

SAFE STRIDES INITIATIVES PROFILE



Safe
Strides
Initiatives
Empower. Prevent. Thrive.

2025

OVERVIEW

Safe Strides Initiatives (SSI) confronts Zambia's twin crises of substance abuse and road fatalities devastating its youth. Through evidence-driven programs, we EMPOWER adolescents and youths (10-35 years) with life-saving education and peer leadership, PREVENT tragedies via community mobilization and policy advocacy, and foster environments where youth THRIVE. With substance abuse fueling 60%+ road accidents and costing Zambia 4.7% of GDP annually, SSI's urgent mission aligns with national health goals and Vision 2030. Partner with us to build a legacy of resilient, safer communities, where every young Zambian walks a path free from addiction and danger.

JULY 20, 2025

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF STORY ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Founded in October 2024, Safe Strides Initiatives (SSI) is a youth-focused NGO committed to reducing substance abuse and road traffic accidents among Zambia's adolescents and young people. Born out of an evidence-based needs assessment, SSI targets the root causes of these challenges: peer pressure, unemployment, weak enforcement, and limited youth-friendly services, through a holistic, community-driven approach. By combining education, advocacy, peer-to-peer engagement, research and strategic partnerships, SSI empowers young people to make safer choices and fosters a culture of health and responsibility. With bold vision and grassroots action, SSI is paving the way for a safer, healthier future for Zambia's next generation.

VISION

TO SEE A GENERATION OF EMPOWERED ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH WHO THRIVE IN SAFE ENVIRONMENTS, FREE FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ROAD ACCIDENTS, MAKING POSITIVE CHOICES THAT SHAPE THEIR FUTURE AND CONTRIBUTE TO STRONGER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES.

MISSION

01 Education

Our mission begins with empowering communities through focused education, providing youth and stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed, healthy, and safe choices.

02 Research

We are committed to conducting and applying rigorous research to understand the root causes of substance abuse and road safety challenges, ensuring our interventions are data-driven and responsive to real needs.

03 Advocacy

SSI advocates for stronger policies and systems that protect Zambia's youth, working with stakeholders to push for evidence-based reforms and inclusive national strategies.

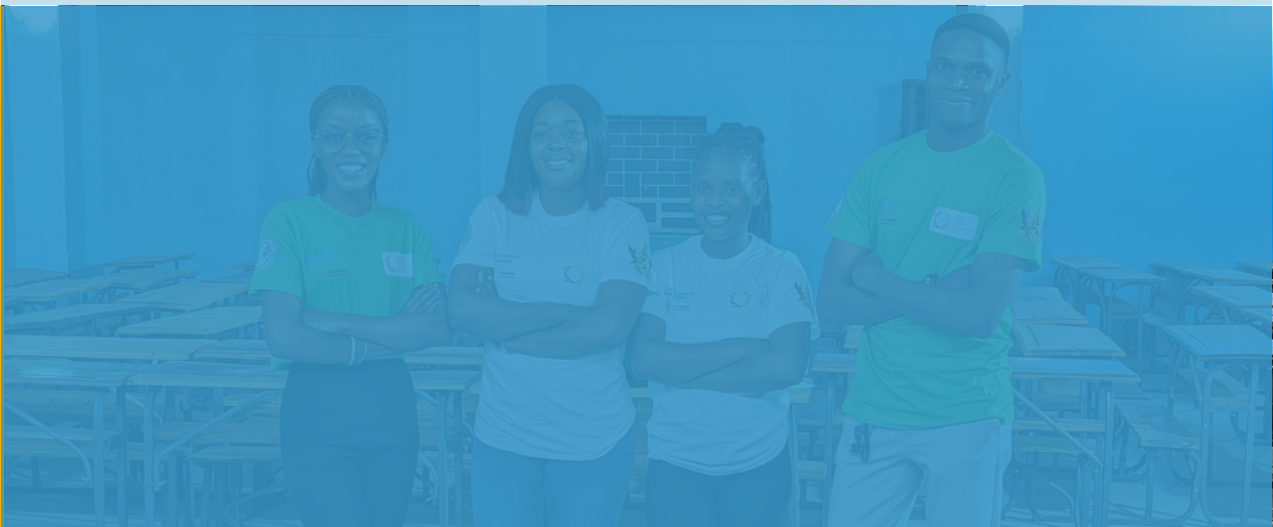
04 Community Action

Through innovative and locally grounded programs, we engage communities directly, ensuring that solutions are sustainable, culturally relevant, and driven by those they aim to serve.



