

ABSTRACT

The study was aimed to establish a comparative top-down, bottom-up and horizontal profile of communication in government (MoFNP) and civil society (ZCSD) development work in Zambia. It was based on the conceptual model of development communication that has evolved from top-down to participatory paradigms, which by extension form the ecosystem of communication in developing countries. In the ecosystem, all three models (top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal) are simultaneously being used by policy makers (government) and development implementers (civil society). Results of the study have confirmed and/or supported the theoretical model. Communication profile of government and civil society has been found in accordance with the basic premises of the ecosystem. Profile of top-down communication was not found to be the most preferred as expected. Instead, horizontal communication was overwhelmingly preferred. However, a gap was found in relation to use of a purely bottom-up model because even when people on the grassroots are asked for input, the final say comes from policy makers and development implementers who are on top of the decision making hierarchy.

Further, results showed that although communication was theoretically perceived to be important by majority of staff respondents, analysis of organisational practices suggested that communication was lowly regarded in government and civil society development work in Zambia. It was also discovered that more than half of audience respondents, mostly those in high density urban areas and rural areas, were not aware of most development messages such as Vision 2030. Thus, development strategies were considered to be not very effective for these groups. As regards to channels and strategies of communication, it was found that they were modelled after organisational practices and/or governance styles existent in particular contexts. Preferences of channels and sources of information were to some extent determined by ownership of communication infrastructure and accessibility.

To generate relevant results, the overall aim was broken down into specific objectives, namely: 1) to establish the nature of communications used by government and civil society in development work; 2) to examine the models of communication used by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MoFNP) and the Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD) in their outreach communications; 3) to investigate the attitudes of MoFNP and ZCSD personnel towards their communications; 4) to examine the channels, messages and sources of communication adopted in particular development contexts; 5) to classify communication strategies used in government and civil society contexts; 6) to assess perceptions of the audience toward development messages by the Ministry and the Civil Society organisation; and 7) to analyse current practices by the two institutions to see if there is adequate incorporation of communication variables in development projects.

The study adopted a triangulation of methods research strategy. Principles of questionnaires, in-depth interviews, FDGs, and to some extent document analysis were blended to come up with the rich data presented and discussed. The questionnaire was used to collect data from randomly selected policy makers,

development implementers, and audience respondents. Data from FGDs and in-depth interviews came from one-to-group discussions and one-to-one interviews, respectively, and systematic observation with key staff respondents. Document analysis, which involved a review of the communication strategy, was imbedded within the in-depth interview the researcher had with the MoFNP Public Relations Officer. Analysis of data collected from these research instruments was framed within the context of the analytical framework that informed the study.

The researcher's analysis and study results revealed that the position civil society organisations were well placed than government in relation to participatory communication.

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DEDICATION

To my late father, Mr. Job Mulomba Bbuku, for encouraging and challenging me to achieve greater heights and leave a “mark” after a life lived. In his memory I dedicate this Thesis. I also dedicate this work to the rest of my family – my mother, sister, brothers, nephews and nieces. Lastly dedications go to all those who have devoted their lives to pursue the communication agenda in development work.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFRONET	Inter-African Network for Human Rights
ANC	African National Congress
BSA	British South African Company
CePRA	Centre for Policy Research and Analysis
CPSR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction
CSA	Census Supervisory Area
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FoB	Freedom of Information Bill
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority Bill
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MoFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGOCC	Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Committee
NGP	National Gender Policy
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OF	Oasis Forum
PAZA	Press Association of Zambia
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TI-Z	Transparency International Zambia
UN	United Nations

UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIP	United National Independence Party
USA	United States of America
WfC	Women for Change
ZANIS	Zambia National Information Services
ZCSD	Zambia Council for Social Development
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation