



INSIDE:

- **From Connection to Impact**
See how ZAMREN is transforming learning and research across Zambia.
- **Growing Together: Inside ZAMREN Week & AGM 2026**
Discover the conversations, innovations and partnerships that brought over 350 delegates together in Livingstone.



“A leading and eminent provider
of the Digital ICT Infrastructure
services to Education and Research
Institutions to enhance innovation”





EXECUTIVE FOREWORD

This edition highlights several milestones that reflect this commitment. From the launch of the eduroam On-Device Proof of Concept and the expansion of connectivity to student residences, to strategic engagements with SMART Zambia Institute and our regional partners, we continue to push the boundaries of what is possible for research and education in Zambia.

Equally inspiring are the stories of our member institutions. Whether it is a nursing student accessing critical research in real time, a teacher trainee completing coursework remotely, or young innovators presenting solutions through the ZAMREN Student Hackathon, these examples remind us why our work matters.

The future of education and research is connected, collaborative and increasingly digital. More importantly, it is a future we are building together.

I would like to thank our member institutions, partners, the Board and staff for their continued commitment and support. Your contribution remains central to our mission of enabling knowledge and driving digital transformation across the research and education sector.

As we continue this journey, let us remain bold in our thinking, innovative in our approach and united in our purpose.

Together, we are not simply connecting institutions. We are connecting people to knowledge, opportunity and the future.

Stein Mkandawire

Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the June 2026 edition of ZAMREN Connect.

As you turn these pages, you will discover a common thread running through every story: the power of connectivity to transform lives, institutions and communities.

Across Zambia, students are accessing learning resources from their hostels, researchers are collaborating beyond borders, librarians are strengthening access to knowledge, and innovators are developing solutions to real-world challenges. These are not just technology stories. They are stories about people, opportunity and progress.

At ZAMREN, we believe that access to knowledge should never be limited by geography, infrastructure or circumstance. That belief continues to guide our work as we expand connectivity, develop home-grown digital solutions and create opportunities for institutions to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

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EDITORIAL



What happens when knowledge becomes easier to reach?

For a student, it might mean accessing a research article from a hostel room late at night. For a lecturer, it could mean collaborating with colleagues across continents. For an institution, it may be the ability to deliver services more efficiently and embrace new ways of teaching, learning and innovating.

For us at ZAMREN, these possibilities are what make connectivity meaningful.

The stories featured in this edition are a reminder that digital transformation is not about cables, routers or platforms alone. It is

about the people whose lives are changed when barriers to knowledge are removed.

In these pages, you will meet students who are learning beyond the classroom, institutions that are embracing innovation, librarians preserving research for future generations, ICT professionals strengthening cybersecurity and young innovators developing solutions for tomorrow's challenges.

You will also see how partnerships continue to expand opportunities across Zambia and the region, proving that meaningful progress happens when institutions work together towards a common goal.

Perhaps the most exciting message emerging from this edition is that the future is no longer something we are waiting for. It is already taking shape in our classrooms, laboratories, libraries, campuses and communities.

As you read through this issue of ZAMREN Connect, I invite you to look beyond the technology and focus on the impact. Behind every connection is a student pursuing a dream, a researcher seeking answers, an educator sharing knowledge or an innovator creating change.

Those are the stories worth telling.

Enjoy the read.

Andrew Mbazima

Communications Officer

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ZAMREN LAUNCHES EDUROAM ON-DEVICE



What if learning could continue long after leaving the classroom, library or campus Wi-Fi zone?

That vision is becoming a reality through the eduroam on-device proof of concept, one of the standout innovations unveiled during the 2026 ZAMREN Week and Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in May in Livingstone.

Officially launched by the Minister of Technology and Science, Hon. Felix C. Mutati, the initiative represents a significant step towards making learning and research more accessible,

flexible and inclusive.

“This innovation demonstrates that Zambia is moving towards a future where learning and research are no longer confined to physical spaces,” Hon. Mutati said.

The initiative is being implemented through a partnership between the Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN), ZAMTEL and ZedMobile.

