

# SOCIAL PROTECTION AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ZAMBIA



May, 2008

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR)  
"Promoting Faith and Justice"



**Save the Children**  
Sweden

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May, 2008

JESUIT CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

This study was commissioned by the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection in Lusaka with the financial assistance of Save the Children Sweden. The views expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the Director or staff of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection. Nor do they reflect the views of Save the Children Sweden.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although Denis Wood prepared this report, there are a number of institutions and individuals that helped guide the process and contributed to the content of this report. The author profited from the collaboration and discussion with officials from the following government institutions: Ministry of Finance and National Planning; the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services; the Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development; the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. In addition to the above institutions, the report benefited from the valuable comments and guidance of Simson Mwale, Chris Petrauskis and Muweme Muweme of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR). The report also benefited from discussions with Charlotte Harland and Ngosa Lesa of United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) who provided a useful insight into issues pertaining to social protection and child protection in Zambia. Staff from the World Food Programme (WFP) also provided a useful insight into the various aspects of the School Feeding Programme in Zambia.

In addition to the above institutions and individuals, the author would like to express his gratitude to Petronella Mayeya, Country Manager for Save the Children Sweden in Zambia and Francina Mhundwa, Regional Programme Officer for Save the Children Sweden, based in South Africa, for overseeing this work and for providing invaluable editorial assistance and support during the discussion of the final draft report.

Finally, a special thank you to all the teachers and staff of the various schools visited; the doctors and nursing staff at all the hospitals and clinics visited; and to all the parents and pupils who took time off to share their thoughts, suggestions and ideas on social protection and children's rights during this assignment. Without their support and invaluable input, this report would not have been possible.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EFA	Education For All
FBE	Free Basic Education
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan
GDP	Gross National Product
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
JCTR	Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
LASAF	Local Authorities Superannuation Fund
MACO	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
MFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
NAPSA	National Pension Scheme Authority
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PTA	Parent-Teachers Association
PWAS	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SFPs	School Feeding Programmes
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

# SUMMARY REPORT

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Introduction

Social protection and the issue of children's rights have been on the development agenda for over three decades. In the late 1980s and early 1990s social protection emerged as a critical response to the "social safety nets" discourse. More recently however, slow progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals has rekindled interest in social transfers as a means of reducing poverty and as a strategy for accelerating progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

There are a number of global, regional and national initiatives that have dramatically influenced the nature, scope and direction of social protection and the rights of the child in the health and education sectors in Zambia. At the international level, the World Bank is considering the scaling up of its support to social transfers as a key policy response to inequities in health and education for the poorest and socially excluded groups. At the continental and regional level, the Commission for Africa has called for a major scaling up of social assistance to vulnerable children. Within the United Nations organizations, bodies like the World Health Organization have launched a Commission on Social Determinants of Health that will review the potential of social transfer programmes to improve health. Similarly, the United Nations Children's Educational Fund is promoting the development of a rights-based approach to social protection, education and health.

At the national level, the development of a policy framework for social protection has boosted the prospects of reducing extreme poverty in incapacitated households. In addition, the incorporation of the social protection policy as a chapter in the Fifth National Development Plan has boosted the prospects of enhancing access to health and education facilities for vulnerable children. Overall, there has been an emerging consensus around the view that social protection can be an effective response to persistent poverty, vulnerability and policy shocks. The proliferation of social protection interventions in the agriculture, health and education sectors in Zambia attests to this emerging consensus.



## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

This thematic study on *Social Protection and Children's Rights in Zambia* makes an assessment of social protection interventions in five districts of Zambia, namely Petauke district in the Eastern Province, Chongwe, Lusaka, and Kafue districts in the Lusaka Province, Siavonga district in Southern Province and Mongu districts in the Western Provinces of Zambia. Drawing on the contributions of researchers, practitioners, policy-makers and beneficiaries in these areas, the study explores the dynamics and effectiveness of five social protection interventions that promote the accessibility of vulnerable children to education and health services.

A key component of the assessment is to identify best practices in the implementation strategies of these initiatives and to determine the gaps in the coverage of social protection initiatives in the targeted areas. The lessons learned from the implementation of these initiatives will determine the degree to which these social protection initiatives promote and protect the fundamental rights of children to education and health. A second component of this assessment is to recommend a *rights-based social protection initiative that guarantees access to health and education services to poor and vulnerable children in Zambia*. This paper builds on the findings of several JCTR thematic studies on education and health including the most recent study entitled *"Investing Directly in the Poor: A demand for Social Protection in Zambia"* (Petrauskis: 2006).

## **2.0 Situation Analysis of the Study Area**

### **2.1 General Characteristics of the Study Area**

Before making an assessment of the various social protection interventions that promote the accessibility of vulnerable children to education and health services, it is important that a brief summary of the location and the general characteristics of the study area be given.

#### ***Location and Size of the Study Area***

The area selected for the in-depth assessment of Social Protection and Children's Rights in Zambia is vast. It consists of seven administrative districts in four provinces, namely Petauke district in the Eastern Province, Kafue, Lusaka and Chongwe districts in Lusaka Province, Siavonga district in the Southern Province and Mongu and Shang'ombo districts in the Western Province. The total landmass of the study area is 56,635 square kilometers representing some 7.52 percent of Zambia's total landmass.

#### ***Selection Criteria used for Assessment of the Study Area***

The selection criteria used to make an in-depth assessment of the above study area included vulnerability and risk to adverse agro-ecological and climatic conditions such as drought and flooding; the effects of tradition and cultural beliefs on children's education; and the impact of rural and urban poverty on access to health and education facilities.

#### ***Key Demographic Indicators and trends in the Study Area***

Key demographic indicators and trends show that the study area had a *de jure* population of 1,899,146 persons (CSO: 2004). This population is growing at an average of 2.5 percent per annum. The highest population growth rate in the study area is in the Shang'ombo district in the Western Province with an average growth rate of 4.1 percent. This is followed by Chongwe district in the Lusaka Province with an average population growth rate of 3.7 percent per annum. Mongu district in the Western Province has an annual growth rate of 0.8 percent and this is the lowest population growth rate in the study area.

Over the past decade, a volatile mix of recurrent drought, intermittent

floods, poor economic performance, weak agricultural policies and weak governance policies have increased the risks and vulnerability of the rural and urban poor in the study area. In addition to drought and lost productivity, the HIV and AIDS pandemic has reduced the resilience of the poor and vulnerable groups to deal with the current food security shocks. The impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic has also changed family structures with an increasing number of elderly and child-headed households taking responsibility for vulnerable children. In many households, care and coping capacities are stretched to the limit given the unprecedented increase in the number of vulnerable children. There are a total of 191,785 vulnerable children in the study area. As parents fall sick with HIV, primary coping measures involve withdrawing some of the vulnerable children from school so as to save on fees, uniforms and books. Many of the vulnerable children withdrawn from school are left to help care for sick family members by taking up adult tasks that include income generation activities.

## **2.2 Key Factors Affecting Access to Education and Health in the Study Area**

### ***Factors affecting access to Education***

According to the Ministry of Education, access to education refers to the extent to which education is being assessed by the eligible population at a given education entrance level. Although enrolment figures in the study area are rapidly approaching the school age population figures there are a number of factors that prevent extremely poor and vulnerable children from enrolling and staying in school. Discussions with parents, school children, teachers and policymakers in the Ministry of Education suggest that the most common factors affecting access to education at the micro-level include the following:

- Cultural practices, rites of passage and social factors
- Economic hardships
- Ill-health and injury
- Environmental shocks caused by drought, floods or too much rain;
- The collapse of primary and secondary markets for produce;
- The break down of law and order; and
- Increasing levels of violence and vandalism in low-income settlements.

Interestingly, there was no mention of hunger as a factor affecting access to education. This may have been due to the timing of the study, which was carried out towards the end of the harvesting period. Each of the major factors affecting access and participation in education are summarized below.

### ***Cultural practices, rites of passage and social factors***

In the rural districts of Chongwe, Siavonga, Shang'ombo and Mongu, a complex set of traditional practices that mark adolescence and the rites of passage of boys and girls often affect enrollment and their stay in schools. A member of staff at Twatasha primary school in Chongwe district sums up the sentiments of many concerned teachers and schoolgirls in rural districts.

