

**CO-ORDINATING SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES:  
THE CASE OF THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET IN ZAMBIA**

by

**Mwape C. Mwiya**

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Communication, University of Zambia

**DECLARATION:**

I declare that this Practical Attachment Report has not been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Full Name: ..... MWAPE CHAMBESHI MWIYA .....

Signature: ..... *Mwape* .....

Date: ..... 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2000 .....

Supervisor: ..... *Prof. Francis P. Kasoma* .....

Signature: ..... *Kasoma* .....

Date: ..... April 4, 2000 .....

## ABSTRACT

This report consisting of eight chapters provides a descriptive analysis of the activities of the National Social Safety Net (NSSN) in Zambia with particular emphasis on the co-ordinating function. The report is a result of the student's attachment to the NSSN for a period of four months from 1 July to 31 October 1999 and is in partial fulfilment of the MCD programme. The main purpose of the attachment was to appreciate and analyse the organisation's communication patterns and assess the effectiveness of its co-ordinating function.

In order to come up with the information contained in this report, the student used a qualitative approach. This involved active participant observation, in-depth interviews, and study of relevant literature and documents.

Having outlined the NSSN's current activities in relation to its co-ordinating function, the student has established that although the organisation has achieved noticeable results in the area of capacity and institutional building of some of the main safety nets, it has not been effective as a co-ordinating body. In spite of some effort made to equip the main safety nets with the necessary technology which would enhance whatever existing communication networks there may be and facilitate the establishment of the much needed service linkages, organisational and funding problems faced by the NSSN have hindered progress in this area. As such, despite its existence as a co-ordinating body, the NSSN has not undertaken any noticeable co-ordination activities and the various safety nets (which it is supposed to co-ordinate) operate independently of each other without any significant co-ordination and networking.

It is clear from the report that in order for the NSSN to succeed in its mission, it would require appropriate funding, legislative backing, and redefinition of its policy framework.

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M.C.M.

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## ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ERP	— Economic Reform Programme
FGD(s)	— Focus Group Discussion(s)
ILO	— International Labour Organisation
ISSA	— International Social Security Association
MCD	— Master of Communication for Development
MLSS	— Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MSB	— Management Services Board
NCDP	— National Commission for Development Planning
NGO(s)	— Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
NIPA	— National Institute of Public Administration
NSSN	— National Social Safety Net
NSSNCC	— National Social Safety Net Co-ordinating Committee
PSMD	— Public Service Management Division
PSRP	— Public Service Reform Programme
PWAS	— Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
SAP	— Structural Adjustment Programme
ZACCI	— Zambia Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry
ZAMIM	— Zambia Institute of Management
ZCTU	— Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZFE	— Zambia Federation of Employers
ZNPF	— Zambia National Provident Fund
ZPA	— Zambia Privatisation Agency

# Chapter 1

## Background

### **1.0 Introduction**

This report is based on an attachment undertaken at the National Social Safety Net (NSSN) Secretariat in Lusaka. The attachment period was four months and it started on 1 July 1999 and ended on 31 October 1999. The attachment was undertaken as part of the requirement for the Master of Communication for Development (MCD) Programme which is offered by the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Zambia.

This report contains results of an evaluation conducted during the attachment. The attachment aimed at finding out how the NSSN relates to and communicates with its affiliates and its beneficiaries and also at identifying strengths and weaknesses in the communication strategies, policies and programmes. It also analyses the communication structure and the strengths and weaknesses of the NSSN's coordinating functions. The purpose of the attachment was to find out to what extent the programmes of the NSSN have been implemented and also to find out to what extent NSSN used a participatory approach to the design of its programmes. It examines the involvement of the various safety nets in the formulation of NSSN programmes and the extent to which the beneficiaries of these programmes are consulted.

The report also outlines changes which the student thought would be beneficial to the organisation. These were based on communication problems which led to lack of free flow of information. The report also gives background information on the NSSN and it looks at the conceptual framework on networking, development and organisational communication.

Based on the findings, recommendations have been given regarding the improvement of the coordinating function of the NSSN.

## **1.1 Profile of Zambia**

Zambia is located in the heartland of south-central Africa, and remote from the sea. It is a land-locked country surrounded by eight neighbours, namely the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola (Fig 1). In geographical size, Zambia stands in the middle ranks of African states with an area of about 753,000 sq kms. The current population is approximately 10,000,000 people, the majority of whom are of African stock of the Bantu language group.

Zambia is administratively divided into nine provinces (Fig 1), with each province headed by a Deputy Minister. Each province has its own administrative headquarters and is further divided into districts. There are currently 72 districts in all (Zambia Human Development Report, 1998). At present, over half the population lives in urban areas, giving Zambia one of the lowest rural population rates in Africa. The country's economy depends on the mining and processing of copper. Agriculture is underdeveloped, and many basic foodstuffs have to be imported. The main crops grown in the country are maize and cassava. Also produced in the country are, tea, edible oils, soya beans and dairy products.

When Zambia became independent in October 1964 under the United National Independence Party (UNIP), it adopted a multi-party system of government. This changed eight years later in 1972 when a one-party State was declared. For 18 years, Zambia was under a one-party system of government until 1990 when the country reverted to a multi-party state and held elections the following year. The Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) won the parliamentary and presidential elections and ushered Zambia into the Third Republic.

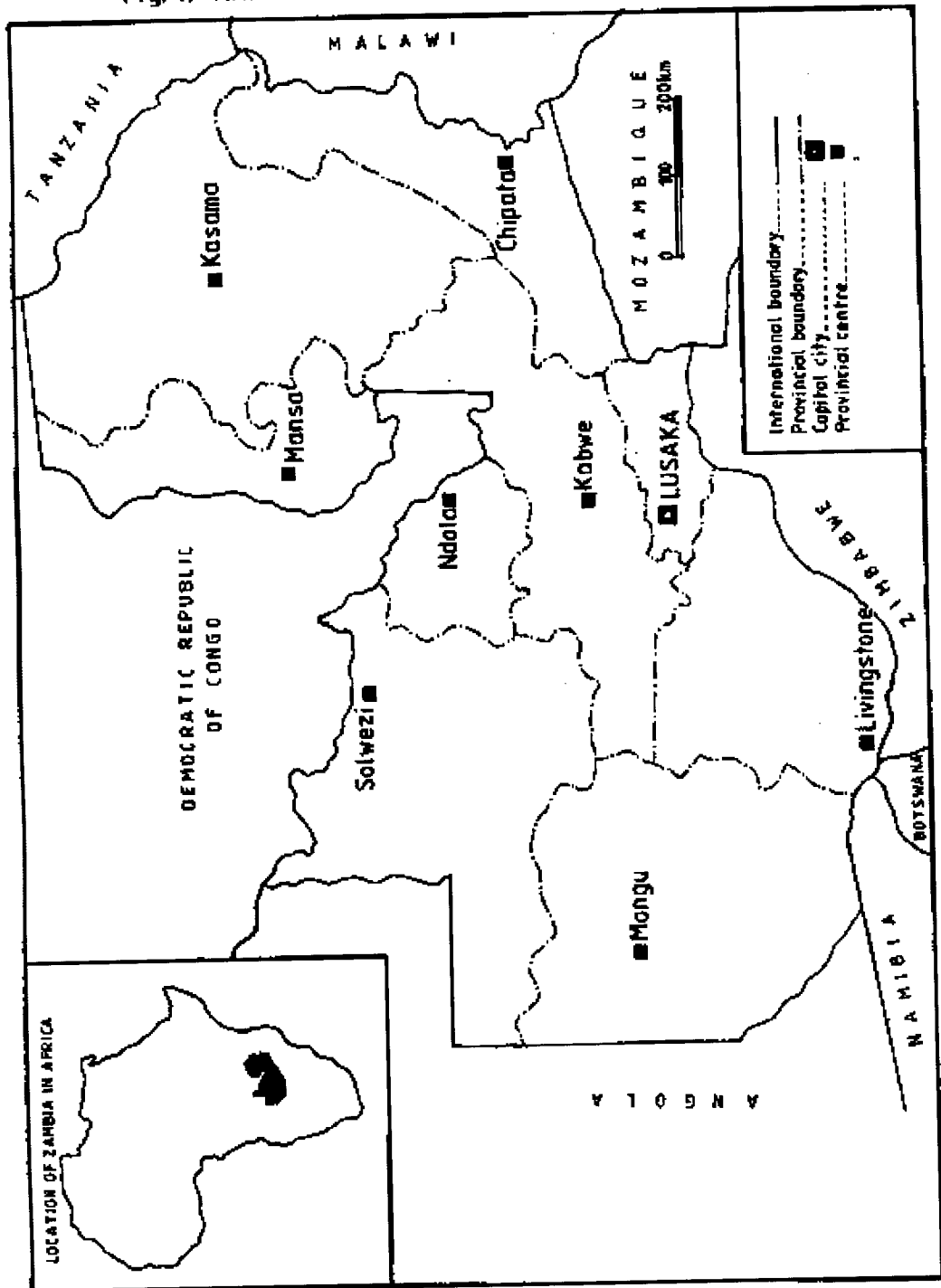
## **1.2 Political and economic changes**