Unlike traditional eduroam access, which relies on designated Wi-Fi hotspots within institutions, the new solution enables students, researchers

and educators to remain connected directly on their devices beyond campus environments. Whether travelling, conducting field research or studying away from campus, users can continue accessing learning platforms, research resources and digital collaboration tools without interruption.

In practical terms, learning no longer has to stop when a student leaves a lecture room or library.

The proof of concept has already been deployed at selected institutions across Zambia, including Kalabo Trades Training Institute, Mwenze Trades Training Institute, Ukwimi Trades Training Institute, Mbala College of Nursing and Midwifery, Chitambo College of Nursing and Midwifery, Charles Lwanga College of Education, Technical and Vocational Teachers’ College, Zambia College of Agriculture-Mpika and Kapasa Makasa University.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, ZAMREN Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Stein Mkandawire, highlighted the organisation’s evolution from a connectivity provider to a developer of home-grown digital solutions that address the needs of research and education institutions.

“In 2022, ZAMREN primarily depended on internet



malls and bus stations, helping more people connect to knowledge and opportunities.

The conference also featured a keynote address by renowned academic and technology leader Prof. Arthur Mutambara, who challenged delegates to embrace innovation and adapt to the opportunities presented by Artificial Intelligence.

Held under the theme “*Growing Together*,” the 2026 ZAMREN Week and AGM brought together researchers, policymakers, institutional leaders, ICT professionals, students and cooperating partners to explore the future of research, education and digital innovation.

As Zambia’s digital landscape continues to evolve, the eduroam on-device initiative offers a glimpse into a future where connectivity is no longer tied to a place but follows learners wherever they go.

connectivity services. Today, we provide indigenous digital solutions such as UNICOSIS, Payroll Systems and Procurement Systems for our member institutions,” he said.

The growing impact of ZAMREN was also reflected in the attendance at the conference, which attracted more than 300 delegates from Zambia and across the continent, including Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, The Gambia, Ghana

and Angola.

ZAMREN Board Chairperson, Prof. Munda Muya, reinforced the importance of ensuring that digital transformation remains accessible to all.

“Learning must be anytime, anywhere, on any device,” he said.

He noted that ZAMREN continues to expand eduroam access beyond educational institutions into public spaces such as airports, shopping



ZAMREN AND SMART ZAMBIA ALIGN ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES



The Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN) held its first quarterly engagement of 2026 with the SMART Zambia Institute, reaffirming a shared commitment to advancing Zambia's digital transformation agenda.

Led by Chief Executive Officer Mr. Stein Mkandawire, the ZAMREN delegation paid a courtesy call on SMART Zambia Institute National Coordinator Mr. Percy Chinyama in Lusaka to provide updates on key initiatives supporting education, research and innovation.

Among the highlights shared was the continued rollout of the University and College Student Information System (UNICOSIS), a digital platform helping universities and colleges streamline student registration, fee payments, examinations management and other academic processes.

ZAMREN also outlined plans to provide free internet connectivity to 20 secondary schools across Zambia in 2026, expanding access to digital learning opportunities and helping bridge the digital divide.

The engagement further

showcased the introduction of edu-roam-enabled SIM cards, an innovation developed in partnership with ZedMobile and ZAMTEL. The solution will allow students, researchers and educators to stay connected beyond traditional Wi-Fi hotspots, providing greater flexibility in accessing online educational resources.

Beyond current initiatives, ZAMREN shared its ambition to support the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions tailored for teaching, learning and research and positioning institutions to benefit from emerging technologies.

The meeting underscored the strong collaboration between ZAMREN and SMART Zambia Institute and their shared vision of building a more connected and digitally empowered Zambia.



INTERNET COMES TO UNZA RUINS HOSTELS



For many students, learning does not end when a lecture finishes. Assignments, research, group discussions and online learning often continue long after they leave the classroom. At the University of Zambia

(UNZA), Great East Road Campus, this experience has now become easier and more accessible for students living in the Ruins Hostels.

Through a partnership between UNZA and the Zambia Research

and Education Network (ZAMREN), high-speed internet connectivity has been extended directly into the hostel facilities under the Student Halls of Residence Internet Upgrade Project. This marks a significant milestone, as it is the first time structured internet access has been made available within student accommodation on campus.

The project was delivered through a 50-50 cost-sharing model between UNZA and ZAMREN, reflecting a shared commitment to improving the student learning experience. Previously, more than 90 per cent of student hostels had no structured Wi-Fi coverage, forcing many students to rely on personal data bundles





and limited connectivity to access online learning resources.

Speaking during the official handover ceremony, UNZA Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mundia Muya, described reliable digital connectivity as an essential component of modern higher education.

“Effective hybrid learning is crucial in complementing face-to-face learning. Reliable digital connectivity is central to aligning UNZA with modern university standards and ensuring

students remain competitive in a digital world,” he said.

ZAMREN Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Stein Mkandawire, emphasized that internet access has become a basic requirement for learning and innovation.

“A student’s room should not be a barrier to knowledge; it should be a gateway to opportunity,” he said, adding that the partnership model demonstrates the value of institutions working together to invest in sustainable digital

infrastructure.

Welcoming the development on behalf of students, University of Zambia Students Union President, Mr. Mwanto Kabaso, described the hostel internet upgrade as a transformative step for student life and academic success.

The Ruins Hostels upgrade represents a total investment of K825,516.25 and provides students with easier access to virtual learning platforms, digital libraries, research resources and online collaboration tools from the comfort of their residence. More than just a technology project, the initiative is helping create an environment where learning can happen anytime and anywhere on campus.

“Effective hybrid learning is crucial in complementing face-to-face learning. Reliable digital connectivity is central to aligning UNZA with modern university standards and ensuring students remain competitive in a digital world,”

ZAMREN CONNECTS STUDENT HOSTELS AT LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY



A stronger digital learning environment is taking shape at Livingstone College of Nursing and Midwifery following the commissioning of internet connectivity to student halls of residence.

The project forms part of ZAMREN's ongoing commitment to creating connected learning environments where students can access educational resources whenever and wherever they need them.

Officially commissioning the project, Ministry of Health Permanent Secretary – Administration, Mrs. Joma T. Simuyi, emphasized the growing importance of reliable internet connectivity in healthcare education and training.

Implemented through a 50-50 cost-sharing partnership



between ZAMREN and the institution, the initiative enables students to access online learning platforms, digital libraries, research materials and collaboration tools directly from their hostels.

For nursing and midwifery students, this means greater flexibility to study, conduct research, complete assignments and engage with learning resources outside formal class hours.

The project is about more

than internet access. It is about ensuring that future healthcare professionals have the tools and opportunities they need to learn, grow and succeed in an increasingly digital world.

As institutions continue embracing technology in teaching and learning, initiatives such as this are helping bridge digital gaps and create more inclusive learning environments for students across Zambia.

WHEN INTERNET ACCESS BECOMES A LEARNING LIFELINE: THE STORY OF MONZE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY



research, providing valuable insights that informed discussions with her tutor and supported patient care.

Beyond academics, reliable connectivity is also improving operational efficiency across the institution. Administrative departments are now able to process student registrations, examinations and financial transactions more effectively, reducing delays and improving service delivery.

The benefits extend to lecturers and researchers as well. Faculty members can collaborate with peers, participate in virtual engagements and access the latest scholarly publications, helping strengthen teaching, research and knowledge sharing.

As Zambia's education sector continues embracing digital transformation, institutions such as Monze College of Nursing and Midwifery demonstrate how reliable connectivity can unlock learning, strengthen research and improve educational outcomes.

Students at Monze College of Nursing and Midwifery are experiencing a new era of learning and research, thanks to high-speed internet connectivity provided through the Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN).

What was once a traditional library largely dependent on printed resources has

evolved into a connected learning environment where students can access online journals, research databases, digital learning materials and global academic resources in real time.

