

Libraries integral entities to development - Ngoma

By Jabulani Moyo

EDUCATION deputy minister Patrick Ngoma says the government envisions libraries as integral entities in the process of national development.

During the opening of the Mumuni Library at Nabukuyu in Monze on Friday, Ngoma said the PF manifesto recognised the value libraries play in national development.

"We celebrate our cultural tradition while looking to a future where libraries play a central role in the community not only as preservers of those traditions but also as resource centres, information literacy hubs, digital commons and places of enrichment and enlightenment," he said.

"Zambia's social economic and intellectual development is dependent on the inclusion of all members of society. This new Mumuni Library will extend to this rural community the life-changing services to children and youth which we have already seen in Lusaka's Lubuto libraries."

Mumuni Library is the first rural public library for vulnerable children and youth created by Lubuto Library Partners, in collaboration with Matantala Rural Integrated Development Enterprise and the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education.

The indigenously-designed Mumuni Library buildings include a collection of over 4,000 books on a wide range of subjects that have been

carefully selected by expert librarians to meet the needs of its users.

Lubuto Library Partners founder and president Jane Meyers said beyond the pleasure of reading, the new library gave Nabukuyu's children a door to science, art, computers, language and social science that were the shared heritage of all humanity.

"Mumuni Library looks not only to the present but, also the future; a future in which the enriched minds and skilful hands of today's children contribute through the application of what they have learned to a brighter, richer future for Nabukuyu and tomorrow's children," she said.

And Iris Young, a representative from USAID Zambia, said the community wisely named the library "Mumuni" which in Tonga means knowledge or enlightenment.

"As children and young people read more, they will be enlightened by learning more about themselves and more about the world. Statistics show us that children who learn how to read will have many advantages in life," she said. "They become healthier adults. Young women who know how to read are able to earn higher incomes, and take better care of their families. In addition, when people learn to read, the whole community benefits since people become healthier and their income rises. The Mumuni Library is truly a wise investment."