The advent of the Third Republic in 1991 brought with it significant changes in the political, economic and social spheres of life. The political system changed from a one-party system to a multi-party democratic system while the economic system shifted from state control to free enterprise.

In 1992, in line with the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the Government launched the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP), whose main aim was to stabilise the economy and promote its growth after many years of economic decline. Many measures were adopted under the ERP, among which were privatisation of state-owned companies, liberalisation of the economy, and reform of the Public Service Sector which included trimming of humanpower levels. These changes in the economic sector have had some significant social impact some of which has been negative. Among the negative social effects of these economic reforms have been retrenchments and unemployment, leading to high levels of poverty. In order to mitigate the negative effects of the economic reforms, social safety net schemes were established “to cushion the vulnerable groups such as the displaced workers, disabled persons and the unemployed in our society...” (NSSN, 1998: 3).

Although these reforms/programmes are meant to provide the foundation for sustained economic growth and thus to improve standards of living, they are generally acknowledged to have adverse short-term consequences on employment and living standards. This aspect of the reforms has become an area of major interest for the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and it was felt that it was important to consider the effects on employment of the SAPs in Africa (ILO, 1998). More recently, attention has focused on the interaction between structural adjustment and social security and social protection.

Fig. 1. MAP OF ZAMBIA



### **1.3 Employment trends in Zambia**

Following changes in the economic sector, the formal sector has been steadily diminishing as the main source of employment in the country. In percentage terms, formal sector employment declined from 75% of the total labour force in 1975 to 12% in 1996 (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 1999). With the decline in formal sector employment, the informal sector has become the main source of employment and livelihood for most Zambians. The growth of informal sector employment can be attributed to the retrenchment of workers from the privatised parastatal companies and those being retrenched as a result of the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) (See Appendix I for statistics).

### **1.4 Social security and social protection**

The standard definition of ‘social security’ in ILO publications is, “the protection which society provides for its members, through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; and the provision of medical care and the provision of subsidies for families with children” (International Social Security Association, 1993: 89). This definition echoes the basic standards set out in the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102); and in practice, it is mainly related to the development of institutionalised social security for formal sector wage-earners.

As regards social protection, the International Labour Office (1994) publication states that:

In Africa, the needs of the vast majority of the people are wider and much more basic than those suggested by the definition of social security. The term “social protection” has been used in connection with these greater needs. While the benefits provided by social security institutions have an important role to play in the alleviation of poverty, social protection often focuses specifically on a range of



social provisions relating to basic needs, providing a 'safety net', so to speak, in such areas as primary health care, subsidised food supplies, affordable housing and public employment programmes (International Labour Office, 1994: 60).

### **1.5 Social protection and the ILO**

Social protection is a wider concept than social security and it seems more relevant to the current needs of the majority of people in Africa. Although this majority lies mostly outside the scope of the formal sector, it has become necessary to consider social protection for this group. The ILO has been assisting African countries in the planning, development and administration of social security schemes since they were first instituted, but there has until now been limited involvement in the wider-based social protection programmes. The International Labour Office (1994) noted that, "...the impact of structural adjustment has highlighted the need to devise comprehensive social protection packages..." (International Labour Office, 1994: 60).

### **1.6 Development of social protection in Africa**

Institutionalised social security which is a relatively new phenomenon in Africa developed in response to the changing economic and social patterns. Formerly, individuals throughout their lives remained members of a closely-knit community based on tribe, clan, village and family; these ties constituted the basic form of social protection. Statutory and other public forms of social protection were first developed to complement rather than replace this traditional community support. Increased economic development prompted the emergence of a new labour force uprooted from the village, beyond the reach of traditional support systems and dependent on wage labour. There, therefore, arose a need to formulate measures to compensate for the loss of traditional support systems and this was fostered by pressure from organised public sector workers. Inevitably, the benefits of these early schemes, whose main aim was to provide limited protection against specific contingencies to formal sector workers, were linked to characteristics and needs of urban wage-earners. The traditional community support system was still regarded as an important component of social protection for those who were not in formal sector employment. The current

schemes have therefore not catered for the unemployed who are the majority. It has been stated that, "...the inability of the schemes to offer protection to the vast majority of the poor has caused them to be seen by some as sustaining islands of privilege in a sea of deprivation" (International Labour Office, 1994: 64).

One would ask why the traditional community-based social protection system cannot continue to cater for its members as before. There has been a breakdown of the traditional community-based social protection system and this breakdown was hastened and its effects compounded by economic decline. Growing urban areas encouraged rural-urban migration and the urban areas provided focal points of attraction, offering new values and new sources of income. The result was a weakening of tribal and family ties, a significant trend towards urbanisation and the emergence of a non-traditional informal sector. This informal sector has expanded with the implementation of the structural adjustment reforms which resulted in the decline of formal sector employment. This decline in formal sector employment has not led to a reverse migration to rural areas. Instead, those unable to find employment in the formal sector and those who have been retrenched seek a living from a wide range of enterprises in the urban informal sector.

Unfortunately, institutionalised social security schemes have not been able to respond to the social protection needs of these informal sector workers. "The schemes remain focused on providing social protection for the formal sector and little progress has been made in extending coverage to the majority who fall beyond their scope, and those whose needs, while they may be different, are at least critical" (International Labour Office, 1994: 66). These schemes were, after all, not designed to cater for needs other than those of formal sector workers; nor do they have the capacity to do so. Attention must therefore be given to devising appropriate social protection systems for those outside the institutionalised social security schemes. It is essential to devise programmes that make the most of available resources to meet present needs. Such programmes should reflect both the need to develop a short-term response to the impact of structural adjustment and the need to ensure that this

response is consistent with a comprehensive and long-term approach to social protection.

### **1.7 Social protection in Zambia**

In the post independence period, Zambia developed a social security system on the assumption that a larger proportion of the workforce would be engaged in formal sector employment particularly by government and the public enterprises. The assumption was that this proportion would increase with development. It was also assumed that those in the informal sector, mainly agriculture, would remain relying on the traditional support systems as their form of social protection. As such, these early schemes did not provide coverage to informal sector workers, the self-employed, the disabled and other vulnerable groups in society such as the retrenched and the poorest of the poor. The result was inadequate social protection to cater for contingencies such as retrenchments/redundancies, persons with disabilities, the unemployed and those in informal employment.

Since Government has a responsibility to offer social protection to vulnerable groups in society, it embarked on putting in place a comprehensive social security system that would cater for all the contingencies. The goal was to improve the levels of social protection and provide a cushion for retirees, retrenched and other vulnerable groups. The cushioning measures have been through the establishment of the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme, Future Search, Resettlement Programme, Small and Micro Enterprise Development and a number of NGOs. These safety nets, despite being in existence, have had no system in place to eliminate duplication and promote complementary, hence Government intention to strengthen the existing social safety net programmes through an effective coordination system.

In August 1992, the Government constituted a taskforce which among other things, discovered that effective delivery of existing safety nets' programmes faced a number of constraints like absence of a well defined social safety net policy, inadequate human resources (numbers and quality) and absence of a comprehensive safety net

information system. It was through recommendations of this taskforce that the National Social Safety Net Coordinating Committee (NSSNCC) was established. It was envisaged that the NSSNCC would be responsible for development, monitoring and evaluation of safety net programmes in Zambia.

### **1.8 The National Social Safety Net Coordinating Committee (NSSNCC)**

The NSSNCC was set up in April 1993 as part of Government's programmes on social security reform. The main objective of the NSSNCC when it was set up was to coordinate social protection programmes for the displaced workers. This included coordinating the social safety net schemes which had been established. The available social safety net schemes include:

- i). Future Search;
- ii). Land Resettlement Programme;
- iii). The Public Welfare Assistance Scheme;
- iv). Small and Micro Enterprises Promotion Unit;
- v). Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority; and,
- vi). Non-Governmental Organisations.

Despite the committee being multi-sectoral, it was decided to focus its attention on provisions related to retrenched/retired workers, the unemployed, unsupported women, the aged and disabled. The envisaged support to these target groups included training, entrepreneurial development, resettlement, social welfare and food for work programmes. Therefore, all programmes that were designed in order to protect the retrenched employees, ensure minimal living standards, retrain, advise and counsel them and assist them in finding new productive activities, fell under the scope of the NSSNCC.

The overall mission and objective of the NSSNCC when it was set up was to ensure that social protection was offered to those groups that became affected by the SAP. Its mandate was to ensure that adequate programmes were developed and

implemented to assist employees retrenched from the parastatal and the public service in confronting their new situation. The organisation's mandate included planning, managing and implementing all social safety net programmes such as training, counselling, and providing resettlement assistance. In addition, the NSSNCC had the objective to initiate and advise on policy issues aimed at addressing the social safety nets. It also had to coordinate social safety net issues with Government organisations, donor agencies, and non-governmental organisations.

#### 1.8.1 The mission statement

The organisation's mission when it was set up was:

**“To create alternative income generating activities designed to cushion the displaced/ retrenched from the negative social and economic impact”.**

The ultimate goal for setting up the NSSN was therefore to create employment opportunities through the provision of alternative income generating activities for the workers being retrenched from the public sector as well as those from the parastatal and privately-owned companies. This mission has now been broadened to not only focus on displaced/retrenched workers but also on all the unemployed.

#### 1.8.2 Organisational structure

The NSSNCC has a board which is responsible for setting the policy decisions which a permanent secretariat ( the National Social Safety Net Coordinating Secretariat) will then implement. The Board is composed of the representatives of all interested groups related to the question of establishing a comprehensive safety net programme in Zambia, and establishing specific policies to address the social consequences associated with retrenchments. Members of the Board represent various government ministries, the Zambia Privatisation Agency (ZPA), the Labour Union, Zambia Association for Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI), and the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE). The Board currently has a total of 17 members.

As has already been stated, the NSSNCC has a Secretariat whose role is to implement the policy decisions made by the Board. The Secretariat is an independent body which, for purposes of policy guidance, falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The Secretariat was designated to undertake the following functions:

- i). service the NSSNCC at all meetings;
- ii). recommend policy guidelines to the NSSNCC;
- iii). coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of social safety net programmes by governmental, donor and non-governmental organisations relating to:
  - training and entrepreneurial development,
  - counselling, and
  - resettlement;
- iv). mobilise, monitor and evaluate the use of financial resources to support social safety net programmes; and,
- v). undertake any such activities as are necessary, incidental or conducive to the better carrying out of the functions of the secretariat.

At present, the NSSN only has offices in Lusaka (the secretariat), and works through the labour offices/departments in the other provinces. The secretariat is headed by a programme director who oversees all activities and establishes operating procedures. It has the following four units:

i). Training, Retraining, Entrepreneurship and Counselling Unit

The unit's responsibility includes development, facilitation, monitoring and evaluation of appropriate training, retraining and entrepreneur development programmes. It is also responsible for providing counselling on opportunities available for gainful employment. To achieve this, the unit will work closely with key implementing agents such as Future Search, Technical Colleges under the

Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT), Agricultural Colleges, and Social Welfare offices of the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services.

ii). Policy Coordination and Programme Financing Unit

The objective of this unit is to mobilise resources for the various social safety net programmes and coordinate the resource flows to the different social safety net activities.

iii). Resettlement Unit

The objective of the unit is to facilitate the development of resettlement programmes. The unit is supposed to coordinate its activities with the Resettlement Division in the Office of the Vice President, Ministry of Lands and Ministry of Agriculture. This unit is not meant to implement resettlement programmes, but facilitate their development.