The impact is already being felt across the institution. Students are now able to conduct research more effectively, collaborate online and access current medical information that strengthens both classroom learning and clinical practice.

One recent example involved a nursing student who, during a clinical placement, encountered a medical condition that was not adequately covered in available textbooks. Using the campus internet connection, she accessed up-to-date international



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Beyond academics, reliable connectivity is also improving operational efficiency across the institution.

EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S TEACHERS: HOW MAMOCE IS LEVERAGING ZAMREN TO TRANSFORM LEARNING



At Malcolm Moffat College of Education (MAMOCE) in Serenje, digital connectivity is doing more than providing internet access, it is helping shape the next generation of teachers.

As a member of the Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN), the college continues to harness high-speed connectivity and digital services to enhance teaching, learning and research while creating new opportunities for students and staff.

Across the campus, reliable internet connectivity



now supports academic activities in classrooms, hostels, staff offices and workspaces. Students and lecturers can access online resources, collaborate virtually and engage with digital learning tools without the connectivity challenges that once limited their experience.

The college has also embraced several ZAMREN services, including



cloud solutions, domain registration and eduroam, which allows students and staff to connect securely to the internet at participating institutions across the ZAMREN network.

One of the most significant

transformations has been in teaching and learning. Through ZAMREN-hosted Moodle, MAMOCE has created a more flexible and interactive learning environment. Lecturers can share learning materials, conduct assessments and engage students online, while learners can access lessons, submit assignments and review course content wherever they are on campus.

The impact extends beyond the classroom.

Through ZAMREN's connection to the UbuntuNet Alliance, MAMOCE faculty and students are able to collaborate with researchers and institutions both within Zambia and beyond. These opportunities have strengthened participation in research initiatives, academic exchanges and virtual conferences, opening doors to knowledge and partnerships that were previously difficult to access.

The benefits are perhaps best reflected in the experiences of the college community. In 2024, the ICT team successfully extended internet connectivity to student hostels, making online learning more accessible outside lecture hours.

For student teacher Machila Bright, the change has been transformative.



“Reliable internet changed everything. I was able to complete my teaching practice portfolio through Moodle even while placed at a rural school,” he said.

The enhanced connectivity has also supported research activities. Researcher Sarah Muyoma Ndumwe was able to share findings at a regional UbuntuNet event using real-time digital collaboration tools, demonstrating how connectivity is helping bridge distances and expand academic engagement.

MAMOCE’s partnership with ZAMREN continues to strengthen its position as an innovative teacher training institution. By combining quality education with digital tools and connectivity, the college is creating an environment where future educators can learn, collaborate and thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Through ZAMREN, MAMOCE is not simply connected, it is preparing tomorrow’s teachers to lead, innovate and inspire in classrooms across Zambia.

MUKUBA UNIVERSITY’S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY



Reliable connectivity is helping transform teaching, learning and research at Mukuba University through services provided by the Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN)

With access to ZAMREN’s network, students, lecturers and researchers can seamlessly connect to online learning platforms, digital libraries and research resources that support academic success.

The university also benefits from **eduroam**, allowing staff and students to securely access the internet at participating institutions across Zambia and beyond using their university credentials.

Through ZAMREN’s connection to the UbuntuNet Alliance, Mukuba University researchers can collaborate

with peers across Africa and the world, opening new opportunities for knowledge sharing and innovation.

In addition, ZAMREN’s cloud-based services are helping the university advance its digital transformation agenda and embrace the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

As higher education becomes increasingly digital, reliable connectivity is helping Mukuba University create a learning environment where students and researchers can access knowledge, collaborate and innovate without barriers.

Through its partnership with ZAMREN, Mukuba University is building a stronger foundation for education, research and innovation in the digital age.



YOUNG INNOVATORS SHINE AT THE 2026 ZAMREN STUDENT HACKATHON



Now in its second year, the initiative has quickly become one of the highlights of ZAMREN Week, challenging students to think beyond the classroom and apply technology to issues affecting communities, institutions and industries.

This year's competition focused on two categories: Zambia Digital ID and AgriTech Solutions.

