Radio Farm Forum in Zambia: A Participatory Approach in Muswishi - Chibombo District

George Kalimbwe

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Communication for Development offered by the department of Mass Communication, The University of Zambia.
Declaration:
I declare that this Practical Attachment Report has not been submitted for a Degree in this
or any other University.

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Signature: ________________________________
Date: 19/07/2001

Supervisor: Prof. Francis P. Kasoma Ph.D
Signature: ________________________________
Date: July 19, 2001
Dedication:

I dedicate this Report to my father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Kalimbwe, my wife Edina, and my children Rhoda, Thom, Akushanga, Sikeletu and Akabondo
Abstract

The practical attachment was held in Muswishi, about 20 km east of Kabwe town. The attachment lasted four months from June to October. Muswishi is a farming area found in Chibombo district of Central Zambia. The area has a population of 5,000 inhabitants with the Lenjes being the indigenous people. Other tribes such as the Tongas, Bembas, Swakas are also found in the area. Agriculture forms the livelihood of the people of Muswishi. The area lies in a high potential agricultural area, though little production takes place. Some of the reasons advanced by the people of the area, are poor agricultural policies by government that hinder agricultural development. Some of these poor policies include, inadequate credit for farm inputs and crop marketing facilities.

In view of the above, Farm-level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA), a SIDA funded programme started a project using participatory approaches in a bid to improve the living standards of the people of Muswishi. Among these projects was the Communication Support for Technology Development and Transfer in Muswishi and Lusitu (Lusitu is in Siavonga district in Southern Province). In Muswishi, the project started by establishing a Communication Committee comprising stakeholders in the area, that was responsible for dissemination of developmental information. The committee used a newsletter and participatory radio as its information dissemination media. Of interest to this student was the participatory radio as a means of bringing about development in Muswishi.

This student worked with the communication committee in establishing two radio listening groups which were Muswishi Central and Chipaba. Each of these groups consisted of 20 members that listened to audio recorded programmes. The recordings were done by the members of the communication committee where three quarters were local farmers. Normally, the committee did the recordings from among the farmers themselves. Therefore, this medium provided the people of Muswishi an opportunity to talk to themselves on matters that affect them. Project evaluation was not done due to time constraints, however, this student was convinced that participatory communication was key in rural development. Rural people know their problems better, therefore, they are the ones that can find possible solutions to them.
Acknowledgements

My Practical Attachment would not have been a success without the help of many people who tirelessly assisted me directly or indirectly. I might not be able to mention all of them by name. However, I must specially include the following: Professor Francis Kasoma and Mr. Fidelis Muzyamba, lecturers at The University of Zambia, who opened my understanding on insights surrounding Communication For Development, a subject the whole world has been grappling with for a very long time. I also thank Mr. Peter Masunu, the Director at National Agricultural Information Services for his support morally and materially. I am also indebted to Ms. Elizabeth Mweetwa, Central Province Agriculture Coordinator, Mr. Mathias Kanyamba, Senior Field Services Coordinator and Ms. Mukonde Mweemba the Acting Senior Agricultural Information Officer - Central Province for a lot of logistical support I received from them. I also wish to thank Mr. Burton Lupobe, Ms. Josephine Shibuyunji, Muswishi Extension Officers, the members of the Muswishi Information Project Committee and all the many farmers I talked to, for their valuable information and personal help they rendered. All the views expressed in this Report are purely my own, and so are any errors.

G.K.
The University of Zambia
2001
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.N.C.</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.S.A. Company</td>
<td>British South Africa Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CABS</td>
<td>Central African Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXCO</td>
<td>Executive Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARMESA</td>
<td>Farm-Level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>FCC</td>
<td>Federal Communications Commission</td>
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<td>FRA</td>
<td>Food Reserve Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRDP</td>
<td>Integrated Rural Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legco</td>
<td>Legislative Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAFF</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDP-ESA</td>
<td>Municipal Development Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMD</td>
<td>Movement for Multiparty Democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAIS</td>
<td>National Agricultural Information Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRBC</td>
<td>Northern Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWICO</td>
<td>New World Information and Communication Order</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>Programme Against Malnutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Appraisal</td>
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<td>PRCA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIS</td>
<td>Rural Information Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAIO</td>
<td>Senior Agricultural Information Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>T&amp;V</td>
<td>Training and Visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.N.</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIP</td>
<td>United National Independence Party.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNZA</td>
<td>University of Zambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZANA</td>
<td>Zambia News Agency</td>
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<td>ZANC</td>
<td>Zambia African National Congress.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZAREP</td>
<td>Zambia Agricultural Research Extension Programme</td>
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<td>ZBS</td>
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<td>ZCCM</td>
<td>Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines</td>
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<td>ZIS</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Zambia National Broadcasting Services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZNS</td>
<td>Zambia National Service</td>
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## Chapter 1

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Background

1.1 Introduction

Since inception in 1945, the United Nations (UN) has not only been concerned with world peace (defense and security) but also other areas of human endeavour namely: economic, social, political, cultural, and scientific and technological. And that is why a number of agencies such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), to mention but a few, were established to address specific areas of international concern.

Over the years, two distinct groups of countries have emerged: the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. These countries are normally referred to, as the 'North' and 'South' respectively. Most countries of the south are found in Africa, Asia, South and Central America. The countries of the South to date are still grappling with the provision of basic needs of food, shelter and clothing to their citizens.

To help countries of the South, a lot of theories and approaches have evolved in the North, but with little or no success. As alluded to earlier, food has been one of the major problems countries of the South are facing. Therefore, agriculture has been one of the main areas targeted by some of the development approaches conceived in the North with a view to improve household food security for the countries of the South. Large sums of money have been pumped into agricultural development projects in the south for more than 40 years now, but the situation does not seem to improve. People still go hungry, they do not have enough food to eat.

The media have been at the hem of the various development theories and approaches as they were considered one of the most reliable vehicle for development in the countries of the South.

Radio, among the media has been used much more in development activities because of its advantage over the other media. For instance, most countries of the South at the beginning of the development assistance, had limited trained personnel to cater for the vast and scattered populations. In addition illiteracy rates were very high such that the
print media could not be accessed by most people. Therefore, radio remained the only mass medium suitable to carry development messages from the technocrats to the would-be beneficiaries.

Radio as a social medium was first used in the United States of America (USA) in the 1920s. Meanwhile, agricultural radio broadcasting started in Britain during World War II. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is said to have been at the helm of this revolution. The BBC launched a campaign called "Dig for victory" in order to abet hunger as a result of the war in Britain. The campaign gave Britons some tips of crude but effective farming methods, they could use to produce food. And this was the first time radio was used for agricultural purposes. (Zherebtsoo, 1969 pp 4-10).

Zambia, as one of the countries in the South, despite attaining her political independence from Britain in 1964, is also still affected by underdevelopment. The country has abundant natural resources that remain untapped. Like in all other countries of the South, different development projects have been initiated and implemented in Zambia since independence. The Radio Farm Forum (R.F.F.) Movement is one such project started in 1966. The R.F.F. performed very well at inception, but down the road, the idea became unpopular. Benefiting from various studies by communication scholars on how the 'big' or 'national' media have failed to bring development among the rural poor, one tends to think the 'small' or 'community media' could provide an alternative.

It is against this background that the Farm-Level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA) conceived the idea of 'Participatory Radio' for the community of Muswishi in Chibombo District of Central Zambia. Muswishi was the area this student chose to do his attachment that lasted four months (end of June to October 2000).

1.2 Geography of Zambia
Zambia, formerly Northern Rhodesia, is a central African country lying between latitudes 8 and 18 degrees south and longitude 22 and 3 degrees east. Shaped like a kidney bean, Zambia covers an area of 750,000 square kilometres. (Kasoma, 1986). The country is landlocked, sharing boundaries with Malawi and Mozambique in the east, Tanzania in the
north, Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire) in the west, and
Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia in the south. The greater part of Zambia forms a
plateau lying between 900 to 1500 metres above sea level.

Zambia receives between 400 to 1600mm of rains per annum. Water is one of the
country's major problems especially in the southern and western parts. Many of the small
water courses dry up during the dry season. Once the rains start pouring between
November and March, some of these empty streams become raging torrents that will
sweep everything out of their way, such that most of the water is lost to big rivers and
everually to the oceans. Experts say only 15 percent of the available water in rivers and
streams in Zambia is used by human beings and their livestock. (Gann, 1964.)

However, two big rivers, the Zambezi and Luapula whose source is in the north western
and northern parts of Zambia respectively, drain the country. The Zambezi, from where
the country derives its name, starts at Kaleni Hills, flowing through Angola, and back to
Zambia running along the borders with Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Finally, the
river flows into Mozambique to the Indian Ocean. It is on the Zambezi River where the
Victoria Falls and the largest man-made lake the Kariba are found. Kafue and Luangwa
rivers are some of the notable tributaries of the Zambezi River.

The country has a subtropical climate, with three distinct seasons. The warm-wet season
stretching from November through to April during which 95 percent of the annual
precipitation falls. There is a cool dry winter season from May to August with the mean
temperature varying between 15 degrees Celsius and 27 degrees Celsius; and a hot dry
season during September and October with temperatures of 27 to 32 degrees Celsius.

Zambia's vegetation may be broadly classified as woodland savannah which is a mixture
of various trees, tall grass, herbs and other vegetation which are mainly deciduous type
found on the main plateau. However, these also occur in other areas such as the major
maize farming areas of the Southern and Lusaka Provinces. Forests occur mainly in the
North-Western and Western parts of the country. These areas are sources of timber. Thick
forests are also found in the northern parts of the country. Grasslands are found in the
seasonal flood plains of Western Province, the Kafue Flats and Bangweulu Swamps. (MAFF, 1997)

The population of Zambia is estimated at 10 million with an annual growth rate of 3.2 percent. About 60 percent of the population is concentrated in four provinces (Southern, Central, Lusaka and Copperbelt) along the line of rail. The country's urban population accounts for above 50 percent of the total. (MAFF, 1997)

Zambia is divided into nine administrative provinces. These include Northern, Luapula, Copperbelt, North-Western, Central, Lusaka, Eastern, Southern and Western. Each of the provincial centres are linked to Lusaka, the capital city with a major tarred road. There is a rail way that cuts the country almost in the centre running all the way from Livingstone in Southern Province, through Lusaka, Central and Copperbelt Provinces to Katanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). There is also another rail truck built with the help of the Chinese Government in the 1970s which runs from Kapiri Mposhi in Central Province, through Northern Province to Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania.

Other major physical features include, The Mchinga Escarpment, which forms the boundary of Central and Eastern Provinces and the Zambezi in the Southern Province. The country also has some game parks like the Kafue National Park that covers parts of Southern, and Central Provinces and the Luangwa National Park.

1.3 History

1.3.1 Pre-Colonial era

The history of human beings in Zambia dates back to ancient days and some scholars consider Central Africa to be one of the origins of the human race. Ape-men/women once roaming through the Zambezi valley and along the Kalomo River. For a period of about 400,000 years, early Stone Age men and women lived by killing game, and gathering roots and berries. Dwellings were made of branches, and grass and brushwood. A great step came with the use of fire, which enabled human beings control their environment.
An early site was discovered at Kalambo Falls near Zambia's border with Tanzania. Found at this site was some charcoal and ashes indicating the presence of a campfire.

These Stone Age communities probably never managed to acquire the art of cultivating crops. They lived a hand-to-mouth type of life. The population accordingly remained infinitely small, and when new migrants came from the north, these people were helpless against the more highly civilized invaders. (Gann, 1964)

Gann (1964) says no one knows exactly when the great migration from North Africa started and what could have set it into motion. But he says, some authorities believe that it may have started around 300 B.C. Early migrants are most likely to have come from the Great Lakes region of East Africa. They drifted across the high plateau of Central Africa.

The date of their arrival in present day Zambia is not clear, but by A.D. 90 when the legionaries of Imperial Rome were matching against Caledonia, Bantu-speaking people distinguished by a character of 'channel ware pottery', were probably already settled north of the Zambezi. Not much is known about these early migrants, but semitic influences may perhaps have influenced their religious concepts and material culture. The invaders could build using stones, and they were skilled craftsmen/women, among them some knew how to smelt iron. The use of metal was a tremendous step ahead, as this improved the quality of weapons, and agricultural implements they used. They also possessed herds of long-horned cattle and sheep. They settled to do some farming where the place was free from the dreaded tsetse flies and there was enough water.

The new comers used hoes to cultivate millets, edible roots, peas and cucurbits using the slash-and-burn (Chitemene) method of agriculture. Farming or herding of cattle, sheep and goats supplemented by hunting and fishing constituted an improved way of life.

More food became available, society could afford to give employment to a few specialists like the smiths. Political units grew bigger as small bands came together into village communities, where some of them merged into more powerful kingdoms. (Gann, 1964)

Between 1500 and 1700 the first large-scale migrations from the Luba/Lunda empires of
the Congo and Angola took place. These were led by powerful chiefs and occupied much of the northern parts of the country, driving out local people they found. Another wave of migration took place between 1800 and 1900 from South Africa, where the migrants settled in eastern and western parts of the country. By 1900 the groups had settled to village life and lived by farming, fishing, hunting and collecting wild edibles. (Kasoma, 1986).

Seventy-three tribes emerged and are still present in Zambia today. These also include some 30 different dialects that fall within the seven principle languages (Lunda, Luvale, Kaonde, Bemba, Nyanja, Lozi, and Tonga).

1.3.2 Colonial era

First contacts with White people occurred in the 19th Century with the opening of trade routes from the east and west coasts of Africa by the Arabs and Portuguese. These traversed the country in search for ivory, copper and later slaves. They opened trade posts in places such as Feira now Luangwa District.

Another group of people, the explorers, and missionaries who came in the second half of the 19th century followed the Arab and Portuguese traders. Among these are people like David Livingstone who was a British explorer and missionary. Livingstone made his first trip around 1850s. On one of his journeys along the lower Zambezi the local people led him to the giant water falls they called 'Musi O Tunya' meaning the 'Smoke that thunders'. Livingstone named this water falls, Victoria Falls, after the reigning Queen of England then, the name the falls bears to this day. In addition, the town that developed near the falls was named Livingstone. (Gann, 1964)

Other missionaries worth mentioning are people like Francois Coillard of the Paris Missionary Society who established one of the earliest missions in the country. Coillard built the first mission in 1885 at Seseke in Western Zambia. Five years later, Coillard played a crucial role in persuading the Paramount Chief Lewanika of the Lozi people to grant the Lonchner Concession, which gave the chartered British South Africa (B.S.A.) Company mineral rights over a vast area. This arrangement eventually brought Western
Zambia into the British sphere of influence. (Gann, 1964).

In 1891, the British Government had extended the protection to Lewanika's kingdom as requested. The B.S.A Company was given the responsibility to maintain peace and order within the region. Nevertheless, the imperial Government retained the right to supervise the Company's activities. By 1899, the whole territory had come under B.S.A. Company rule after the company's hunters had obtained concessions from other chiefs.

The company divided the country into two parts for administrative purposes. There was North-Western Rhodesia with headquarters at Kalomo and North-Eastern Rhodesia where Fort Jameson (now Chipata) was the headquarters. The two were amalgamated into one in 1911 under the name of Northern Rhodesia, named after John Cecil Rhodes who was the Chief Executive of the B.S.A. Company.

The administration of the Company continued until 1924 when the Colonial Office took over control, making Northern Rhodesia a British Protectorate. During the colonial era, the British Parliament made laws for the country. Major policy changes were effected through Orders-in-Council. Matters involving day-to-day running of the country were dealt with by the Executive Council (Exco) and the Legislative Council (Legco) which were both presided over by the resident Governor appointed by the British Monarch.

The Exco was made up of civil servants that advised the Governor on governance matters. Membership to the Legco came from elected and non-elected members who were called official and unofficial members respectively. (Gann, 1964). For its administration, the B.S.A Company used only a handful of staff whose main job was the collection of taxes from indigenous people. The local people's huts were burnt at the least sign of resistance of paying tax. Such treatment made the indigenous and some white settlers resent the company's rule. White settlers also hated the company rule for being strict with policies on land and mineral rights making it difficult for them to settle anywhere they liked.

The Protectorate period (1924-1964) saw economic and political developments of Zambia. For instance, large copper deposits were discovered in an area that became and
still is known as the Copperbelt. Mines were opened and started attracting large numbers of local people who sought work in order to afford the taxes. By 1930, there were about 30,000 Africans employed on the Copperbelt. The mines also attracted other supporting industries making the Copperbelt both an industrial and commercial centre. (Gann, 1964)

One of the greatest common experiences by the African mineworkers was racial segregation by the whites, which made Africans form welfare societies that later culminated into a political organisation that championed the cause for independence.

Another important feature about the colonial era worthy mentioning is the Federation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland spear-headed by Sir Roy Welensky. The three territories were amalgamated in 1953 and Welensky became the Prime Minister, with headquarters in Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia now Zimbabwe. The Federation was bitterly opposed by the Africans in Northern Rhodesia for two main reasons. Firstly, Africans felt their territory was going to be exploited of its resources as a 'milk cow' to build Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, they felt that the Federation meant perpetuation of white rule. To this effect, African nationalism emerged in 1948 in Zambia, when the African National Congress (A.N.C.) was formed, and Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula became the leader of the party in 1951. Nkumbula's party agitated for self-government, independence, and an end to racial segregation.

A.N.C. split in 1958 when Kenneth David Kaunda (Secretary General) formed his party called Zambia National African Congress (ZANC). ZANC was banned soon after it started and its leaders arrested. Its successor the United National Independence Party (UNIP) proved even more effective especially after Kaunda came out of prison and assumed leadership in 1960. UNIP grew into a mass party and hatched the Master Plan of civil disobedience throughout the country with the aim of having the British Government dissolve the Federation and grant Northern Rhodesia independence.

In 1963, the Federation collapsed when UNIP and A.N.C. formed a coalition government after an election that lacked universal suffrage. Kaunda became the first Prime Minister. Early in 1964, elections encompassing universal suffrage this time were held which saw
Kaunda taking over power as President and independence came in October of the same year.

1.3.3. Post Colonial era (1964-1990)

Kaunda's belief in oneness of humanity was largely responsible for his propounding of the philosophy of humanism, which he launched at the UNIP National Congress in 1967. This became the official philosophy for the country.

From 1964 when Zambia attained independence to 1973, the country was a multiparty state and this era is called the First Republic. Then came the Second Republic during which a one party type of rule surfaced. This era lasted up to 1991 when the country reverted to Multiparty Democracy (MMD) took over power.

Soon after independence, the new Zambian Government embarked on mass construction of infrastructure. It was in the first ten years of independence that a lot of institutions of learning were built. For instance, The University of Zambia was built during this time. Then, the national economy was thriving due to favourable prices of copper on the world market. Copper mining became the mainstay of the Zambian economy. Other industries emerged to support copper mining. As a result, other equally important industries like agriculture were relegated to the background. In addition, government nationalised most of the private companies, seeing many whites leave the country as their positions had been taken over by the indigenous Zambians.

Things could not remain the same, copper prices started nose-diving in the mid 1970s, such that the economy started performing badly. This was also coupled with some measures the Kaunda regime took against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who in turn, cut off financial support to the country. For the first time after independence Zambians experienced hardships. The rate of depreciation of the Kwacha was high; there were shortages of essential goods, leading to the cost of living being high. The higher the cost of living became, the more the Zambians resented the then ruling party (UNIP). At the time, there seemed to be no way of changing the status quo, as a result, a few coup
attempts by both civilians and military personnel were experienced.

The turning point dawned with the 1990 failed coup by the army, which took advantage of lack of peace sparked-off by food riots due to mealie meal prices that had been hiked. UNIP then suggested holding a referendum to determine whether Zambians were for or against the re-introduction of Multipartism. The referendum never took place as the Kaunda regime resolved to instead hold early elections which they thought they could easily win. To the contrary, Kaunda lost the elections to the current ruling party the MMD ending 18 years of one party rule in October 1991.

Soon after assuming power in 1991, the MMD government embarked on privatisation of most government parastatals and companies leading to massive redundancies of employees as most of these parastatals had a huge workforce. This was coupled with the harsh economic conditions experienced by most Zambians due to the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), a condition for continued assistance dictated by the IMF and the World Bank who are the major financial donors. Other land-marks witnessed during the MMD reign was the selling of council and some government housing units in 1996, as a way meant to empower the citizens. This move was greatly condemned by the opposition parties who perceived it as a ploy to buy votes from the electorate as it took place just before the parliamentary and presidential elections which MMD won.

1.4 Economy

Trade dominated the country's economy during the pre-colonial era. People engaged in a form of trade that was called 'barter', where they exchanged goods. People exchanged copper, ivory and later slaves. Like in all other areas in Africa, the slave trade became intensified and robbed the country of able-bodied men who were sold to the Americas where they worked on plantations and mines.

When the slave trade was banned, the western part of the country found a new source of wealth in its cattle. The export of cattle became profitable when the rinderpest epidemic wiped out cattle in Southern Rhodesia in 1896. Traders from Bulawayo, many of them East European Jews, made their way to Barotseland where they found no difficulties in
buying cattle unlike the Zulus of South Africa where cattle was paid as bride price.

During the company rule, one other prominent feature that surfaced was taxation, which was introduced in 1900. Able-bodied men went to work on the mines locally and in South Africa in order to earn money for tax. This marked the beginning of the labour market economy. All white migrants needed African labourers. The Administration itself also needed carriers and these were Africans. Therefore, Zambia's real wealth for a very long time in history lay in its mineral resources. The first mine (lead and zinc) to be discovered was at Broken Hill now Kabwe in 1902 by an Australian Engineer called T.G. Davey. This encouraged other mineral explorers to move northwards until they (white explorers) discovered the rich copper deposits on the Copperbelt.

For a very long time, Zambia's economy revolved around mining. There were attempts especially in the Second Republic to promote agriculture as it was realised that copper was a wasting asset. But these attempts were not followed with serious allocation of resources, making rural areas very unattractive for settlement. Crop producer prices remained low, while prices of other goods and services used by rural people were high compared to urban areas. This to some extent signified government's lack of commitment to agricultural and rural development in general.

It is worthy noting here that, mining as the major sector of the country's economy could not have prospered without the building of the railway line that made transportation of ore easy. The railway line, which was built by John Cecil Rhodes, was completed in 1909 when it reached Katanga in the DRC. Transportation of ore and agricultural produce was enhanced. (Gann, 1964)

1.5 Agriculture

Zambia's agriculture is predominately rain-fed and rainfall is one of the major determinants of the sector's performance in a given year. Zambia currently has an estimated nine million hectares or 12 percent of its total area suitable for cultivation and 16 million hectares suitable for livestock grazing.

