

## **Denny H Kalyalya: Opening speech - World Savings Day and Financial Literacy Awards**

Opening speech by Dr Denny H Kalyalya, Governor of the Bank of Zambia, at the World Savings Day and Financial Literacy Awards, Lusaka, 31 October 2025.

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- Senior Government Officials
- Securities and Exchange Commission Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Phillip Chitalu
- Pensions and Insurance Authority Registrar, Mrs. Namakau Ntini
- Bankers Association of Zambia and Financial Literacy Working Group Chairperson, Ms. Lowani Chibesakunda
- Chief Executive Officers of Financial Services Providers
- Cooperating Partners
- Nominated Recipients of the Financial Literacy Awards
- Invited Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

It is an honour for me to speak to you on this occasion of the commemoration of the 2025 World Savings Day. As per established practice, we will also use this occasion to present Financial Literacy Awards to deserving institutions.

From the outset, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the organizers and various stakeholders for their continued partnership and support in commemorating World Savings Day.

The theme for this year's World Savings Day is: "It's more than just your savings, it's your life." The theme underscores an important message that saving is not merely about setting money aside by postponing current expenditure. The habit of saving in fact enables individuals to create pathways for them to invest and build a portfolio of financial and non-financial assets that support living fulfilled lives. Savings and investments play a critical role in enabling individuals to manage emergencies, plan for education and healthcare, and secure financial stability after retirement. A culture of saving and prudent investment empowers individuals to enhance their productive capacity, supports inclusive economic progress, and contributes to achievement of broader objectives of national development.

Therefore, it is important for financial service providers to design and develop appropriate savings and investment products that are of practical use to people as they seek to build financial resilience in their lives.

Ladies and Gentlemen

While we acknowledge the commendable efforts financial sector supervisory authorities and financial service providers have made in promoting financial literacy and consumer protection across the country, reports of citizens falling victim to fraudulent schemes are

of great concern. Recently, several individuals lost their hard-earned savings to promoters of an online money circulation scheme, thereby jeopardizing their financial well-being. This development is deeply troubling.

In this regard, the Bank of Zambia and other financial supervisory authorities are working closely with law enforcement agencies to curb these illegal activities.

We believe that the most effective way to end such schemes is for individuals to be financially smart and stop participating in them altogether. We all need to accept and appreciate that it generally takes time and consistent diligent effort to accumulate legitimate wealth. If some entity is promising to give you a return on investment that is too good to be true, that investment scheme is more likely to be fraudulent.

We urge that we should all take it as our personal and primary responsibility to protect ourselves from scammers and other unlicensed financial service providers. Let us not be quick to place our money into schemes whose licensing status we do not know. Much in the same way that at night we do not sleep with our windows and doors open, in the same way we should not expose ourselves to financial fraud. Financial sector supervisory authorities, the world over, do not have capacity to protect people who choose to engage with unlicensed financial service providers. These entities tend to operate on the fringes. Usually, by the time a supervisory authority comes to know about them, a lot of people will have already lost their money.

Distinguished Guests

In addition to money circulation schemes, it recently came to our attention that some unlicensed online credit providers were engaged in predatory lending practices involving unfair, deceptive, or fraudulent loan practices that take advantage of borrowers by enticing them into obtaining unaffordable online loans. While the Bank of Zambia is working with other relevant competent authorities to bring the online unlicensed credit providers to account, members of the public are advised against engaging with any financial service provider that is not licensed. Consumers that engage with such entities expose themselves to avoidable financial and other risks because the consumer protection recourse mechanisms provided under the Banking and Financial Services Act are not available to them in the event of disputes. We therefore urge members of the public to exercise due diligence and verify the licensing status of financial service providers prior to engaging in any transactions with them, and to report suspicious entities to the authorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As we commemorate the 2025 World Savings Day, we also have an opportunity to reflect on the remarkable progress Zambia has made in developing its financial sector, promoting stability, enhancing financial education, and expanding financial inclusion.

According to the FinScope 2020 Survey, financial inclusion increased to 69.4 percent from 59.3 percent in 2015. This progress was attributed to the successful implementation of initiatives under the National Strategy on Financial Education, the Rural Finance Policy and Strategy, and the National Financial Inclusion Strategy, particularly in Digital Financial Services (DFS).

Currently, the Bank of Zambia, in collaboration with the Zambia Statistics Agency and other financial sector regulators, is conducting the 2025 FinScope Survey to assess progress toward the targets set in the National Financial Inclusion Strategy II (2024–2028). Release of the FinScope Survey 2025 top-line findings report is scheduled for the end of the year.

The FinScope survey findings will further support the Government, regulators, and service providers in identifying gaps, and developing targeted interventions for improving access to quality and affordable financial services, foster participation in economic activities, help address poverty, and improve the well-being of Zambians.

Distinguished Guests

I wish to commend the Pensions and Insurance Authority, the Insurance Association of Zambia, and the insurance companies for successfully commemorating Pensions Week and Insurers Week. I also extend tribute to the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Capital Markets Association of Zambia for organizing the World Investor Week.

Over the years the messages and activities from these events have contributed significantly to raising financial literacy and promoting the uptake of various insurance and investment products across the country.

Going forward, let us continue to explore more effective ways of communicating our messages to achieve a financially astute public.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I conclude my remarks, allow me to take this opportunity to recognize and appreciate the contributions of individuals and institutions that have advanced financial literacy in Zambia. In this connection, we will shortly be presenting Financial Literacy Awards to outstanding recipients for their dedication to promoting financial education in various categories.

I am delighted to join you in celebrating these achievements. I extend my warm congratulations to all nominees and award recipients.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND GOD BLESS!