In the Zambia Digital ID category, ZCAS University emerged as the first-place winner, while Mulungushi University secured second place. ZCAS University also took top honours in the

Innovation, creativity and bold thinking were on full display at the 2026 ZAMREN Student Hackathon as university students developed technology-driven solutions aimed at addressing real-world challenges.

Held during the 2026 ZAMREN Week and AGM in Livingstone, the hackathon brought together some of the country's brightest young minds, creating a platform where students could transform ideas into

practical solutions with the potential to make a meaningful difference.



AgriTech Solutions category, with the University of Lusaka finishing in second place.

By providing students with opportunities to experiment, collaborate and innovate, the ZAMREN Student Hackathon continues to nurture a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in institutions of higher learning.



2026 ZAMREN AWARDS GALA DINNER PHOTO FOCUS



ZAMREN HONOURS OUTSTANDING MEMBER INSTITUTIONS



The 2026 ZAMREN Week and Annual General Meeting (AGM) concluded on a high note in May as delegates, partners and member institutions gathered in Livingstone for the Awards Gala Dinner, an evening dedicated to recognising excellence, reliability and commitment across the ZAMREN community.

Held at the Radisson Blu Hotel, the gala dinner was more than a celebration of achievements. It was a reflection of this year's theme, "Growing Together," highlighting the partnerships and collective efforts that continue to strengthen research, education and digital transformation in Zambia.

Guest of Honour, Ministry of Health Permanent Secretary – Administration, Mrs. Joma T. Simuyi, commended ZAMREN and its member institutions for their role in advancing connectivity, collaboration and digital

inclusion across the country.

One of the most anticipated moments of the evening was the presentation of the 2025 Most Reliable Member Institution Awards, which recognised institutions that consistently demonstrated commitment to the ZAMREN network and its shared vision of enabling knowledge.

The award recipients were:

- University of Zambia – Most Reliable Member Institution (Public Universities)
- University of Lusaka – Most Reliable Member Institution (Private Universities)
- Chipata College of Education – Most Reliable Member Institution (Public Colleges of Education)
- Evelyn Hone College – Most Reliable Member Institution (Public Colleges)

- Northern Technical College – Most Reliable Member Institution (Public Trades Training Institutes)
- Lusaka College of Nursing and Midwifery – Most Reliable Member Institution (Colleges of Nursing and Midwifery)
- Baobab College – Most Reliable Member Institution (Private Colleges)
- Chengelo School – Most Reliable Member Institution (Private Schools)
- Mpelembe Secondary School – Most Reliable Member Institution (Public Schools)
- Examinations Council of Zambia – Most Reliable Member Institution (Anchor Institutions and Communities of Practice)
- Zambia College of Agriculture-Mpika – Most Reliable Member Institution (Colleges of Agriculture)
- The evening's highest honour, the 2025 ZAMREN Member of the Year Award, was presented to Levy Mwanawasa Medical University, recognising the institution's exceptional commitment to the ZAMREN network.

BUILDING CYBER RESILIENCE THROUGH PCIO TRAINING



As cyber threats continue to evolve, building the skills needed to secure digital infrastructure has never been more important.

During the 2026 ZAMREN Week and AGM in Livingstone, participants from ZAMREN member institutions successfully completed the Practical Cybersecurity for Internet Operators (PCIO) training programme, an intensive

The training, sponsored and facilitated by the Network Startup Resource Center (NSRC), brought together ICT professionals from various institutions to develop practical competencies in securing networks, identifying vulnerabilities and responding to emerging cybersecurity challenges.

More than just a training programme, the PCIO course provided participants

with hands-on experience and real-world insights into protecting the digital environments that support teaching, learning, research and institutional operations.

The successful completion of the programme was marked by a certificate presentation ceremony during ZAMREN Week, celebrating the commitment of participants to enhancing cybersecurity capacity within their respective institutions. This training initiative also reflects the shared commitment of ZAMREN and NSRC to strengthening cyber resilience and empowering institutions with the skills needed to navigate an increasingly connected world.