The country is divided into three Agro-ecological zones. Zone one (1) is mainly located
in southern areas of Southern and Western Provinces. Zone two (2) covers the central belt of the country. This is the most populous zone, with over four million inhabitants and has the highest agricultural potential. It has a well distributed annual rainfall of between 800 to 1000 mm and generally has good soils. Zone three (3) covers large areas of Northern, Luapula and North Western Provinces and has a population of about 3.5 million.

Zambia has approximately 700,000 farm families who can be categorised as follows: small-holder farmers, constituting about 75 percent, with an average farm size of two hectares. An estimated 17 percent are emerging farmers with farms of between 10 to 20 hectares in size. The remaining eight percent are the commercial farmers with farm sizes exceeding 60 hectares. Most commercial farmers are located along the line of rail or near major urban centres. (MAFF, 1997)

It can be seen from the farm sizes that the small holder farmers mainly produce to meet their domestic needs, they normally have very little to sell.

The types of crops grown in Zambia include maize, sorghum, millets, rice and wheat in the cereals category; sunflower, soyabean, groundnuts and sesame are grown as oilseed crops. Other crops grown are beans, cotton, coffee, tea, and tobacco. (Chimowitz, 1990).

Livestock forms an important part of the agricultural sector in western, southern, central and eastern parts of Zambia. Cattle, sheep, goats and chickens are also some of the livestock reared in Zambia. It is worth noting here that starting from the early 1980s, cattle populations have gone down drastically due to corridor disease commonly known as Denkete, with Southern Province being the worst hit.

The agricultural sector has not been spared from liberalisation of the economy introduced by the MMD Government. This phenomenon was characterised by the closure of lending institutions (e.g. Lima Bank) that provided credit to small-holder farmers and the disbanding of the cooperative movement that acted as the middleman between farmers and crop buying organisations. Farmers have been left to fend for themselves, they must find their own credit for inputs and market for their produce. This measure has had its tailing effects on the agricultural sector. Most farmers especially the small holder, have
become more impoverished than they were before 1991 as a result of the liberalisation of the economy which is a new phenomenon farmers have yet to grasp. Coupled with the liberalisation of the economy, there has been the big drought that hit the southern region in the recent past. The drought had a devastating effect on the agricultural industry.

Given the above scenario, if Zambian agriculture was to develop, it was important that alternative farming methods that are less dependent on chemical fertilizer and market related information were made available to the farmers. This is only possible if the information dissemination media adopted methods that address the real information needs of the farmers. Rigidities in the media used to disseminate information and how information was disseminated to the farmers need to be eliminated, so that farmers as the ultimate beneficiaries of agricultural development are accorded an opportunity to participate full in the information dissemination process. Radio especially 'participatory radio' with all its advantages over the other media, could be used effectively to enhance rural information dissemination. For instance, radio is able to overcome literacy and language barriers, it is cheap and easy to maintain and operate.

1.5 The mass media in Zambia

1.5.1 History of the mass media in Zambia

The history of the mass media in Zambia dates back to 1906 when the Livingstone Pioneer hit the streets. This is believed to have been the first newspaper in the country. W. Tranter published the Livingstone Pioneer, the paper was a weekly with circulation limited only to Livingstone town. The Livingstone Pioneer was in the same year succeeded by the Livingstone Mail, which was published by Leopold Frank Moore. Both papers were published for the white settlers in Livingstone. The two papers set what could be termed as a trend of 50 years of the white settlers' newspapers. These papers followed some racial policy in nature and form. (Kasoma, 1990)

The 1950s saw the establishment of privately owned newspapers for the Africans though they were short lived as the white settlers who had the money never advertised in these papers. Newspapers for Africans included the Zambezi News (1955-1957), African Mail
(1957-1958) published by Alexander Scott, *African Life* (1958-1961) by Sikota Wina and *African Mail* under David Astor which started in 1960. The *African Mail* is the current *Zambia Daily Mail*. All these papers were national weeklies except for *Zambia News* which was published by the Livingstone Mail Limited. All these papers were published in English, except the *Zambezi News*, which was published in Lozi and Tonga.

Generally the private press, both pre-independence and post-independence served as a watch-dog against the government of the day.

After independence in 1964, government took over the running of most of the newspapers except for the Lonrho owned *Times of Zambia* which survived as a private paper. The press then, was not allowed to criticise the authorities, as was the case with the private press because it was seen to be an arm of government a phenomenon reminiscent of the Development theory of mass communication propounded in the 1960s. (Moore, 1990).

The press in Zambia was initially privately-owned. Similarly, when radio broadcasting started in 1939 on the Copperbelt, radio broadcasting experiments were conducted by private people. Officially, radio broadcasting in Zambia started in 1941 at the Lusaka's Old City Airport. (Kasoma, 1990). Initially, broadcasting was intended for the white settlers. It was not until World War II that the Colonial Office decided to broadcast to the natives as they were called, to inform them about how the British Army was faring at the war front. The Department of Information, through Hurry Franklin introduced the sauce pan radio which was very cheap for Africans to afford. Television too, started on the Copperbelt in 1961 by Lonrho, a privately-owned company. The facilities were bought by government in 1964, which opened another station in Lusaka.

1.5.2 Radio Farm Forums in Zambia

Radio Farm Forums were first started in Canada in 1941. The forum idea was adopted for the purpose of utilizing radio for education. Radio Farm Forums were conceived bearing in mind that, the essence of broadcasting could not be achieved if the rural audience receive the information in a passive manner. The agriculturists then, believed that if ideas
transmitted were analyzed, discussed and collaborated among the audience, the broadcasts would become more meaningful so as to contribute to the well-being of the masses. Secondly, the forums intended using the idea that rural people all over the world got together frequently at common meeting places (e.g. Insaka) to discuss questions related to either an individual or the whole community and then decide what course of action to take. (Natesh, 1966).

In Zambia, Radio Farm Forums were preceded by a survey sponsored by UNESCO in 1966. A pilot project was introduced in December 1966 in the Bemba language covering Copperbelt, Luapula and Northern provinces. In May 1968 broadcasts for Western and North-Western provinces were commenced. While the broadcasts for Southern, Lusaka, Central, and Eastern provinces started in July 1968.

The Radio Farm Forums were run by the Communications Unit, now National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS) of the then Ministry of Rural Development (now Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries).

The forums were classified into three categories namely;

a) Main Radio Farm Forums, (these were R.F.F. groups organised by agricultural extension officers);

b) Aided Radio Farm Forums (these were supervised by Community Development officers); and,

c) Self-help Radio Farm Forums (these were sponsored among cooperative societies and individual farmers also took up some initiative).

By the end of October 1968 there were;

a) 281 Main Radio Farm Forums
b) 59 Aided Radio Farm Forums
c) 97 Self Help Radio Farm Forums.

437 Total

Programming took the feature, drama, documentary and panel discussions format. Programmes in each language were to last 30 minutes and would be broadcast in the
afternoon once per week. Programmes would be recorded on the different farms of the respective language areas. Planning of programmes was done in consultation with the local extension experts who were believed to know the problems of the farmers better. In most cases NAIS supplied batteries and stationary to the main and self-help Radio Farm Forums. Further, a feedback system was also established in form of discussion report books, which were filled in after each broadcast. The discussion report books included such information as the date of the broadcast, subject of broadcast and questions by the farmers on issues from the broadcast. (Natesh, 1966).

Chairpersons and secretaries for each of the Radio Farm Forums were chosen. And these are the people (chairpersons) who chaired the forum meetings. The forum meetings often took place at neutral places chosen by the farmers themselves. Sometimes the farmers erected some shelters where they could listen to the broadcasts. At each meeting where possible, an extension worker was present to provide answers to questions raised during the discussion. In addition, incentives in form of inputs and farm implements were given to forums that were performing well.

Changes in the number, popularity, and performance of the R.F.F. became noticed in 1983. The NAIS Annual Report for the same year (1983) highlights the fact that R.F.F were not doing well hence new approaches were being sought to activate R.F.F. The situation deteriorated even further as the1999 NAIS annual report does not mention the number of R.F.F. groups in the country. Chibombo District, the area of the practical attachment, boasts of 20 R.F.F but only about five were active. We can not talk about Muswishi the actual field site of the attachment, there was completely no R.F.F. in the whole area. That could have been the reason why the idea was made welcome when FARMESA introduced participatory R.F.F.

1.6 Muswishi Area

Muswishi Agricultural Camp falls in the traditional domain of Chibombo District. The area is about 20 kilometres east of Kabwe town. Muswishi is closest to Kabwe than Chibombo District Headquarters.
The area forms part of the central plateau, of Central Province. It lies between latitude 1200 to 1400 meters above sea level. Muswishi falls under agro-ecological zone 2 with an average rainfall of 800 to 1000 mm. The area has a rainfall pattern that spreads over five months from November to March, giving an average of 125 rain days.

The soils of the area are well drained, very deep, brown to red, friable, moderately leached, fine loamy to clay type. These soils have low base saturation due to some leaching that has taken place, as a result they tend to be acidic. Muswishi has also suffered a lot of deforestation due to large tracks of land that were opened up for agricultural activities and charcoal burning, a common feature for most areas near major urban centres in Zambia.

However, an all weather gravel road links the area to Kabwe. There are other feeder roads connected to the main Muswishi road. The area has five schools where only one is a Basic School that runs up to Grade 9. There is a clinic which is situated at the agricultural centre.

The area is drained by one seasonal stream, the Muswishi, whose water is used for domestic and gardening purposes. Most of the people use water from boreholes that are connected to mono-pumps. The area has a population of about 5,000 people, which consist of the Lenjes, who are the indigenous people, the Swakas, and the Lalas. A few other people like the Bembas, Tongas and Shonas have also settled in the area. The main occupation of the people in Muswishi is agriculture. Most of the people in Muswishi fall in the small holder category of farmers who grow enough crops for domestic use. Before the liberalisation of the economy, some people in Muswishi were almost becoming emergent farmers. This is evident in the hectarage they were cultivating and a few implements they had acquired. When visiting the people of Muswishi now, it is disheartening, to observe that they can no longer cultivate the area they used to because they can not afford inputs. As if this is not enough, those that had bought some cattle, had most of it die from corridor disease leaving them worse off. Muswishi is actually a high potential area that is supposed to feed the whole of Kabwe. People in the area have attributed their poor life condition to bad government policies on agriculture.

It is because of this potential that the area was identified as a project site by FARMESA.
1.7 Farm-Level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA)

Farm-Level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA), is a regional collaborative initiative of five countries, which include Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The programme was funded by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) with finances being administered by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

FARMESA aimed at improving 'food security, income and resource management' of the small-holder farm families in the region. This was to be accomplished through the promotion, consolidation, and integration of participatory, holistic, inter-disciplinary, gender sensitive, environmentally friendly and farmer focussed methods of research and development.

In Zambia, the programme started in 1998 in March with a one-week workshop of the stakeholders in Kabwe. During the workshop, participants undertook a field trip to Muswishi where a 'participatory needs assessment' was conducted. The participants with Muswishi people, identified the following as some of their problems;

a) inadequate credit for agricultural inputs;
b) poor marketing facilities for agricultural produce;
c) livestock diseases;
d) inadequate planting material for crops like cassava;
e) sweet potatoes and cow peas which do not require fertilizer;
f) and poor communication channels between the farmers and other stakeholders, to mention but a few.

To address the above problems faced by Muswishi farmers, mini-projects were conceived. Among them, the Communication Mini-Project was established to look into the 'participatory' information exchange of the stakeholders. To this effect a communication committee comprising of the farmers, teachers, extension officers and NAIS staff was formed. The communication committee was formed to spear-head
information dissemination among the stakeholders in the area. To do this, the committee, after a participatory information needs assessment identified, a newsletter and participatory radio as some of the media they could use.

The committee started working in April 1999 with the production of a newsletter they called FARMESA Ku Muswishi that was to be published quarterly in English, Tonga and Bemba. The participatory radio project only started in June 2000 due to financial constraints. FARMESA as a project was to last up to December, 2001. Though financial support to the project was withdrawn in March 2000 because the financiers felt the implementing organisation had deviated from the agreed upon goals.

This forms the background of attachment the author of this report undertook. The attachment was an eye opener to a lot of development problems rural people encounter. To solve these problems, a holistic approach need to be employed, as rural people do not see life as segments but a whole.
Chapter 2
Why Muswishi for the attachment?

2.1 Terms of Reference

This student used the following aims as his terms of reference.

a) To experience how participatory radio could be used in enhancing development among the rural people of Muswishi.

b) To assess how adequate the current R.F.F. programmes produced by National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS) were, in addressing the information needs of the rural people of Zambia and make appropriate recommendations.

c) To work with the Muswishi Information Committee in providing a participatory communication channel (using radio) for which stakeholders in the area would exchange technical information useful in decision-making on their identified and prioritized problems.

This student chose Muswishi for the attachment because he had worked with the farmers in the area since the inception of the FARMESA Project in March 1998. As one interested in rural development, this student in a way, by working with the people of Muswishi, desired to contribute to the rise in the living standards of the farmers since this was the ultimate goal of FARMESA by using participatory radio. Secondly, communication for development as taught at the University of Zambia embraces the tenets of participation of the development beneficiaries. This was in line with the FARMESA's perception of rural development.

2.2 Methodology

The attachment lasted about four months, starting in the first week of June to the third week of October 2000. This student worked among the small-scale farmers of Muswishi for the whole period of the attachment. He worked with the Muswishi Information Committee, supervised by the Office of the Senior Agricultural Information Officer (SAIO) - Central Province, under the auspices of FARMESA, a SIDA funded project.
Lined up for the attachment were a number of activities. Some of them are discussed below.

2.2.1 Workshop

On 6th June 2000, a two-day workshop was held to teach the Information Committee members how to conduct an information needs assessment, handling of recording equipment and how to produce a radio programme. The workshop did not aim at producing broadcast experts but laypersons who would produce simple and unedited radio programmes in a bid to inculcate a sense of ownership in the whole idea. Ms. Mukonde Mweemba - Acting Senior Agricultural Information Officer conducted the training workshop with the help of the local extension officers and her staff. Seven participants attended the workshop. Following are some of the resolutions reached during the workshop.

a) Participants agreed that each of them would interview at least five respondents using an available sample, mainly from within their localities. The following are some of the questions that the committee members asked their respondents.
   
i) What information media are available in Muswishi?
   
ii) What programmes do they enjoy listening to on radio?
   
iii) What radio programmes would they like listening to if they had an opportunity of establishing their own radio station?
   
iv) What type of programme format would the farmers prefer listening to?
   
v) How long should the radio programmes be?
   
vi) How good is the radio and television reception in Muswishi?

b) They agreed to be meeting every Tuesday.

c) They also agreed to form two pilot radio farm forum groups in Muswishi Central and Lwumbika village for ease of supervision.

d) Since the area is multilingual, Tonga and Bemba were chosen to be the main languages that would be used for programme recording as nearly all other dialects fell within these two. Of course, the Lenjes, Swakas, and Lalas were free to use
their languages during the recordings.

2.2.2 Follow-up meeting to the workshop

The Information Committee was supposed to have met on 13th June 2000. But unfortunately this was not possible due to a bereavement that befell one of the extension officers. Instead the chairperson postponed the meeting for two weeks. And the only time the committee met was on Tuesday, 27/06/00.

When the committee met, they among other things discussed responses arising from the information needs assessment they had conducted. Below are some of the responses.

a) The only widely used information medium in Muswishi was radio. There are very few people in the area who own television sets, which are powered by car batteries. In addition, people in the area did not have adequate access to print media, especially on agriculture. However, the respondents acknowledged that there was good reception for radio and television in the area.

b) Most respondents enjoyed listening to drama programmes like 'Fyabukaya', 'Sewero' and 'Chisobano' and other entertainment programmes such as musical programmes.

c) They also liked listening to agricultural programmes.

d) Most respondents said, they would like to listen to agricultural programmes, especially on how to acquire inputs, marketing of their produce, and growing crops that do not need a lot of fertilizer. Most female respondents, said they needed programmes that would educate them on how to take care of their homes. They also said, they wanted among others, programmes on recipes of locally grown crops like cowpeas, cassava to mention a few, and handcraft making.
e) On programme presentation, most respondents said, they would not mind listening to interviews, dramatised developmental programmes, panel discussions and straight talks as long as the programmes were spiced with some local songs.

f) In addition, they wanted programmes to be 20 to 30 minutes long.

2.2.3 Drawing-up of the Programme Schedule

After discussing responses of the information needs assessment, the members proceeded to draw a programme schedule for the months of August and September 2000 indicating the subject areas to be recorded.

a) Making doormats, baskets, and flower pots  
b) Growing apple trees  
c) Baking bread from bananas  
d) Making cow peas recipes  
e) Mushroom growing (especially the planting materials)  
f) Supplementary feeding for cattle, goats and chickens  
g) Conservation farming, and  
h) Tree nursery preparation

2.2.4 Formation of the R.F.F.s

The Information Committee agreed to form two R.F.F.s within the existing farmer groups in Muswishi Central and Lyumbika village. Therefore, the question arose as to how many members each R.F.F. would have, since the existing groups had more than 50 members each. This question arose because effective R.F.F. participation needed about 15 to 20 members. The committee agreed that despite the groups being very big, not all members turned up for meetings each time they were called, so this would not affect the performance of the R.F.F. As such, the committee resolved to go ahead with the existing groups and if attendance at each R.F.F. meeting would be more than 20, there might be need to form other R.F.F. groups. In Lwumbika village a women's group known as Chipaba was chosen for the R.F.F. Chipaba Women's Group also has a few men who are
patrons. The choice of the two groups (Muswishi Central and Chipaha R.F.F.s) was made on the basis of their commitment towards development programmes as perceived by the extension officers and the Information Committee.

2.2.5 Audio Programme Recording

The recordings were done locally with some of the successful farmers in a particular agricultural enterprise and experts as identified by the Information Committee. The Information Committee members with the assistance of the NAIS staff did the recordings. FARMESA bought an audio cassette recorder that the farmers were using for programme recordings. The following were some of the audio programmes recorded.

i) Making doormats from grass
ii) Baking bread from cassava
iii) Making cow peas recipes
iv) Growing cassava as a cope-up strategy during hunger times
v) Conservation farming
vi) Loan repayment, and
vii) Crop marketing

As already stated, the farmers themselves recorded these programmes. They also recorded some songs that were used as they listened to the play back. The recordings were done on 18th and 25th July 2000 in three different locations.

2.2.6 Meeting of the R.F.F. groups

An initial meeting was held 11th and 14th July 2000 for Muswishi Central and Lwumbika respectively, by the Information Committee Chairperson to sensitise the members on the R.F.F. concept. The members of each group were given an opportunity to choose a day when they would be meeting to listen to the play back of recorded programmes.

Both groups chose to be meeting fortnightly. The Muswishi Central Group agreed to be
meeting every other Tuesday to listen to the programmes. Their meetings would last one hour with about 20 to 30 minutes listening time. This group chose Mr. Poliki Chilumelume as their chairperson and Ms Maureen Mumba as the secretary. The Information Committee members would record the programmes before the R.F.F. group met for each of the respective groups.

The Chipaba Group said they would be meeting every other Friday. This group would be meeting at the Village Headwoman's home who they chose as the chairperson. The Chipaba group maintained the same leadership structure. The meeting schedules are given in Figures 1 and 2.

**Fig 1**

**Meeting schedule for the Muswishi Central Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Subject listened to</th>
<th>Attendance by gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/08/00</td>
<td>Making cow peas recipes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/08/00</td>
<td>Growing cassava as a cope-up strategy during hunger times.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/08/00</td>
<td>Conservation farming.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/09/00</td>
<td>Loan repayment.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/10/00</td>
<td>Crop marketing.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total for the period of the attachment</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig 2**

**Meeting schedule for the Chipaba Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Subject listened to</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/08/00</td>
<td>Making door mates from grass.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/09/00</td>
<td>Baking bread from cassava</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/09/00</td>
<td>Making cow peas recipes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/10/00</td>
<td>Conservation farming</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If all the two groups had met as scheduled, there should have been eight meetings where R.F.F. members listened to recorded programmes. But it was not possible because on about three occasions there were funerals in the area. Whenever there was a funeral in the area, meetings were cancelled until after two to three weeks. For instance, at one occasion an Extension Officer and the Chairperson for Chipaba group had bereavements making it difficult for the meeting to take place. In addition, there were times when other agro-organisations were meeting the same farmers, as a result the R.F.F. programmes had to be postponed.

2.2.7 Feed back mechanism

The Information Committee designed a 'Discussion Report Form' that shows when the R.F.F. groups were meeting, the subject discussed in the programme, questions on issues discussed, their reaction to the issues raised in the programme, and the attendance. This form was filled in triplicate every time the groups met to listen to the programmes with copies being sent to the Information Committee, NAIS, while the group also retained a copy.

2.3 Justification

It has now generally been accepted that conditions in the rural areas for small holder farmers have deteriorated over the years. Exhaustion of the soil, difficulties in acquiring inputs, inadequate markets for farm produce and the departure of many young people for the urban areas due to unattractive living conditions in rural areas are said to have contributed to lack of development in the rural areas. (Chimowitz, 1990).

In the past few decades we have witnessed the growth of sprawling shanty compounds on the outskirts of most African towns and cities. Migration of people to urban areas in Africa was accelerated by the freedom of movement achieved with the coming of independence. On arrival in the urban centres, rural people continued leading precarious lives with little or no funds to set themselves up as well as no social welfare provisions.
The migrants just managed to survive, very few of them found jobs, as the job market had equally shrunk. The shanties in most cases became the host of all vices, and were prone to epidemic outbreaks due to lack of sanitation facilities. African governments spent a lot of money on these unplanned settlements. In addition, the migrants had to be supplied with food, which they could have grown had they remained in the rural areas.

It is in the interest of every rural developmentalist like this student, that the rural-urban migration be reduced. In as much as the largest part of trying to curb rural-urban migration lies in the government, the media can equally play an important role by empowering rural dwellers with relevant information that would enable them carry out profitable farming. From history, national media seem to have performed badly in achieving development for the rural people in the South. The idea that appears feasible is that of setting up of community media. That is why Nair and White (1990) argue that, there is need to generate endogenous sources of development. Society must be able to shape it’s own destiny. There is need to strengthen self-reliance and interdependence so that individuals and people collectively can achieve the inalienable right to better life. This requires communication, which is not only a system of public information but also an integral part of education and development. They (Nair and White, 1990.) further suggest that to bridge the information gap, there is need to increase the communication competencies of the people through participatory communication at local level.

While it is true that the widely agreed upon potential of the media is counterbalanced by the complexity and persuasiveness of the obstacles to change. Radio still holds a compelling attraction to people hoping to make an impact on rural development. For instance, there have been a number of efforts to use radio in education of rural people in the Dominican Republic. Radio Santa Maria founded in 1956 by the Jesuit Priests ran literacy programmes from 1964 to 1970 in which 25, 459 adults participated and received literacy certificates. (Mc Anany & Mayo, 1990).