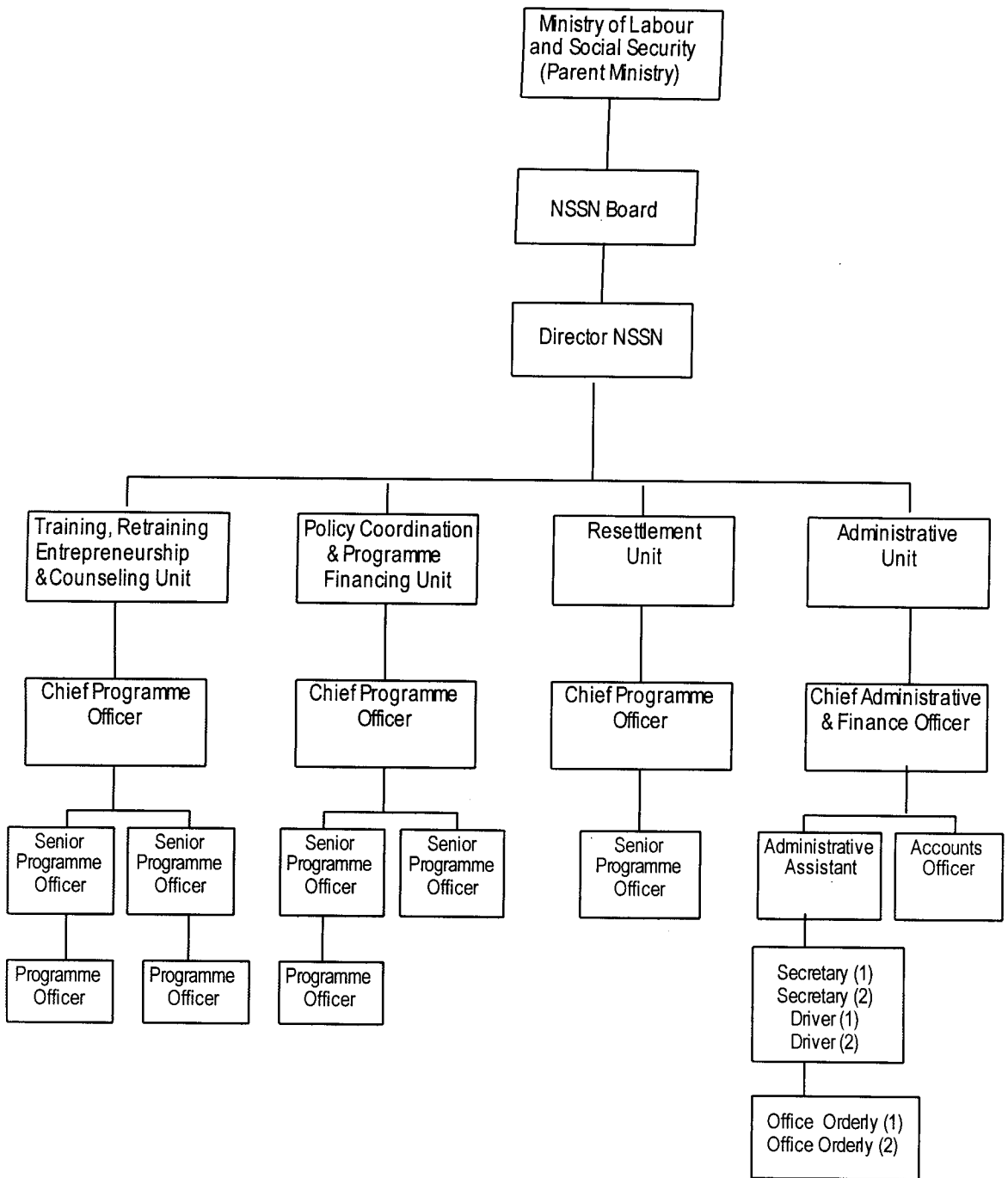
iv). Administrative Unit

The unit's role is to administer the day to day operations of the Secretariat. This includes dealing with among other things, transport, office equipment and its maintenance, stores and requisitions. It is also charged with the responsibility of managing the internal accounting functions of the Secretariat.

(See organisational chart at Fig.2)

It is important to note that at the time the student was on attachment, the units were not fully operational due to inadequate staff numbers (see staffing levels shown in Table 1). However, towards the end of the student's attachment period, the organisation had recruited more members of staff bringing the total number of staff to 10.

**Fig. 2 National Social Safety Net Organisational Chart**





**Table 1: NSSN Staffing Levels as of 1st July 1999**

<b>Post</b>	<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Director	1	1
Chief Programme Officers	4	-
Senior Programme Officers	5	1
Programme Officers	3	1
Administrative Assistant	1	-
Accounts Officer	1	1
Secretaries	2	1
Drivers	2	1
<u>Office Orderlies</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
	21	7

*Source: NSSN Board Paper, August 1999*

# Chapter 2

## Scope of the Attachment

### **2.0 Background of the attachment**

With the implementation of SAP, the Government undertook to improve the country's social security system by broadening its coverage. To accomplish this, a complete overhaul of the existing social security system became necessary so that a more comprehensive system could be put in place. This was not immediately possible but since the need for social protection especially for those leaving employment prematurely was a pressing problem, the Government decided to set up safety nets in various ministries.

Although funding was made available for the various activities of the social safety nets, there was insufficient co-ordination and therefore significant scope for duplication of effort. This resulted in a waste of resources. This lack of co-ordination was mainly due to the lack of a clear policy framework outlining priorities and the roles to be played by the major players. This is why the NSSN was established: to ensure that social safety net activities could be co-ordinated and that these activities were appropriate and reached the intended target groups.

The Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines 'co-ordinate' as causing (parts, movements, etc.) to function together efficiently and to work or act together effectively. Co-ordination, therefore, involves correlating and corresponding with each other. Communication is vital to all co-ordinating activities as it ensures that vital links among related organisations are maintained. It is, therefore, important to monitor the effectiveness of the communication methods being used by the organisation, and it is thus imperative that regular communication audits are undertaken. It is particularly essential that the NSSN, being the apex organisation involved with co-ordinating all social safety net programmes in the country, be subjected to such audits.

## **2.1 Terms of reference**

The attachment is an important requirement of the Master of Communication for Development (MCD) programme. The programme, which emphasises the effective use of communication for development purposes, requires that students be attached to development-oriented organisations. This is to ensure that they are not only familiar with theories of development but are also afforded opportunities to observe and participate in development-oriented activities.

For this particular attachment, the student undertook to:

- i). review the NSSN's structure;
- ii). evaluate the NSSN's activities with a view to establishing the effectiveness of the communication methods used in the co-ordinating function; and,
- iii). offer suggestions for improvement in the NSSN's communication strategies.

## **2.2 Objectives of the attachment**

Specifically the attachment sought to:

- i). analyse the communication patterns in the organisation;
- ii). establish what type of networks and relationships exist between the organisation and its affiliates;
- iii). analyse the organisation's communication patterns with funding agencies;
- iv). examine the communication technology in use in the organisation and the capacity of the organisation to sustain this technology;
- v). analyse the effectiveness of communication within the organisation and with its affiliates and beneficiaries; and,
- vi). suggest possible areas for improvement in the NSSN's communication strategies.

## **2.3 Significance of the attachment**

Although social security systems have been in existence in the country since pre-independence days, the concept of social, safety nets is relatively new to Zambia, having only been introduced in the 1990s. Studies have been conducted and a number of papers written on social security schemes in Zambia, but not much has been written

specifically on social safety nets. The attachment, therefore, provided an opportunity for the student to evaluate the NSSN in relation to its goals and also to provide information on what a safety net is and does. It also provided a chance for the NSSN to reflect on its performance especially with regards to its function of co-ordinating other safety nets.

Since the NSSN is the apex organisation regarding the co-ordination of all the safety net programmes in Zambia, its evaluation is important as the results will reflect what is pertaining in the various safety nets. The attachment also enabled the student to suggest specific areas of improvement in the NSSN's communication strategies.

## **2.4 Justification**

As already stated, not much has been written on social safety net in Zambia and in order for the social safety net programmes to develop and improve, there is need for their continuous appraisal so that their activities are linked to their goals. The attachment thus has several specific benefits and justifications. These include:

- i). the need to identify and recognise the NSSN's strengths and suggest areas for improvement in its communication strategies;
- ii). the need to review the existing communication approaches with a view to identifying how the rate of progress and improvement can be increased;
- iii). the need to share ideas and achieve best practices; and
- iv). the need to consistently audit the communication activities of the NSSN towards its objectives and goals with a view to achieving better results.