*"One of the most complex sets of factors affecting girls' enrollment and their stay in school are the numerous traditional beliefs and practices that mark the rites of passage of the girl child. Between Grade 1 and 5, the enrollment of the girl child is not a major issue. But once the girl child reaches Grade 6 and 7, the level of enrollment and the stay in school becomes problematic. We had a case here at Twatasha community school where a very brilliant girl suddenly stopped coming to school. At first we thought that she was sick but when she was absent from school for over three weeks, the school decided to follow her up. We found that the girl had come off-age and traditional ceremonies regarding the rites of passage had taken place. When we requested that the child return to school after the rites of passage, we noticed that the parents were reluctant to send her back to school. On further investigation, we discovered that the girl's uncle had arranged that she get married. Worse still, he had not only arranged that his niece get married, but that he had received the lobola (the bride price) from a prospective husband. Had we not threatened the parents and her uncle that we would report them to the police Victim Support Unit in Chongwe for marrying off an under-age child against her will, the young girl would not have come back to school".*

The above experience suggests that some parents and guardians inadvertently take advantage of their cultural practices and beliefs and prevent boys and particularly girls from enjoying the rights and freedoms associated with Education For All.

In the Shang'ombo and Mongu districts where female autonomy is considered risky to cultural and traditional norms, early marriage is often used as a means of securing a girl child's future. A young widow from Nanoko village in Mongu district explains.

"Given the current economic problems, it is not uncommon for poor families to endorse the early marriage of their 11 to 15 year old girl

children so as to lighten the family's economic burden. There are many parents that do this in Limulunga. In these circumstances, early marriage often becomes a reason to leave school. This situation is made worse by the behaviour of some the traditional leaders in the Western Province who are literary "given" these girl children as wives at a give away lobola. Although parents feel privileged to have their children "helping" out in the "lapa" (the traditional leader's palace), both the parents and the traditional leaders are robbing these girls of their rights to education"

The above cultural norms are not the only factors that prevent poor and vulnerable children from enrolling and staying in school. One of the other key factors for children not attending school is that their families need them to help out with income generating activities. A member of staff of Twatasha community school in Chongwe district explains that the issue of economic survival is a major impediment to increased school attendance and to the retention of children in most rural schools. This is how she explained the predicament of some of her school going children in Chongwe district.

*"One of the commonest reasons for children not attending school in farming areas like Chongwe is that their families need them to work at home. The months of October and November are particularly difficult months for children to keep up their attendance at school. This is because both boy and girl children are required to work in the fields so as to prepare the fields for the coming season's cropping programme. In addition to October and November, the months of February and March are difficult months as this is the time for weeding the family crop. Depending on the level of weed infestation, children may be absent for 2 to 3 days in a week. This affects the attendance of Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 children. June and July is the start of the harvest and this can be a trying time for us. Attendance can be affected especially if the harvest is good".*

The interviewee explained that overall, the work participation rates of children in rural areas not only affects their attendance at school but also affects their ability to apply themselves while at school. This effectively means that achievement ratios are affected as the quality of the school experience is greatly undermined by the trade-offs between work participation and school attendance.

Another factor that affects the enrollment and participation ratios of school children is the issue of un-paid domestic work. In most homesteads in Chongwe, Kafue, Siavonga and Mongu, domestic work such as preparing and cooking food, cleaning the house, fetching water and firewood as well as looking after siblings is often carried out by the girl child. Boys, on the other hand, are mainly involved in working on the

family farm, looking after livestock and engaging in other income-earning activities. A member of staff on the field data collection exercise at the Ministry of Education elaborates.

"Recently we were on a data collection exercise in Mazabuka district and noted that in all the schools visited, the attendance ratios of boys were surprisingly low. After a careful analysis of the data, we rechecked our figures and had to go back into the field to determine this discrepancy in the data. We discovered that many of the boys had been assigned to herd cattle on behalf of the hired hands that were busy harvesting their fields".

From the above examples, it was clear that the households determine the way in which children spend their time at school. Social and cultural frameworks of each society in turn, set the broad parameters for household behaviour.

### ***Economic Hardships***

In addition to cultural and social factors, many parents, teachers and school children cited the issue of economic hardship as a major factor preventing extremely poor and vulnerable boys and girls from enrolling and staying in school. A young widow with four school going children explains her economic plight.

*"Life is hard in Zambia. When my husband died the world came to a complete standstill for my four children and me. He was the breadwinner and we looked to him for our day-to-day requirements. This included paying for our children's school needs. After my husband died, I had no choice but to withdraw the children from school. I couldn't manage on my own. I had to send two of my children to my mother in the village to help me look after them. I now have a small source of income from buying and selling foodstuff like kapenta, bananas, oranges and Irish potatoes that I order from Lusaka and sell here on the market. Although my children are all in government schools where education is supposed to be free, I still have to find money to pay for school uniforms, shoes, school bags, pens and pencils and school books. I also have to find money to pay the K20,000 per term to the PTA".*

The young widow mentioned above who we shall call Ma Kabuku (not her real name) is only one example of the millions of Zambians facing economic hardships in Zambia. Despite the Free Basic Education policy, widows like Ma Kabuku claim that they have to pay up to K120,000 per child per term to cover the costs of school uniforms, school bags, shoes, PTA fees and other incidentals. With four children at school, Ma Kabuku

has to find some K480,000 per term to see her children through school.

In a focus group discussion in Lusaka's Misisi compound, one of the girls in a group of five girls attending school at St. Lawrence community school pointed out that:

*"When my father lost his job at a factory in Kitwe, we started to experience a lot of hardships. We did not have enough money for food. We also did not have enough money for uniforms, school shoes and to pay the PTA (Parents' and Teacher' Association). Because my father could not find another job, my mother suggested that I should be sent to her brother here in Lusaka. I found a transfer and was sent to my uncle in Lusaka. Unfortunately, my uncle does "piece-work" and could not pay for my fees at a private school. Because he is a strong church member at the Kabwata Catholic Parish, he was able to speak to the parish priest and to arrange a transfer for me to go to St. Lawrence community school where he does not have to pay any school fees".*

### **III-health and injury**

Ill-health and injury, particularly of the household's main income earner, is another factor that prevents extremely poor and vulnerable boys and girls from enrolling and staying in school. In some of the health-care centers visited in the study area, the disease burden from malaria, fever, non-pneumonia respiratory infections, diarrhoea, skin infections and ear, nose and throat infections are some of the leading causes of morbidity. Among school-going children, malaria, upper respiratory diseases (chest infections) and diarrhea are reported to be the major reasons for absenteeism from school. A more serious problem is the prevalence of a chronic illness like tuberculosis or a terminal illness like HIV and AIDS. A respondent from Mushuwa village in Mongu district discusses the strain of HIV and AIDS on the household's financial and human capital and its effects on enrolment and participation of his children in school.

*"About five years ago, my wife became sick. She was always complaining of high fever, malaria and headaches. Each time we went to the clinic she was treated for malaria. After some time she was too sick. She was very weak and could not work in the cassava fields. She could not look after the children, as her condition was very bad. So attendance (school children) was poor. Eventually my wife passed away. About a year later, I also fell very sick. I had continuous headaches, high fever and was treated for malaria but I was not getting better. Eventually I started having bouts of diarrhea and vomiting. I was too weak to look after my two children. I had to send them to my father who is still looking after them. I did not know that I was suffering from HIV and AIDS. One day, a relative from Lusaka was visiting the village and found me in a very bad state. I was almost dead. My relative took me to Lusaka where I was told that I had AIDS. I was devastated to hear the news. I stayed with my relative for three months while getting treatment. I am now feeling much better. I have been on treatment for almost one year now. During my*

*illness I had no money to feed my children. I also had no money to send them to school so they could not participate in school. My children are still with my father. He sends them to school. Once I start working, I will bring my children back home and look after them".*

The respondent's experience clearly shows that ill-health is a major factor that prevents extremely poor and vulnerable children from enrolling and participating in school. Parents, teachers and pupils alike suffer from various forms of ailments. The likelihood that the illness and injury of a parent will deteriorate into a longer-term impairment or death increases the chances of children not enrolling or participating in school.

### ***Environmental Shocks***

Sudden and unpredictable shocks arising from natural disasters and natural hazards can have huge consequences on school enrollment and participation. Mr. Nalumino from a village in Shan'gombo, on the west bank of the Zambezi River shared his story with us.