Tanzania also had a similar experience, literacy radio programmes saw an increase in the number of people that took part each subsequent year from 1969. For instance, the programme "Kapanga ni Kuchagwa" (To plan is to choose) broadcast by the Institute of Adult Education had 1,100 participants in 1969. In 1975 (five years later), when
"Chakula ni uhai" (Food is life), a programme broadcast by the same institute was conducted, there were 3 million participants. (Mc Anany & Mayo, 1990).

The Radio Farm Forum concept brings the farmers together so that there is participatory decision making. The group concept promotes uniformity among the farmers. The farmers learn to tackle their problems as a group and this idea has done so well in India.

This student holds radio in high esteem as a developmental instrument in rural Zambia because of some advantages the medium holds over other media. For instance, radio still remains one of the cheapest media that could be used in the rural areas. In addition the medium has.

a) the capacity to reach a large audience at the same time
b) no boundaries
c) the capacity to reach even remotest places that are impassable during sometimes of the year, and
d) requires no level of literacy

On the basis of these advantages, radio could still perform wonders especially if it was going to complement the efforts of other forms of agricultural extension in a participatory manner.

Top-down message imposition largely correlates with audience alienation, because the recipients have little or no sense of ownership of the messages. This could be one of the reasons why Radio Farm Forums in Zambia have not done well. Programming of R.F.F. in Zambia has been the preserve of NAIS staff. Starting from the programme schedule to the actual presentation, farmers are not consulted. If farmers were involved, it is at the recording stage. Farmers do not influence which programme should be on air. Neither can they suggest when the programme should be aired. It is for this reason that this student concurs with the suggestions by Tomaseli (1997) that action media, where target groups design their own messages, with the help of a media specialist are more effective. The ideas advanced by Tomaseli (1997) and later by Melkote and Vallant, (1994) worked in the Dominican Republic. Facilitating participation of people at the grassroots in decisions
regarding message-making is considered critical to message impact and effect. In addition, White and Pradeep (1996) also posit that participation in its most developed form is ‘self management.’ Here the target adopters are given an opportunity to participate in decision-making regarding the topics and issues of the messages. When people participate in developing messages intended to enhance their ability to make a living or solve problems which affect the quality of their lives, they are more likely to seek out and apply indigenous and expert information.

This was the essence of the practical attachment, to give the attachee an opportunity to work and share experiences with the farmers of Muswishi and other stakeholders using insights this student acquired from the Development Communication course work, at the University of Zambia. Ultimately, this attachment experience should lead to improved information dissemination between all stakeholders not only in Muswishi, but all over Zambia where a similar experiment will be carried out.

2.4 Literature Review

An increase in the flow of information is a key factor in the spread and smoothness of development. Information lubricates the very fabrics of society and contributes to the spiral of development. Information makes expert knowledge available where it is required, raising the general level of aspiration. (Schramm, 1964. pp 23-40).

Given the important role information plays in development, one wonders how much information is available to rural people and in what form? In the post industrial society now referred to as the information society, information has replaced energy as the basic economic component. By contrast, the least developed sectors of the South are the least rich in information and this impacts negatively on their economy. (McAnany, 1980).

The mass medium one is likely to encounter in the rural areas even today is radio. Other media like newspapers and television are rare. This scenario is not only unique to the South but it is also common in the North. The supply of information drops sharply as one goes from the urban areas towards the villages. Thus information is least where attitudes and behaviours are in need of change. There is very heavy coverage of the urban areas as
compared to rural areas. For instance, studies carried out in 1953, revealed that in the USA more than 80% of the urban dwellers as compared to 76% of the rural dwellers knew who the then British Prime Minister was. In the same year, in Brazil, about 80% of the urban dwellers against 50% of the rural dwellers knew who their president was. The situation was the same in India where only the Patils (headmen) knew that Nehru was the leader of their country, and even the Patils, this was all they knew about politics. (Schramm, 1964.)

The above situation is no different from what obtains in Zambia. Information flow to rural areas is still a very big problem. Even radio, which used to be the only accessible mass medium in rural areas, has of late become rare due to poor radio reception. Attributed to the poor reception of radio in most rural areas is the aging transmission equipment of ZNBC. “Information is power” if rural areas can not access the much needed information then development would remain a myth.

Radio as a social medium was first used in the United States of America (USA) in the 1920s. Initially, the medium was used for advertisements, until 1934 when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was formed to regulate the issuance of licenses, as advertisements out weighed the need to use radio for educational purposes whose potential had been recognized. (Zherebtsoo, 1969). While agricultural radio broadcasting is said to have been revolutionized by Britain during World War II. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is said to have been at the hem of this revolution. The BBC launched a campaign called “Dig for victory” in order to abet hunger as a result of the war. The campaign gave the Britons some tips of crude, but effective farming methods, they could use to produce food. This was the first time radio was used for agricultural purposes. (Zherebtsoo, 1969).

Radio Farm Forums were first started in Canada in 1941. The forum idea was adopted for the purpose of utilising radio for educational purposes. Radio Farm Forums were conceived bearing in mind that, the essence of broadcasting could not be achieved if the rural audience receive the information in a passive manner. The agriculturists then, believed that if ideas transmitted were analysed, discussed, and collaborated among the audience, the broadcasts would become more meaningful so as to contribute to the well-
being of the masses. Secondly, the forum idea took advantage of the fact that rural people all over the world got together frequently at common meeting places (e.g. Insaka) to discuss questions related to either an individual or the whole community and then decide what course of action to take. The Canadians adopted the Forum idea with a motto “Listen, Discuss and Act”. (Natesh, 1966).

As alluded to earlier, when the Radio Farm Forum idea started in Canada, it spread to a number of other countries, some of which even adopted television for the purpose. In France and Japan, rural discussion groups were organized around television. For instance, in Japan, rural communities began taking interest in the more serious subjects rather than in gossip and idle chat. Television in Japan helped farmers to open their mouths, so as to express their thoughts. Schramm (1964) further discusses that, the most effective trial of the Radio Farm Forums was in India. He says, the pilot project began with 20 programmes broadcast to 150 villages listening and discussion groups in five unilingual districts of one state. The activity within a short time spread to 3,500 villages and later throughout India. He (Schramm, 1964.) also says, reports on the Radio Farm Forums indicated that the forums were growing, consequently increasing the agricultural knowledge as compared to those villages that did not have the forums. Forums developed rapidly into decision-making bodies capable of spreading common pursuits in the village, more than even the elected politicians. Forums, therefore, became important instruments of village democracy and enabled many more people to take part in the decision-making process.

In Zambia, the earliest agricultural communication activities concentrated on production of publications for the small community of European Settlers. These attempts were disappointing, for instance, at the first ‘agricultural show’ in Mazabuka in 1917, farmers were not given a single copy of the publication. However, government played a dominant role in the agricultural communication system, through NAIS (then Rural Information Services) under the Ministry of Agriculture. In Zambia, there has been no government monopoly on agricultural communication since a number of commercial and private organisations such as the commercial press, agro-companies, and the Zambia National Farmers Union have been active participants.
From history, commercial farmers are the ones that have generally used the agricultural communication system more than the small holder farmers because of their ability to communicate directly with scientists and extension workers by either visiting, telephoning and corresponding. To the contrary, the majority of the small holder farmers have largely depended on the extension service for information. At independence in 1964, the Zambian Government was in a hurry to develop agriculture. At the time, there were proportionately very few extension workers to meet this demand. In addition, most of the small holder farmers were illiterate, hence radio was chosen as an alternative.

Radio broadcasting in Zambia started with a small government broadcasting station in 1941 at the old City Airport in Lusaka. The station was part of the Department of Information in the then Northern Rhodesia (as Zambia was called). Its (radio) purpose was to inform the natives about the progress of World War II. During the early days of radio broadcasting, facilities were poor. The station was open only for a few hours each week. Reception was very unreliable and listening facilities for natives were negligible. (Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Report, 1985).

After the war, the future of broadcasting in Zambia was uncertain. A majority of white settlers, mostly non-broadcasters, were very opposed to broadcasting to natives. Their argument was, natives would get wrong ideas into their heads which might work against the white settlers in the long run. If allowed to own wireless/radio sets, natives would listen to foreign stations, which would influence them to revolt against white rule.

In spite of the opposition from the majority white settlers, the few white broadcasters went ahead to seek ways of developing effective radio broadcasting for Africans. Their efforts led to the establishment of the Central African Broadcasting Services (CABS) in 1950. CABS became the first station in Africa to broadcast exclusively to the native population. (Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Report, 1985).

In order to enable many Africans to listen to radio programmes, a cheap dry-battery short-wave radio receiver called the 'Saucepan Special' was introduced in 1949. It was sold to Africans at five pounds each and a battery cost one pound five shillings. By 1950, about five thousand sets were owned by Africans.
In 1958 the CABS and the Federal Broadcasting Services based in Southern Rhodesia were merged to form the Federal Broadcasting Corporation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. After the dissolution of the Federation in 1963, the Northern Rhodesia Government established the Northern Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (NRBC) on January 1, 1964. The NRBC had two channels, namely the National Service which broadcast in English and the Vernacular Service which broadcast in Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde. The policy of the NRBC was to 'provide a first class public service in the fields of news, education, entertainment and culture'. (Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Report, 1985).

After independence, the Zambia Broadcasting Corporation replaced the NRBC. In January 1966 it became Zambia Broadcasting Services (ZBS) and became a department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services. The National Service became the General Service, while the Vernacular Service became the Home Service broadcasting in English and the seven local languages respectively. In a bid to improve broadcasting government (sole owner of the broadcasting station) built a multi-million Kwacha Japanese funded Mass Media Complex in 1982 which currently houses Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), Zambia News Agency (ZANA) and Zambia Information Services (ZIS). (Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Report, 1985).

Agricultural broadcasting in Zambia is said to have started during the colonial era using a broadcasting station based in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Initially, agricultural broadcasting was for the White settlers. Serious agricultural broadcasting for Africans started after independence with the establishment of the Communication Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture the forerunner of NAIS.

Radio Farm Forums under the communication unit of the Ministry of Agriculture in Zambia were preceded by a survey sponsored by UNESCO in 1966. A pilot project was introduced in December 1966 in the Bemba language covering Copperbelt, Luapula, and Northern provinces. In May 1968 broadcasts for Western and North Western provinces were commenced. While the broadcasts for Southern, Lusaka, Central and Eastern provinces started in July, 1968.
Among other radio programmes NAIS produced and still produces include.

a) Zambian Land and the People
   This is a 15-minute weekly feature programme in English, consisting of
   interviews in which a farmer talks about his/her successful solutions to farming
   problems.

b) Rural Question Time
   This is also a weekly programme broadcast in English and the vernaculars.
   Farmers are given the opportunity to write and ask questions, and have their
   questions answered on air.

c) Rural Notebook
   This is a 10-minute Radio Spot broadcast daily except for Saturday and Sunday in
   English. This programme was also broadcast in vernacular weekly for each of the
   seven languages.

d) Radio Farm Forum
   This programme is still being broadcast weekly for each of the seven languages. It
   is a 30 minute documentary.

As already alluded to, the declining activities of the R.F.F. in 1985 could be attributed to
lack of radios, inadequate funds, and limited availability of batteries and spare parts for
radios. In 1985 the R.F.F. groups had started dropping and the number now stood at 788.

Despite efforts by most African Governments to increase agricultural production, these
efforts appear not to be bearing fruits. Several agricultural programmes have in the past
been and are still being established to boost agricultural production. But very little seems
to have been achieved. Chimowitz (1990) blames this condition on a number of factors,
some of which are historical, these include:

a) The slave trade in the pre-colonial period which robbed rural areas of young men
   of productive age deprived rural areas of development.

b) Colonialism is said to have set African rural areas on a downward path. The
   colonial powers took control of independent states for various aims;

i) To obtain cheap raw materials
ii) To recruit labour at very low wages.

iii) To open markets for their manufactured goods and invest capital for making high profits. Food production for local consumption was neglected in favour of export crops to earn foreign exchange. Cash crops such as groundnuts, cocoa, palm oil, cotton, coffee and tobacco were developed at the expense of food crops.

(Chimowitziz, 1990). Land tenure system that entails communal land ownership. Land is vested in the chiefs who distribute it in the manner they please. This has devastating effects such as deforestation consequently leading to land degradation, an increase in livestock diseases as one is not allowed to fence off his land to avoid other livestock from straying into his/her land

c) Government policies on agriculture which seem to perpetuate rural-urban drift.

d) The devastating drought that hit Africa in the recent past.

Zambia, a country on the continent of Africa, where most countries are least developed has had her own share of the above problems. Since independence, the government appeared to have agricultural production on the third or fourth slot of its priorities. For instance, after independence copper was the country's sole export, which accounted for 90 percent of the country's export earnings. That is why when the copper prices dropped at the world market, there was disaster in the Zambian economy.

The ascension to power by the MMD has made the rural situation worse. Government liberalised the economy leaving the farmers to fend for themselves. This has left the farmers, especially the small holders stranded, they can not access credit, and neither can they sell their produce profitably. Farmers have been left to the mess of unscrupulous businesspersons who masquerade as 'credit coordinators'. Most crop storage sheds, which used to be a symbol of pride in rural areas, have now become white elephants. Farmers have added to their vocabulary words like what Muswishi farmers, call Kambilombilo referring to 'food for work' a concept they never knew.

It is during this time that the small holder farmers are in this dilemma that they need to be empowered with relevant information to enable them make informed decisions pertaining to agricultural ventures. The solution lies in establishing 'participatory media' where they are able to determine what information is most relevant. Therefore, Participatory Radio
could complement other efforts to empower the small holder farmers in Zambia.

2.5 Limitations

2.5.1 Lack of experience in participatory approaches

Lack of sufficient experience in executing participatory projects by the Information Committee, NAIS staff, the attachee and the members of the R.F.F. cost the project a lot of time. At times people did not know which direction to take. They were implementing 'participatory radio' for the first time. The farmers still felt the need to entirely rely on the NAIS staff and this student. In addition, having been Team Leader of the project before this student went for studies at UNZA, he was in most cases called upon to lead the proceedings, hence denying him an opportunity to be a participant observer.

2.5.2 Wrong expectations by the farmers

Nowadays farmers are in need of loans for inputs, therefore, every project that comes, they think it will in the long run help them acquire loans. From some of the informal discussions this student had with some of the farmers, it dawned to him that some farmers were thinking the Information Committee would be a link between the farmers and the lending institutions hence their enthusiasm initially.

2.5.3 Time constraint

Participatory projects require more time in order for one to notice changes. For instance, participatory projects move at a snail's pace depending on the would-be beneficiaries. The slow pace with which participatory projects such as the R.F.F., move can not be blamed on the would-be beneficiaries, because life can not be looked at from one angle. Farmers have many other things they consider important such that at times when you need to meet them, they might not be available. Social functions such as initiation ceremonies, funerals take some of their time. When such functions are taking place, virtually everything else is suspended. For instance, the evaluation of the project was not carried out as planned due to lack of time. Secondly, Zambians are coming from an era
where they depended on government for development. The old adage 'old habits die hard' is apt in explaining the time length required to notice any change resulting from participatory projects.

2.5.4 Funding

FARMESA funding of the project had become problematic, making mobility of the NAIS staff to the field site difficult. At one or two occasions, the NAIS staff failed to go and meet the R.F.F. groups due to lack of fuel. This is likely to affect the continuity of the project in that the group members are encouraged by the constant visits of the NAIS staff.
Chapter 3
Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

An effective agricultural communication system is a central component of any agricultural extension service. Agricultural communication plays an important role in stimulating and sustaining agriculture. Ideally, communication to the farming communities has been, and still is through radio, television, and publications. Production of these media, in Zambia for instance, has always been at the national headquarters. There could have been a few productions done at the provincial and district levels but within donor funded projects. In both cases, farmers have rarely been involved. If they were, normally, it would be at the information needs assessment stage. Thereafter, experts ran the whole production and the farmers were just given the finished product. The non-involvement of the farmers in media planning and production has contributed to the farmers' inertia of adopting development strategies, as they considered the projects as being alien. Hence the need for participatory media that encompass modern and traditional media such as, oral media, songs/dances and radio, television and publications.

Therefore, all concepts used in communication for development must be defined in the light of the would-be beneficiaries.

3.2 Definition of key concepts

3.2.1 Communication

i) Communication is the process by which messages are transferred from a source to one or more receivers. It is a dynamic and complex process of message exchange and interpretation. It is a process of sharing the environment between two or more people. (Rogers, 1969; Gibson and Hanna, 1992).

ii) Agricultural Communication

Is the sharing of agricultural information between stakeholders through the use of
the media (both mass and traditional). It normally takes place through broadcasts, publications, farmers' meetings, and extension farm visits.

iii) Information

Information is the difference in matter-energy that affects uncertainty in a situation where a choice exists among a set of alternatives. Information is the major component of communication and in most cases has not been delivered adequately to the rural people in the South. (McAnany, 1980).

3.2.2 Development

i) Development is a concept with so many definitions. For the purpose of this report, this student will use that of Rodney (1972) who defines the concept as, "... an increase in skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being". The definition suggests that, people have the ability to shape their destiny in life. People can only shape their destiny, if information exposing them to alternative ways of doing things is adequately made available to them.

ii) Rural Development

Rural development is the strategy to enable a specific group of people, normally the rural poor to gain for themselves more of what they need, this pre-supposes some form of self-reliance. (Chambers, 1989).

3.2.3 Participation

i) Participation is a means of engaging a community or sub-sector within a community in analyzing it's problems and needs, and developing and implementing solutions.
ii) Participatory radio

This is where the people/audience are given an opportunity to conceive ideas for broadcast programming. They design the messages and decide on how these messages will be delivered. The audience in this case has a chance to talk to themselves and the authorities. (Mhonda, 1996).

3.2.4 Radio

i) The term radio comes from the Latin word, radius, which means a straight line drawn from the centre of a circle to any point on its circumference. The concept also means the radiating of airwaves by transmitting stations through space and reception by receiving devices. Wireless transmission, as it is sometimes called, emanates airwaves like a beam of light in all radial or specified directions, therefore, sound signals are transmitted through the air and are received by radio sets. (Zherebtsoo, 1969).

ii) Radio Farm Forum

Radio Farm Forums (R.F.F.) are organised groups of farmers who meet to listen to agricultural radio programmes with a view of broadening participatory decision-making. The principle behind the R.F.F. is to assemble a group of 15 to 20 farmers, where a subject is introduced on radio. After the broadcast, the farmers discuss the content of the broadcast. (Schramm, 1973).

iii) Radio programming

Radio programming consists of the choice, preparation, and scheduling of music, news, public affairs, sports and drama for transmission by radio waves i.e. broadcasting.
3.2.5 Rural People

These are the people mainly living in the rural areas whose pre-occupation is agriculture. It is these people whose living conditions are appalling hence the need to help them through the provision of information to help them make informed decisions concerning the improvements in their livelihood. (Chambers, 1989).

3.2.6 Small-holder farmers

According to Rogers (1969), these are subsistence agricultural producers who are traditionally oriented. They are rarely self-sufficient, since they consume the major portion of the food they produce. Where they grow some cash crop, normally they would sell it and use the money on goods like radio sets, and furniture. They want to maintain their status rather than enlarge their scale of production.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Having defined some of the key concepts used in the report, this student now proceeds to link few of them to the practical attachment he had at Muswishi from June to October 2000.

3.3.1 Communication

Communication is not the mechanical transfer of facts and figures, as the mathematics model of communication would appear to indicate. It is also not talking to people as the mass media were conceived to be in the era of the magic bullet theory. Communication is an interactive process, which works in a circular, dynamic and ongoing way. It is talking with people in a process with no permanent sender and receiver. In communication, roles of sender and receiver are interchangeable, depending on who is talking and listening at the time.

Communication is a vital aspect of social change. It is indeed the key that opens the door
to change. It is inherent in both types of social change. In the case of eminent change, the inventor must communicate his ideas to other people and persuade them to adopt the ideas. While in contact change, the role of communication is large, for it involves the process by which the potential adopter first hears of the new idea, learns more about it and then decides either to adopt it or not.

Communication is a part of the various decisions that, if taken together, constitute social change; a peasant's decision to move to the city or join an agricultural project depends on how much information is available and information is made available through communication.

Although communication and social change are closely related, care should be taken not to think of them as synonymous concepts. Social change is a more encompassing term in that it includes invention, diffusion of new ideas, and the consequences of these innovations. Whereas, communication is central to diffusion, it is less a part of the invention process and little involved in the consequences phase of social change. Communication is an essential part of social change, and perhaps all analysis of social change must ultimately focus upon the communication processes. Communication processes are an integral and vital element of development.

In Muswishi, the Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) that was conducted just before the Communication Project was conceived revealed that there was a weak communication link between the farmers and the other stakeholders. After government liberalised agricultural marketing, farming activities declined tremendously. Farmers did not know where to find agricultural loans, when in fact, there were so many companies that had been appointed by government as credit coordinators. The major problem in this situation was inadequate communication between the farmers and the credit coordinators. In this case farmers did not just need general information about the existence of the credit coordinators. They needed relevant information that would link them (farmers) to particular credit coordinators that would give them loans. The farmers needed to know which credit coordinators serviced their area. Therefore, if farmers only relied on the national media for such information, they would not receive all the details they required, as it would be very expensive for the national media to provide such
detailed information. Information dissemination existed and still exists through the 
estension service, which has its weaknesses rendering communication less effective. For 
instance, most farmers throughout the country complained about the unfair terms of the 
loans farmers received from the credit coordinators as being very exploitative. Farmers 
were made to pay three to four x 90 kgs bags of maize in return for one 50 kgs bag of 
fertilizer. Where the farmers failed to pay, they had their cattle, farm implements, and 
even household goods confiscated. If communication had been effective, farmers would 
have understood the terms of the loans before getting involved, meaning, farmers would 
not have cried foul at the time of repaying the loans. This scenario pre-supposes an 
effective, localised and participatory communication system.

Secondly, some of the farmers in Muswishi that had a few resources to enable them grow 
crops had problems of selling their farm produce profitably. In a liberalised market 
economy like our country’s, the laws of supply and demand govern the market prices. 
This too posed as a big problem since it was a new concept to our farmers, especially the 
small-holder farmers, who needed to learn the skills of, (first) finding the market for their 
produce. After they found the market they needed to know how to bargain for profitable 
producer prices. This scenario too entails the need for effective communication. While it 
is true that a lot of debate went on, in the national media on liberalisation of Zambia’s 
economy, how many of our small-holder farmers were able to follow and comprehend the 
nit-grit of these debates. Most of the debate was too technical such that only economists 
knew better what was being discussed. Hence the need for community and participatory 
media which can explain to the farmers in a language they understand well about such 
important issues that affect their production.

Given the above examples, low agricultural productivity could be attributed to the weak 
communication link between the farmers and the other stakeholders in rural Zambia in 
general and Muswishi in particular.

Thirdly, small-holder farmers given the above scenario, required an effective 
communication channel through which farmers could air their views to the policy 
makers/authorities. Kasoma (1990) discusses the importance of farmers owning the 
media through media cooperatives. The issue of "who says what in whose media" is
crucial. In Zambia, the main stream media are owned by the government, therefore, criticism of government policy can rarely be entertained. For instance, the *Times of Zambia* and the *Zambia Daily Mail* only have one page for rural news. All the urban centres apart from Lusaka and the Copperbelt towns are categorised as rural districts competing seriously for space on the rural page with the typical rural areas such as Shangombo, and Kaputa. If one read through the rural page, most articles are about government leaders making statements when visiting rural areas. This is true for other media organisations like the National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS) which are responsible for agricultural information dissemination. The Press Section of NAIS always publishes what the authorities say and rarely do they publish what the farmers are saying. Even when they published what the farmers were saying, it is normally when they are accompanying these authorities. Therefore, the farmers need their own media, where they will be able to say how government policies affect their production. They need a medium that will address their basic needs. They need a medium that they can control. This student is very aware of the Farmers' Unions, for instance, there was a Peasant Farmers Union which is now defunct. Such unions too are organised at national level such that their pronouncements reflect the views of the elite and not the majority of the farmers. In addition, their views are aired through the national media which are inaccessible to the majority of the small-holder farmers.

In Muswishi, like all other rural areas in Zambia, interpersonal and mass communications are the two common communication channels used for development.

i) Interpersonal Communication

This is face-to-face communication between two or more individuals. This takes the form of change agents that work in the area and farmers passing information amongst themselves. Interpersonal communication channels provide for two-way interaction and feedback and is more effective especially when the goal of communicating is persuasion. Interpersonal communication is more likely to cause attitude change.

ii) Mass Communication
Mass communication is the transfer of information by using equipment to a large, scattered, heterogeneous and unidentified audience. Mass communication channels provide a potential means of spreading information quickly. Mass media communication is more important in changing cognition aspects like increasing knowledge of ideas. Under mass communication, radio, television, and publications such as newsletters, posters, books, and newspapers are some of the media that are used. The mass media in countries of the South mainly carry pro-development messages.

Following are some of the characteristics of the mass media in the South.

i) The mass media reach much smaller audiences than those in more developed countries.

ii) Audiences for the electronic mass media, especially, radio and film, are larger than for print mass media such as newspaper and magazines in less developed countries.

iii) Mass media messages are of low interest and relevancy to villagers because of the strong urban orientation of the mass media.

ii) There is greater degree of government control over the mass media, especially the electronic media. Mass media are viewed as an integral tool of the development campaigns.

Currently in Muswishi interpersonal communication channels are the ones that are quite effective, because of the agricultural extension staff, health personnel, teachers, churches and other development agents such as those involved in outgrower schemes. These channels inasmuch as they are effective, have weaknesses such as the distortion of messages. At times messages are not relayed as intended by the originator, and farmers have suffered consequences of such distortions. In addition, development agents cover vast areas making it difficult for them to uniformly disseminate information. Therefore, the efforts of the development agents need to be complemented by community media such as participatory radio.
The mass media are available in limited quantities in Muswishi. Of course, the most common medium found in the area is radio. Very few people have battery powered television sets. Newspapers are unaffordable vis-a-vis meeting basic needs of the farmers. Therefore, radio remains the only medium available to the farmers in Muswishi. This medium too, is not very effective as all the programming is done in Lusaka. Specific problems and needs of the Muswishi farmers can not effectively be taken care of by radio programming meant to cover the whole country. At times radio reception is not very good in this part of the country, such that farmers have problems listening to development programmes.

Therefore, an important strategy for any communicator is to determine what channel to use in order to affect the receiver's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour in desired ways. Rural people throughout the country need action media, where they can talk to themselves and the authorities as Mhonda (1996) suggests.

In the fifties and sixties mass communication was considered the prime mover in social development. Information was thought to be the missing link in the development chain. Mass media such as the print channels and radio were saddled with the important task of spreading information as widely as possible among the people. Government authorities, subject experts, and extension agents would go on the radio or visit villages teaching people on increasing agricultural yields or live healthier lives. Communications were hierarchical, one-way, and top-down. People were regarded as passive receivers of development information resulting to non-adoption of innovations.

The idea of self-development gained popularity in the seventies. In other words, users initiated activities at the local level, were considered absolutely essential for successful development at the village level. This emphasis was not so much on a top-to-bottom flow of information and messages from government officials to a mass audience, but importantly, bottom-up flows or communication between people. People must discuss together, identify their needs and problems, decide on a plan of action, and then use a specific medium of communication and an information data base most appropriate to their needs. Emphasis is not on big media but appropriate media. The need for
information, then is the prerogative of the users at the village level rather than the same authorities at the top.

Self-development implies a different role for communication, from what was conceptualised and operationalised in the dominant paradigm. Development agencies still perform a service function in terms of collecting technical information, but it is no longer prescriptive. Communication flows are now initiated in response to articulate needs of the users. And this is the kind of communication the Muswishiri Information Committee is advocating for.

For instance, Melkote (1991) explains how Tanzania successfully employed this approach. He says, useful information was exchanged between the users and subject experts. When villagers in the Arusha region decided to construct latrines in the villages. They borrowed relevant audio-tapes from the local communication centre which helped them with expert knowledge from the project authorities. In this project, the idea was not to persuade people to do something specific at the initiative of the source but rather to let the users decide what ought to be done and then seek expert information, if necessary, on their own.

The concepts of development also emphasize the integration of traditional and modern systems, and an active participation of the people at the grassroot in development programmes. The folk media were productions of the local culture, which were rich in cultural symbols. The folk media are intimate with the people at the grassroots and are highly participatory and have great potential for integration into the modern mass media. Examples of the folk media include.

i) dances
ii) ballads
i) songs
ii) story-telling
iii) theatre
iv) puppetry
Below are some of the advantages of the folk media over others in the development of the rural people.

i) They are part of the rural social environment, therefore, they are credible sources of information for the people.

ii) They command the audience as live media and are ideal examples of two-way communication.

iii) They have proved useful in generating grassroots participation and a dialogue between the performers and the audience.

iv) Many of the folk media formats are flexible facilitating the incorporation of development oriented messages in their themes.

v) They are relatively inexpensive and in almost all cultures, they are rich and exist in inexhaustible varieties both in form and themes.

3.3.2 Radio Farm Forums

Radio Farm Forums (R.F.F.) are probably the best known types of media discussion groups. They were first used in Canada in 1939 during the depression days of agriculture and have since been widely adopted in Japan (1952), in India (1957), in Pakistan and Mali (1961), in Nigeria (1962), in Ghana, Madagascar, and Jordan (1964) and in Zambia in (1968). Other countries that have used R.F.F. are Costa Rica, Brazil, Togo, Malawi and Niger. (Rogers, 1969).

During almost 60 years of farm broadcasting both the form and broadcasting situations have changed hence the need to re-examine the R.F.F. concept in order to meet the needs of the farmers. In addition, there is need to evaluate R.F.F. programming if the system is to improve.

Therefore, it is inevitable that Radio Farm Forums in Zambia and Muswishi in particular need to change their approach in order to address the problems and needs of the small-holder farmers for whom they are formed. As seen in the previous chapter, Radio Farm Forums in Zambia have not produced the desired results among the small-scale farmers.
That is why the concept only remains with the elderly farmers and not the young ones. In Muswishi the last time farmers remember having R.F.F. in the areas was in the late 1980s.

From the PRCA conducted in Muswishi in 1999 revelations are that radio was still a common medium found in the area. Therefore, radio, as a medium of communication still stands a chance of being a successful instrument for development in Muswishi as long as the approach changed, in order to accommodate participatory tenets.

Organising R.F.F. at a national level has the following disadvantages:

i) There is no sufficient personal contact between the broadcasters and the audience.

ii) Insufficient contact between the broadcasters and the audience leads to lack of appreciation of the social and economic conditions of the people.

iv) There is inadequate coordination between the broadcasters and other change agents who are on the ground leading to duplication and consequently waste of resources.

v) Forums attract more the local elite, successful farmers, petty traders. Their presence affects the willingness of those who most need the forums.

To succeed broadcast centres need to be near enough to the communities and this will make the programme content relevant to the users. Action media appear to be among many other alternatives, the way forward in the development of rural areas such as Muswishi.

3.3.3 Development

Development is a multi-faceted concept that means change toward patterns of society. It allows a society to realize better human values and greater control over it's environment. It also enables society shape its political destiny, hence allowing individuals to gain
increased control over themselves. (Inayatullah, 1967).

Hence, the concept has different meaning to different people. For instance, an economist would define development in relation to economic well-being of individuals. A political scientist defines development as the capacity to increase political awareness and an improvement in the ability to resolve conflict. These different angles from which development was viewed, were not exclusive but rather interwoven. Together they emphasize improved life conditions of human beings.

The years following World War II saw the birth of multilateral development assistance through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and United Nations family of specialised agencies. In addition, there was an emergence of bilateral development assistance to help the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This assistance comprised of both funding and technology in the field of, agriculture, health, and mass media. For instance, in Zambia there have been development programmes like the R.F.F. project, Integrated Rural Development, Training and Visit Agricultural Extension Method and many others.

On the face of it, developing the South seemed quite simple; determine appropriate innovations promising high payoffs and arrange to have them diffused to targeted beneficiaries. The reasons attributed to the woeful state of affairs of the South lay in inadequate industrial infrastructure development and backward cultures of the citizens. The long history of colonial exploitation and oppressive social structural conditions that it spawned may have something to do with the backward state of these nations.

The South was considered to be in the same stage as most European countries in 1600, before the advent of the industrial age. Therefore, the solution to the problem of underdevelopment of the South was simple and straightforward; by retracing the development path of the North, development in the South could be accelerated. It is this orientation that became known as the 'Dominant Paradigm'. This paradigm suggested that the process of development meant a transition from traditionalism to modernisation in a unidirectional manner. Nations passing through this journey would emulate the North. The role of the mass media in development programmes was very important. The
modernisation of the industrial or agricultural sector in the South required the mobilisation of human resources. (Melkote, 1991).

Therefore, the mass media and education were vested with the responsibility to mobilise the human resource. The mass media and education channels were expected to build capacity (which was thought to be lacking) and preparing individuals for change by establishing a climate conducive for modernisation.

It was during the dominant paradigm era that scholars like Harold Lasswell coined the Magic Bullet Theory of the press. This theory pre-supposed that human behaviour was essentially irrational. The Magic Bullet Theory conceptualised the impact of the mass media as direct, powerful and uniform on individuals. In the bullet theory, the mass media were the guns and the message, the bullets, which were shot at passive and defenseless audiences. During the period between the two World Wars, the mass media were viewed as powerful instruments, which could be successfully used to manipulate people's opinions and attitudes, in a relatively short period of time. (Melkote, 1991).

The old paradigm of development started to break down in the late sixties and early seventies. The development of the South simply did not fit the assumptions of the paradigm. The paradigm worked better to describe what took place in the North. The propositions based on the theory were excessively abstract, they had limited utility when applied to actual problems of the South. For instance, the assertion that social transformations occur in the passage from underdevelopment towards modernisation was questionable. The bipolar theories presented extremes of the process of change without providing insights into the determinants and constraints of the development process. Wrong dimensions were identified as indicators of development. Melkote (1991) quotes Parsons as having identified several evolutionary universals such as money, markets and bureaucracy as strategic for development, when most of the countries of the South already had these factors existing in their social structures.

In the dominant paradigm theory, development was quantified, usually in terms of economic indicators, the Gross National Product (GNP), per capita income to mention a few. The paradigm did not consider the question of equality of the benefits of
development. Emphasis was on absolute growth and not it's equitable distribution. The
paradigm assumed that the standard of living would be improved as innovations of new
technology were communicated down through the social structure but leaving the
structure of dependency in the societies of the South intact.

Capital intensive technology was prescribed for the South ignoring the beneficiaries,
since they were never consulted. The big push concept was given to capital-intensive and
labour-extensive technology, where imported machinery was used in various industries,
making the South perpetually dependent on the North for finances and technology. In
addition, huge sums of money were pumped into the industries leading to accumulation
of huge debts.

Centralised planning was another prominent feature of the dominant paradigm era.
Usually, economists did the planning making the development top-down. This is the era
when in Zambia we had the National Development Plans. The development plans were
urban biased making urban centres more attractive to rural dwellers.

It was not until the seventies that it dawned to most development enthusiasts that,
development could no longer be viewed just from the economic standpoint. When one
talked about development, the real indicators were decrease in the rates of poverty,
income inequality, and unemployment. Another indicator would be the decrease in
human suffering. Therefore, the new definitions of development were pluralistic and
indicated several new goals for meaningful and real development in the South. The
following factors became important when analyzing development:

i) Equity in the distribution of information and other benefits of development. Here
emphasis is on the poorest of the poor, those living in the shanties and rural areas.
Growth with equity was the clarion of the seventies.

ii) Active participation of people at the grassroots, input of the people in
development activities that were superficially set up for their benefit. This did not
liberate people from the spiral of silence where only a few talkative individuals
influenced the course of action, but also ensures that development plans and
decisions are relevant and meaningful to the recipients.
iii) Independence of local communities to tailor development projects to their own objectives. The reliance here is on local human skills and material resources, fostering greater self-reliance in development, and importantly, leading to freedom from external dependence.

iv) Integration of the old and new ideas, the traditional and modern system, the endogenous and exogenous elements to constitute a unique blend suited to the needs of a particular community. This approach would not consider the local culture as something to be discarded but instead it would benefit from the native wisdom. It came up with a unique mix of both traditional and modern system suitable to the tastes at hand. (Melkote, 1991).

Given the above background, it is true that development conceived outside the area where it is to be implemented has failed to bring about an improvement in the living standards of the rural people. Ascroft (1990) gives an analogy of some community in Ghana that used to grow a tall variety of sorghum, which yielded lowly. For change agents, this was a very big problem, they went ahead to institute research in order to come up with a high yielding variety. And the high yielding variety discovered was a dwarf variety. The change agents became very happy because they felt they had solved the problems of that particular community. To their surprise, the community did not adopt the new innovation, instead, they continued growing the tall variety. This induced subsequent research, which revealed that the community did not adopt the dwarf variety because it turned out to be useless to them. The Ghanaian community used the tall variety in a number of ways, for instance, they used the leaves and stalks of the tall sorghum variety to build and roof their huts. While the residue, was fed to livestock hence the reason for the rejection of the dwarf variety. This shows how difficult it is to succeed with development programmes that are planned and designed without the involvement of the would-be beneficiaries.

Similarly, in Zambia there have been development programmes that have not succeeded because they have been planned and designed outside the communities that are supposed to benefit from such programmes. The Radio Farm Forum movement is one such project. The project was planned and designed on the basis that it had worked in other parts of the world especially in India. Little consideration was given to the problems and needs of the Zambian farmers. It is possible that if the farmers had a choice, they could have chosen
another medium other than radio for development purposes. And if the farmers could have chosen radio, probably the organisation and formation of R.F.F. could have been different which could have been sustainable. This student is at times tempted to feel that, it could be for this reason that when one talked about R.F.F. farmers in Zambia, farmers, will always ask for a radio set, batteries and stationary that used to be supplied to the farmers in the past. The R.F.F. concept remained that of NAIS the department responsible for running the project and not that of the farmers.

If development is to have any relevance to the people who need it most, it must start where the real needs and problems exist. i.e. in the poverty-stricken areas. People living in such poor conditions must be encouraged to perceive their real needs and identify their real problems. In the past poor people have not been able to do so due to lack of real participation in development strategies set up to solve their problems.

The realization that would-be beneficiaries were important in the development process saw the birth of a new paradigm often referred to as 'Another Development'. The new paradigm became popular in the 1980s with emphasis on the basic needs of the people in areas of health, ecology, structural transformation, and participatory democracy.

In Zambia for instance, a lot of participatory projects have of late been implemented. Among the many projects implementing participatory approaches are Farm-level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA), Muswishi (Chibombo) and Lusitu (Siavonga) and Municipal Development Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA) executed by Kabwe Municipal Council. The latter aims at providing good municipal governance through the use of the civic society.

In view of a number of participatory development projects being attempted, this student strongly feels communication plays a vital role in sustaining development as long as it too takes a participatory approach.

3.3.4 Participatory Radio

A concept now revolving throughout the world is the inalienable right to communicate. This calls for balanced communication not only between nations but also within nations.
Bodies like New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) were established to address issues of balanced communication between the North and the South, which seemed lop-sided, in favour of the former.

The right to communicate should be seen as a right arising out of the need to foster the physical and mental development of an individual, and to encourage constructive coexistence among individuals. All development depends on knowledge. Knowledge is a function of the amount and quality of facts at one's disposal. These facts can not be made available without communication. Therefore, the need to know and to inform, the need to exchange ideas and to give opinions and the need to safeguard the enhancing aspects of one's culture are all indispensable parts of meaningful living. Unless we knew, understood, and conceived the need to act, we can not make appreciable progress either physically or mentally.

In view of the foregoing, a communication developmentalist is more interested in attitude changes, gains in knowledge and skills, enhanced self-image and improved ability to solve problems individually or through group action. If there is no change in people's attitude towards developing their situation, there can be no physical change, meaning there will be no progress. Further, people needed to be well informed in order to realize the full benefit of modernisation.

To keep the people well informed communication through various channels must be employed. It is common knowledge that any country has different groups of people with different media tastes, language, and modes of behaviour. To reach these different groups of people by way of communication, a communicator needs to speak to them on the same wave length, the language used should be familiar to the people otherwise the communication efforts will be in vein.

In view of the above, if broad-based rural development is to be achieved, more attention must be given to providing information to the rural people. In short, the rural people have to be nurtured into an enlightened and active citizenry, they must benefit and participate in development. In essence increased and articulate consumption of development information among rural people helps bridge the knowledge gap between rural people
(who are normally ill informed on matters of development) and the rest of the citizens. (Moemeka, 1981).

The thrust of the mass media is geared towards information rather than towards communication. While it is true that mere information has its place in nation-building because of its capacity to arouse interest in development and to stimulate people’s aspirations by putting the people in touch with events, development goes far beyond knowing what is happening and wishing for better situations. Therefore, it must involve the exchange of ideas, participation, and action. All these demand communication and not mere information.

The media in their different form and nature are therefore, vital instruments for informing the rural people. Of course as noted earlier, the mass media in their present structure are more often than not instruments for widening the knowledge gap between urban and rural people. This is so because they are concentrated in urban areas, with little attention being given to the rural areas. Usually, rural populations are categorised as non-participatory audiences and so are kept out of the mainstream mass media.

Nevertheless, some of the mass media like radio which are not only relatively cheap but also have the capacity to reach a wide audience can be used as instruments of social change as long as participatory tenets are upheld.

Participatory Radio aims at promoting local communities in decision-making activities. This strategy presents messages or information in a non-directive way, a dialogue in which community members participate in defining problems, putting them in a wider social context and devising ways to mobilise themselves for common action. The strategy places emphasis on defining and not suggesting solutions to people's problems. Radio programmes are made from recorded responses to a definite problem given by some members of the listening group. The participating groups then listen to these responses and views and discuss the problems further, thus creating awareness for further responses from the group members and subsequently eliciting decisions.
The assumptions of this strategy are

i) That no solutions to problems can be imposed on local communities from the outside;

ii) that local communities must first arrive at the problem definition and then its solution on their own.

iii) That the purpose of information in this approach is to help to define the problems and not give solutions.

iv) That community participation and social action is the goal, and therefore, feedback from the community is essential. (Moemeka, 1981.)

Local participation should not only end at suggestion and planning stage, it must extend to the actual production of the radio programmes. The people should be given an insight into programme production as this engenders a sense of commitment. The farmers would enjoy listening to themselves as they try to solve their own problems.

However, participatory approaches place the burden of taking initiative on the local people, which at times is not easily attainable. According to Moemeka (1981) experience has shown that many communities are slow to organise and many more are not able to organise themselves at all. While it is true that there are spirited men and women in the local communities, they are guided by what their culture demands. This makes participatory approaches slow because developmentalists have to wait for the local people. Local people can not be pushed to accelerate the development process.

In concluding this chapter, communication plays an important role in enhancing development. Communication should not be imposed on the people for whom development is intended, but local people must determine how they will use communication to their advantage. Indeed, all channels of communication must be exploited bearing in mind that rural communities have also been exposed to the fruits of modernisation. Therefore, rural people should not only be limited to traditional communication media. Traditional and modern media must be used in a complementary manner.
When considering media for use in development, participatory radio should be given thought, as it is handy in a rural setup. Organisations like United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is trying to promote the setting up of Community Radio Stations. In Zambia so far there are about three new radio stations that have been established with UNESCO funds, and these are Mazabuka Community Radio (Southern Province), Radio Liambayi (Mongu - Western Province) and Radio Chikaya (Lundazi - Eastern Province). Participatory Radio appears to be one of the alternatives to rural communication.

This student feels the Muswishi community could equally benefit from other funders like UNESCO, since FARMESA which was funding the communication project has since pulled out of the area. A communication committee is already in place such that if any development agent wanted to start up a participatory communication medium, the ground works have been done. The Muswishi people are already conscientized on the importance of using participatory communication.
Chapter 4
Personal Experiences

4.1 Muswishi People

4.1.1 Background

Muswishi agricultural camp lies within Chief Chamuka's area in Chibombo district in Central Province of Zambia. The area is made up of four villages, these being, Kalangwe, Lyumbika, Chikuse and the Rural Reconstruction Centre, formerly a Zambia National Service (ZNS) camp area, now occupied by the former ZNS employees with a village headman. Muswishi is inhabited by the Lenje who are the indigenous people. Other inhabitants found in substantially large numbers include the Tonga under the Bantu Botatwe group, and the Swaka, Lala and Bemba, under the Bemba-speaking group, and the Shona. There are also other Zambian ethnic groups who are present in Muswishi though in small numbers.

Mr. Bernard Lupiya, a Lenje, who was in his late eighties during this student's attachment said, it was not clear when the Lenjes first occupied Muswishi. All he knows is, the first Lenjes to settle in Muswishi came from Chief Chipepo's area in what is now called Kapiri Mposhi district. Their reason for leaving Chief Chipepo's area was to exploit new agricultural and hunting lands. The second group that followed was that of the Swakas and Lala who are also believed to have come for hunting reasons. Then came the Shonas who arrived in the late forties. These were specifically attracted to Muswishi by the fertile soils of the area. They came for agricultural purposes. The Shonas that inhabited Muswishi are believed to have come from Mumbwa and Chisamba in a bid to make a fortune in agriculture. And the sole market for their produce was Kabwe, the then Broken Hill with its mine and related industries that employed a lot of people.

A large wave of settlers came to the place (Muswishi) in the mid-eighties with the Tongas from Southern Province occupying the area. The Tongas trekked to Muswishi due to drought that had hit the southern parts of Zambia. At the time, Muswishi appeared to be a safe haven for the Tongas who intended to enhance their agricultural ambitions. In the nineties there was yet another group of settlers. These were of different tribes, comprising
of retirees and retrenchees who lost employment due to the closure of the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mine (ZCCM) Kabwe Division and its supporting industries. The closure of the mine came as one of the measures to liberalise the country's economy, a policy taken by the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in a bid to rid government of participation in economic activities. This policy saw the closure of many government parastatals and companies resulting in many people losing employment. To some extent, though inexperienced, most retirees and retrenchees in Kabwe sought to go back to the land using their terminal benefits as capital. The liberalisation of the economy affected all the vital economic sectors, including agriculture. As discussed in Chapter 2, farmers had to finance their activities and even market their produce with little or no help from government. This had far reaching consequences on the living standards of both the old and new settlers in Muswishi.

The Muswishi population comprises people between the ages of 1 to 14, and 25 to 55. This student can not give the statistics, but this is derived from his observations based on his mixing and socialising with the people. The reason attributed to this is that most youth are in towns where they are either working or seeking for employment.

However, it is worth noting here that despite most parts of central province enjoying favourable weather suitable for agriculture, Chief Chamuka's area received more settlers from other parts of Zambia. In Chief Chamuka's area, settlers too, have been made village headmen. Therefore, settlers are much freer as compared to other parts of central province. For instance, in other parts of the province, settlers despite being Zambians are referred to as 'Baswa mashi' meaning 'foreigners'. Such a term is rare in Chief Chamuka's area. And the reason is, the chief believes settlers are capable of bringing development in the area therefore, they should be allowed to carry out their activities freely. It is in Chief Chamuka's area where places such as 'new Monze' are found.

And probably this explains why Bemba and Tonga are the main languages used in Muswishi. Of course, this student was unable to establish the ratio of the tribes found in Muswishi due to the sensitive nature of such an exercise since the Muswishi population is multilingual. From his observations, it appears that the Bemba, Tonga and Lenje speaking people exist in sufficiently equal numbers in the area. Another reason why Bemba is used
as a mode of communication in Muswishi could be that, the area is adjacent to Kabwe, which had a lot of Bemba-speaking people working in the zinc and lead mine. Therefore, the interaction with the miners could have influenced the use of Bemba as a communication medium. As for the use of Tonga, the reason could be attributed to their (Tonga) economic strength, which the Tongas assumed when they got into Muswishi. The Tongas are known to be very hard working people in agriculture such that they become quite rich according to the standards of the area. Some of them owned and still own motor vehicles, tractors that provided transport to and from Kabwe. They cultivated large pieces of land. They also owned large herds of cattle. As their custom, the Tongas married a lot of wives from among the Lenjes and other tribes in the area. This could have given them the dominance that they enjoy in Muswishi. To this day, the Tongas are still above average in their living standards as compared to the other people in the area.

The use of Bemba and Tonga is widespread in the churches, schools, and most farmer meetings. At times Lenje is used, although people of other tribes prefer using either Bemba or Tonga.

4.1.2 Occupation

Muswishi is predominantly an agricultural area. The main agricultural enterprises undertaken in the area include the growing of maize, cotton, sunflower, and groundnuts, which are mainly grown as cash crops. People also grow other crops like sweet potatoes, cow peas, sorghum, beans, cassava, squashes and many other less economic crops like millets. These crops were used as cope up strategies during times of hunger. They also rear livestock such as cattle, goats, chickens, guinea fowls, and pigeons.

The cropping system of the people of Muswishi includes mono-cropping where only one crop is grown at a particular time on the field, and inter-cropping meaning two or more crops are grown concurrently on the same field. Normally, cash crops are grown using mono-cropping, and these are grown by men except for groundnuts, which is considered a crop for women. The growing of cash crops by men has in the recent past raised a lot of issues from gender activists who complain that men always want to associate themselves with activities that have economic value. Anything with little or no economic value is
said to be for women. Though in Muswishi this does not appear to be a very big problem, people, especially women, have accepted that a man is the head of the household. However, when it comes to economic activities anybody can undertake any enterprise as long as they are capable of managing the crops regardless of their sex. In Muswishi, there are women who could have been very successful if the agricultural policies of this country were conducive.

The agricultural practices are not very traditional, the people in Muswishi are trying to use modern methods of agriculture though they are hindered by lack of farm inputs. The only other problem is that of their soils which has become acidic due to over usage of chemical fertilizers over a period of time leading to low productivity. Production per hectare is quite low going by the recommendations of agricultural research. The people realized too late that growing the same crop on the same piece of land depleted the soil of the fertility necessary for crop growth.

The crops that are inter-cropped include maize, sorghum, and sunflower, which are inter-cropped with either beans, pumpkins, cow peas, sweet potatoes or groundnuts. The main reason why they inter-crop is, leguminous crops have the capacity to add nitrogen to the soil and this helps the people of Muswishi supplement their nitrogen requirements which they could have got in the fertilizers which have become rare in the area.

Cattle were the main livestock Muswishi people kept, though due to diseases such as corridor believed to have come from Southern Province, cattle populations have gone down to the extent that only about 25 per cent of the people/farmers in Muswishi own cattle. According to Mr. Ken Mukando the Veterinary Assistant for the area, corridor disease has claimed a lot of cattle in the area. He (Mr. Mukando) attributes the increase of corridor disease to some Tonga settlers who brought cattle from corridor-infested areas of southern province to Muswishi. Mr. Mukando further says reduction of cattle in the area has had an adverse impact on agriculture, since cattle were the main source of draft power.

Other than agriculture, the people of Muswishi engage in other activities such as brewing local beer called 'Katata', 'Gankata' and 'Kachasu'. Beer is generally brewed as an off-
farm activity meant to help the people raise money to meet household needs. During the dry season as observed by this student there were no specific days when beer was brewed and taken. But there are more beer parties at the weekends. There are also some makeshift stores commonly known as 'Tuntemba' where opaque beer like 'Chibuku', 'Golden Brew' and 'Shake Shake' are sold. There are also some taverns in the area.

This student also observed that, mostly young men in Muswishi between the age of 16 and 30 take beer. This student feels beer drinking in Muswishi is not as rampant as it is in other rural areas in Zambia. People would rather do their work in the morning before going to drink in the evenings.

Charcoal burning is yet another off farm activity which is becoming, rampant threatening the forest resources of the area. About 200 to 600 by 90kgs bags of charcoal are sold every year. When asked, charcoal burners say they engage in the activity due to lack of enough money for agricultural inputs and the money raised from selling charcoal helps them buy farm inputs like fertilizer and seed. While it could be true that some of the charcoal burners use the money for farm inputs, most of them use it on beer.

Some of the people are engaged in fish mongering, with the source of their fish being the former ZCCM Mulungushi dam. There are also some 'tuntemba' where various groceries are sold.

Another activity observed in Muswishi is the sale of motor vehicle fuel along the main Muswishi road by the youth. The fuel is sold at reduced prices as compared to the filling station prices in Kabwe where these youth claim they get their fuel from.

When this student asked these fuel vendors about the source of their fuel, they said they bought it from Kabwe. And when asked further as to why their fuel was cheaper compared to the Kabwe prices. The fuel vendors' response was that they just wanted to help the people of Muswishi. They made no profit from the sale of fuel. However, further investigations revealed that, these vendors got their fuel from the fuel tankers on the Great North Road that supply fuel to all the other vendors on the same road from Ndola to Livingstone. After getting their supplies usually in 20 litre containers, they use bicycles
to transport their contraband to Muswishi. At the time, fuel in Kabwe was going at about K3,000.00, these vendors were selling their fuel at K2,500.00. And main customers were vehicle and hammermill owners in the area, who preferred buying fuel from the vendors, because of the low price.

4.1.3 Types of settlements

Settlements in Muswishi are mainly traditional where people live in villages. Even those at the Rural Reconstruction Centre, people have settled in the ZNS area with a village headman chosen from among themselves. The former ZNS structures, office, and production buildings were turned into a school.

Like all traditional settlements in Zambia, land is given out by the village headmen/women. Non of the people of Muswishi have title deeds for their land. The people have individual farms that range between five to 100 hectares, with the average cultivated land ranging from 0.5 to 30 hectares. (Information obtained verbally from the area extension officer - Mr. Burton Lupobe).

The people own certain natural resources communally. They have communal grazing lands and rivers/streams and dams. The idea of communal ownership of natural resources as been discussed by many rural development scholars as having advantages and disadvantages on rural development. Its advantages are that, everybody can afford to utilise these natural resources free of charge. Nobody pays for grazing their cattle in the bush, and nobody pays for the water they draw from the river. To the contrary, since nobody pays for the use of these natural resources, similarly nobody is responsible to take care for these natural resources consequently leading to their depletion. In addition, diseases like corridor have been difficult to control because cattle graze together. It does not matter how one farmer dips his/her cattle, as long as they graze in the same area, his/her cattle are likely to catch the disease.

However, in Muswishi, huts are still found like in all other rural areas, though there are some people that have built modern and permanent structures. Some of them have houses with a living room well furnished with lounge suits. Some of these are people that are
slightly more successful as farmers as compared to others.

There are four primary schools in the area. The people usually have a meeting place at the agricultural office.

4.1.4 Social life of the people of Muswishi

Muswishi people are predominantly Christian, this is evident in the proliferation of churches in the area. Muswishi is one rural area that has a lot of churches, for instance, there is the New Apostolic Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Roman Catholic Church, United Church of Zambia, Watch Tower Church, Reformed Church in Zambia, Jerusalem and three to four Pentecostal Churches. The proliferation of churches in the area is attributed to the diverse background of most of the settlers found in the area. Despite being religious, the people of Muswishi observe a lot of cultural activities such as initiation ceremonies, they call 'chisungu'. 'Chisungu is the initiation ceremony for young girls when they reach puberty. The girls are kept in seclusion where they are taught about how to look after their homes. The event attracts a lot of people and there is a lot of merry making. Such ceremonies are not only entertaining but also have a rich cultural heritage. They are also a unifying factor for people from different cultural backgrounds.

Other social functions include 'chisi', which is a women's function, where two women enter into an intimate friendship such that they buy each other gifts ranging from kitchen utensils, clothes, beddings, lounge suits and even livestock like goats and cattle. This is an equivalent of the 'secret friend' found among the town women. The women involved in the 'chisi' normally agree to buy each other gifts periodically. If one of them, bought an item worth K100,000.00, her 'Sii' is expected to reciprocate that with an item double the amount her friend bought. When the 'chisi' is taking place, normally, the 'Sii' whose turn it is to give the gift to a friend is accompanied by other women as though she is being taken for marriage. The recipient also prepares a lot of food, and drink. Men, women, and children are invited when this function is taking place. There is a lot of fun, there is dancing and ululating. It is a social event that has gained popularity in Muswishi. He (this student) was witnessing the 'chisi' for the first in his life. Upon inquiry, he was told the 'chisi' takes place after the harvest of each farming season when people still have
some food and money raised from the sale of the farm produce. Men appear not to have problems with 'chisii' as they say it helped bring household goods into their homes, therefore, they encouraged their wives to take part.

In addition, there are a lot of church conferences held in the area after the harvest. At times these conferences involve people from outside Muswishi and take place between July and October every year.

There was also a local football league that took place around the same period (July to October) involving the youth of Muswishi. Games were usually played over the weekend. And the main purpose for the games was entertainment, there was no trophy. Normally, when such activities took place, people of all ages and sex attended.

Funerals are another outstanding social event worth noting. In Muswishi when there is a funeral almost all other activities come to a stand still. All meetings, be they economic and church are postponed. Apart from children, the sick and those who are out visiting, all the people normally converge at the funeral home. Funerals normally last for a week and are really very solemn moments. Women usually sit inside the house or hut while men sit outside around a campfire. It is at funerals where elderly people share their experiences in life. A lot of stories rich in cultural value are told. This is the place where traditional issues are raised regarding death. Some of the stories were told in parables. They are about people who shun funerals as a way of teaching the young on the importance of attending funerals. Depending on the bereaved family, some funerals were characterised by singing of Christian songs. This student observed that, at such funerals, very little beer was taken. While in other funerals, there was a lot of beer drinking though most the funerals attended by this student were incidence free.

4.2 Personal Experiences

When one visited the people of Muswishi now, the first impression he/she got is that they are people who once upon a time were affluent. This is evidenced by the scrap metal of old vehicles, hammer mills and many other agricultural machinery still lying around most of the homes. Some of the people still own permanent housing structures built out of
burnt bricks and corrugated iron sheets. Some of them still have large tracks of cleared land they used to cultivate, and huge cattle kraals which are now overgrown with grass since there are no cattle to cultivate or even keep there. A visitor to the area is likely to conclude on seeing these things that the people of Muswishi had in the past lived a better life, though they now look very poor. They now till the land using hoes. The harvest is little compared to that which they would have got if all the land had been cultivated.

During social events especially at beer parties, stories about how wealthy the people of Muswishi were are usually told. Phrases such as 'twali abaume', or 'twakali basankwa' can easily be picked from the conversations. Usually people talk about how many bags of maize they used to produce and how many wives they married when they were still financially sound, this was common talk among the Tonga settlers. Most settlers attribute their impoverished state to the bad agricultural policies of the MMD. At one of such social events, a discussion ensued, where the people were talking about how they now have been reduced to destitutes. They said, they now were involved in 'food for work' programme commonly known in the area as 'Kambilombilo' a concept they never knew of in the Second Republic. Kambilombilo entails that people do community work such as building roads, dams, teachers' houses and many other developmental activities and they receive food in return. This type of activity is spearheaded by organisations like Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM).

Given this background, one is most likely to conclude that the people of Muswishi are very thirsty for development such that any development activity would succeed without any difficulties. This might not be unique to the people to Muswishi alone, but probably all the rural people in the Zambia.

Below are some of the experiences this student had while on attachment in Muswishi.

4.2.1 **Attitude towards outsiders**

As earlier alluded to, Muswishi has a lot of settlers from different parts of Zambia and even neighbouring countries. Some of these settlers are retirees and retrenchees of government and parastatal organisations. Therefore, when in Muswishi, a stranger feels
welcome, he/she does not feel lonely. The people of Muswishi are very sociable, and are willing to render any form of help to anybody at any time. Language barriers do not seem to bother the people of Muswishi. They are able to communicate with anybody freely. This student classifies Muswishi as a modern rural area. Having lived among the Tongas of Southern Province, this student could notice a few differences in the manner the Muswishi Tongas behaved. For instance, in southern province, greetings are quite elaborate, while in Muswishi greetings were brief. The people in Muswishi do not insist that when greeting people one inquires about their cattle and many other possessions as the case is in Southern Province.

Strangers in Muswishi are rarely viewed with suspicion, as is the case in most rural areas. The Muswishi society is open to outsiders, they have very little if any to hide. One elderly man interviewed by this student said, "an open society always develops unlike a closed one". He even cited an old Tonga adage, 'yakila mumbalaa nzila kutegwa beenda ba kugwase' literally meaning, 'build your hut near the road/path, so that the passersby can advise you'. All the old man meant was, if people knew what one was doing, they might be ready to render helpful advice on how to do things better. The old man further said, that it did not mean that the people in Muswishi accepted any advice, they too have the capacity to analyze issues and only that which is useful was accepted.

4.2.2 Culture

This student admits, he has not lived among the Bembas so as to know and understand their culture. But what he saw in Muswishi can neither be called Bemba nor Tonga culture. He thinks what he saw was a mixture of cultures. For instance, one of the Tonga families held a pre-marriage function called 'amatebeto'. Upon inquiry, he (this student) was told that this was a Bemba event where in-laws gave their son-in-law food to welcome him in their household. Words like 'bana chimbusa' were often used though pronounced in a Tonga way.

There was also a ritual usually held in memory of a departed relative among a Ngoni family. This ritual among the Tongas is normally referred to as 'mweshyo'. It is normally held after a year from the time the deceased died, especially after the harvest. This
student was surprised to hear this word (mweshyo) being used at a Ngoni family's function. Given another ten years, this student feels, the people of Muswishi will have evolved their own culture which is neither Bemba, Tonga, Lenje or any other tribe found in the area.

In addition, if a Tonga or Bemba from Southern or Northern provinces visited relatives in Muswishi, it is possible that he/she will not be able to understand some of the words and expressions used, as the language in the area combines both Tonga and Bemba words. The language being evolved is peculiar to Muswishi, and will only be understood by the people of Muswishi. It is interesting when people of Muswishi are discussing especially, during a meeting. Normally, people discussed using either Bemba or Tonga, but both Tonga and Bemba words and expressions were used interchangeably.

The other thing this student observed is the free contribution of ideas by women and the youth during meetings. Of course, women always sat in one corner, separated from men. But when it came to raising questions, making suggestions or indeed rejecting an idea, all were free to air their views irrespective of their sex and age. Men and women whether married or not mixed freely before and after meetings. Married men and women in Muswishi meet in various fora unaccompanied by their spouses. To this student, it appeared as though couples never cared, they seemed not to be jealous. This student remembers accompanying a male member of the communication committee to a couple's home for programme recording. At the time we arrived, the husband was leaving for Kabwe and bid the recording crew farewell without much concern. This too explains how free or open the Muswishi society has become.

4.2.3 Attitude towards development

Muswishi people appear to cherish development, probably this is because of their high aspirations in life. This is evident in the number of development projects people were involved in. For instance, FARMESA was trying a number of participatory projects in the area. None of the projects lacked people to participate in them. Actually there were more people than required in each of the projects. For instance, in the communication committee that only had ten members, each time they had a meeting, there would be four
to six non-members attending. The idea of taking part in all development projects was very good, though at times it worked against the people of Muswishi. This student feels, it is for this reason that Muswishi had the highest number of farmers that were swindled during the time of the credit coordinators in the Central Province.

This student also observed the reminiscence of the dependency syndrome that characterised development projects in the Second Republic among the people of Muswishi. This was proved in the good attendance of meetings called in the area by any of the development agencies. This student observed that each time there was a meeting, discussions were inclined towards free supply of agricultural inputs (fertilizer and seed).

This student really appreciated being in Muswishi for his attachment. Rural development scholars need to understand rural people very well before working with them on any development programmes. There are times when outsiders saw a problem, which the rural people did not perceive, as a problem. There have been instances in Zambia when government working in collaboration with the donors has conceived development projects that have ended up into being white elephants. This student has in mind the Kafushi Rice Scheme in Malambanyama in Chibombo district. The authorities thought the scheme would, be accepted by the local people. To the contrary, the local people there perceived it as an employment source. Immediately the project phase was over, the project died a natural death, because the local people were not consulted when the project was being designed. Probably rice would not have been a crop they could have chosen to grow in the area. Secondly, people did not know how to process wheat in case they failed to market it.

It is vital that rural people are given an opportunity to identify their problems and solutions. Then rural development will become meaningful, since there would not be a waste of the meagre resources, which have in the past been directed at what was not a problem according to the would-be beneficiaries.
Chapter 5
Problems of the institution and attempts to solve them

5.1. Overview

The current chapter will try to highlight some of the problems of the institution this student was attached to. In addition, the Chapter will indicate some attempts the institution was putting in place to try and solve them.

This student identified three problem areas the institution was facing at the time of the attachment. These problem areas include;

a) Organisational arrangements.

b) Operational problems arising from lack of experience of the executing team in participatory approaches.

c) Attitudes of the government officials, and the Communication Committee members towards the project in Muswishi.

From the onset it must be stated that this student was attached to the National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS). This is a department responsible for the dissemination of agricultural technical information to and from agricultural stakeholders in the country. NAIS is a department in the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries (MAFF). The department disseminates information using both the print and electronic media. It among others supervises the Radio Farm Forums established in 1968.

In March 1998, the Farm-level Applied Research Methods for East and Southern Africa (FARMESA) established a project that would work with the farmers in Muswishi in Chibombo district. The project was set on the basis that it employs participatory methods in helping the people of Muswishi solve their identified and prioritised problems. FARMESA with headquarters in Harare - Zimbabwe, was a Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) funded project operational in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In Zambia, the project was working among the people of Muswishi and Lusitu in Siavonga district of Southern Province. In Muswishi, ten mini-
projects were conceived after a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). Among them was the Communication Support for Technology Development and Transfer, which would complement the efforts of the other mini-projects by way of information dissemination. This mini-project was to be supervised by the Senior Agricultural Information Officer (SAIO) for Central Province. Among others, the mini-project was to disseminate information using posters, leaflets, newsletter, video, and audio programmes. The mini-project established a communication committee to oversee the dissemination of information in the area. The committee comprised of ten members drawn from the farming community, local extension officers, NAIS staff as the supervisor of the project and other stakeholder organisations working in the area. From among the many activities of the communication mini-project, this student chose to work with people that were involved in the production of audio programmes using the participatory radio format.

FARMESA only worked for one year and the project has been discontinued by SIDA, its financiers, who feel the people implementing the project had diverted from the agreed upon objectives. This student does not have any official document to this effect, but he was verbally informed of this development by the project’s national coordinator - Mr. John Musanya. The coordinator said that at a meeting held in November 2000, the donor informed MAFF management of the withdrawal of funding from the FARMESA Project.

Actually, it must be noted here that even at the time this student was on attachment, funding of the project had already stopped flowing. Activities at the time continued with a view that SIDA would rescind its decision to discontinue the project.

5.2 Problems of the Muswishi farmers

As a preamble to understanding the problems NAIS was facing during the period of the attachment, this student finds it wise to also highlight some of the problems farmers in Muswishi were facing as they form the basis under which NAIS operated. Thereafter, that is when he (this student) will proceed to discuss the problems of NAIS.
5.2.1 **Low crop productivity**

The diagnostic survey carried out by FARMESA just before the project was established revealed that, crop yield per hectare was very low in comparison with the recommendations of agricultural crop research. For instance, in Muswishi, farmers harvested on average 15 to 20 by 90kg bags per hectare, when the recommended yield was 50 to 60 by 90kg bags per hectare. Most of the problems attributed to low crop productivity were caused by bad agricultural practices, which include.

i) **High soil acidic levels**

High soil acid levels arose from the over use of chemical fertilizers on the soils of Muswishi. During the second republic, farmers used a lot of chemical fertilizer on their soils as they thought crop production was dependent of fertilizer use. Little did they know that this practice raised the soil pH, making the soils less productive. This practice was rampant during the second republic when government subsidised agriculture.