MAJOR FACTORS

These four key enablers drive the success, sustainability, and scale of Safe Strides Initiatives' work across Zambia:



01 INFRASTRUCTURE

SSI leverages school systems, community centers, and local institutions as platforms for program delivery. Our grassroots network allows us to engage youth directly in their environments: schools, compounds, and peer spaces, amplifying access and effectiveness.

02 TALENT

Our team includes youth development experts, community mobilizers, education specialists, and advocacy professionals with lived experience in the issues we tackle. We also invest in peer educator capacity, building a pipeline of trained youth leaders from within communities.

03 OPERATIONAL METHODS

We implement structured, field-tested Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for planning, community outreach, M&E, and stakeholder engagement. Our adaptable model ensures clarity, consistency, and accountability across all activities.

04 RESOURCE ALLOCATION

SSI operates through lean, high-impact budgeting. Resources are strategically allocated to maximize program outcomes, prioritizing awareness campaigns, school-based interventions, and partnerships. Funding from Lusaka City Council and future donors supports expansion.

PROBLEM



A BRIEF STORY ABOUT THE PROBLEM

Zambia faces a youth health emergency. In 2022, 217 children died and over 500 were injured in road crashes, many linked to drug and alcohol use. Over 60% of road crashes involve substance abuse. Youth are at the epicenter, costing Zambia ZMW 16.7 billion annually. But behind the data lies a deeper cost—the loss of dreams, leadership, and national potential.

SOCIETY

Substance abuse and road crashes are destabilizing families and communities. Youth drop out of school, face unemployment, and become trapped in cycles of poverty and violence.

ENVIRONMENT

Poor road infrastructure, inadequate drainage, and lack of safe public spaces contribute to unsafe mobility and rising health risks—especially for youth in densely populated areas.

ECOSYSTEM

Weak enforcement, poor coordination among sectors, and a lack of youth-centered services have left critical gaps. The system is failing to protect the very generation it depends on.



SOLUTION



A BRIEF STORY ABOUT THE SOLUTION

Safe Strides Initiatives empowers youth through a holistic approach that combines education, peer leadership, and community engagement. We focus on prevention, not just response; addressing the root causes of substance abuse and unsafe mobility. By working with schools, communities, and national partners, we create youth-led solutions that are practical, scalable, and sustainable.



INTEGRATED PREVENTION APPROACH

SSI combines education, awareness, and peer-led outreach to tackle substance abuse and road safety simultaneously. Our programs are age-appropriate, community-driven, and culturally relevant, helping youth make informed, healthy decisions.



STRATEGIC MULTI- SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

We work closely with ministries, schools, NGOs, and local leaders to align policies, share resources, and strengthen systems. These partnerships bridge the gap between government services and community needs, ensuring coordinated support for youth.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

By training peer educators and involving young people in solution design, SSI turns youth from passive victims into active changemakers. Our approach builds leadership, accountability, and resilience from within the communities we serve.

STRENGTHS

- STRONG GRASSROOTS PRESENCE AND COMMUNITY TRUST
- YOUTH-CENTERED, PEER-LED ENGAGEMENT MODEL
- EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING ALIGNED WITH VISION 2030
- STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH MINISTRIES, SCHOOLS, AND LOCAL ACTORS
- HOLISTIC APPROACH: COMBINES SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION, ROAD SAFETY, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

WEAKNESSES

- LIMITED FUNDING STREAMS AND RELIANCE ON EARLY GRANTS
- NEW ORGANIZATION STILL BUILDING BRAND RECOGNITION
- ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS AND STAFFING STILL UNDER DEVELOPMENT
- LIMITED DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ONLINE OUTREACH AND MONITORING
- SHORT-TERM PROJECT TIMELINES MAY AFFECT LONG-TERM IMPACT

OPPORTUNITIES

- NATIONAL ALIGNMENT WITH YOUTH HEALTH AND SAFETY PRIORITIES
- GROWING INTEREST IN CLIMATE-SAFE MOBILITY AND COMMUNITY-LED ADVOCACY
- HIGH DEMAND FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS
- EXPANSION THROUGH DIGITAL TOOLS AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS
- DONOR INTEREST IN MULTI-SECTORAL, YOUTH-LED SOLUTIONS

THREATS

- ECONOMIC INSTABILITY AFFECTING DONOR AND PARTNER FUNDING
- RISING RATES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ROAD-RELATED FATALITIES
- GAPS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND WEAK POLICY IMPLEMENTATION
- STAKEHOLDER FATIGUE IF IMPACT ISN'T CONSISTENTLY COMMUNICATED
- COMPETITION FOR LIMITED RESOURCES AMONG NGOS

4P'S OF IMPACT STRATEGY

PROGRAMS

- Youth-focused
- Peer-led education
- Climate-resilient mobility campaigns
- Substance abuse and road safety interventions
- Monitoring and evaluation integrated