For Mr. Imbuwa Nalumino (not his real name) the drought of the 2002/2003 season was an unprecedented shock to his farming business. Mr. Nalumino grows maize, millet and pumpkins and often sells his surplus produce to teachers at a nearby school. In the 2002/2003 season, the rains stopped when his maize was 30 centimeters high. A three week dry spell made him a destitute from one day to the next.

There are a number of underlying vulnerability factors that have left Mr. Nalumino poorer and unable to cope with the agro-climatic shock. First, the soils in the Western Province are infertile. The lack of fertilizer inputs due to inadequate marketing agencies in rural areas has made maize production a very risky business. Secondly, deepening levels of poverty on the west bank of the Zambezi river has decimated the asset buffers (maize and millet stocks) that were built by Mr. Nalumino and members of his farming community.

In Mr. Nalumino's case (not his real name) the interaction between a natural hazard and marginal soils have combined and resulted in a livelihoods shock. The effects of the shocks can cause an irreversible decline in a person's poverty status. Intuitively, the shocks from which it is difficult to recover from are those that are severe, sudden, unpredictable and often sequential. These shocks often affect access to education and



health. In Mr. Nalumino's case his children could not attend school for two terms.

### ***The collapse of primary and secondary markets***

In agricultural production zones like Petauke, agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Petauke district in the Eastern Province is a major producer of maize, groundnuts, seed cotton, burley tobacco, sunflower, mixed beans, sorghum, citrus fruit and vegetables. The collapse of primary or secondary markets for agricultural produce can generate large amounts of transitory poverty. This transitory poverty has a marked effect on the levels of school enrollment and participation. A respondent whom we shall refer to as Mr. Banda (not his real name) shared his story.

*After leaving paid employment as a domestic servant in Lusaka some nine years ago, Mr. Banda returned to his home village in Petauke district. Banda has two wives and seven children of school-going age. During the holidays all the children help with the farming chores. Last season, the market price for maize collapsed from K50,000 per 50 kg bag to K28,000 per 50 kg bag. Since the Food Reserve Agency had no money to purchase his crop, Banda had to sell his maize crop to some unscrupulous businessmen from Chipata and Lusaka at a loss. For farmers like Banda and his family who depend on farming for their livelihood, the collapse in maize prices began a downward spiral of asset-depletion that has affected the enrollment of children into school. Banda's children had to miss a whole term from school on account of reduced income from the harvest.*

### ***Breakdown of Law and Order and Violence***

Additionally, violence, conflict and the breakdown of law and order can prevent extremely poor and vulnerable boys and girls from enrolling and staying in school. An example from one of the compounds in Lusaka district will illustrate the effects of the violence and the breakdown of law and order and its effects on enrollment.

Several infernos have recently engulfed various markets in Lusaka. In Lusaka's Misisi compound, Mrs. Febby Nyirongo (not her real name) rapidly descended into impoverishment when her market stall that was built from poor quality, inflammable plastic and cardboard was burnt to ashes. The lack of fire hydrants, narrow streets and the inaccessibility of the fire brigade to the crowded markets meant that her market stall with goods valued at K4.3 million was completely destroyed. With no fire insurance and nor recourse to an insurance company, Mrs. Nyirongo was pushed into a downward spiral of asset depletion and vulnerability.

Since Mrs. Nyirongo has no access to savings and has no 'crisis funds' to fall back on, she has to rely on intra-community social safety-nets. Since her neighbour is in a similar situation and lacks the resources to assist her friend, this shock has culminated in increased risk and vulnerability.

In Mrs. Nyirongo's case, limited access to both private and intra-community sources has driven her into intractable poverty. Mrs. Nyirongo is a victim of what she considers to be a relatively major shock to her asset base. The disaster has seriously affected her cash flow and her children may not be able to attend school for sometime.

In addition to the above, discussions with the United Nations agencies (United Nations Children's Education Fund and World Food Programme), policymakers in Government, teachers, parents and pupils indicate that there are numerous demand-side and supply-side factors that continue to affect access to education.

### **2.3 Key Factors Affecting Access to Health in the Study Area**

The overall vision of the Health Sector Reforms in Zambia is to, "*provide the people of Zambia with equity of access to cost-effective, quality healthcare as close to the family as possible*". Despite this bold vision, the disease burden in the study area has continued to increase. Although healthcare centers were generally reluctant to release health statistics without a formal letter from the Permanent Secretary in Lusaka, disaggregated figures obtained from other healthcare centers in the study area indicated that the top ten causes of visitations to health facilities in the study area were:

- Malaria
- Respiratory Infections (non-pneumonia)
- Diarrhoea
- Trauma (accidents, injuries, wounds and burns)
- Respiratory Infections (pneumonia)
- Skin infections
- Ear/Nose/ Throat infections
- Digestive system (not infectious)
- Intestinal worms
- Anaemia

## ***The Disease Burden in the Study Area***

A sample survey of 15 clinics in the study areas shows that malaria has continued to be the leading cause of morbidity and mortality. According to healthcare providers in the study area, malaria accounts for approximately 60 percent of outpatient attendances and some 46 percent of all hospitalizations. A detailed Case Study of the Waterfalls Clinic in Ntandabale Ward in Chongwe confirmed the statistics.

Located some 30 kilometers from the district center, Waterfalls Clinic is one of 28 healthcare facilities in the Chongwe district. Established in 2005, Waterfalls Clinic was built by the local community. Using funds from their own resources, the community first purchased a 2hectare plot of land and then raised funds to start construction of the clinic. With the assistance of Irish AID and the Rotary Club of Tralee in Ireland, the clinic was constructed and a new ambulance was acquired. Both the clinic and the ambulance are the envy of most government clinics in the district. The two facilities are also a major source of conflict in the district as most government run healthcare facilities do not have an ambulance. Nor are the healthcare centers in the surrounding areas in a good state of repair.

Discussions with health-care providers at Waterfalls Clinic point out that the facility services some 4,985 people. A detailed breakdown of the population is set out below:

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Population below 15 years</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>48.8</b>
<b>Population above 15 years</b>	<b>2,552</b>	<b>51.2</b>
<b>Total population</b>	<b>4,985</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Women of childbearing age</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>22.0</b>

A detailed assessment of the healthcare records kept by the Waterfalls Clinic shows that the disease burden is relatively high.

Malaria is the leading cause of morbidity. In 2006, the total number of malaria cases treated by the Waterfalls Clinic was 8,732. As will be noted from the statistics above, the incidences of malaria cases in the Waterfalls area are much higher than the population statistics. This clearly shows that malaria is not only pervasive but also affects the some of the population at least twice a year. In certain instances, clinic records show

that a patient may be treated for malaria at least two or three times per year.

Records for the six-month period ending June 2007 show that the incidence rate of malaria is still high. Some 2,534 cases have been recorded from January to June 2007. From the above figures, malaria continues to be the leading cause of morbidity and mortality particularly amongst children aged 1-5 years. In addition, it is by far the leading cause of health facility attendance at the Waterfalls Clinic. According to the healthcare providers at the clinic, malaria contributes to poor birth outcomes amongst childbearing mothers. The disease also affects school attendance and school performance.

Non-pneumonia respiratory infections were the second leading cause of morbidity with an incidence rate of 4,672 cases in 2006. The third leading cause of morbidity is diarrhoea followed by ear, nose and throat infections. This general trend of the disease burden in Waterfall Clinic is common in other health care centers in the study area. This trend is also reflected in the statistics at the national level.

### ***Nutrition***

In addition to the high disease burden, there are a number of nutritional problems facing school-going children in the study area. These include stunting, underweight, anemia, iodine deficiency and vitamin A deficiency. Although there were no records or statistics from which we could determine the nutritional status of school-going children, discussions with healthcare staff and teachers indicate that inadequate nutrition continues to affect children's health in the study area.

According to healthcare staff, stunting appears to be a common phenomenon amongst school children. Stunting is associated with a long-term inadequate dietary intake. Repeated episodes of illness and poor quality diets in the first two years of a child's life often result in incidences of stunting. Severe stunting is believed to be associated with lower test scores in children aged 8 to 11 years.

Healthcare staff also point out that incidences of underweight and intestinal parasitic infections are also common in the study area. School-age children are often the most heavily infected group for many forms of roundworm, hookworm and whipworm. The prevalence and intensity of

infections require a systemic de-worming and micronutrient supplementation programme that is not available from healthcare centers.