Currently, the soils are so unproductive that even in the fields that are left fallow or unplanted, grass can not grow. Therefore, to resuscitate these soils, a heavy liming programme has to be undertaken, and most farmers in Muswishi can not afford this.

However, to address this situation, the farmers are applying some ash in the field which is also done on a very small scale to have an impact.

ii) **Growing of the same crop on the same soil**

The growing of the same crop on the same piece of land every year also led to the depletion of soil nutrients. The main crop that had been grown using this practice was maize. Maize is a heavy feeder, meaning it requires a lot of fertilizer, therefore if it was grown on the same piece of land every year, there is greater risk of depleting the soil nutrients to a level that no more crops can be grown profitably on that particular soil. Growing of the same crop on the same soil also contributes to the rising of soil acidity.
The above problems can not entirely be blamed on the farmers, but also on the government policy on crop production. At the time maize was ‘the’ crop, government encouraged the growing of maize as the only crop that would be used to feed the nation. Even in some provinces such as Luapula, Northern, and North Western where they grew other crops like cassava, sorghum and millet, they were also encouraged to grow maize. Actually this problem is not only unique to Muswishi but also to all areas that used to be part of the maizebelt, for instance the Southern Province. Most soils in Southern Province are not as productive as they used to be, before the intensification of maize production in the country.

To address the problem of growing one crop on the same soil, crop rotation is now being encouraged, though it is coming too late.

5.2.2 Inadequate credit facilities for farm inputs

This student observed that farmers in Muswishi have problems acquiring farm inputs. Despite the many credit coordinators that give out credit to the farmers throughout the country, farmers in Muswishi still can’t acquire credit. And one of the reasons for this is, the prohibitive conditions of the credit, which make most farmers shun the credit scheme. For instance during the 1999/2000 farming season, farmers were required to pay 20 per cent of their entire loan as down payment. Most farmers did not have such money making it difficult for them to acquire credit.

While it is true that during the same season (1999/2000) government gave out loans to cooperatives, this did not benefit most of the farmers, as this credit was given through the ward councillors. Therefore, it appeared as though the ruling party was trying to reward its cadres. Things like “it pays to belong to MMD” were common. As a result, non-party cadres could not benefit. Just like in the Second Republic, this facility was abused. Very few of the party cadres that got loans through the cooperatives were able to pay back.

5.2.3 Low loan repayment rate

The farmers themselves identified low loan repayment as another major problem they
have. A discussion was actually recorded on one of the Radio Farm Forum programmes done by the farmers. According to the farmers, this problem contributes to the credit coordinators shunning Muswishi. The farmers in the area would get loans from the lending institutions or credit coordinators but fail to pay back.

Though upon investigation regarding the question why farmers defaulted, it was found that the major problem was the unfair terms of the loans. A farmer who got a fertilizer loan was expected to pay three to four by 90kg bags of maize for every 50kg bag of fertilizer. In most cases, fertilizer was delivered very late to enable the farmers apply it to their crops at the right time. The normal practice involving credit coordinators had been, farmers were not informed of how much they would pay in return for the loan at the time they got it. The farmers would only be informed of the repayment terms when they begin harvesting their crop. It was in this situation farmers found themselves, prompting them to default especially if their harvest was not good enough.

This problem was actually a chain reaction, credit coordinators too said they usually were not informed of the interest rate by the Food Reserve Agency (FRA), where they got the fertilizers from until about harvest time. Therefore, it was not possible for them to inform the farmers of how much they were supposed to pay in return. Credit coordinators also blamed the late delivery of fertilizer to FRA, which was the sole organisation responsible for importing fertilizer into the country. This therefore is a vicious circle, though it weighs heavily on the farmers who happen to be at the end of the chain.

5.2.4 Inadequate market for farm produce

The other problem the farmers of Muswishi are facing is a market for their farm produce. Despite being near Kabwe, farmers have problems marketing their produce. This problem is compounded by the high fuel prices which led to high transportation fares when delivering their produce to the market. For instance, during the period of this student’s attachment, a 90kg bag of maize cost K5,000.00 to transport to Kabwe. In addition, the issue of profitability came in. How much would the farmer sell his/her maize to make a profit in a liberalised market economy where the laws of supply and demand dictate the
prices? Therefore, those farmers that grew some maize, found it difficult to sell their produce.

Related to lack of market for their produce is the influx of bogus businessmen and women that buy farm produce and promise to pay later. Some of the farmers in Muswishi have been victims of swindling by these businesspersons. At times these business people have got the farm produce from the farmers and never paid for it, as their residences are usually not known.

Inadequate market for farm produce in Muswishi has deprived the farmers of the much needed income which would enable them meet some of their needs. This problem has had a very negative impact on the economic well-being of the people of Muswishi.

This problem has been very difficult to address, what the people are now doing is to form some association to oversee their marketing interests. At the time this student was completing his attachment, the farmers were just working out the modalities on how this would work.

5.2.5 Inadequate planting material

At the beginning of each farming season, most farmers in Muswishi waste a lot of time looking for seed or other planting material such as sweet potato vines and cassava stalks. This problem is attributed to lack of money to buy seed. As a result, farmers use recycled seed (seed from their previous harvest) which does not give them good yields.

During the 1999/2000 farming season, Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM) and FARMESA through a programme known as ‘seed multiplication’, gave some farmers maize, groundmuts, cow peas seed, and sweet potatoes and cassava planting material. The seed and planting material PAM and FARMESA gave the farmers were to be grown for seed for the following farming season (2000/2001). The seed, which was given to the farmers, was composite seed, which retains its value even if it was replanted several times.
5.2.6 Livestock diseases

Livestock diseases are rampant in Muswishi. As alluded to in Chapter Four, most farmers lost their cattle through corridor disease commonly known as ‘Denkete’ in the area. Corridor disease is a tick borne disease, which can only be controlled by cattle dipping. Cattle were mostly used for draft power. Therefore, their reduction subsequently meant, the reduction in the total hectarage under cultivation. Cattle also provided manure which farmers used in their fields as an alternative in the absence of fertilizer.

Diseases like ‘New Castle’ in chickens are also rampant in Muswishi. Small livestock such as, chickens, ducks and goats are sold in order for people to raise money to abet hunger during such times. People sell them for cash and use the money to meet some of their needs, such as buying soup, sugar, books for school children and even food.

Before this student’s attachment, FARMESA was running a programme to control chicken diseases, but as mentioned earlier, this project has been discontinued. At the time of the attachment, a few farmers had continued controlling chicken diseases using their own resources. While cattle farmers in the area appealed to government during a number of meetings attended by government officials that, they be given donkeys which are less susceptible to diseases.

5.2.7 Attitude of the people of Muswishi towards development

Traces of the dependence syndrome still manifested themselves in the people of Muswishi. According to this student, people still felt that development could only be brought to Muswishi by government. From the time this student was in the area, there was no single time that the people there met to discuss their problems without the intervention of a government or NGO change agent. Even when they were discussing the above highlighted problems, mention was always made that government came to their aid. This is evident in the fact that with the pulling out of FARMESA, most projects have also died.

This student feels this was the biggest problem he identified in the area. Muswishi is
endowed with rich natural resources which if properly utilised, the area would help
develop the area. There was one thing this student liked about FARMESA when it just
started (as he was present then), emphasis was that the project had just come to give a
push to the farmers in Muswishi, everything else had to be done by the farmers
themselves.

Indeed when the project was in operation, when a dignitary visited, women sung songs in
praise of the project, but just a few months from the time it was discontinued one hardly
finds footprints of the project. This is very sad, because the participatory ideas of a
project like FARMESA surely should have continued even after its project life. Unless
people changed their attitude development remains a myth to most of them.

5.3 Problems of the institution

Given the above background, one is able to understand the mammoth task that was ahead
of NAIS in trying to assist the people of Muswishi solve their problems through the use
of communication in general, and participatory radio in particular. However, despite the
fact that NAIS posed as a partner in solution seeking in Muswishi, as an institution it had
problems. Below are some of the problems as identified by this student.

5.3.1 Organisational arrangements

NAIS started as a communication unit of the Ministry of Agricultural after independence
in 1968. Its mandate then was to supervise the Radio Farm Forums throughout the
country. It drew most of its technical work force from graduates of Zambia College of
Agriculture (Monze and Mpika). These graduates were mainly certificate holders who
had studied general agriculture. NAIS continued employing certificate holders until 1994
when government slapped an employment freeze pending the restructuring of the
ministry. NAIS for a very long time remained the only unit or department that employed
lowly trained staff in the entire ministry, it had no professionals until after the
restructuring of the ministry.

At inception, NAIS formerly known as Rural Information Services (RIS) was a section of
the Extension Department. It became a fully flagged department in the late 1980s, though it was headed by a 'Head' and not a director like all the other departments in the ministry. In 1995, NAIS reverted to being a section though now called a 'Sub-Programme' of the Department of Field Services, which is essentially the same department of extension.

Therefore, some of the problems NAIS is facing emanate from its organisational arrangement. For instance, the fact that NAIS employed lowly qualified staff, other people in the ministry looked down upon the department, such that it never enjoyed full benefit of the ministry in terms of donor training and funding. NAIS solely depended on government funding which has been dwindling every year making the operations of the department very difficult. For instance, there were donor funded projects like Zambia Agricultural Research Extension Programme (ZAREP), which only supported Research and Extension wings of the ministry leaving out NAIS which was vital in the dissemination of messages to the farming communities in country.

Having worked for NAIS for some time, this student remembers how NAIS was involved in ZAREP only as a shopping window for their (Research and Extension) activities. NAIS was involved when it suited them and not as a partner in agricultural development. A gulf existed between NAIS and other departments in the ministry when it came to donor support a situation that made NAIS less effective.

With the restructuring, more professionals have been employed in NAIS, and these are able to talk on the same wave length with other professionals in the other departments of the ministry, the gulf appears to be reducing, though it still is an upward battle. To date NAIS still depends on the other sub-programmes for facilities like transport, especially in the provinces.

In view of the foregoing, the activities of NAIS staff in the FARMESA project were very difficult, as they relied on other departments in MAFF for transport making supervision of the project very difficult.
5.3.2 Lack of a research unit

Since inception, NAIS has had no research unit to determine the information needs of its audience. This student attributes this to low caliber staff that the institution employed for a very long time as they probably did not appreciate the importance of research in any media organisation. This student feels if there was a research unit, the Muswishi experiment would probably have been handled in conjunction with this unit and the inexperienced provincial team that ran the project single-handedly.

Regarding whether there is something NAIS is currently doing to establish a research unit, this student does not know. But this student is aware of a Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) programme that intends to work with the institution in the broadcasting section. So far JICA carried out a survey on the R.F.F. movement though at the time of this report the results were not yet released.

5.3.3 Initiative to experiment on participatory radio

NAIS was brought in the FARMESA project as one of the stakeholders. NAIS had little input in the establishment of the project. Therefore it could be right to say that this idea was imposed on NAIS starting with the national headquarters right through to the communication committee in Muswishi. Since it was imposed on NAIS, there where no measures taken to insure sustainability of the project after the project life. With the donor (SIDA) withdrawing, this student does not see the project continuing and yet this was a very good project that would have given NAIS another approach to R.F.F.s in Zambia. As mentioned in earlier chapters, national broadcasting has failed to make an impact on rural development, hence the need to try participatory approaches which ensure the broadcasting of relevant messages and give ownership of the messages to the audience. Therefore, NAIS could have continued with the project so as to see how best it would have worked. In any case, this would have been a pilot project in participatory R.F.F.s in Zambia.

The execution of the project largely depended on support from FARMESA, which was slow and erratic in the releases of funds. For instance, the project (Communication
Support for Technology Development and Transfer) was approved in June 1998, and funding for the project was first received in March 1999. And the second and last allocation of funds came in September 1999. This meant that project implementation suffered, no matter how willing the implementers were, they could not do anything since they did not have the resources.

In addition, projects perceived outside the country have always not performed well especially in countries of the South. The reason is simple. The executing country has to depend on the financing organisation for everything. The financing organisation normally designs the objectives of the project. They determine the timetable of the project, and the benchmarks to be met. In view of the aforementioned, projects can be abandoned at will by the donors, destroying the reputation of the local project implementers. Imagine what effect the abandoning of the FARMESA Project will have on the officers that were executing the project among the farmers in Muswishi. This student feels that, if the project was conceived by NAIS, measures would have been taken to ensure sustainability.

The communication project was to provide support to the other projects that had activities that depended on the rains. The first allocation for the project was coming in March, when the rain season is coming to an end. The project activities were designed in such a way that attention would be given to crop planting. This entails that money would come at a wrong time. Unfortunately, the execution team was told to use the money within 30 days. It is most likely that in a bid to spend the money within the specified period, the team could have bought items that were not necessary or relevant to the project. This point ties very well with projects designed outside the country and how problematic they are. If this project was designed by NAIS and at the time the project was supposed to start the department had no money, they could have waited until the right time for the project so as to follow the programme.

The terms of reference were also designed by the financiers of the project. As the old adage says, 'the one who pays the piper calls the tune'. The project team had to operate within the dictates of the financiers perception of participatory radio. The financiers wanted certain things done by a specific time period. For instance, the project should
have come to an end by December 1999. Given the erratic funding, this student does not see how the project could have accomplished its objectives within such a short time. In any case participatory approaches really depend on the beneficiaries, how fast they are able to move and do things.

This student thinks the project team needed more time since the type of work they were doing was specialised. In as much as they did not aim at producing broadcasters, they needed to ensure that the communication committee members handled the recording equipment very well. Some of the members were handling broadcasting equipment for the first time, so they needed more time to understand the operation of the equipment. In addition, they needed time to comprehend programme production skills.

Therefore, if the terms of reference were drawn by the local people themselves, they could have taken care of the fact that they were going into a new area (broadcasting). They could have given themselves enough time to acquaint themselves with the operations of the R.F.F.s. Also communication would have been easy if the project was designed by NAIS, in case of any problems.

In view of the above, projects initiated outside the project area, are very problematic since they overlook a number of aspects pertaining to the operations of the projects. Therefore, NAIS as the executing institution should have studied the project idea before accepting it. This would have given the department an opportunity to analyze the viability of the project, what necessary aspects should have been given more attention and how the project would have been sustained after FARMESA.

There seems to be nothing NAIS had done to try and solve this problem. However, the members of the communication committee realizing how fragile projects were, established a fund. Money for this fund will come from member subscriptions and advertisements on R.F.F. programmes by the stakeholders. At the time this student was completing his attachment, the committee members had agreed they would each pay K5,000.00 as subscription fees. They had not yet agreed on how much they would sell advertising airtime on their programmes.
5.3.4 Operational problems arising from lack of experience of the executing team in participatory approaches

Due to the restructuring of the ministry that took place in 1997, new members of staff were either relocated or employed throughout the country. For instance, at the time this student was doing his attachment, the acting Senior Agricultural Information Officer (SAIO) had been relocated from general extension with a bias to crop husbandry. Therefore, she was still coping with the activities of NAIS. She was yet to understand the operations of the R.F.F.s.

The acting SAIO was being assisted by a gentleman (Evelyn Hone graduate) who had just been employed. Therefore, these two officers still needed to be guided on the operations of the R.F.F.s, and later on, the participatory approaches. Both the executing team and the communication committee lacked experience in the running of the project. This, to some extent made the execution of the project a big problem. Operations of the project stalled at times since the team had to depend on this student who before going on study leave was the team leader of the project.

In addition, this project was supervised by the SAIO who was also in-charge of the whole province, since at the time the project was established, Chibombo District Agricultural Information Officer was out for studies. This arrangement was also a problem, because the SAIO would not be available at all times when the communication committee needed her services at Muswishi, as she could be out attending to other provincial assignments.

To this effect, the project needed somebody with some experience to help run it. Hence the suggestion by this student that NAIS needs a research unit that could handle such activities.

5.3.5 Lack of resources

As already mentioned the NAIS staff depended on FARMESA for the allocation of resources. At the time of the attachment, it was difficult to run the project because there
was no money coming from the project and the NAIS headquarters. Secondly, the officers had no reliable transport. They mainly depended on others departments for transport to supervise the project, which resulted in some of the meetings with the farmers and the communication committee being put off.

This was and still is a very big problem, which does not seem to have any solution in sight.

5.3.6 Attitudes of the government officials and Communication Committee members towards the project in Muswishi

i) Government Officers

In Zambia, projects are usually associated with an unlimited flow of funds for officers through allowances and other operational expenses. Therefore, if the flow of funds was erratic in most cases morale is low among the executing government officers. There was a lot of excitement when the project started, but no sooner had the officers realized that funding was not as expected, that they lost motivation. This did not only affect the communication project but all the other projects under FARMESA in Muswishi.

For instance, at the time of this student’s attachment, officers dragged their feet to do work for the project. Except for the acting SAIO who struggled to visit the project site all the time she had a bit of fuel. The going was rough, the communication committee had to stand on its own.

ii) The Communication Committee

The communication committee members according to this student thought by joining the committee they would benefit in one way or the other. At one time they were also asking for an allowance from the project supervisor. They were also asking the supervisor to link them to lending institutions as a way of appreciating what they were doing. In other words, it appeared as though they were also working and needed remuneration for the work that they were doing.
Given the above scenario, one wonders whether development is attainable with such kind of attitude by the development agents and the beneficiaries.

To conclude this chapter, NAIS needs to pay attention to establishing a research unit that would periodically assess the information needs of its audience in order to disseminate information that was relevant to the audiences. Broadcasting to ‘whom it may concern’ as it where is a waste of time and government’s meager resources. In addition, farmers too need to put their house in order, development can not take place if the farmers were not fully involved. Of course, they should not be involved because they want immediate benefit, but they should be ready to endure and be patient as development was a long-term process. They should also be ready to have deferred gratification which comes after some time of concerted efforts.
Chapter 6
Input of the student

6.0 Introduction

The main objective of the NAIS project in Muswishi was to contribute to the rise in the living standards of small-holder farmers, through improved household food security, real family income and management of resources. This objective was to be achieved through the provision of a communication system or approach for farmers to access technical information useful in decision-making pertaining to their farm activities.

Among numerous problems Muswishi people were facing, the weak communication link between the stakeholders in the area was identified as the main problem. Therefore, this project would use various media in a participatory manner in order to enhance development. Participatory radio among these media was chosen by the people of Muswishi in their quest for development solutions.

Chapter 5 dealt with the problems of the farmers in Muswishi and how they impact on the operations of NAIS, which equally faces numerous problems. It was mentioned in Chapter 5 that the main problem of the people in Muswishi was, inadequate supply of alternative information vis-à-vis a liberalised economy. This situation has led to increased poverty, leaving the farmers in the area worse than they were before 1991 when the MMD took over power from UNIP. On the other hand, NAIS which is supposed to help provide solutions to the farmers through information dissemination, is also ridden with many problems ranging from inadequate funding to lack of experience and initiative to conduct a survey to establish the performance of the R.F.F.s one of its sole activities.

It must be noted here that, the Muswishi project was also an experiment of how participatory information dissemination would contribute to rural development.

6.1 Input of the student

The input of this student came in handy, since the participatory radio project (R.F.F.) was just beginning. This student appreciates the insights gained from the course work of his
Communication for Development degree programme at the University of Zambia, since he was ready to help establish the project together with the NAIS staff responsible for the project in Muswishi.

Participatory approaches were a new phenomenon in the area, as such, this student was more of a consultant than an observer. In addition, the acting SAIO, went on leave in August 2000, meaning this student worked with the farmers single handed in her absence.

Some of the areas this student contributed towards the project and in solving some of the problems of the institution he was attached to, included.

6.1.1 Training of the Communication Committee members of the Muswishi Participatory Radio Project

i) Information needs assessment

This student advised the project team on the importance of conducting an information needs assessment in order to establish the information needs of the people of Muswishi before making radio programmes for them. To this effect, a workshop was held on which the communication committee members were equipped with the participatory assessment skills.

He (this student) took a leading role in the training of the members on the types of surveys, how to solicit for information and how to analyze survey information.

Arising from the workshop deliberations, the communication committee members drew the programme of the information needs assessment. He designed a very simple questionnaire and taught the committee members how they would administer it. The committee members also determined the sample each of them would interview.

After the information needs assessment, this student led the communication committee members to analyze the responses collected from the survey and the drawing up of the radio recording programme schedule.
ii) Radio Programme Production

This student helped in the training of the communication committee members on how to produce a radio programme. He gave the members an insight of the origin of radio and when it was first used as a social medium.

The communication committee members were also taught the advantages and disadvantages of radio as a medium of communication. This student also taught the members on how they could use radio effectively in communication for development.

iii) Radio Farm Forums

This student also taught the communication committee members of the origin of the Radio Farm Forum concept and how it was adopted in Zambia in the late 1960s. He shared with committee members on how R.F.F.s are organised and how to run them for the benefit of the farmers.

6.1.2 Conscientizing R.F.F. members on the need to own the communication medium

This student helped the Muswishi Communication Project Team conscientize the R.F.F members of the importance of owning the project. In the past government through NAIS gave out free radio sets, batteries and stationery to the R.F.F.s. This idea still emerged as we (R.F.F. group) were discussing how to establish the R.F.F idea in Muswishi.

This student explained to the farmers that the time for handouts was long gone. He told them that development costs money, therefore, if the people of Muswishi wanted to develop they should be prepared to spend some money. This took a protracted discussion from among the members, who had realized that development belonged to them. Therefore, they did not need outsiders to give them everything they needed to develop.

This student further explained that, if small scale farmers did not control or share in the control of the development process, it would be difficult to ascertain whether their interests were being served. Therefore, the issue is not how to make the small-scale
farmers modern, but to help them gain control over their well-being. The challenge then is to reconceptualise development not as a means of satisfying life's basic needs, but rather as a process of accumulating increasing degree of control over all those variables in the human environment which are in one way or another essential to the maintenance of a safe and happy life. Communication therefore is the vehicle by which control of the environment would be acquired and accumulated.

6.1.3 Input of the student to some of the problems NAIS is facing

As alluded to earlier, the main problem NAIS was facing is inadequate funding which led to lack of supervision of its activities in the province generally. Participatory approaches are a new concept to most of the Zambian farmers. Therefore, if they (participatory approaches) were to succeed, there was greater need to effectively supervise them. There was very little this student could do, except advise the acting SAIO to constantly get in touch with the national headquarters, explaining the problems they were facing, probably funding would improve.

As regards inadequate experience in running participatory projects, this student had fruitful discussions with the NAIS staff and communication committee. This student too, did not have practical experience on participatory projects, but his exposure to theoretical works by various development scholars enabled him participate actively in discussions on participatory projects.

6.2 Reactions to this student's suggestions

Generally, the farmers expressed happiness in the project. They said they appreciated having a communication channel through which they would talk to the authorities and among themselves. They said, in the past they never had a voice through which they could air their grievances on to development in Muswishi. With the introduction of participatory radio, even the illiterate would be able to express their views to the relevant authorities.

The Muswishi farmers also appreciated the fact that they would now be listening to radio
programmes together. They said, listening to programmes together allows members to
discuss issues that have been raised in the programme, and even get responses which they
would not get if they listened alone at home.

It was slightly difficult to get reactions from the NAIS staff since this student was
working with his subordinates who accepted almost each and every suggestion given.
Nevertheless, there was some form of appreciation of the input of this student. For
instance, the acceptance of holding training sessions on the information needs
assessment, the organisation of the radio farm forums and even on the programme
production skills. Generally, their sentiments were that they had learnt a lot from the
project. They admitted that they had very little idea as to how they could have
approached the project before this student arrived.

In conclusion, this student admits he ran the whole project other than being an observer.
He was running a participatory project for the first time, therefore, he also had a lot to
learn from the project. From what he learnt from this project he can safely say, a
participatory approach when established can become a norm, thereby providing
continuity and stability. It increases motivation and self-reliance of the people who are
involved in the project.

Given that necessary information is made available, participation in message
development should lead to increased information exchange, thus strengthening the weak
communication link between the stakeholders in Muswishi.

Whatever adjustments that must be made by the development communicator in order to
accommodate participatory approaches are worth trying. Going by what this student
observed from the Muswishi experience, participatory approaches help break social and
cultural barriers that inhibit acceptance of new ideas and practices. For instance, some of
the discussions that the R.F.F. members engaged in, hinge on long standing traditional
values that would not be discussed between men and women. But it is important to also
note that participatory approaches at the same time preserve cultural identity, since the
people involved ensure they collectively do not adopt practices that are contrary to their
culture.
Greater satisfaction is realized when people at the grassroots develop their own communication competence in order to access development information and blend indigenous knowledge to facilitate change on their own.
Chapter 7
Discussion of the findings

7.0 Introduction

More and more rural development practitioners are today looking for means of enhancing communication in their work. It is becoming increasingly recognised that true participation can not take place without communication. On the other hand, participation is a pre-requisite to development.

Communication therefore, is a powerful technique of engaging participation in development projects. It is more powerful than simple information delivery which has in most cases tended to assume that information should flow from 'those who have knowledge', usually these are the specialists within a development project, to 'those without knowledge', who are assumed to be the project participants. Dissemination of information has been top-down, where what was published or broadcast was considered important by the information media. This perception of communication has always been attributed to the failure of most development projects in the countries of the South.

In addition, information flow is limited, the further away one gets from the urban centres. This is because most mass media coverage is done and concentrated in the urban areas, neglecting rural areas, which equally play a major role in economic development of the countries of the South. Due to limited information flow in the rural areas, views of the rural people are rarely highlighted. The voice of rural people is subsequently not heard. This has serious implications in that, the people at the development front are starved of an information network necessary for making informed decisions pertaining to development. This, therefore, leaves rural areas undeveloped, hence making them unattractive for people to live in. That could be one of the reasons why there are high incidences of rural-urban migration in most countries of the South.

The mass media organisations assume that, the information they broadcast or publish also caters for rural people. Yet little consideration is placed on whether rural people have access and exposure to the mass media. Where rural people could have access and
exposure to the mass media, the media content is usually urban biased in terms of language and coverage. Therefore, there is need to reverse the trends, in order for the mass media organisations to consider establishing communication channels that are participatory in rural areas if development is to be realized.

This chapter will try to discuss the findings related to information flow in Muswishi in the light of some of the communication theories as propounded by communication experts. Further, the chapter will highlight how the information flow impacts on development of the area. Finally, it will deal with ideal situations that enhance rural development.

7.1 Communication forms available in Muswishi

To understand the subject at hand, this student finds it prudent to initially look at the various communication forms that exist in Muswishi. The Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) that was conducted in the area, in March 1999 revealed that, though various forms of communication existed in Muswishi, there was a weak communication link between the farmers and the other stakeholders. Farmers in the area did not have a well-coordinated channel of communication with the other stakeholders. The weak communication link between the farmers and the other stakeholders in Muswishi has been attributed to low agricultural productivity.

This student identified three forms of communication as existing in Muswishi. These include, interpersonal and mass communications, and folk media.

7.1.1 Interpersonal Communication;

This is face-to-face communication between two or more individuals. On the interpersonal level, the communication of a variety of information could be traced through social networks. A number of social networks, such as neighbourhoods, traditional markets, social gatherings and government and non-governmental development agencies form part of the traditional structure of rural communications. They serve as communication networks for the kinds of content such as, news, gossip,
cultural information, re-inforcing traditional values and price information for local goods. Interpersonal communication channels provide for two-way interaction, and feedback is more effective and immediate. Muswishi people use interpersonal communication channels much more than the other two forms of communication. Interpersonal communication channels are quite effective in that they provide a two-way interaction process especially where the goal of communication is persuasion.

Interpersonal communication channels commonly used in Muswishi are, the agricultural extension service, that promote agricultural development, health, schools, churches and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as the Programme Against Malnutrition and Amaka Cotton Ginnery, an outgrower scheme that promotes the growing of cotton. Other government agencies such as the Central Statistics Office, National Registration and the Electoral Commission are also said to use interpersonal communication channels, though during the attachment of this student non of them were noticed in the area.

However, some of these channels are much more used than others. For instance, the agricultural extension service is used much more than the other channels for development. The reason could be that it was the oldest development channel in the area. It was just recently that other channels started working directly with the farmers of Muswishi. In the past all the other channels or agents worked with the farmers through the agricultural extension service. Therefore, the agricultural extension service has firmly established its structures among the people of Muswishi. For instance, most meetings at the time of this student's attachment were held at the agricultural camp office, where there is a shelter constructed specifically for farmers' meetings.

As the name suggests, the agricultural extension service is used to disseminate agricultural information to the farmers through face-to-face interaction. This channel was used in a variety of ways such as meetings, field visits by the extension workers and field days where farmers invite their colleagues to share their experiences.

The Ministry of health also uses meetings to disseminate health information to the people of Muswishi. The programmes tackled under this channel were mostly directed at women. Information on family planning, nutrition, and personal hygiene was dealt with.
At the time of the attachment, this student attended a few meetings held by the Ministry of health at Muswishi clinic. Women attended most of these meetings. While other channels like the schools were mainly used for public announcements. This was where something of public interest needed to be disseminated. This channel uses the pupils as bearers of the information to their parents and relatives. During the period of the attachment, this student experienced how effective this channel was used to spread information about the outbreak of rabies in Muswishi. Schools also organised social functions such as football and netball matches where the people came to watch. After such matches important announcements were usually made. The churches too, used a similar approach. The churches did not only use the church services as a channel for announcements, but also encouraged the formation of development groups. The approach used in such a gathering is called 'ichtente'. This is a small localised Christian meeting group which apart from addressing the spiritual needs of the members also comes up with some development ideas.

Other development agents only came to the area when they had specific messages to the farmers. At the time of the attachment, these agents were in the area in order to recover the loans which they had given to the farmers. This student does not remember seeing civic education organisations especially preparing the people in readiness for general elections that take place later in the year 2001.

As alluded to earlier, interpersonal channels are also used for cultural promotion in Muswishi. For instance, during events such as initiation ceremonies (chisungu), funerals, marriage ceremonies and other social gatherings a lot of cultural heritage is exhibited in song and dance. This way, culture is passed on to the younger generations.

7.1.2 Mass Communication

Mass communication is the transfer of information using equipment to a large, scattered, heterogeneous audience. Mass communication channels provide a potential means of spreading information quickly. Under the mass communication channel, radio, television, and publications such as newsletters, posters, books, and newspapers were used.
The mass media are available in limited quantities in Muswishi. Of course, the most common medium found in the area is radio. Very few people have battery powered television sets. Newspapers were said to be unaffordable, as people would rather use the little income that they get to meet their basic needs.

Therefore, radio remains the only medium available to the farmers in Muswishi in a substantially large number. Though programming in general is done in Lusaka, people in Muswishi still used the medium as a source of information, education and entertainment. One feature that this student noticed in the area is the increasing use of musical cassettes at such functions as weddings and other social gatherings.

However, as has been alluded to earlier, radio broadcasting is done in a 'to whom it may concern' manner where Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), the station to which people have access, rarely undertakes surveys to assess the information needs of its potential audience. Coupled with this is the poor radio reception at times experienced in Muswishi. This could explain the reason why some of ZNBC potential audience opts for foreign stations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and South Africa’s Channel Africa radio station. While others, such as the young, resort to playing musical cassettes at the expense of supposedly informative programmes on radio Zambia.

Muswishi like most rural areas of Zambia, television is beyond the reach of most people. In addition the area, at the time of the attachment, was not connected to the electricity grid. Therefore, the few people that had 12-volts batteries, either also owned vehicles which were used to charge their batteries as they drove to Kabwe, or had their batteries charged in Kabwe. This makes it difficult for this medium to be fully accessed in Muswishi.

Other media such as newspapers, pamphlets and books are not in regular supply in the area. Even if these media were supplied regularly, one wonders how many of the people would afford buying them.
7.1.3 **Folk media**

The folk media are productions of the local culture, rich in cultural symbols. Folk media are very intimate with the people at the grassroots and are highly participatory and have great potential for integration with the modern mass media. Examples of the folk media found in Muswishi include:

i) dances  
ii) songs  
iii) story-telling  
iv) theatre

People of Muswishi use songs and dance to convey development information. Agricultural and Family planning messages are mainly disseminated using these channels. Usually, the people of Muswishi use tunes of their traditional songs which they modify and add developmental messages. Singing and dancing was usually done when they were being visited by both local and outside dignitaries. During meetings too, singing and dancing was done. In most cases, it was women and the youth that sung and danced, while elderly men would sing along, though their voices would usually be in the background.

Theatre was also employed as a way of disseminating information. This was used more, by the development agents who in most cases hired youths from Kabwe. Such information like birth control was usually disseminated by the hired theatre groups. However, in most cases people laughed their lungs out hoping the messages were driven home. Theatrical performances were normally put up during meetings where the development agents had specific messages to deliver to the Muswishi community.

While the art of story telling appears not to be used much in Muswishi because there are not many elderly people as these are the ones in the habit of telling stories. This student did not notice much of this, though of course in the evenings very few grand parents told stories to their grand children.
7.2 Availability of the mass media in Muswishi

7.2.1 Accessibility to the mass media

By nature the mass media have potential to disseminate information to a large audience in a very short time. As alluded to earlier, the only mass medium commonly used in Muswishi was radio. Other media were present in the area, but at very limited levels. This therefore, suggests that mass media were not very accessible in Muswishi. When discussing accessibility of the mass media by the people, this student is talking about the people of Muswishi being the potential audience of the media in Zambia. In essence this means the people physically coming into contact with the mass media. Radio being the only medium much more accessible in Muswishi, either by ownership or listenership, not many have access to it, due to poor reception.

However, about half the people of Muswishi could have access to the radio especially in the period between May to November when they have harvested and sold some of the produce as they can afford to buy the batteries. While only about one quarter of the population has access to the print media such as newspapers, pamphlets, books, posters, and church literature. In the whole area only few people possess television sets which use car batteries, therefore accessibility was low despite television reception being generally good. The reasons advanced by most Muswishi people for low accessibility to most mass media were that they did not have enough money to afford the mass media since they were expensive. In addition, lack of electricity and illiteracy were attributed to low accessibility to the mass media in the area.

7.2.2 Exposure to the mass media

People that are not only physically present to the mass media but are also able to hear, read see, reach or experience with at least a minimal amount of interest to the mass media messages are said to have 'exposure to the mass media'. This student can not safely say that Muswishi people are favourably exposed to the mass media. Though from the interactions he had with the people in Muswishi, especially those that are at least
educated, he can certainly confirm that they are exposed. This was evident in the conversations that ensued when there was something controversial on radio as this is the only popular medium. Given this situation, this student can further confirm that to some extent the mass media set some agenda for the people of Muswishi.

7.2.3 **Mass media content**

This student identified mass media content as being one of the major problems affecting exposure of the people in Muswishi to the mass media. Given the mass media that service the rural areas in Zambia, their content is usually irrelevant to the rural people. In most cases, the subject matter is biased towards the urban people. In addition, most media products are packaged in a language not easily understood by most rural people. This makes the media products inappropriate to the rural people.

Even for the Radio Farm Forum programmes, because they are broadcast to the entire nation, it is very difficult to satisfy the information needs of all the rural people. There were times that programmes meant to address drought prone areas of the Gwembe and Luangwa were broadcast. Such programmes bored the audience in high rainfall areas, as the problems being addressed were inappreciable to them.

7.3 **Findings of this student in relation to the communication theories**

A few communications this student observed in Muswishi correspond very well with some of the communication theories. As indicated earlier, communication takes place using the interpersonal and mass communications, and folk media channels. The following are some of the communication theories as applied in Muswishi.

7.3.1 **The Diffusion Theory**

Muswishi like any other rural area in Zambia and indeed the world over, experiences numerous ideas that are new to the area. And these new ideas are usually referred to as innovations. An innovation therefore, is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption. It matters little, so far as human behavior
is concerned, whether or not an idea is objectively new as measured by the lapse of time since its first use or discovery. The perceived newness of the idea for the individual determines his or her reaction to it. If the idea seems new to the individual, it is an innovation.

Newness in an innovation need not just involve new knowledge. Someone may have known about an innovation for some time but not yet developed a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards it, or have adopted or rejected it. "Newness" of an innovation may be expressed in terms of knowledge, persuasion, or a decision to adopt.

Given the above definition of an innovation, a lot of new ideas pertaining to agriculture are introduced in Muswishi. For instance, at the time of this student's attachment, an innovation called conservation farming was introduced in the area. This idea encourages the maintenance of the soil's virginity as virgin land usually has best soils. It involves minimum destructive tillage leaving the crop residue on the surface to allow good rainwater infiltration, to enhance root development and to manage the organic matter content. Conservation farming employs methods such as potholing where holes of about 30 cm square are dug, and manure is buried in the holes. Later crops are planted in the holes.

This was one of the innovations that was introduced in Muswishi during the attachment of this student. An innovation is useless if, when generated by a researcher or organisation, it is not made known to other people. Where an innovation exists, communication must take place to spread it. Therefore, communication of an innovation is referred to as 'diffusion'.

Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. It is a special type of communication, in that the messages are concerned with new ideas.

While communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. So diffusion is a special type of communication, in which the messages are about a new idea.
There are four elements in diffusion that constitute the main concept, and these include an innovation, communication channels, time and a social system. This Chapter will only discuss these elements in as far as they affect diffusion of the above mentioned innovation in Muswishi. These elements will not be discussed in detail.

i) The Innovation

In the first place for diffusion to take place there has to be an innovation that has been generated. Innovations in most cases are generated to address some specific problems people are facing at a particular time. For instance, conservation farming was generated to address low soil fertility in the face of problems small-holder farmers are having in procuring chemical fertilizers.

Therefore, conservation farming came as a solution to the above problem. Farmers were just required to dig holes in their fields where manure of any kind was buried in the holes. In the first place, they did not have to cultivate the whole field, which meant saving on labour.

At the time this student was completing his attachment, the extent to which this innovation was accepted could not be established as it was still in the awareness stage. However, the introduction of the innovation generated a lot of debate among the farmers in Muswishi.

ii) Communication Channels

As defined previously communication is the process by which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. Diffusion is a particular type of communication in which the message content that is exchanged is concerned with a new idea.

The main communication channels employed to diffuse the innovation (conservation farming) were interpersonal and mass communications. Basically, numerous meetings were held in order to sell the innovation to the farmers in Muswishi. Mobile courses were
also conducted to make farmers aware of conservation farming. There was one notable feature this student was seeing for the first time in the diffusion of conservation farming in Muswishi. A gender aspect formed part of the programme. Farmers were also being conscientized on gender issues. The main objective of integrating gender in conservation farming was to ensure that both male and female farmers were sensitive to the needs, problems and other related issues that affect men and women. This was meant to put development into perspective, as development needed to be tackled from a holistic point of view.

Some of the mass media used in the diffusion of conservation farming in Muswishi were pamphlets, posters and some radio programmes recorded by the Muswishi Communication Committee.

An obvious principle of human communication is that the transfer of ideas occurs most frequently between two individuals who are similar, or homophilous. Homophily is the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, social status, and the like. In a free choice situation, when an individual can interact with any one of a number of other individuals, there is a strong tendency to select someone who is very similar.

To spread conservation farming in Muswishi a lot of local people who grasped the concept early, were used to explain it to the other farmers. Even in the recorded programmes, it was the farmers talking to their fellow farmers.

iii) Time

Time is a third element in the diffusion process. The time dimension is involved in diffusion in that people do not accept an innovation immediately they came across it. There is normally a time lapse before an innovation can be adopted or rejected.

People will adopt an innovation at different rates. Some will adopt an innovation earlier than others. Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption
is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than the other members of a system. Below are
the adopter categories enumerated in an order of how quickly they adopt innovations.

a) Innovators -
b) Early adopters
c) Early majority
d) Late majority, and
e) Laggards.

From the few meetings and interaction this student had with the farmers of Muswishi,
adopter categories could already be identified. Some of the farmers wanted to try the idea
immediately conservation farming was introduced. Such people are referred to as
innovators, they are active information-seekers about new ideas. They have a high degree
of mass media exposure and their interpersonal networks extend over a wide area,
reaching outside of their local system. This could be noticed from the exhibition of a
substantial amount of knowledge they had about conservation farming. They were able to
narrate where it had been tried and how it was working. Innovators are able to cope with
higher levels of uncertainty about an innovation than are other adopter categories. As the
first to adopt a new idea in their system, they cannot depend upon the subjective
evaluations of the innovation from other members of their system. In most cases,
innovators are above the average farmer in an area, so they are rarely admired by the
average adopters.

Then there are the 'early adopters', these adopt an innovation earlier than an average
adopter. But before adopting an innovation they would want to depend on careful
evaluation of the innovation. These are accepted members of the social system, and share
a lot in common in terms of educational background, exposure, material possession and
status. These are the role models of most of the people in a social system. Early adopters
command some economic and social status. It is the early adopters who usually assume
opinion leadership.

This student has no doubt that there could also be laggards among the people of
Muswishi who have nothing to do with an innovation. Though this feature did not come
out clearly during the attachment. Probably, after evaluation of the conservation farming programme, these categories will come out distinctly.

iv) A Social System

A social system is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem-solving to accomplish a common goal. The members or units of a social system may be individuals, informal groups, organizations, and/or subsystems. Each unit in a social system can be distinguished from other units. All members cooperate at least to the extent of seeking to solve a common problem in order to reach a mutual goal. In this case the Muswishi community was the social system where the innovation was introduced. A communication structure is thus often created in a system in which homophilous sets of individuals are grouped together in cliques. However, regularized patterns soon begin to occur in the communication network of the system. These aspects of communication structure predict, in part, the behavior of individual members of the social system, including when they adopt an innovation. This student was not in the area long enough to experience the development of such communication networks.

In addition, village norms affect the rate of adoption of innovations. Norms are the established behavior patterns for the members of a social system. They define a range of tolerable behavior and serve as a guide or a standard for the members' behavior in a social system. The norms of a system tell an individual what behavior is expected. As pointed out earlier, this student did not experience how the village norms affected the innovation. But on face value, the innovation seemed to enjoy a lot of acceptance from the people in the area.

7.3.2 Opinion Leadership, change agents and information flow

a) Opinion Leaders

Other members were identified by this student as functioning as opinion leaders in Muswishi. They provided information and advice about the innovation to many in the system.
Opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way with relative frequency. This informal leadership is not a function of the individual's formal position or status in the system. Opinion leadership is earned and maintained by the individual's technical competence, social accessibility, and conformity to the system's norms. When the social system is oriented to change, the opinion leaders are quite innovative; but when the system's norms are opposed to change, the behavior of the leaders also reflects this norm. By their close conformity to the system's norms, opinion leaders serve as an apt model for the innovation behavior of their followers. Opinion leaders thus exemplify and express the system's structure. Opinion leaders were noticed in most cases in meetings, from the way they contributed views and opinions about the innovation and how their decisions were supported by most of the farmers. This student was also able to identify opinion leaders from among women too. There were some women who could influence some decisions about a particular issue. Opinion leaders generally,

i) are more exposed to all forms of external communication, and thus are more cosmopolitan

ii) have somewhat higher social status, and,

iii) are more innovative (although the exact degree of innovativeness depends, in part, on the system's norms).

e) Change agents

While the role of change agents was taken by the agricultural extension both in and outside Muswishi. A change agent is an individual who influences clients' innovation-decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agent. The change agents sought to obtain the adoption of new ideas which in this case was conservation farming. Change agents used opinion leaders in the area as their lieutenants in diffusion campaigns.

f) Multistep flow of communication

In Muswishi, this student also identified the multistep flow of communication. The
multistep flow of communication suggests that information flow does not have a definite pattern. Information from the mass media can flow directly to the other members of the social system and to the opinion leaders. Unlike in a 'two-step flow of communication' where information flows from the mass media to the opinion leaders and then to the other members of the social system as depicted in the following figures.

Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-step flow of communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the social system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multistep flow of communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the social system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.3 Agenda Setting Theory.

Another theory that applied during the attachment of this student in Muswishi was the agenda setting theory. The agenda setting theory suggests that the mass media set the agenda for the people at any particular time. The principle behind this theory is that, the mass media do not tell people what to think, but what to think about. This theory was coined in the 1960s by a political scientist known as Bernard Cohen. In his theory, Cohen suggests that the news media help people have an idea of what to think about. Therefore, the mass media have the potential to provoke debate of issues considered important to the people served by those particular media at a particular time period. The theory posits further that if people are exposed to the news media for some time, the prioritization of
issues becomes their own.

At the time of the attachment, what was of interest to the people of Muswishi then was the revitalization of the farmers' cooperatives. The issue of cooperatives raised a lot of debate among the people of Muswishi at the time. Their interest was in how the cooperatives would operate. The could media could have set the agenda among the people because, they were by the time supposed to be preparing for the forth coming rainy season.

7.4 Conclusion

There were not many communication situations that corresponded with the communication theories, due to the limited numbers in which they exist in Muswishi. That is why the diffusion theory which to some extent dependent on interpersonal communication was much more prominent. In addition, it would be pre-mature to evaluate the impact of the participatory radio established by the Muswishi Communication Committee, as the project was still in its infancy.

However, as indicated in the above sections of this Chapter, most communications in Muswishi were top-down. Those with knowledge are the ones that had to be heard, in most cases. These were not from within the social system. This trend in development, has been attributed to the failure of most development projects in the countries of the South.

It is true that participation of the people in Muswishi has been employed for most development projects, though this participation has always been haphazard. Would-be beneficiaries were not involved at all levels of the development process later on in communication.

Therefore, all future development projects in Muswishi should endeavour to integrate true participation of the people. Muswishi as a potential area of agricultural production, provides an ideal area where participatory communication theories necessary for development could be generated.
Chapter 8
Conclusions and recommendations

8.0 Overview

The practical attachment was an eye opener to this student who for 15 years had worked with small-holder farmers as a rural communicator, but had never given a thought to why many development programmes failed in most rural areas. All along, his views were that cultural values and practices of the rural dwellers inhibited rural development. Rural communicators therefore, needed to gain a full understanding of the rural people and their development needs. In most cases, rural communicators regarded themselves as the 'fountain of knowledge', while rural dwellers were the 'Tabula rasa' an empty slate, where new innovations were to be inscribed without question or regard for the rural people for whom development was intended. It was this top-down development approach that has lately become unpopular. New development approaches are now embracing real participation of both the beneficiaries and benefactors, this appears to be the way forward in rural development.

While information and knowledge are key to development, an opportunity should be given to the rural dwellers to devise methods of how such important information and knowledge could be disseminated among themselves and other stakeholders. Of course, a lot of participatory approaches have been and are still being attempted in most rural areas of Zambia by various development agencies, but full participation is yet to be realized as most attempts still exhibit the top-down tendencies.

Muswishi like all the other rural areas, need to be given an opportunity to practice active participation in development. Any intervention with the intent of achieving a real and sustainable improvement in the living conditions of the people is doomed to failure unless beneficiaries are actively involved in the process.

Unless people participated at all phases of any development intervention, ranging from, problem identification, implementation to evaluation, no meaningful and sustainable development will be achieved. Communication for development can be an enabling tool
for local organizations and groups to gain the confidence, skill and knowledge to become protagonists in sustainable development. As various experiences have demonstrated, a starting point is the use of communication media to help local groups identify problems, document them using traditional or electronic media, and communicate them to local and national authorities. Skill and knowledge exchange at the level of problem identification are crucial to the task of agreeing on plans to overcome problems. There is a growing body of experience in the use of visual media to assist rural, often illiterate groups, to participate in action research and engage in platforms for negotiation.

8.1 Conclusion

8.1.1. Rural Zambia and information availability

About three quarters of the world's poor people live in rural areas. In Zambia though, less than 50 per cent of the people live in rural areas. And about 80 per cent of the rural people live in abject poverty. (MAFF Report, 2000). For many years, rural areas have experienced many and varied development programmes. Among them was the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and many agricultural extension approaches such as the Training and Visit (T&V). In spite of such efforts, rural areas have not been adequately developed to date. Some of the reasons for the backwardness of the rural areas include, appalling living conditions which lead to mass exodus of the productive age to the urban areas. There are limited job and other economic opportunities in rural areas making them (rural areas) unattractive for people to live in. The stagnation of the rural economy characterised by low producer prices and productivity have accelerated the rural-urban drift. In addition, public support for the agricultural sector, including land reform and improvement in infrastructure have been inadequate and slow.

The present poor state of the Zambian economy with high incidences of poverty and many existing agricultural constraints can be traced to the development strategies pursued over the past years. At independence in 1964, Zambia had a relatively prosperous economy due to high copper export earnings. Its per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was over US$500 and annual inflation was less than 5 per cent. (MAFF, 2000 p 8.) After independence, the country adopted a socialist development orientation which
entails a state controlled economy. Agricultural marketing was controlled by the state, government provided subsidies, there was free education and health services. Maize became the major crop government promoted to the detriment of other crops like sorghum and millets that for time immemorial were used for survival. However, when the prices of copper, the main foreign exchange earner for the country, started declining and the oil prices escalated, the Zambian Government could no longer sustain the national economy. By the late 1980s, health and educational sectors had deteriorated with the impact being greatly felt by the rural people. Donors in order to control government spending introduced the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which resulted in government reducing its funding of the public services. This brought misery to citizens such that in 1986 there were protests in most urban areas resulting in the programme (SAP) being suspended. With the coming of the MMD government in 1991, strict adherence to the conditions of the donor community saw most government parastatals privatised leaving a lot of people without employment. Agricultural marketing was also liberalised. Farmers were now required to find their own loans and market for their produce. To some extent, this worsened the living conditions of most rural people who were dependent on agriculture as the liberalisation of crop marketing was a completely new phenomenon.

This student has argued throughout his report that, communication could play a key role in inducing development in rural Zambia. From time immemorial rural areas throughout the world have not benefited from the new information technology. As a result, development agents bombarded rural dwellers with a lot of information with a view of creating an urge for rural dwellers to emulate developed communities. While little effort was made to understand the rural dwellers and their needs. Hence participatory communication is more less like a panacea to the development bottlenecks of the rural people. It gives rural people an opportunity to be heard by their benefactors and the authorities. There is, therefore, a need for building bridges, linking different viewpoints and creating a common "language" among different rural development stakeholders. Participatory communication should be the entry point for strategically designed efforts aimed at linking different stakeholders in rural areas.

Muswishi, like many other rural areas in Zambia is poverty stricken. At certain times of
the year, food despite being a basic necessity was difficult to come by, later on, clean
drinking water and other facilities that make life pleasant. As alluded to earlier, a lot of
development projects have been and are still being tried in Muswishi, though with little or
no success due to the top-down approaches used in the past by most development agents.

Though short lived, the participatory communication approach introduced by FARMESA
in Muswishi could have been a stepping stone to development for the people in the area.
The major problem was that, as the locals were just trying to grasp the techniques of
running their own media of communication, technical and financial support was suddenly
disrupted. This, therefore, calls for the empowerment of rural people by way of forming
media cooperatives advocated by Kasoma (1990). Media cooperatives will enable the
people run media houses independent of interference from their sponsors, who in most
cases insist that media policies conform with the ideals of the sponsors.

The Muswishi community under the auspices of FARMESA formed a communication
committee that would oversee the dissemination of development information by using a
quarterly newsletter called FARMESA Ku Muswishi and the Participatory Radio Farm
Forums. The newsletter, sold at K200.00, was only published twice in 1999. Publication
of this newsletter could not continue due to financial difficulties. However, in June 2000,
the communication committee established the participatory R.F.F. which this student
worked with during his attachment. Two listening groups were formed: Muswishi Central
and Chipaba Radio Farm Forums. Meanwhile, FARMESA had bought the groups a radio
cassette for listening to. An information needs assessment was carried out where the
Muswishi community preferred listening to agricultural and handcrafts programmes. A
programme schedule comprising of seven programme areas was drawn by the
communication committee. From July to December 2000, eighty meetings to listen to
recorded programmes were scheduled. Both groups would have been meeting fortnightly
on Friday for Muswishi Central Radio Farm Forum and Tuesday for Chipaba. Seven
programmes were recorded by the communication committee and listened to. Due to time
constraints, this student did not witness the evaluation of the project which could have
been conducted by the communication committee after six months had FARMESA
continued supporting the project.
8.1.2. **Observations:**

a) **Information availability in Muswishi**

This is definite that a lot of information on a variety of subject disciplines could have been available in Muswishi, the only problem was how information could have been disseminated to the target audience. As discussed in some sections of this report, there was little effort in most information dissemination agents to give the people of Muswishi an opportunity to take part in the designing of messages and later choose the medium through which these messages could be disseminated. This student having been present at the conception of the FARMESA sponsored communication project in Muswishi, he remembers how the project proposal was designed by communication specialists with little consultation of the would-be beneficiaries. This was because the initial project design included a communication component and the timetable given by the project financiers who wanted results at specified time-periods. While it was true that when the project was introduced in Muswishi, there was seemingly an overwhelming acceptance of the project, this student still feels the acceptance of the project was because people felt they would benefit from the project by way of obtaining credit for inputs.

Around March in the year 2000, there was an independent evaluation team FARMESA engaged to assess the performance of the various projects in Muswishi, it was discovered that the communication project was a preserve of only the committee members. Most farmers were not very sure of the role of the project. In addition, people interviewed said the project was gender insensitive. To a greater extent, this student agrees with the respondents of the evaluation team, because the selection of the committee members was done with the help of the agricultural extension officers in the area. It could have been possible that the committee was not representative of the average farmers in Muswishi.

Secondly, committee members were chosen from areas around Muswishi Central, meaning the activities of the project could have only been confined to Muswishi Central. Therefore, this was a problem, as experts by virtue of being in contact with the project authorities could have most likely hi-jacked the running of the project.

In addition, the choice of the media to be used was also done by the project experts. Farmers in the committee were just used to endorse the already preconceived decisions.
This was evident in the manner training workshops were held. Though various alternative communication media were at the disposal of the committee members, professional biases by the project experts could be said to have influenced the decisions on what media to choose. For instance, this student a broadcast journalist, who at the time the project was conceived was the team leader, and could not have seen such a project proceed without the use of a broadcast medium such as radio. While it is true that radio has a number of advantages over the other media in development, had the process been fully participatory, there are chances that radio could not have been chosen as one of the media the people of Muswishi wanted to use. Other media such as posters, booklets and folk media could have stood the same chance of being picked in place of radio. In short, a lot and varied development information is available among the people of Muswishi, but the way by which this information was delivered is the one that is faulty. Farmers participated as observers, while the project experts ran the project.

b) Mass media availability in Muswishi

Limited mass media exist in Muswishi, and the only mass medium reasonably available to the people was radio. Whether radio in its current form where programming is done at the Lusaka studios would stir development in Muswishi, the answer is a definite 'no'. National Broadcasting as discussed earlier rarely addresses the developmental needs of a specific target audience such as the people of Muswishi. Usually national broadcasting disseminates information 'to whom it may concern'. It does not address specific problems that affect a specified group of people. What the people of Muswishi need is a local broadcast station which can be wholly owned by the people themselves.

Other media such as the print and folk media could also be used to complement radio. The people in Muswishi are fairly literate, therefore, they could benefit from printed material which they can keep and use when appropriate.

c) Radio as a tool for rural development

Over the last couple of decades there have been many changes in the use and role of the
media for communication in development. These have been fuelled from two directions. First, there was a revolution in the technologies which could be used for communication. Video and audio technologies, for example, become smaller, cheaper, more reliable and easier to use, making them accessible to many organizations and to individuals, and usable in many different contexts by a wide range of people. Running parallel to this was a change in development thinking towards sustainability of livelihoods and the participation of rural and urban communities in decision-making about their own lives. Moves towards participatory development and the desire to make development a reality for the disadvantaged, especially women and the "poorest of the poor," meant changes in approaches to media, to their role, the technology used, the skills needed, and the role of the community and the media professionals.

The use of the media by those with knowledge to inform those without knowledge was now being replaced by participatory approaches involving different groups of people with a range of skills able to respond to changing needs and contexts. Media communication is no longer seen as simply a top-down flow of information, exemplified by the delivery of messages through the national press, radio and television to health and agricultural extension services or to mobilize populations behind government development programmes as assumed in the dominant paradigm era. Nor are populations regarded as one mass to be blanketed with the same message, but rather as communities with differing needs and perspectives on the world (Melkote, 1991).

Radio has been part of development communication for many years and its use must now change in response to the new approaches to development and technology. Efforts must be made by government to establish real community radio stations unlike the ones we have in Zambia which still operate on the old premise where the audience is rarely involved in the production of programmes. Radio still stands out among the other media as a development tool because it transcends literacy and language barriers. It is a now medium, activities can be covered live from the scene, giving the audience a real feel of what is happening. In areas like Muswishi which have a number of ethnic groups, in a single programme a discussion could be conducted where people of the various ethnic groups can interact and be able to deliver the right message across to the audience.
Of course, Muswishi is rich in young men and women that have attained secondary school education. These young people would easily work at the broadcast station if established.

g) Is participatory communication attainable in Muswishi?

Participatory communication in Muswishi is a must, people must be given an opportunity to choose information dissemination methods they consider most appropriate if meaningful development is to take place in the area. Human development can only be achieved when people are empowered to become critically conscious of their social, economic and physical circumstances and to use their creativity to improve the quality of their lives in a sustainable manner. To become empowered, people need relevant skills, information and knowledge in addition to physical resources and technologies to enable them to improve their circumstances. Participation of people in the decision-making processes that lead to the generation and dissemination of the above is crucial. People's participation in these processes ensures that such decisions are relevant to their circumstances and capabilities. This means that the people must be involved in the joint identification and analysis of their needs, problems and causes, and contribute actively to the development of policies and strategies to solve the problems or provide for the needs.

In this process, people participate in drawing up action plans and in the strengthening of existing community institutions or the formation of new structures to implement, monitor and evaluate the plans. The outcome is often successful and sustainable because people see the decisions and plans as theirs and strive to ensure their effective implementation. This brand of participation increases people's ability to define their own problems and to mobilize themselves for collective action.

When this level of development is achieved, people become empowered. On their own, the people seek additional skills, knowledge and outside assistance when they encounter problems beyond their capabilities and resources. They also become more aware of the various external political and socio-economic factors that obstruct the achievement of their goals and often use their newly acquired skills of self-mobilization to tackle these obstacles. Development field staff and extension workers who assist people to learn new
ways of thinking and interacting with the complex and changing circumstances in which they live become facilitators of sustainable human development.

The participatory approaches to development also contribute to political empowerment of communities and permanent reductions in poverty. Better access to media communication may not guarantee this, but it can enable the poor to use the information revolution to help reinforce the processes of democratization and social reform. The most important change may be that the poor are increasingly able to use communication and information technologies for their own needs instead of just receiving messages. Therefore, participatory communication is attainable in Muswishi, all the people need is to be conscientised on the importance of being independent of external assistance and self-reliant in seeking out solutions to problems they face.

In conclusion, participatory communication can be an enabling tool for local organizations and groups to gain the confidence, skill and knowledge to become protagonists in sustainable development. A starting point is the use of communication media to help local people identify problems, document them, using traditional or electronic media, and communicate them to local and national authorities. Skill and knowledge exchange at the level of problem-identification are crucial to the task of agreeing on plans to overcome problems. There is a growing body of experience in participatory communication from where Muswishi people could draw if they tried it. No meaningful development can ever take place without a free flow of information where people are able to interact as equals and at the same wave length.

8.2 Recommendations

Participatory communication is closely associated with the very process of development planning, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. Communication for development is no longer a public relations effort meant to build and protect the public image of a development agency and/or the government of the day. It needs to go beyond political rhetoric where people use participatory communication media to enhance the political ambitions. It should be used as the meeting ground for sustainable development. Following are some of the recommendations this student is suggesting.
8.2.1 Political good will and conducive political climate

For any development to take place in an area, there must be relative peace which enables citizens go about their business without fear of having their estates destroyed or grabbed by the warring factions. Zambia being a neighbour of countries that are at war has seen how difficult it has been for any development to take place despite those countries being endowed with rich natural resources.

In addition, there must be good political will by those involved in politics so that the participatory media are used for development purposes. These media are not supposed to be associated with political enclaves as they could be shunned by some sections of the would-be beneficiaries. This student is aware of a situation where the Kabwe District Agricultural Show Society which had executive members from the opposition had problems inviting a senior MMD politician to a fund-raising braii just before the 1999 agricultural show. Therefore, if the participatory media were to succeed it was important that politicians understood that these media were specifically for development purposes and nothing else. This would minimize interference from politicians who always want to be associated with any development programmes in order to further their political desires. As alluded to earlier, participatory media are built around the tenets of free exchange of information, therefore, government should formulate policies that enhance freedom of expression where no divergent views are suppressed.

8.2.2 Internal and external institution arrangements to embrace participation ideals

Traditionally, in most rural areas the elderly men are regarded as the fountain of wisdom such that they are the ones that must be heard. Women and youths must sit and listen, and watch elderly men take decisions that affect the whole community. This suppresses free exchange of ideas, and is in essence counter participatory. While it is true that this student can attest to the fact that people in Muswishi expressed themselves freely irrespective of their age and sex, he still noticed some form of royalty towards the elderly men and the economically well-off. This was evident in the manner they (elderly men and the economically well-off) influenced decisions of some of the most important activities.
Unless, each and every member of the Muswishi community is given an equal chance of being heard, true participation will remain a myth.

External institutions too must adopt participatory approaches when taking development programmes to the people of Muswishi. From the FARMESA experience in Muswishi, project experts still took a leading role in the major decisions that affected the progress of the project. This student feels that, until participation was internalised in the development programmes of development agencies, sustainable development would not be attainable. This student is in this regard recommending that true participation should not only be included in the training curriculum of the development training institutions, but must also be seen to be practiced by both the instructors and the students.

8.2.3 Sensitization of the rural people on the importance of participation in sustainable development

Rural populations need to get rid of the dependence syndrome where they feel they owe their life to the government or the donor agencies that have representatives in their localities. This student has in mind the food for work concept where rural people are engaged in community projects in order to receive food mainly from Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM), the sole relief food providers. Work is normally discontinued if food ran out. Therefore, people will only construct their own road, dip-tank or school classroom when they are getting food. This means in a normal farming season where there are no calamities, people would not undertake such community projects in order to enhance their standards of life. People should be conscientized to actively participate in their welfare, even without immediate reward. For instance, the participatory radio farm forum idea introduced by the FARMESA's communication project would have continued because, the project bought the farmers a radio cassette which has not been retrieved when the project wound up. All the farmers could do was to contribute some money for batteries in order to run the listening clubs to their advantage. Therefore, people in rural areas need to understand that development is theirs, it belongs to them and not the development agents.
8.2.4 Development of user-friendly radio broadcasting equipment

This student recommends that radio broadcasting engineers endeavour to develop simple to maintain, cheap and durable radio broadcasting equipment that can easily be used by the farmers with minimum supervision. The current broadcasting equipment was capital intensive and complicated to use as it required trained personnel which could not be attracted to go and live in rural areas. Therefore, equipment that would be manufactured for the rural people must be adaptable to the rural situation or else it will not achieve the purpose for which it was made.
Reference:


COMMONWEALTH Broadcasting Association. (1985)


ZHEREBTSOO, Fundamentals of Radio, Moscow 1969
Appendix A

Members of the Muswishi Communication Committee

1. Mr. Matthew Katiti : Chairperson - farmer
2. Mr. Ignatius Mwango : Vice Chairperson - farmer
3. Mrs. Saviour Ngwenya : Secretary - farmer
4. Mr. Rodrick Musukwa : Vice Secretary - farmer
5. Mrs. Grace Njovu : Treasurer - farmer
6. Mr. Christopher Daka : Vice Treasurer - farmer
7. Mrs. Mukonde Mweemba : Member - (SAIO)
8. Mrs. Chikwenda Dube : Member - farmer
9. Mr. Burton Lupobe : Member - Extension Officer
10. Mrs. Josephine Shibuyunji : Member - Extension Officer
11. Mr. Kelvin Mukando : Member - Veterinary Officer
Appendix B

Members of the Muswishi Radio Farm Forum

1. Mr. Jackson Kamokya
2. Mr. Poliki Chilumelume (Chairperson)
3. Mr. Peter Mwengwe
4. Mr. Christopher Daka
5. Ms Teresa Rashayi
6. Ms Rosemary Gwenamo
7. Y. Phiri
8. Ms Febby Mudenda
9. Ms Christina Rashiyi
10. Ms J. Mileki
11. Ms Rodah Jere
12. J. Julu
13. Ms R. Midzi
14. Ms Maureen Mumba (Secretary)
15. Mr. Matthew Katiti (Chairperson - Information Committee)
16. Mr. Cliff Chuumpu (Producer TV - NAIS)
17. Ms Siafundu Mweemba (Producer Radio - NAIS)
18. Ms Josephine Shibuyunji (Extension Officer - Muswishi Camp)
19. Mr. Burzone Lupobe (Block Extension Officer - Muswishi Block)
20. Mr. Mukando (Veterinary Officer - Muswishi Camp)
Appendix C

Members of the Chipaba Radio Farm Forum

1. Enika Mpumba (Chairperson)
2. Rabbecca Limbamo
3. Jessie Saineti
4. Regina Liteta
5. Mary Nkunika
6. Rexina Mukutumani
7. Felister Chipamina
8. Loyce Kasholola
9. Rosemary Malisase
10. Janet Nkuwa
11. Rosemary Simate
12. Mirriam Mondoka
13. Maureen Mulokwa
14. Grace Mulimbika
15. Janet Chipamina
16. Christina Shafuluma
17. Rosemary Mweene
18. Christina Kunda
19. Fridah Nkunika
20. Sara Mukosha
Appendix D

R.F.F. Discussion Report

TONGA

PROCEEDINGS AND DISCUSSION REPORT

1. Zyina lya Nkamu (Name of forum)

Boma (District) Lubazu (Province)

2. Buzuba bwa kwaambilizya (Date of broadcast)

3. Ciiyo cakwaambilizya (Subject of broadcast)

4. (I) Baliko (Members present):
   Balombwana (Men) Bakaintu (Women)
   Antoomwe (Total)

   (II) Bakaliko batali munkamu (Non members present):
   Balombwana (Men) Bakaintu (Women)
   Antoomwe (Total)

5. Ciindi litalika muswaangano (Starting time of meeting)

6. Ciindi lijalwa muswaangano (Closing time of meeting)

7. Makani mapati (Main point):
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.

8. Mibuzyo yakaletwa a basinkamu nikwa kamana kwaambilizingwa (Questions raised by members on the broadcast):
   1.
   2.
   3.
9. Lugwasyo luyandwa a bankamu kuzwa kulizyambilizingwa (Further help required by members on the subject broadcast):
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. 

10. Intamu zyakacitwa a sinkamu a basinkamu a kaambo ka kwaambilizya kwa kamana
    (Action taken by at member or members on any previous broadcasts):
    1. 
    2. 
    3. 
    4. 

Mizeezo yabinkamu kwiinda mukwaambilizya (Opinion of members on the quality of
the programme):

Kudita kwa mubelesi (Signature of Extension worker) ...........................................
Buzuba bwa mwezi (Date) ..............................................................
Kudinta kwamulembi (Signature of Secretary)
...........................................................................................................
Buzuba bwa mwezi (Date) ..............................................................
Kudinta kwa Sikuuno (Signature of Chairman) ..............................................
Buzuba bwa mwezi (Date) ..............................................................

Duplicate – To the Senior Agricultural Officer, through the District Agricultural Officer
Location of Zambia
Map 2

Location of Muswishi on part of the Zambian Map
Agrico-ecological Zones of Zambia

Map 3
Pictures

Picture 1

Members of the Muswishi Communication Committee
Picture 2

Members of the Muswishi Central R.F.F. during the formation of their group.
Picture 3

Drama performance during one of the farmers’ meeting in Muswishi
Drama performance by women at a meeting in Muswishi