



**MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL
WELFARE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**ACCELERATING CHILD CARE REFORM IN ZAMBIA:
A CALL TO ACTION**

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN THIS COUNTRY ARE SECURED THROUGH VARIOUS POLICY DOCUMENTS AND IN PARTICULAR THE NATIONAL CHILD POLICY FOR WHICH WE ARE CURRENTLY DEVELOPING A NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, SPORT AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT. ALSO IN PLACE IS THE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY WHICH AIMS TO SECURE THE LIVES OF ALL VULNERABLE GROUPS, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN. GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT ALL FAMILIES ARE PROTECTED AND ABLE TO PROVIDE CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN THROUGH THE FINALIZATION OF THE CHILDCARE REFORM THAT HAS BEEN INITIATED SINCE 2001 THROUGH THE CHILDCARE UPGRADING PROGRAMME.

FOLLOWING THE CHILD CARE REFORM FORUM HELD IN LUSAKA ON 06 MAY 2016, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE URGES OTHER LINE MINISTRIES AND COOPERATING PARTNERS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO ACCELERATE CHILD CARE REFORM IN ZAMBIA.

1. ESTABLISH A NATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON CHILD CARE REFORM;
2. DEVELOP A CHILD CARE REFORM STRATEGY INCLUDING COSTED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WITH FOCUS ON PREVENTION OF FAMILY SEPARATION, PROVISIONS OF APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVE CARE AND ENSURING THE LINKAGES BETWEEN THE CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE SYSTEM, CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM AND SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM;
3. DEVELOP A NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE CARE FRAMEWORK WITH THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS: (I) COORDINATING MECHANISMS ON ALTERNATIVE CARE AT COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL, (II) GATEKEEPING MECHANISMS; (III) ALTERNATIVE CARE REGULATIONS/GUIDELINES AND RELATED STANDARDISED OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES; (IV) SKILLED AND MANDATED COMPETENT SOCIAL WELFARE WORKFORCE, (V) FAMILY BASED ALTERNATIVE CARE OPTIONS SUCH AS FOSTER CARE, KINSHIP CARE/EXTENDED FAMILY CARE AND ADOPTION (DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL), (VI) PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY BASED CARE;
4. STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL WELFARE WORKFORCE THROUGH STANDARDISED TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION AND INCREASE RESOURCES TO DELIVER COORDINATED CARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN;
5. ADDRESS THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY DISABILITY AS PART OF THE CHILD CARE REFORM STRATEGY AND THE NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE CARE FRAMEWORK;

6. UNDERTAKE QUALITY RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE BUILDING AROUND CHILD CARE INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE PLATFORMS FOR INFORMATION SHARING;
7. AWARENESS RAISING AND ADVOCACY FOR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOBILISATION TO SUPPORT THE CHILD CARE REFORM, ESPECIALLY ENSURING THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY AS ACTORS OF CHANGE FOR CHILD CARE REFORM;
8. SECURE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ACCELERATE THE CHILD CARE REFORM PROCESS.

LET US USE THIS CALL TO ACTION TO RENEW OUR COMMITMENT OF NURTURING AND SUPPORTING THE CHILDREN OF ZAMBIA.