

Zambia - National Assessment Survey

Examinations Council of Zambia - Government

Report generated on: Apr 10, 2015

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Overview

Identification

Summary

ABSTRACT

The National Assessment Survey (NAS) has been administered every two years since 1998 by the Examinations Council of Zambia to grade 5 (ISCED 1) and grade 9 (ISCED 2) students in public, private, grant-aided and community schools. At the lower-secondary education level, the NAS targets students in general education programmes only.

The NAS is a low-stake assessment. It is a written assessment, administered face-to-face and delivered through paper-pencil tests. All test-takers are presented with the same cognitive booklets or tests, which are aligned with the national curriculum.

The NAS serves the following purposes:

- designing individualised instructional plans
- supporting teachers (training, relevant materials, etc.)
- school or educator accountability
- sub-national level monitoring of learning outcomes
- monitoring education quality levels
- planning education policy reforms
- measuring impacts of educational inputs

The NAS accommodates students with special needs, by providing the following arrangements:

- Hearing impairment: sign language interpreters
- Visual impairment: test materials with large fonts and in braille
- Physical disability: additional time
- Emotional disturbance: additional time

KIND OF DATA

Random sample

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

Results are reported at the sub-national and national levels. Data are disaggregated by sex, geographic location (urban and rural) and type of schools (public, private, grant-aided and community).

Results are published in reports, which are available in print. Results are also broadcasted on the radio and on television and published in the media.

Scope

NOTES

The National Assessment Survey assesses students in three subjects administered in English. The subjects and the duration of each test are listed below:

Grade 5:

- English language, 60 minutes
- Life skills, 60 minutes
- Mathematics, 60 minutes

Grade 9:

- Mathematics, 120 minutes
- English language, 90 minutes
- Environmental Sciences, 60 minutes

Description of test items: Test items consist of multiple choice questions with three or more response options and open-ended questions requiring short constructed responses.

Description of stimuli: Test stimuli consist of continuous, non-continuous and mixed texts.

Reporting metrics: Student performance is reported by content domain within each subject and as a composite for each subject tested. Student performance is reported by average score and proficiency levels. Desirable performance levels are defined by experts during validation workshops; however, the minimum standard varies across subject tested.

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

National

UNIVERSE

Students enrolled in grade 5 (ISCED 1) and grade 9 (ISCED 2) in public, private, grant-aided and community schools.

Producers and Sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S)

Name	Affiliation
Examinations Council of Zambia	Government

OTHER PRODUCER(S)

Name	Affiliation	Role
Examinations Council of Zambia	Government	Test development and administration; data processing and dissemination; programme development
Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education	Government	Test administration; data dissemination; programme development; financial support through ministerial budget
National Non Governmental Organization	N/A	Data dissemination; financial support
Teachers unions	N/A	Data dissemination
Parents associations	N/A	Data dissemination

Metadata Production

METADATA PRODUCED BY

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Examinations Council of Zambia	ECZ	Government	Data collection
UNESCO Institute for Statistics	UIS	United Nations	Questionnaire design, metadata collection, review and publication

DATE OF METADATA PRODUCTION
2014

DDI DOCUMENT ID
ZMB-NAS-2012

Sampling

Sampling Procedure

The sampling frame is based on the school annual census database. The sample is drawn using a stratified multi-stage cluster sampling design. The sample is stratified by province, district and location (urban and rural). In the first stage, a sample of schools is selected within each stratum using probability proportional to size. Schools with less than 20 learners at the targeted grade are excluded. In the second stage, students were selected at the targeted grade using systematic sampling.

Purposive sampling (a non-probability sampling) is used to select students with special educational needs.

Questionnaires

Overview

The National Assessment Survey comprises three background questionnaires:

- student questionnaire: it collects information on family background, parental education, household's socio-economic status, family support with homework, distance to school and other information on learning conditions;
- teacher questionnaire: it has a completion duration of 60 minutes, and collects information on instructional time, classroom dynamics, pedagogy and teaching methods, availability of teaching aids, homework policy, teacher qualification and other information on teaching conditions;
- school principal questionnaire: it has a completion duration of 60 minutes, and gathers information on school management and infrastructures, staff structure, staff continuous professional development and incentives, and other information related to education policy issues.

Data Collection

Data Collection Dates

Start	End	Cycle
2012	2012	Every 2 years

Data Collection Mode

Face-to-face [f2f]

Data Collection Notes

The following actions were taken to reduce non-sampling error:

- Conducted a pilot survey
- Trained data collection staff
- Trained data processing staff

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Data Processing

Data Editing

Test booklets are scored and verified manually and through automatic controls. The data editing process is performed at headquarters.

Other Processing

Data entry is performed manually and by scanning score sheets. The data capture operations are performed at headquarters.

Data Access

Access Authority

Examinations Council of Zambia (Government), www.exams-council.org.zm

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Access Conditions

To access the data, please send a request to the Examinations Council of Zambia, mchilala@exams-council.org.zm.