## **2.5 Methodology**

Basically, a qualitative approach was taken during the attachment. There are several methods of data collection which fall under the qualitative approach. These include focus groups, field observation, in-depth interviews and case studies. Wimmer & Dominick (1997) state that, "Although there are substantial differences among these techniques, all involve what some writers refer to as 'getting close to the data' " (Wimmer & Dominick, 1997: 43). This is possible because the qualitative approach

allows one to observe events in a natural setting, and to search for and find answers while doing actual work by participating in the events being observed. This contributes to one's experience in that particular field of interest. Wimmer & Dominick (1997) further state that, "Field observation involves the study of a phenomenon in natural settings. The researcher may be a detached observer or a participant in the process under study" (Wimmer & Dominick, 1997: 107).

The methodological framework used in this particular attachment included active participant observation which entailed involvement in the NSSN's daily operational activities; study of relevant literature and documents such as reports, proposals, and minutes of meetings held; and, in-depth interviews with NSSN staff and representatives of the various safety nets and the ZPA.

## **2.6 Limitations**

Almost all life experiences and data gathering activities usually encounter certain constraints and this particular attachment was no exception. The student had intended to use Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as part of the methodological approach to the attachment. The advantage of using these especially during the earlier stages of the attachment is that one can gather data as well as lay the groundwork for more precise evaluation methods. Other advantages are that people tend to express views that they might not express in other settings, or if interviewed as individuals; the researcher can probe for clarification in greater detail, and unanticipated but potentially fruitful lines of discussion can be pursued; and responses have a high face validity due to the clarity of the context and detail of the discussion ( McLean, 1998: 1).

These FGDs were to be conducted with clients/affiliates of the NSSN and also with NSSN staff. Unfortunately for the student, the organisation did not have a full staff strength (as seen in Table 1) and the student could, therefore, not conduct any FGDs. Of the available staff, only two qualified to participate in the planned FGD and this was not practical. As McLean says, "Focus groups can consist of 4 to 12 members..." (McLean, 1998: 2). In addition membership of each group should be homogeneous.

As regards clients/affiliates, it was not possible to bring together the representatives of the various safety nets because of their spatial distances and busy schedules.

Apart from that, the student could not make an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of NSSN's internal communication because as already stated, the staffing levels were low. Due to these low levels, the communication patterns observed during the attachment period cannot, therefore, be generalised to apply to a situation when the organisation has a full staff strength of 21 employees.

## **2.7 Literature review**

There has not been much specifically written about social safety nets in Zambia. This is because the concept of safety nets, being a response to SAP, is relatively new to Zambia. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security draft policy statement on the National Social Safety Net (1994) states that:

The concept of a "National Social Safety Net" is a new phenomena (sic) that began to take root in Zambia in 1992. Apart from the programmes being implemented by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (Public Welfare Assistance Scheme), the Office of the Vice President (Resettlement Programme), and those by NGOs, no other concrete social safety net programmes had existed before. The last two years, however, have witnessed the emergence of a number of programmes aimed at alleviating the negative impact of adjustment. (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 1994: 3).

This concept of social safety net has gained prominence over time in relation to the current economic circumstances where pensionable employment has become uncertain. In its narrow perspective, social safety net has come to be known as a system of social security intended to cushion employees who find themselves in situations where they cannot continue in permanent and pensionable employment and have to be retrenched on account of organisational restructuring. In its broader

perspective, it encompasses all unemployed as it is supposed to take care of all the casualties of the results of economic changes in a country.

However, despite the lack of literature on safety nets per se, there is substantial coverage of social security issues in both developed and developing countries. This student noted that the idea of safety nets does quite frequently appear in the literature dealing with issues of social security. This is because the two concepts — social security and social safety — are interrelated. Social security is defined as

the protection which society provides for its members through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; and the provision of subsidies for families with children (ILO, 1994: 59).

This kind of protection is in the majority of cases provided by institutionalised social security systems which cater exclusively for formal sector wage-earners. It usually comes in the form of lump sum payments to the beneficiaries. Rys (1974) cited in the International Social Security Association (ISSA) notes that:

A thorough analysis of social security functions in society will easily discover that monetary compensation accorded to victims of social accidents, and benefits paid to members of certain disadvantaged groups, while they may deal with the immediate needs of the people concerned, will do nothing about the causes or long-term consequences of these social ills (Rys, 1974: 16).

This observation indicates that the current social security systems leave a lot to be desired as they do not contribute to the sustenance of the individual victim's well-being. They are in most cases a source of temporary relief especially in cases where

the individual does not properly invest his/her lump sum payment. In fact it has been noted that:

...cash benefits may not be the most effective way of helping people in need. A strong trend has appeared in social security development throughout the world over the past 15 years, towards complementing income maintenance measures by social services. While in some cases, cash benefits may be sufficient to deal with critical situations of short duration, they may clearly be insufficient in other cases, particularly when a social accident results, for the victim and his family, in a more or less prolonged, if not permanent, social declassification. While cash benefits constitute a mechanical device released on the occurrence of a contingency, social services are able to deal with individual situations of stress; their obvious objective is not only to provide the people in need with a certain amount of material help but also, as far as possible, to bring them back to normal life in society (Rys, 1974: 16).

Rys (1974) also pointed out that in an industrialised society, the essential function of social security will consist of three tasks, namely:

- i). prevention of social risks;
- ii). compensation for losses caused by social accidents; and
- iii). restoration of victims to normal living.

This means that meaningful planning of social security will have to consider as one of its primary tasks, the integration of these three main functions of the institution. This is more or less similar to the integrated development approach which is based on a holistic problem and aims at combining sectoral activities in order to achieve synergetic effects.



This approach:

assumes that mass poverty is a result of multi-causal and interdependent factors. Hence in most cases sustainable development impacts cannot be achieved by mono-sectoral interventions or by sectoral development agencies acting in isolation from others. Sustainable development requires intervention strategies, which consist of well selected and well co-ordinated components from different sectors (Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural Development, 1974: 7).

However, the structural adjustment programmes initially introduced in most African countries tended to concentrate almost exclusively on economic reform and only later realised that these programmes required a social dimension. Zöllner (1974) states that, “Both economic and social development policies aim at an improvement in the situation of the people” (Zöllner, 1974: 3). This is human development which Kasoma (1994), defines as “the improvement in the human life condition at individual and societal levels which is achieved through desirable but fluctuating changes or adjustments in the environment” (Kasoma, 1994: 403). More fundamentally,

it was recognised that human development was the foundation of economic growth. This awareness ... led to a series of measures aimed at mitigating the adverse social consequences of adjustment and giving greater priority to human development aspects. Generally a dualistic approach was followed, involving measures directly related to employment promotion, and others focused on providing a safety net to soften the impact of adjustment on the most vulnerable groups (ILO, 1994: 69).

The safety nets which were financed by government and international donors included among other things,

- i). special allocations of funds to improve basic infrastructure in deprived areas (for example, wells, schools, road repairs);
- ii). public works employment schemes;
- iii). special credit facilities, start-up funds and equipment for small scale enterprises and the unemployed;
- iv). counselling and vocational training for retrenched workers, and land and basic equipment to convert them into farmers;
- v). special compensation payments to retrenched public servants;
- vi). the establishment of a social development fund, financed partly by Government and partly by donors to provide financial and welfare support to *vulnerable groups*;
- vii). retention of some food subsidies and introduction of food security programmes; and,
- viii). exemptions of the poor from cost-sharing for education and health.

ILO (1994), however, notes that:

The extent to which such measures have been introduced has varied since they require considerable resources which have not always been forthcoming. Furthermore, the measures are essentially short-term and are intended to alleviate temporary hardship consequential to structural adjustment. There has been little effort to integrate them with any long-term social protection strategy or with existing schemes (ILO, 1994: 70).

As already stated, the function of a social security system in industrialised countries is to prevent social risks, provide compensation for loss of income in case of a social accident, and help in returning to a normal way of life in society. Most of the population in industrialised countries draw a regular income, which is not the case in

developing countries where the majority of the population may still live in a subsistence economy. In most cases in the developing countries, there are two population groups — the small minority with a regular income but nothing to fall back on when it is lost, and the vast majority with hardly any income at all but an extended family and the tribal structure to take care of members in need. These traditional self-supporting local communities are, however, being destroyed by industrialisation and the evolution of a money economy. The rural-urban migration results in loss of kinship ties and, therefore, the urban worker and his family lose the traditional protection extended by the family or village community. Thus when the urban worker is exposed to certain risks or contingencies such as employment injury, old age, and unemployment, he has nothing or nowhere to fall back on. The result would be extreme poverty for the worker and his family. Although such social hazards increase as industrialisation progresses and modern economy develops,

Social security, which assures individuals the continuity of income, counter-attacks such insecurity and instability by providing medical care and cash benefits, in anticipation of which workers can remain in the process of industrialisation and develop their capacities, morale, efficiency and possibilities, without which economic development cannot be expected. Stabilisation of manpower, once thus achieved, contributes towards social and economic development of their country (Zöllner, 1974: 4-5).

Rys (1974) states that it is essential that social security should provide protection to persons most affected by the process of development, with social security acting as a stabilising factor in rapidly changing social conditions. He further states that the function of social security must include restoring to victims of social accidents, their capacity to participate in the process of creating new conditions of living and improving them. “Social security could thus become an institution which not only protects given sectors of the population, but also teaches them how to live better” (Rys, 1974: 26). This is more or less what the social safety nets are trying to achieve.

Although social security is an institution which deals with the social aspects of development, social security schemes cannot be planned for in isolation. They have to be planned with other aspects of development in mind. Rys (1974) points out that:

considerations concerning the scope, the organisation and finance of a social security scheme will have to be completed by the analysis of certain aspects of its societal environment which are of fundamental importance for its functioning (Rys, 1974: 31).

These other aspects of development include: economic aspects; demographic situation; social structure; and political aspects of the societal environment in which the plan is to operate. In addition, some external aspects would have to be considered especially in developing countries (i.e. technical aid in programming a scheme either by international organisations or through bilateral arrangements).

In the economically advanced countries, social security evolved to cover a wide range of contingencies and refers to the entire population of the country. These contingencies include among others, sickness, maternity, work accidents, unemployment, and old age. Unemployment is a rather difficult contingency to address especially so in developing countries, most of which suffer from widespread unemployment. The unemployment prevailing in developing countries is referred to as “a sort of chronic unemployment due to a basic disequilibrium between labour force and job opportunities” (Tsoucatos, 1974: 37).

A wide range of research and analytical activities have been carried out on specific topics in the field of social protection, and research papers have been published on social security financing, expenditure and modelling techniques. It has been noted that many national social protection systems are facing dramatic changes.

Industrialised countries are also reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of their social security systems in the context of persistently high levels of unemployment, the re-emergence of poverty, the globalisation of their economies, the ageing of the

population, shifting patterns of work and life, and changing societal values. This calls for the application of the wider concept of social protection.

The ILO has been very instrumental in a number of programmes carried out in the field of social protection and it conducted two action programmes with a view to providing constituents with a framework for planning reforms and improvements in the operation of their social security systems. These were entitled “Reforming and developing systems of social protection: framework for planning”, and “Improving the governance, management, administration and operation of social security programmes”. The current system emphasises financial compensation. While this and income protection will help workers over a period of search for other employment, it does not help or show them how to find a job. ILO has made tangible contributions in this area by the assistance it provides to its constituents for the development of employment promotion policies and programmes. Activities carried out under this assistance concentrate on employment intensive growth programmes and strategies which incorporate social protection for the workers concerned (ILO, 1998: *passim*).

In Zambia, the current social security policy pertains mainly to the protection and advancement of workers through adequate preparation for retirement and other unforeseen circumstances such as injuries or death which may occur during the time they are employed. The World Bank (1993) noted that, “The Government’s social security policy is severely limited in terms of its target population as it excludes the majority of the unemployed and small-scale and informal sector participants” (World Bank, 1993: 72).

Social security programmes in existence in the country are operated by different institutions, most of which are autonomous and serve different interest groups. These programmes include:

- i). The Civil Service Pension Programme which is administered by the Civil Service Pension Fund and caters for civil servants;

- ii). The Workmen's Compensation Fund which is compulsory for all employed persons;
- iii). The Local Authority Superannuation Fund (LASF) which targets all employees of local councils and other public institutions;
- iv). The Mukuba Pension Scheme which provides injury and retirement benefits for employees of the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines and other mines; and
- v). The Zambia National Provident Fund (ZNPF) which caters for a cross section of employees from the private, parastatal, and government sector and for domestic servants.

Due to inherent delivery problems, the above programmes are currently under assessment with a view to establishing a more comprehensive national social security scheme.

At present, the various social security systems do not cover the informal sector, nor do they provide services to the unemployed, thus limiting their target population.

“Social security in Zambia has developed as a class-specific programme catering for those persons in formal employment excluding the unemployed and the poor”

(World Bank, 1993: 74). Masiye, Tembo & Zulu (1999) have also noted this narrow coverage of social security. They point out that the majority of the population, who are in the informal sector, are excluded from state protecting facilities.

As can be seen, the social security systems presently in existence in Zambia do not provide services to the unemployed or the informal sector workers. The World Bank suggests that, “In order to address the needs of the urban poor and the unemployed, there is need to expand the definition and application of social security in Zambia to the whole population with special emphasis on the poor...” (World Bank, 1993: 75). This can be achieved with the successful establishment and organisation of social safety nets.

## **2.8 Outline of the report**

*The rest of the report is organised in the following order:*

Chapter 3 deals with the conceptual framework of the attachment and links it up with aspects of social security. This chapter is necessary for the reader to appreciate organisational communication and the importance of co-ordination in organisations. It also explains the concept of development in relation to social security institutions. Chapter 4 focuses on the attachment and outlines the personal experience and reflections of the student. In Chapter 5, the perspectives of the NSSN are outlined in detail. The purpose of this chapter is to provide information on the activities of the NSSN and it shows how these activities are linked to the organisation's objectives. It also outlines the problems of the organisation and attempts that are being made to solve them. Chapter 6 is about what changes the student would have liked to see in the organisation and also outlines the changes suggested to the organisation by the student. Chapter 7 is a discussion of the findings on NSSN, based on the objectives of the attachment and Chapters 3, 5, and 6. Finally, Chapter 8 gives the conclusions and recommendations.

