

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**  
ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FARMER INPUT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN 2018/2019  
FARMING SEASON  
BY THE HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MR KATAMBO

Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me this opportunity to deliver a ministerial statement on the implementation of the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) in 2018/2019 Farming Season. This statement has been necessitated by the need to inform the House and the nation at large on the state of the implementation of FISP for the 2018/2019 Farming Season.

Mr Speaker, on 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture held a meeting with various stakeholders to review the performance of FISP Electronic Voucher System (e-Voucher System) during the 2017/2018 Farming Season. The stakeholders that participated were as follows:

- (a) Ministry of Agriculture;
- (b) Smart Zambia Institute (SZI);
- (c) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO);
- (d) Agro-Dealers Representatives;
- (e) National Input Suppliers;
- (f) Mayfair Insurance;
- (g) Musika Zambia;
- (h) Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI);
- (i) Banks and Financial Institutions; and
- (j) Farmer Organisation Representatives.

Mr Speaker, during the stakeholders' consultation meeting, challenges faced during the 2017/2018 Farming Season under FISP e-Voucher System implementation were highlighted as follows:

- (a) Network limitations in some districts;
- (b) Competence limitations in the usage of ICT by agro-dealers and members of staff;
- (c) Farmers losing their cards or pin numbers;
- (d) Delays in card production distribution and loading by service providers;
- (e) Complications in deposit capture due to lack of physical presence by some contracted banks in some districts;
- (f) Challenges faced by some agro-dealers in accessing sufficient inputs from national suppliers;
- (g) Delays by farmers in making their K400 contribution;
- (h) The code system under the Zambia Integrated Agriculture Management Information System (ZAMIS) proved a challenge with some agro-dealers and farmers;
- (i) There were also reports of bias and abuse by some ministry staff in their dealings with agro-dealers; and
- (j) Delays in release of the Government contribution from the Treasury.

Mr Speaker, despite the above challenges, FISP e-Voucher System has the following advantages:

- (a) Improved targeting of beneficiaries, thereby reducing on ghost farmers;