Healthcare providers also note that iron and iodine deficiencies in school-age children are among the most harmful types of malnutrition with regard to cognitive development. Iron deficiency in school children often renders children listless, inattentive and uninterested in learning. Iron deficiency also weakens the child's immune system and may cause fatigue in the child. There is a need for a micronutrient fortified food or supplementation programme.

Healthcare staff also pointed to the need to attend to the problem of anemia particularly among girls. The current vitamin A supplementation programme is inadequate to address the anemia problems in the girl-child in schools in the study area.

### ***HIV and AIDS in the Study Area***

Although the high prevalence and severity of HIV and AIDS is well documented, a general assessment of HIV and AIDS and food security in the study area indicates that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is fuelling vulnerability in the area. Recent studies (Zambia Human Development Report: 2007) indicate dramatically increasing levels of adult and child morbidity and mortality as a consequence of HIV/AIDS. The HIV and AIDS pandemic is most prevalent among the most productive age. This has negative implications for economic growth and for the provision of essential services such as health and education.

In districts like Petauke, Chongwe, Lusaka, Siavonga and Mongu, fighting chronic food insecurity is now even more of an uphill struggle as the number of HIV and AIDS orphans soars and as the number of farmers, rural workers and agricultural extension workers keeps plummeting. Overall, the HIV and AIDS pandemic in the study area is changing the demographic profile of districts like Chongwe, Kafue and Mongu.

The HIV and AIDS pandemic has led to a marked increase in the number of orphans. Although estimates of the total number of orphans in Zambia differs depending on the source, unpublished data from the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey for 2005 suggests that the total number of vulnerable children is estimated at 1,197,867 orphans. (CSO: 2005). Without AIDS, the number of vulnerable children would have been 598,935.

An assessment of the HIV and AIDS statistics in the study area indicates that there were a total of 191,782 vulnerable children in the study area (2004). This figure is based on published statistics from the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey for 2004. Lusaka district accounted for 57.8 percent of the total number of vulnerable children in the study area followed by Mongu district with 11.2 percent of the total number of vulnerable children in the study area.

The HIV-infected child in the study area is not just another vulnerable child. Throughout our field visits, it was clear that HIV-infected children suffer from unique pressures and influences. Many of these pressures may lead to depression, hopelessness and psychological pressures in later life. Although the concept of 'orphanhood' arising from death caused by natural causes is generally accepted in Zambian communities, the concept of 'orphanhood' as a consequence of HIV and AIDS is still relatively new in Zambian communities. During field visits to Mongu in the Western Province, discussions with pupils disclosed that the psychological pressures caused by the stigmatization and discrimination of HIV-infected children in schools and villages is often greater than the psychological pressure experienced by a child that was orphaned by parents dying from witchcraft.

## 3.0 Assessment of Social Protection Initiatives

### 3.1 General Overview of Types of Social Protection Initiatives

State and donor funded social protection instruments in the study area are many and varied. Each of the social protection instruments funded by donors and the government during the 2006 budget cycle are a response to a particular understanding by donors and government of the various aspects of risk and vulnerability in Zambia. For example, the social protection initiatives under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives address various aspects of *transitory vulnerability*. In various parts of Zambia, including the study area, transitory vulnerability is usually associated with harvest or crop failures that have been triggered by erratic rainfall and drought. Transitory vulnerability affects economically active groups like vulnerable but viable small-scale farmers. Interventions include emergency relief initiatives (e.g food aid or cash transfers) and rehabilitation measures (e.g fertilizer support and seed multiplication programmes). These programmes enhance the real incomes and the capabilities of farmers to improve their livelihoods.

The social protection instruments that feature under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services address issues related to *chronic vulnerability*. In all the study areas visited, chronic vulnerability is related to life-cycle events. These include old age, widowhood and orphanhood. In 2006, the government's responses to these life-cycle events were to provide predictable transfers of cash and other resources that seek to provide relief from deprivation.

Under the Ministry of Education, several social protection programmes were funded in 2006. These programmes included the School Health and Nutrition Programme, the Education Grants to Community Schools Programme and the Bursaries Promotion Programme. These programmes seek to address issues related to *structural vulnerability*. Structural vulnerability is related to market failures, political marginalization, social exclusion and structural unemployment. Structural vulnerability in the study area is endemic. They require "transformative" interventions that aim at addressing issues of social equity and social exclusion in the education and health. Transformative interventions also address sectors issues that reduce vulnerability by transforming the socio-legal context within which livelihoods are constructed (Devereux, 2006). Transformative interventions invariably focus on upholding human rights.

### **3.2 Best Practices and Gaps in Social Protection Initiatives in the area**

The backlog of unsatisfied social demands in education and health has led to the implementation of numerous social protection initiatives in Zambia. In assessing the best practices in implementation and the gaps leading to the denial of children's rights, the following assessment criteria will be used.

- Spatial coverage of the initiative
- Appropriateness for Social Protection and Children's Rights
- Implementation capacity
- Impact in the promotion of children's rights
- Potential for scaling up
- Cost effectiveness and
- Financing

### **3.3 School Feeding Programmes**

#### ***Spatial Coverage***

Although the programme is categorized as national in character, the World Food Programme's Emergency OVC Community School Feeding Programme is not a national programme. Coverage is restricted to specific geographical areas in ten of the 72 districts of Zambia. The programme is time bound and will run for a period of three years. Despite its restricted coverage, the WFP's School Feeding Programme has enabled more orphans and vulnerable children to have access to education and health as compared to say the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme. Overall, the programme focuses on protective measures that provide relief from poverty and deprivation arising from transitory food insecurity in specific drought or flood prone areas.

#### ***Appropriateness for Social Protection and Children's Rights***

The overall goal of any WFP school feeding intervention is to increase access to education, especially among marginalized sections of the population. Given this goal, the Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme appears appropriate for social protection and children's rights in that it contributes to both the WFP strategic objective of supporting access to education and to the Millennium Development



Goal number 2 of achieving universal primary education. More importantly, the objectives of the Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme augment Zambia's policy response to the plight of vulnerable children. These policy responses are summarized within the overall framework of the FNDP chapters on Education, Social Protection, Child Development and Protection, HIV and AIDS.

Despite the appropriateness of the WFP School Feeding Programme within the country and policy context, the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of the WFP's Emergency OVC School Feeding Programmes is still highly controversial. During our discussions with policymakers and government officials, it was clear that empirical evidence on the programme's positive and negative impacts on vulnerable children is both limited and inconclusive. However, despite the inconclusive arguments for and against SFPs, several case studies from the field have confirmed that the provision of free meals at selected schools in the study area has increased enrollment and attendance rates. SFPs have also reduced school drop out rates. More importantly, SFPs have provided additional "safety-nets" to a large number of vulnerable children. For example, in Mongu and Siavonga districts, the SFP has provided food and take-home rations to 26,082 vulnerable children in flood and drought-prone areas. SFPs have also encouraged parents in the study area to leave their children in school rather than withdrawing them so as to save costs and assist the family in the search for food. Evidence from head teachers in schools visited also suggests that SFPs have reduced the gender gap in education access and attainment of the girl child. Further evidence also suggests that improvement in pupils' concentration levels and better than average performance in Grade 7 examinations can be attributed to SFPs.

Despite the above successes, several policymakers and government officials have argued that the implementation of the Free Basic Education (FBE) has resulted in a doubling of primary school enrollment. Given this success, the case for maintaining or for scaling up of SFPs in its present form appears weak.

Although the FBE policy has paid dividends, there are still large numbers of vulnerable children that remain outside the educational system. These include "disadvantaged children"; children who have never enrolled in school; children that have dropped out from school; orphans; geographically and culturally isolated children; street children; children

with disabilities; and abused children. The FBE has not reached these vulnerable categories of children. In these circumstances, providing a daily meal for a child living in a food insecure household can provide the incentive needed to enhance equity of access to education.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, the consultant recommends that carefully targeted SFPs be considered for specific vulnerable groups in areas with high concentrations of vulnerable children. The current WFP targeting system for SFPs is very prone to both exclusion and inclusion errors.