# Chapter 3

## Conceptual Framework

The previous chapter provided a review of some of the literature on issues of social security and social protection. This chapter presents a conceptual framework based on key concepts that will constitute part of the discussion in Chapter 7. An understanding of these concepts is crucial if we are to appreciate the role of the NSSN as a development-oriented organisation.

### 3.1 Communication

There are various definitions of communication, just as there are various approaches to the study of communication. Some of the definitions of communication are as follows:

Communication is the discriminatory response of an organism to a stimulus. (Stevens, 1950)

...the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, etc., by the use of symbols — words pictures, figures, graphs, etc.

(Berelson & Steiner, 1964)

...the eliciting of a response through verbal symbols. (Dance, 1967)

Communication has as its central interest those behavioural situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver(s) with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviour. (Miller, 1996)

Human communication has occurred when a human being responds to a symbol. (Cronkhite, 1976)

(Source: Infante, Rancer & Womack, 1997: 8).



The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines communication as, “the imparting, conveying, or exchange of ideas, knowledge, etc. (whether by speech, writing or signs)”. The most important point to note is that we are all involved in communication for the most part of our lives. Burton (1980), reminds us that:

Communication is an even more prominent activity in our working lives. Most of us perform our work with other people in an organisation. We are rarely alone at work. When we are, we are usually reading or writing, telephoning, calculating, studying graphs, tables, data of some kind — in other words, communicating (Burton, 1980: 1).

Infante, Rancer & Womack (1997), define communication in the following way: “Communication occurs when humans manipulate symbols to stimulate meaning in other humans” (Infante, Rancer & Womack, 1997: 8). They further state that communication is a social, symbolic process which occurs in a context and it involves co-orientation or mutual awareness, individual interpretation, and shared meaning (Infante, Rancer & Womack, 1997: passim). The aspect of sharing also comes up in Kasoma’s definition which presents communication as the sharing of human life experience and the environment between persons. Kasoma further states that the word communicate, comes from the Latin word ‘communicaré’ which means ‘to share’. Rogers (1995) also incorporates the notion of sharing as he says, “Communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (Rogers, 1995:6). Burton tells us that:

Communication takes place between people who, in their private, their social, and their working lives, are functioning as members of systems. (The definition of system is given as: an organised body of parts; a complex whole) . Communication must therefore be studied in relation to the systems within which it operates and by which it is influenced. Without communication no system can

function efficiently. It is communication that connects the parts and keeps the complex whole together (Burton, 1980: 5).

All human beings live and work within systems of various kinds. Some examples of systems are the family, college, and a business firm. The structure of any system is influenced by the kind of activities in which it is engaged. Therefore, one could say, a business firm looks like what it does. In addition, the shape of the overall structure of the firm determines the shape and nature of the communication networks that the firm sets up. No single separate system can exist in isolation. The various systems overlap and interconnect and therefore influence and modify each other. This entails communication. Communication can be regarded as a system within a system, or better still, as a sub-system. Hodge & Johnson (1970), state that:

There are internal systems whose function is to link other organisation systems to each other. These internal systems furnish goods and services consumed within the organisation itself in its efforts to accomplish its missions. Typical of such systems is the communication system which supplies information necessary to maintain the organisation and its operations (Hodge & Johnson, 1970: 8).

Hodge & Johnson (1970), further tell us that the communication system could be regarded as a life-support system which connects the organisation with the outside world; at the same time it might be considered as a central nervous system for the organisation's internal operation since it facilitates the communication of vital information, ideas and decisions within an organisation. Apart from the aforementioned, organisations exist mainly to serve society, and success in this mission is largely dependent on the knowledge of society's needs and wants. This requires quality communication.

In an attempt to conceptualise communication, this student has quite frequently used the terms organisation(s) and system(s) in this chapter. It is, therefore, imperative that these terms be defined for the benefit of the reader. However, before this is done, there is need to mention here, the various contexts within which communication takes place. According to Infante et al. (1997), the contexts are:

Interpersonal	—	communication between two people
Small group	—	communication involving several people
Organisational	—	communication within and between organisations
Public	—	a speaker addressing a large audience
Mass	—	communication which is mediated by electronic or print media
Intercultural	—	communication between people of different cultures
Family	—	communication between family members
Health	—	communication involving health care providers and health care receivers
Political	—	communication involving the governing part of our society

(Infante et al., 1997: 12).

In addition to the above, there is what is known as intrapersonal communication which involves communicating with, within or to oneself. This type of communication can be mental (as in thinking), as well as physical (as in noting down something in one's diary), and it is key to any other type of communication.

### 3.2 Organisation or system

The study of people in organisations is not a new phenomenon as it dates back to the time of Confucius. In more modern times, however, the study of organisations has been approached from three different perspectives which affect one another. These are:

- i). The individual;
- ii). The organisation and its form; and ,
- iii). The systems and interactions within the organisation.

(Handy, 1985).

Hodge & Johnson (1970) state that:

An organisation can thus be thought of as a complex of relationships among human and physical resources and work, cemented together into a network of systems. Systems serve as the arteries of an organisation; they carry resources through the productive and distributive processes to become means of satisfying the needs of membership groups (Hodge & Johnson, 1970: 7).

System is defined as “a pattern of relationships (like the assembled pieces of a puzzle) within some relevant framework (the picture) aimed at the attainment of some specific purpose” (Hodge & Johnson, 1970: 6).

According to Hodge & Johnson (1970), an organisation is, therefore, a complete system in that it is a complex of relationships within some relevant framework. In the words of Hall et al. (1981),

An organisation comes into being when (1) there are persons able to communicate with each other (2) who are willing to contribute action (3) to accomplish a common purpose. The elements of

organisation are therefore (1) communication; (2) willingness to serve; and (3) common purpose (Hall et al., 1981: 479).

More or less the same is said about a system, as shown by Haberstroh (1965) who states that, “Some more common definitional criteria of system are common purpose, functional unity and high internal interdependence” (Haberstroh, 1965: 1174).

He further says that, “ In organisation systems, the basis for functional unity is common purpose” (Haberstroh, 1965: 1175).

Infante et al. (1997), define system as “...a set of interdependent units which work together to adapt to a changing environment” (Infante et al., 1997: 90). They further state that an organisation is one type of system. Considering the thin line of distinction between the two concepts — system and organisation — they will be used interchangeably in this report.

There are various types of organisations ranging from informal to formal dealing with a multitude of things. A key, formal organisation in modern society has been designed to process and change people or redefine their social and personal statuses. Examples of such organisations are public schools, hospitals, welfare agencies and employment offices. Hasenfeld and English (1978) have referred to such “organisations which define or alter the person’s behaviour, attributes, and social status in order to maintain his well-being as ‘ human service’ organisations” (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 1). These organisations, according to Hasenfeld and English (1978), are distinguished from other organisations by two main characteristics:

- i). Their input of raw materials are human beings with specific attributes, and their production outputs are persons processed or changed in a predetermined manner, and

- ii). Their general mandate is that of 'service,' that is, to maintain and improve the general well-being and functioning of people (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 1).