By investing in people and skills, initiatives such as these are helping create safer and more secure digital environments for Zambia's research and education community.



course designed to strengthen cybersecurity knowledge and operational skills within the research and education community.



LIBRARIANS GAIN NEW SKILLS THROUGH REPOSITORY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME



opportunity to strengthen their capacity in managing digital collections and supporting open access to knowledge.

As a member of the UbuntuNet Alliance, the regional alliance of National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in Eastern and Southern Africa, ZAMREN continues to benefit from partnerships that support capacity building, knowledge sharing and digital transformation within the research and education community.

Beyond the technical skills gained, the programme created a platform for librarians to exchange experiences, share best practices and build professional networks with colleagues from other institutions. As institutions increasingly embrace digital scholarship, initiatives such as the Research Repository Stewardship Programme are helping ensure that librarians remain at the centre of managing and connecting knowledge in the digital age.

Behind every research paper, thesis and academic publication is a need for proper preservation, accessibility and visibility. Recognising this, librarians from ZAMREN member institutions gathered in Livingstone during the 2026 ZAMREN Week and AGM to participate in the Research Repository Stewardship Programme, a specialised training initiative sponsored

and facilitated by the UbuntuNet Alliance.

The programme brought together librarians from various institutions across Zambia, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge to better manage institutional research repositories and improve access to scholarly outputs.

As research institutions continue generating valuable knowledge, repositories are playing an increasingly important role in ensuring that research findings remain discoverable, accessible and impactful. The training therefore provided participants with an



TERNET BOARD BENCHMARKS WITH ZAMREN



The Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN) recently welcomed the Board of the Tanzania Research and Education Network (TERNET) to Zambia for a benchmarking visit aimed at strengthening collaboration and sharing experiences in the delivery of digital services for education and research.

Led by TERNET Board Chairperson, Professor William-Andey Anangisye, the delegation met with the ZAMREN Board, chaired by Professor Mundia Muya, to exchange insights on governance, operations and strategies that support the growth of National Research and Education Networks (NRENs).

The visit provided an opportunity for both organisations to learn from one another's experiences and explore practical ways of enhancing connectivity, expanding digital services and supporting the evolving

needs of universities, colleges and research institutions.

Discussions also focused on how emerging technologies can be leveraged to strengthen teaching, learning and research, while ensuring that institutions continue to benefit from reliable and affordable digital infrastructure.

As National Research and Education Networks, ZAMREN and TERNET play a vital role in connecting academic and research

communities to knowledge, collaboration opportunities and global resources. By sharing experiences and best practices, the two organisations are helping build stronger and more resilient research and education networks across the region.

The benchmarking visit reflects the growing importance of collaboration among African NRENs and reinforces a shared commitment to advancing digital transformation in education and research.



IN MEMORIAM: PROF. WELANI CHILENGWE



His professional journey was marked by a rare combination of academic excellence, public service and dedication to developing future generations of professionals. Whether in healthcare, higher education or institutional governance, Professor Chilengwe consistently championed excellence, integrity and lifelong learning.

Those who had the privilege of working with him remember a leader who was insightful, humble and deeply committed to the advancement of knowledge. His contributions extended beyond the institutions he served, leaving a lasting impact on students, colleagues and the wider education community.

The Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN) joins the education, research and healthcare communities in remembering the late Prof. Welani Chilengwe, Major (Retired), a distinguished scholar, medical practitioner and leader who passed away on 13th April 2026.

Prof. Chilengwe served with distinction as Vice

Chancellor of Cavendish University Zambia and as a valued member of the ZAMREN Board, where he served as Vice Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee. Throughout his service, he provided strategic guidance, thoughtful leadership and an unwavering commitment to strengthening research, education and innovation in Zambia.

As ZAMREN reflects on his life and legacy, we honour a man whose service helped shape institutions and inspire others to pursue knowledge in service of society.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

2026 ZAMREN AWARDS GALA DINNER PHOTO FOCUS



2026 ZAMREN AWARDS GALA DINNER PHOTO FOCUS



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