PEOPLE

- Adolescents and youth (ages 10–35)
- Peer educators and school leaders
- Teachers and mentors
- Parents and guardians
- Community volunteers

PARTNERSHIPS

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Transport and Logistics
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA)
- Zambia Police, Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC)
- UN agencies (e.g., UNDP)
- Schools and community organizations
- Private sector collaborators

PROMOTION

- Social media outreach (e.g., Facebook)
- School and community awareness campaigns
- Youth-led storytelling and testimonies
- Stakeholder updates and advocacy briefs
- Community engagement forums



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A BRIEF STORY ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

Safe Strides Initiatives (SSI) delivers a range of youth-centered programs designed to prevent substance abuse, promote road safety, and support climate-conscious mobility. Each program is carefully crafted to meet the real-life challenges faced by Zambia's adolescents and youth, ensuring relevance, impact, and sustainability.

Our services are grounded in research, led by youth, and tailored for schools, communities, and institutions. By integrating education, advocacy, and peer leadership, we create solutions that save lives and build safer communities.

Our Core Programs Include:

- Substance Abuse Prevention Education
- Road Safety Awareness and Community Mobilization
- Climate-Safe Mobility Campaigns (e.g., Green Pathways)
- Peer Educator Training and Youth Leadership Development
- School-Based Campaigns and Clubs
- Community Dialogues and Stakeholder Forums
- Monitoring, Research, and Impact Evaluation



PROGRAM PORTFOLIO

A BRIEF STORY ABOUT THE PORTFOLIO

Safe Strides Initiatives offers a growing portfolio of programs that empower Zambia's youth to live safer, healthier, and more purposeful lives. Our interventions are rooted in education, peer engagement, community mobilization, and advocacy and they respond directly to the pressing issues of substance abuse, road traffic injuries, and environmental safety.

Each program is designed to be scalable, inclusive, and measurable, ensuring a strong return on social impact.



STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS

July 3, 2025: Stakeholder Consultative Meeting
Green Pathways: A Youth-Led Climate Action Campaign
Venue: Kamwala Secondary School, Lusaka

Safe Strides Initiatives hosted a stakeholder meeting to launch the Green Pathways campaign, addressing climate resilience, sustainable transport, and youth-led action. Stakeholders included the Ministry of Green Economy, RTSA, UNDP, MoH, Lusaka City Council, and schools.

The initiative integrates road safety and climate response through youth leadership, with support from Lusaka City Council.



DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



2024

Research and Planning

- Safe Strides Initiatives officially founded in October
- Conducted youth vulnerability and community needs assessment
- Identified core focus areas: substance abuse, road safety, and youth empowerment
- Designed strategic plan and formed initial stakeholder links

2025

Launch and Pilot Implementation

- Rolled out flagship programs in Lusaka communities and schools
- Held Green Pathways Stakeholder Consultative Meeting (Kamwala Secondary School, July)
- Trained first cohort of Peer Educators
- Formed school-based clubs for climate, health, and road safety
- Partnership initiated with Lusaka City Council for program delivery

2026

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Expand programs to peri-urban schools and underserved communities
- Launch national digital campaign on youth safety and wellness
- Host first Youth & Policy Dialogue Forum
- Begin integrating menstrual hygiene and mental health education
- Strengthen M&E systems for data-driven decisions

2027

Planning a New Variety of Product

- Scale Green Pathways to additional provinces
- Launch the Safe Strides Youth Innovation Lab
- Host Zambia's first Youth Safety & Wellness Summit
- Establish internal Research and Data Unit
- Pursue SADC-level registration for regional partnerships

EXPECTED OUTCOMES



- Increased awareness of substance abuse and road risks
- Youth making safer, informed life choices
- Stronger cross-sector community engagement
- Policy reforms and system strengthening
- A sustainable national youth safety movement

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Partnership Building

Ongoing collaboration
with government and
private sector

Community Ownership

Engagement from
planning to
implementation

Diversified Funding Streams

Pursuing grants,
donations, and
partnerships to ensure
financial stability and
long-term impact.

Capacity Building

Continuous training
for staff and youth
leaders



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

SSI collaborates with:

- **Ministry of Health**
- **Ministry of Transport and Logistics**
- **Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA)**
- **Zambia Police Service**
- **UNDP Zambia**
- **Schools & youth organizations**

We are open to new partnerships that align with our vision and Zambia's development priorities.

CALL TO ACTION

Be part of Zambia's youth safety movement.
Join Safe Strides Initiatives in saving lives,
shaping futures, and building a resilient
nation.



Plot Number 398/07, Desai Township, Lusaka.



+260-978-797931



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