for the sustainability criterion.

Sustainability rating: 3

¹⁴ [summary_of_results-zambia-afrobarometer_round_8-29june2021.pdf](#)

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, overarching developmental impact** and **sustainability**. The ratings are also used to arrive at a **final assessment** of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

Level 1	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
Level 2	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
Level 3	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
Level 4	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
Level 5	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
Level 6	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Rating levels 1-3 denote a positive assessment or successful project while rating levels 4-6 denote a negative assessment.

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while rating levels 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (level 3).