### ***Implementation capacity***

The implementation capacity of the WFP Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme appears sound. There are a large number of best practices that can be learned from this programme. First, the need for clarity and strategic choice of implementing partners and implementing modalities was considered key to effective implementation of the programme. To achieve this, a rigid capacity assessment of potential or interested partners was made. This ensured that partners with good human and material resources were selected. These partners had good management, administrative and financial skills. A second best practice was the deliberate move to anchor the programme in an existing framework for community schools' regulation. At the time of initiating the programme, the main entry point for programme implementation was the Zambia Community Schools Secretariat. This secretariat (now defunct), was the Ministry of Education's delegated authority and worked closely with both the Ministry of Education and the WFP. A third best practice was to define, in detail, the key responsibilities envisaged for each party at the district and national levels. The fourth best practice was the development and implementation of a rigorous training programme in not only the methodology but also in other key elements relevant for implementation of the programme. A fifth best practice was the development of a sound monitoring and evaluation system.

### ***Potential for Scaling up***

The potential for scaling up the WFP Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme is high. Government has requested WFP to continue supporting national efforts to expand access and enrollment in basic education. To this end, WFP envisages expanding this activity from

feeding 102,000 vulnerable children in 250 schools in food insecure areas to the feeding of 210,000 vulnerable children in 400 schools in ten food insecure districts.

### ***Sustainability and Exit Strategies***

Under the WFP's international guidelines and exit strategies for Schools Feeding, the WFP's support to the Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme should be temporary. As with all requests for school feeding, the WFP will consider support for periods of up to five years. Thereafter, if government has met the fundamental programme requirements (e.g. continued government commitment to the provision of primary education, which is reflected in budget allocations and policies) the government can request another five years of support (WFP). This effectively means that WFP supported school feeding programmes can be rolled over several times provided government meets its basic commitment to the provision of primary education. Whether this commitment is in the form of policy initiatives or in the form of budgetary allocations makes no difference.

Is the WFP SFP sustainable? In its present form the WFP Emergency OVC Community Schools Feeding Programme is not sustainable. It is at best, a temporary food aid instrument that is oriented towards the alleviation of transitory food insecurity. It must be noted that WFP is the food arm of the United States system. Consequently WFP is in the business of food aid. It's core mandate is to promote food security and to develop targeted interventions that save lives in emergency situations. WFP's other mandate is to improve nutrition and the quality of life of the most vulnerable members of society; and, wherever possible, to help build the asset base of the poor and vulnerable members of society.

Given the WFP's broad mandate, it is not surprising that its exit strategy with regard to SFP's is open-ended. The most successful school feeding interventions are those that have a planned or in-built cessation of external aid from the onset. There are approximately 3,300 Community Schools with an estimated 600,000 pupils and some 9,000 teachers (MOE and WFP). These schools constitute 20 percent of basic school enrolment. With the policy of free education for all in place, there is a need to integrate community schools into the mainstream of the Education Sector. Rather than perpetuate the concept of the SFP in community schools as a donor initiative, WFP, through its partners, can play a role in advocating for

community schools to be fully integrated into the Education Sector.

Promoting the recognition of community schools as an integral part of the educational system in the revised Education Act should be the long-term strategy. In the meantime, WFP and CSOs can advocate for community schools to get financial support from the MOE on an equitable basis. The MOE's Draft Strategic Framework for Community Schools may be an initial entry point to achieve increase funding to community schools. A second exit strategy is for WFP to integrate the SFPs into the School Health and Nutrition Programme.

### **3.4 The Public Welfare Assistance Scheme**

#### ***Spatial Coverage***

The Public Welfare Assistance Scheme is national in character. Following its successful re-launch in 2000, the scheme initially spread to 58 districts in every province and now provides support to poor and destitute households in all the 72 districts of Zambia. There were 151,731 beneficiaries in 2006 across all 72 districts. The number of beneficiaries rose from 125,307 in 2005 to 151,731 in 2006. This is an increase of 17.4 percent.

#### ***Appropriateness for Social Protection and Children's Rights***

One of the key objectives of the new PWAS is to assist the most vulnerable in society to fulfill their basic needs, particularly in healthcare, education, food and shelter. Over the years, PWAS has developed a set of protective measures that provide relief from deprivation. These protective measures are basically narrowly targeted safety-net measures that include disability benefits, food, clothes, medical fees, education fees, repatriation allowances and shelter for the poor.

#### ***Implementation capacity***

Although the implementation capacity of PWAS is generally considered as weak due to low and erratic funding, poor management and lack of integration with community views and activities, the new PWAS implementation structure has several innovative best practices for implementing a national social welfare programme. First, the PWAS structure is highly decentralized. Under the new PWAS, each district is

serviced by a number of Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs). Each district has between 60 and 120 CWACs. These committees are very accessible to every community members. For ease of coordination and in the interests of facilitating communication, the CWACs are grouped into Area Coordinating Committees (ACCs). In practice, districts have between 10 and 15 ACCs. These committees are represented on the District Welfare Assistance Committees (DWACs) that oversee the social protection issues for the poor and vulnerable groups. The DWACs are a sub-committee of the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC).

Second, the PWAS structure has the greatest potential for reducing regional social disparities through the implementation of various social protection instruments that target children. Its network of CWACs has the potential to transfer funds to the most vulnerable segments of society.

### ***Impact in the promotion of children's rights***

In its present format, PWAS is still equated to mainstream "social welfarism" and has not shed this image despite its new look. Although PWAS provides food and education grants to orphans and vulnerable children, its appropriateness for promoting social protection and children's rights is still highly questionable. In theory, support for assessing primary or secondary education is regarded as one of the three key areas for support but in practice this is not the case. Similarly, PWAS is supposed to provide costs for accessing healthcare services for poor and vulnerable children whose vulnerability is linked to HIV and AIDS. In practice, this support is provided to adults and not to children.

### ***Potential for scaling-up***

The average budgeted cost per annum for PWAS over the past two years is US\$760,000. Direct beneficiary numbers per annum average some 105,000 of whom 40 percent are male and 60 percent are women (down to 54 percent in 2006). Transfer amounts per beneficiary per year amount to US\$7.00. The potential for scaling-up PWAS are very high. However, as will be seen in the details on the financing arrangements below, PWAS's prospects for scaling-up continue to be hampered by budgetary constraints. To be effective, PWAS needs an average budgetary allocation of US\$5 million per annum. This sum would be considered adequate to meet both the transfer costs per beneficiary per annum and to meet the costs of administration.

## ***Financing***

The design of the new PWAS in 1997/98 and its subsequent financing occurred against a background of a major resurgence in macroeconomic growth and development. From the outset, implementation of the more active social welfare programmes under PWAS was subordinated to an overarching commitment to macroeconomic stability. To avoid any major financial imbalances or cost overruns under the new macroeconomic policy framework, any increment in government's social agenda had to be matched by available fiscal resources. In principle, these resources could come from three sources:

- Improved revenue from strong GDP growth;
- Reallocated budget resources such as from reduced public debt service;
- Increased revenue from higher taxes.

Efforts to finance the new PWAS initially focused on the first two sources of funding. For example, in 1997 and 1998, disbursements in real terms to PWAS fell due to weak GDP growth. In 1999, improved GDP growth resulted in a budgetary increase for PWAS activities. Despite the increase in allocations to PWAS, the increase was not sustainable. In 2001, the HIPC initiative was launched and PWAS benefited from both improved revenue streams emanating from a strong GDP growth and additional funding from reallocated budgetary resources from HIPC funds. Some K3 billion was received from the regular government subventions whilst a further K15.9 billion was received from HIPC funds in 2001.

In 2002, total allocation to PWAS amounted to K14.3 billion. Only 12 percent of the 2002 allocation was disbursed. Given the competing demands for scarce fiscal resources, PWAS's demands in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 were overshadowed by "more important" elements of public spending requirements such as expenditure on public salaries and on better conditions of service for public workers. In 2003, PWAS received K 5.3 billion. Disbursements to PWAS increased to K7.2 billion in 2004 and registered an increase of 44.1 percent to reach the K10.4 billion mark in 2005. In 2006, disbursements increased marginally to K10.6 billion. Projected allocations for 2007 and 2008 are likely to be between the ranges of K9 to K10 billion.

The above disbursement trends show that like other public expenditure

programmes, PWAS's success will largely depend on available fiscal resources from increased revenue from higher taxes. These taxes will have to come from a moderate broadening of the tax base. Until we see an increase in revenue from indirect taxes like VAT, tariffs and special levies, efforts to finance the success of the new PWAS will continue to be hampered by competing demands from other government programmes.

### **3.5 The School Grant and the Bursaries Scheme**

#### ***Spatial Coverage***

The Schools Grant Scheme was initiated in February 2002 and provides grants to all schools. The objective of the scheme is to give all children from Grades 1 to 7 free and compulsory education. The spatial coverage of the Schools Grant is national. The amount allocated to all the schools is based on the number of pupils in the school. All the schools visited by the consultant had been allocated an average of K3.0 million. The transfer period and frequency is quarterly.

The Bursaries Scheme is also national in character. However, unlike the School Grant, which is targeted at all schools, the Bursaries Scheme is specifically targeted at vulnerable children to enable them access basic and high school education.

#### ***Appropriateness for Social Protection and Children's Rights***

Although both the Grant and the Bursary scheme generally address issues relating to equity and access to universal education, the Bursary scheme is more appropriate in that it addresses some of the more structural aspects of equity. For purposes of this report, equity is considered in terms of two basic principles namely, equal opportunity and the avoidance of absolute deprivation. In examining the inequality of opportunities to education, it was clear from comments made by pupils and parents alike that the "predetermined circumstances" of vulnerable children is such that they are caught up in an inequality trap. This inequality trap stifles the vulnerable children's access to free education. The case of 11- year-old John Banda (not his real name) who is now in Grade 2 highlights this inequality trap. John's circumstances are "predetermined". Through no fault of his own, John was born into a poor family and is now a "double orphan". Had John been born into a middle income family and started school at the right school-going age, he would have been in Grade 6 instead of Grade 2.

## ***Implementation capacity***

Overall, the implementation capacity of the MOE is considered reasonable.

## ***Impact in the promotion of children's rights***

Both the Schools Grant and the Bursaries Scheme provide an excellent platform for providing schools and vulnerable children with the requisite finances to enable schools meet the high demand for school places and for vulnerable children to have access to education facilities. The impact of the Schools Grant Scheme has been phenomenal. In the Basic Schools sub-sector, the total number of government and grant aided schools increased from 4,622 in 2005 to 4,705 in 2006 (MOE and MFNP). Gross Enrolments for Grade 1 to 9 stood at 2,847,956 in 2006. Access to education continued to rise from 93.5 in 2005 to 95.7 in 2006. The average completion rates also increased in 2006. Completion rates for Grade 7 rose from 80.9 percent in 2005 to 85.5 percent in 2006 whilst that of Grade 9 improved from 42.7 percent in 2005 to 43.1 percent in 2006. These national statistics do mirror the trends in the study area. More importantly, the above trends have had a marked impact on the rights of the child to free education.

## ***Financing***

Like the PWAS reform programme, the design of the education reforms and their financing occurred against backdrop of real GDP growth rates of 4 to 5 percent per annum. The permanent costs of the education reforms were projected to reach to 2 percent of GDP once they were fully implemented. Most of the costs came from implementing the FBE. Other costs arose from putting in place the infrastructure needed to allow for the increased demand for schools, furniture and fittings.

Implementation of the education reforms was also subordinated to an overarching commitment to macroeconomic stability. Like PWAS, the education reforms relied heavily on three sources of revenue. These were: funding arising from increased revenue from strong GDP growth; increased revenue from higher taxes and reallocated budget resources from reduced debt servicing obligations. Although these sources of funding were regarded as stable, there were a number of considerations that indicated that these sources of revenue were not stable.

First, it was unlikely that Zambia's growth in GDP would continue indefinitely.



Thus a prudent assessment of the resources that could be generated from GDP growth had to be based on a rate that was lower than the 3 to 5 percent that the economy had experienced and is currently experiencing. The scope for using the growth dividend to finance education was further reduced by the so-called vegetative growth of social expenditure in education, health and on welfare programmes. Vegetative expenditure requirements are not under the control of the economic authorities. Rather, they are associated with the evolution of social and demographic variables that put further pressure on social expenditure.

Second, public salaries continued to be an important element of government's spending requirements and their impact on expenditure in education. In Zambia's competitive job market, salaries in the public sector were in direct competition with private sector and NGO salaries. A strong wage growth in the private and NGO sector, fuelled by high GDP growth inevitably fed into the public sector wage bill. This situation was exacerbated by the need for some parts of the public sector to narrow the salary differential with the private sector and NGOs in order to attract and retain qualified personnel in government.

Third, while there was room to relocate resources to the social sector they were unlikely to be sufficient to finance the education reforms fully. Finally, financing was needed for many other important policy initiatives in the social arena such as health and government pensions.

Taking resources from the growth dividend and using budget reallocation to finance education reforms has proved a major challenge to financing the education reforms. Focusing on these sources of revenue has also postponed the broader question of sustainability of funding the education reforms.

The above considerations all argue against financing the FBE agency purely on the basis of possible revenue gains from the GDP growth dividend and budget reallocations. Given this funding scenario, the government needs to explore alternative and more permanent and sustainable financing sources for social expenditure in education and health.

### ***Cost-effectiveness***

The cost of any social transfer is determined by three factors. These are (a) the scope of the programme i.e the number of people receiving the

transfer; (b) the cost of delivering the programme, ie the administrative costs and overheads; and (c) the amount of the transfer given to each beneficiary. Although various agencies were hesitant to share anything about their budgets even when the information is openly available, it is difficult to directly compare the various operations in terms of knowing what administrative and other costs are placed above the line or below the line. Attempts to sit with the MOE and the MOH to determine the actual costs of the interventions proved futile. Both the MOE and the MOH Planning Departments have not attempted to cost the FBE School Grant or School Bursary per individual nor has the National Malaria Prevention Programme made any attempts at determining the unit cost per beneficiary. Despite this, we were able to make an estimate the cost per beneficiary for four of the five social protection initiatives. These figures are based on the total disbursements made divided by the number of beneficiaries. For example, under the School Grants Scheme, a school with up to a total of 1,000 pupils will receive a grant of K3.0 million per quarter. Similarly, the cost of the Schools bursary is closely associated with the US\$6.00 allocated to each pupil under the School Grants Scheme. More work needs to be done with the MFNP to determine the computation of the allocations made to each beneficiary. Despite the crude and unrealistic cost estimates, the following are the average cost per beneficiary:

<i><b>Programme</b></i>	<i><b>Cost per beneficiary</b></i>
School Feeding Programme	US\$36.00 per annum
Public Welfare Assistance Scheme	US\$7.00 per annum
FBE School Grant Scheme	US\$6.00 per annum
FBE School Bursary	US\$7.00 per annum
Malaria Prevention	Not available

From the above estimates it would appear that the Schools Grant Scheme has the cheapest unit cost per beneficiary. We must nevertheless put a caveat that these are very crude estimates.

Overall, each social protection initiative "appeared" to be cost-effective at the time of design. However, despite the cost-effectiveness of the programmes at the design phase, several cost centers were affected by the appreciation of the local currency. This hurt the revenue streams particularly those generated by foreign currency inflows. In addition to the impact of the appreciation of the local currency, the cost-effectiveness of the School Feeding Programme's was and still is affected by increased

logistical costs emanating from high fuel and transport costs. In addition, the increasing import parity price of imported maize, soya bean and pulses continues to affect the cost-effectiveness of the SFP. The Free Basic Education Programme's cost-effectiveness is hampered by increased infrastructure costs for classroom blocks and by high input costs. The cost advantages of the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme continue to be affected by both cost-push and demand-pull inflation for the basic commodities provided under PWAS.

### **3.6 Which is the most appropriate Social Protection Initiative?**

Of the five social protection initiatives studied, there is no best or most appropriate social protection instrument. As alluded to earlier, each of the social protection instruments funded by the government during the 2006 budget cycle are a response to a particular aspect of risk and vulnerability in Zambia. For example, the social protection initiatives under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives address various aspects of *transitory vulnerability*. In various parts of Zambia, including the study area, transitory vulnerability is usually associated with harvest or crop failures that have been triggered by erratic rainfall and drought. Transitory vulnerability affects economically active groups like vulnerable but viable small-scale farmers. Interventions include emergency relief initiatives (e.g food aid or cash transfers) and rehabilitation measures (e.g fertilizer support and seed multiplication programmes). These programmes enhance the real incomes and the capabilities of farmers to improve their livelihoods. It would be foolhardy to suggest that this social protection initiative be replaced by say a SFP or a bursary scheme.

Similarly, the social protection instruments that feature under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services address issues related to *chronic vulnerability*. In all the study areas visited, chronic vulnerability is related to life-cycle events. These include old age, widowhood and orphanhood. In 2006, the government's response to these life-cycle events were to provide predictable transfers of cash and other resources that seek to provide relief from deprivation. Whilst this social protection instrument addresses the concerns of vulnerable children, one cannot say that this scheme be replaced by SFPs.

Under the Ministry of Education, several social protection programmes were funded in 2006. These programmes included the School Health and Nutrition Programme, the Education Grants to Community Schools Programme and the Bursaries Promotion Programme. These programmes

seek to address issues related to *structural vulnerability*. Structural vulnerability is related to market failures, political marginalisation, social exclusion and structural unemployment. Structural vulnerability in the study area is endemic. They require “transformative” interventions that aim at addressing issues of social equity and social exclusion in the education and health. Transformative interventions also address sectors issues that reduce vulnerability by transforming the socio-legal context within which livelihoods are constructed (Devereux, 2006). Transformative interventions invariably focus on upholding human rights.

Although the above social protection instruments may address the issue of EFA, they do not necessarily address issues related to child nutrition at school. Nor would this initiative address the issue of deworming of school children.

It should also be noted that the majority of social protection interventions in the study area are predominantly operated and funded by external sources (usually the WFP, CARE International and Oxfam of the United Kingdom) and with only partial government funding. This factor is worrying and shows that government commitment to social expenditure is very low.

An important conclusion here is that each form of social protection measure has either specific or overlapping objectives. For example an unconditional cash transfer may increase the affordability of say educational services and boost the uptake of educational services in a rural district like Kafue or Chongwe. On the other hand, a conditional transfer could help overcome weak demand for a service and boost its uptake. A critical assessment of each of the social protection measures assessed has resulted in one of three specific policy objectives. These are:

- *Change or re-enforce demand-side behaviour* thus boosting demand and increasing the utilization of a service such as education; reduce gender-based and other discrimination-based barriers to accessing services; or empower the poor with choice of providers;
- *Link demand to supply by targeting social sector resources and or subsidies to the poorest or socially excluded population;*
- *Change service provider’s behaviour by promoting competition and providing choice to the poor and vulnerable groups;*

## **4.0 Financing Arrangements**

The volume and value of public expenditure outlays on social protection instruments are an important measure of government's commitment to the promotion of social protection. This section of the report briefly looks at the financial architecture of social protection and attempts to trace the various sources of revenue in the Fifth National Development Plan for the period 2006 to 2010.

### **4.1 Overview of the Financing Techniques in the FNDP**

The financing techniques in the Fifth National Development Plan are anchored on three key variables. The first major variable is the nature and structure of the political economy. This variable determines and reflects the priorities of the political elite to growth, development and inevitably to social protection. Currently, there is a strong perception by the political elite that FNDP expenditure programmes should have a strong bias towards the economically productive sectors of the economy. While this approach has its merits, there is a general tendency by the political elite to sideline the importance of pro-poor growth with equity.

The second key variable relates to the nature and source of the resource envelope. The resource envelope is basically the sum total of the domestic revenues, external grants and loans that will finance the projects and programmes of the FNDP. During the visits to the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, there was a commonly expressed view, especially at the Treasury, that social protection is not affordable and cannot be funded from domestic resources. Given that donors have indicated a commitment to financing a national social protection strategy in the short term, government's concerns are to establish the source of funding for the medium and long term.

The third variable is to determine the actual choice or mix of financing packages for social transfers. The manner in which this variable is addressed will determine the impact and outcome on poverty reduction and the promotion of equity.

Funding for social protection in the FNDP gives a general overview of the core and non-core programmes per sector. Core programmes relate to social transfers that include direct income support, child benefits, school feeding and transfers for input support. Core programmes feature

prominently in the health sector, education sector and in the social protection sector. Non-core sectors programmes include projects and activities that enhance and empower the poor and vulnerable groups to improve their standards of living. These broad range of support services include investments in water supply and sanitation, natural resource management and in the provision of rural energy supply.

From the general assessment of the programmes outlined in the FNDP, several points emerge. First, there are adequate resources particularly in the health and education line ministries that have been budgeted for protecting children's rights to education and health. The key issue is the availability and, more importantly, the disbursement of these funds to the relevant line ministry.

Second, the major source of funding for the social sector and for the roll out of social protection programmes is predominantly donor funds. For example, donors will finance over 62 percent of the Basic Health Care Package in the FNDP. Similarly, donors will also fund some 92.5 percent of the Malaria Control Programme. An examination of the Ministry of Education budget shows a similar trend. Donors will fund 70.4 percent of infrastructure development. The absence of government leadership in funding the social sectors and social protection reflects the priorities of the political elite.

Third, government's resistance to funding social protection reflects a view that the main policy priority for the government is growth and the expansion of the productive capacity of the economy. In this context, social protection appears as a net cost rather than as an investment in productive capacity. Discussions with the Treasury indicate that social protection is considered as a drain on scarce resources.

Fourth, a close examination of the FNDP funding structures shows that the financing of personal emoluments and administrative costs often takes precedence over other costs. For example in the Ministry of Education, personal emoluments account for 57.9 percent of the total FNDP budget. While the cost of financing personal emoluments is essential, the need to down-size the civil service is absolutely necessary if funds are to be released for social protection. The issue of down-sizing or right-sizing the civil service is and will continue to be a politically sensitive issue as many government officials want to enjoy "the benefits of working in government".

## 4.2 Affordability and Sustainability

In spite of the apparent enthusiasm for social protection as an acceptable policy and the growing evidence of the positive impact of social protection measures on poverty and inequality (the Kalomo Scheme) social protection programmes have a low profile with regard to financing.

There are still many obstacles and arguments against the financing of social protection interventions. The foremost argument is basically the lack of resources raised through domestic financing from local taxes. This argument appears to be baseless as it is more a question of allocation and prioritizing expenditure as opposed to the issue of availability of funds. The assessment of the Green Paper will illustrate the point.

According to the Government's Green Paper for the 2007 to 2009 Medium Term Expenditure Framework, government's strategic focus is the development of socio-economic infrastructure and human resource development. In addition, the Green Paper stipulates that government will continue to promote wealth creation through sustained broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction.

The Green paper stipulates that for the period 2007 to 2009, government anticipates to raise revenue and grants of K9,985.20 billion in 2007, K10,822.41 billion in 2008 and K11,704.44 billion in 2009. These resources will include revenue from income tax, excise duty, value-added tax, import duty and customs duty. Funding from domestic revenue will account for an average of 22 percent of GDP over the three-year period. Other sources of revenue will be from external grants.

An assessment of expenditure by function of government indicates central government's proposed expenditure programme. For social protection for the period 2007 to 2009, government anticipates to spend K59.47 billion in 2007, K75.10 billion in 2008 and K82.20 billion in 2009. Outlays on social protection will include expenditure on social security, social welfare and other related social programmes. Although the figures show that there will be an incremental expenditure over the three-year period, the outlay on social protection as a percentage of total expenditure is less than 1.0 percent. This compares with an average outlay of between 3 to 4 percent on Public Order and Safety and an outlay of between 7 to 8 percent for Defence. Taking the expenditure on Defence as an example, it would appear that government is prepared to spend 8 percent

of its total budgetary allocation on an estimated 20,000 defence personnel and less than 1 percent of total budgetary allocations on some 200,000 poor and vulnerable groups. Clearly, government's expenditure priorities are not in line with its rallying public calls for poverty reduction. Another example will illustrate the point further. A detailed analysis of government's proposed expenditure on defence also indicates that a total of K60.0 billion will be spent on housing for the defence forces. This allocation on defence housing to a handful of defence personnel is higher than the annual budgetary allocation to social protection for the year 2007.

Although the poor have a right to social protection as agreed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the budgetary allocations to social spending clearly show that the politics of transferring resources to the poor is based on rhetoric and misplaced priorities. At the present rate of budgetary allocations, the value of transfers to the poor and vulnerable groups will be insufficient to have development as well as relief outcomes to the poor.



## 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

One of the central questions that were addressed in this study was to undertake an assessment of three to five major social protection initiatives and to ascertain how they promote vulnerable and poor children's access to education and health. The evidence deduced from this field study is that the social protection initiatives are an important but as yet not an efficient tool in promoting social protection and children's rights.

This inefficiency does mean that the School Feeding Programme, the PWAS and the Free Basic Education Schools Grant, the Schools Bursary Schemes and the Malaria Prevention and Control Programme are not effective on their own. To enhance their effectiveness they require:

- Political will;
- Political commitment;
- A paradigm shift in the minds of civil servants and the political elite;
- Strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions like the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to meet the growing demand for education and healthcare; and,
- Improved disbursement mechanisms so that all budgetary allocations are exhausted within the stipulated budget cycle.

Broadly speaking, the five social protection initiatives assessed in this report are both *vertically* and *horizontally* inefficient. Vertical efficiency refers to the fact that there are no significant leakages in programme resources to the non-poor. Unfortunately, corruption in Zambia is endemic and incidences of corruption were evident during the field study. Food from the WFP School Feeding Programme often goes to the non-poor schoolchildren. Similarly, FBE Grants and Bursaries to schools find their way to fund the running costs of individual head teachers and schoolteachers.

Horizontal efficiency, on the other hand refers to the fact that the

programme reaches all the poor and vulnerable schoolchildren. Again, the five programmes score poorly on the horizontal efficiency scale. PWAS seldom reaches its targeted group. The FBE Bursary and Grants Schemes seldom meet the growing demand for bursaries from community schools. Similarly the SFP has not reached the bulk of the poor and vulnerable children that need to access education and health facilities.

While scaling up of PWAS, FBE Bursary and Grant Schemes and SFPs could improve the vertical and horizontal efficiency of the programmes in the study area, issues of improved targeting and the need for longer-term funding need to be resolved. The issue of the longer-term financial sustainability of these programmes remains an important issue. To date, the bulk of transfers for SFPs and FBEs have come from multilateral and bilateral institutions. These programmes can be cost-effective and affordable when measured as a share of GDP. Although the costs of scaling-up the programmes could be phenomenal, a graduated approach to financing the schemes from domestic resources is still possible. While we should not underestimate the inherent potential political hurdles or problems of securing the necessary political support to switch from donor to domestic sources of financing, there is a need to review the allocation of domestic resources allocated to the promotion of social protection and children's rights. A possible solution is to ensure that the supply-side programmes (health, education and social protection) in the FNDP be scaled-up through an incremental activity-based budgetary approach.

This may be a more prudent strategy than focusing on demand-side subsidies that are often perceived as an affront on the government's ability to budget for its people's requirements.

Are these programmes the answer to promoting children's rights to health and education? The definitive answer is yes.

With regard to lessons learned, the Child Support Grant in South Africa appears to offer possible solutions to the design and implementation arrangements of social protection initiatives in Zambia.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

### **General Recommendations**

- Although a Social Protection Policy is now in place and government has a Social Protection chapter in the FNDP, we note from our

research that government is not giving sufficient priority to vulnerable children and their related issues. There is too much lip service from both the politicians and staff in Government ministries. We strongly recommend that Government give a higher political priority service provision for vulnerable children and to the allocation and disbursements of funding of core healthcare and education initiatives that specifically address vulnerable children and their related problems.

- Laws are the foundation of any social protection policy. In the case of children's rights, laws are central to the promotion and defense of children's rights and their welfare. Laws also articulate a nation's social protection vision and define the rights of vulnerable children. The domestication of international conventions with regard to the rights of the child, in particular the CRC has moved at a snails pace. This lethargic approach to domestication of the CRC is an injustice to vulnerable children. We recommend that Government speed up the development of a legal and regulatory framework that specifically addresses social protection and the children's rights. To this end we strongly recommend that the Bill of Rights and the Socio and Economic rights of vulnerable children be enshrined in the New Republican Constitution.
- In the health sector, malaria continues to be the leading cause of morbidity and mortality amongst vulnerable children. Malaria is also responsible for the high levels of absenteeism of vulnerable children in schools. Between 13 to 50 percent of total school days missed per annum are attributed to malaria. We strongly recommend that the National Malaria Control Programme re-double its efforts to prevent malaria. A massive campaign to sensitize the public on the use of treated mosquito nets be re-launched.
- In the education sector, it is clear that despite good progress with regard to FBE policy reforms, Vulnerable children still have limited access to quality education. Whilst community schools have made a significant contribution to access to education, the quality of education still leaves a lot to be desired. We recommend that the MOE integrate the community schools into the mainstream education system. More importantly, the Government needs to re-double its efforts to fulfill the supply-side of the equation. There is an urgent need for trained and well-paid teachers as well as the need for infrastructure and teaching materials.

## **Specific Recommendations**

Although government policy supports social protection and children's rights initiatives as a way of promoting the access of children to education and health, the reality is that social protection initiatives exclude more children than they cover. In order to promote and scale-up social protection we recommend the following:

### **Implementation Gaps**

The Fifth National Development Plan recognizes the importance of social protection mechanisms to promote pro-poor growth. This includes the promotion of children's rights. In chapter 22 of the FNDP on Social Protection, objective 2 states "to reduce extreme poverty in incapacitated households through welfare support." Our findings show that social protection initiatives in the study area are disjointed and uncoordinated. To effectively implement this objective, government and cooperating partners need to develop a sector programme approach.

- We recommend that the current draft Implementation Framework developed by the Technical Working Group on Social Assistance in the MCDSS be completed and implemented. This will enable government, donors and other players have a joint roadmap for the coordination, implementation and financing of the of social protection initiatives such as the SFPs, and PWAS.

Our findings also indicate that several line ministries are responsible for the promotion of children's rights to health and to education. More often than not, line ministries work in isolation thus working at cross-purposes.

- To improve the synergy between the line ministries responsible for social protection and children's rights we recommend that the Technical Working Group on Social Assistance co-ordinate the activities of the line ministries.

### **Best Practices**

The assessment compared the effectiveness of the five different types of social transfers in the form of SFPs, PWAS and the FBEs and noted that the programmes are not vertically and horizontally effective. Consequently there are gaps in the coverage of social protection initiatives

that aspire to promote the fulfillment of children's rights to education and health.

- Best practices from the region suggest that the Child Support Grant in South Africa is the most effective as it is well targeted and when fully implemented will reach most of the poor school children in poor families. We recommend that the Child Support Grant model be the blueprint for strengthening the PWAS and the FBEs.

The targeting of the five social transfer programmes studied indicate that targeting is poor and results in a rather patchy coverage of social protection initiatives for schoolchildren.

- Targeting and issues related to conditionality often create some perverse impact and outcomes. Conditionalities may sometimes penalize the very schoolchildren who are in most need of support. We recommend that the area of targeting and conditionality be revisited. Where beneficiaries are fully informed of their entitlements and responsibilities, conditionality may not be an issue.

### **Long-term Financial Sustainability**

The long-term financial sustainability of social protection programmes that promote social protection and children's rights continues to be a major issue. To date, transfers from bilateral and multilateral institutions constitute the major source of income for social protection.. The FNDR financing arrangements attest to this fact. Although the programmes appear to be cost-effective and affordable when measured as a share of GDP, the potential costs of scaling-up the programmes could be astronomical. Indeed, as one government official stated, "The cost of reaching each child under the Free Basic Education Scheme could take up the entire government budget".

- The issue of financial sustainability for social protection is an emotive one. It is also a political hot potato for the political elite. However, we recommend that government and co-operating partners focus on funding the existing supply-side programmes that feature in the FNDR. This would avoid the immediate need to switch to domestic sources of financing. However, the issue of developing exist strategies for say the SFP still remains. We recommend that this issue be handled amicably through the development of carefully prepared Memorandums of Understanding.

## **Harmonizing and Domesticating the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Laws are the foundation of any social protection policy. In the case of children's rights in Zambia, laws are central to the promotion and defence of children's rights and to their welfare. It has been 18 years since the Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force internationally. During the ensuing period the gap between international obligations and national action has remained static. This effectively means that Zambia has made very slow progress with regard to domesticating the CRC.

- Working in conjunction with UNICEF and UNESCO, we recommend that a network of CSOs (including the Oasis Forum) lobby and advocate for social protection and children's rights to education and health. This would pressurize the government into domesticating and harmonizing the laws relating to children's rights in Zambia. We also recommend that the Lesotho and South African model for developing a legal framework for child protection be used.

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2008-05

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Wood, D.(2008). SOCIAL PROTECTION AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ZAMBIA. Lusaka, Zambia. Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR)

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