The NSSN is one such organisation in Zambia, as it is concerned with improving the well-being of the majority of the populace, who have been somewhat displaced or disadvantaged as a result of the economic reforms that the country is undergoing. Human service organisations fulfil a number of functions both at the societal and individual level. One of these functions, according to Hasenfeld and English (1978) is that:

. . . these organisations assume a social integration function by providing the means and resources for the individual to become integrated in the various social units with which he affiliates. Through such mechanisms as resocialization, therapy, material assistance, and counselling, human service organisations attempt to prevent social disintegration and facilitate and restore the integration of the individual in society (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 2).

Human service organisations are open systems and as such they maintain continuous interchanges with their environment. Haberstroh (1965) says of open and closed systems that:

Where the boundary is impermeable for all practical purposes ... the system is referred to as closed. Most systems, including organisations, are open, thus the nature of interchange with the environment is an important characteristic (Haberstroh, 1965: 1174).

An organisation communicates with its customers, suppliers, the government and other groups of people or institutions that constitute its environment. The organisational environment is a set of all the elements external to the organisation but which affect its structure and operations and which are, in turn affected by the activities of the organisation. The organisational environment can be divided into three subsystems:

- i). The ecological subsystem - which includes geographic area within which the organisation operates, the demographic composition of the population and the nature and availability of resources in the area;
- ii). The sociocultural subsystem - which refers to the social stratification patterns, the level of technological development and organisation and the system of values and norms that exist in the community in which the organisation functions; and,
- iii). The economic-political subsystem - which is the set of social units on whom the organisation depends for the procurement of necessary resources and the maintenance of its mandate and legitimisation. These include the beneficiaries of the organisation's services; suppliers of clients, financial resources, staff and equipment; regulatory groups that oversee the activities of the organisation; other organisations offering needed complementary services; and competing organisations.

These three interacting environmental subsystems influence the organisation and by presenting a series of constraints, contingencies as well as opportunities to the organisation, they contribute to shaping its character (Hasenfeld and English, 1978).

These interactions lead to what is known as interorganisational relations.

Interorganisational relations, unlike intraorganisational relations which are internal to the organisation, are the variety of interactions between two or more organisations designed to enhance organisational goals (Hasenfeld and English, 1978). According to Hasenfeld and English (1978):

It is useful to study interorganisational relationships in order to understand the conditions that lead to the emergence of relationships between organisations, to become sensitive to consequences of these relationships on intraorganisational structure, process, and clientele, and to become aware of the forms of linkages which effectively join organisations to each other (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 540).

They further explain one approach to the analysis of interorganisational relations which involves the study of an organisational set comprising a network of organisations in interaction with a focal organisation or a class of focal organisations. Here, the focal organisation is in an environment of input and output organisations with which it has interactions. Input organisations provide various types of resources for the focal organisation, including personnel, legitimation, clients, and capital, while output organisations receive a product, new knowledge, a service, or a client system from a focal organisation.

Other approaches to the study of relations between organisations include the study of: (1) the relations between an entire network of organisations, (2) the interactions between a pair of organisations within a network and, (3) the forms of linkages organisations use to relate to other organisations (Hasenfeld and English, 1978).

Hasenfeld and English (1978) also point out that a common problem confronting organisations in their relations with other units is the need to maintain their functional autonomy and institutional identity. This is especially problematic for human service organisations. Since they are often required to co-ordinate and exchange their



activities with a variety of other organisations, they are constrained to manage the problem of environmental dependence. Human service organisations are often faced with the dilemma of providing multiple services versus specialised services to meet client needs. While the provision of multiple services allows the organisation to meet a broader spectrum of client needs, it increases the dependence of the organisation on its environment and reduces its distinctiveness. The two authors, however, maintain that, “as an organisation increases its specialisation, it tends to become less dependent on the environment” (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 543).

The effectiveness of a focal organisation will partially be determined by the type of exchanges it establishes with organisations providing complementary services. For example the effectiveness of a job retraining centre may be dependent upon the quality of jobs an employment placement service provides for the centre’s clients. According to Hasenfeld and English (1978), Litwak and Hylton present a theory of interorganisational relations which focuses on the concept of interdependence. They argue that low interdependence leads to no co-ordination between organisations. In their view, co-ordination is likely to occur only under conditions of moderate independence. This suggests that co-ordination is contingent upon high degrees of interdependence.

Hasenfeld and English (1978) also tell us that, “The measure and degree of organisational interdependence is defined as the number of joint programmes that an organisation has with other organisations” (Hasenfeld and English, 1978: 544).

All the interactions which exist within and between organisations require communication for their sustenance. This gives rise to what is referred to as organisational communication.

### **3.3 Organisational communication**

This kind of communication involves exchanging messages to stimulate meaning within and between organisations and their environments (Infante et al., 1997).

Guetzkow (1965) states that “Communications in organisations are influenced by

internal characteristics and by factors in the organisation's environment" (Guetskow, 1965: 568). He further explains that:

Communications are central phenomena in organisations. When one conceives of the organisation as an ever changing system of interactions, one notes that communications aid in the development and maintenance of organisational purposes, as its members motivate and inspire each other towards goal accomplishments (Guetskow, 1965: 534).

Organisational communication, therefore, includes various communication contexts – one-on-one communication, small group communication, public communication, and mass communication. Infante et al. (1997) tell us that each of these forms of communication may occur between members of the same organisation or between organisations to co-ordinate behaviour with each other or with their environment. Examples of such types of communication are communication between superiors and subordinates; meetings; public speeches by a chief executive; and press releases or company newsletters (Infante et al., 1997).

Organisational communication developed as a result of the industrial revolution. Before the industrial revolution in England, most businesses were small family-operated enterprises and the owner and the employees knew each other well. After the increased mechanisation of the industrial revolution business (especially manufacturing), grew much larger and therefore employed more people. With this increase in staff came the need for managers hired by the owner to make the business run smoothly. At the same time theories were developed to explain how managers could more efficiently and effectively perform their jobs. These theories, known as organisational and management theories, had communication implications (Tompkins, 1984, cited in Infante et al., 1997).

*The classical theory of organisations was developed based on the work of three* important theorists outside the communication field — Weber (1909 - 1948), Fayol (1916 -1949), and Taylor. According to Infante et al. (1997), Weber wrote about the benefits of bureaucracy and he believed that written messages in the organisation's file created permanence for the organisation. Fayol on the other hand, identified key principles of management such as divisions of work, centralisation of power, and the hierarchical chain of command. Fayol also developed the idea of a horizontal chain of communication between employees on the same level but in different departments, and he advocated oral, face-to-face communication contacts. Taylor (1911), with his scientific management theory, meant to correct the unsystematic ways in which organisations operated at that time. He emphasised the importance of both upward and downward communication in the organisational hierarchy and advocated upward communication, not only as a method of receiving feedback for managers, but also as a means for managers to learn from their subordinates. As can be seen, all three theorists bring up the issue of communication in their attempts to refine management practices. It is therefore evident that management and organisation require communication in order to be successful. One should therefore not underestimate the importance of organisational communication.

Other theorists and practitioners have extended the work of the earlier theorists. One of these works — the Hawthorne studies — brought to the attention of theorists the importance of considering the effect of communication and human relations on productivity. The Hawthorne studies showed that workers' social needs and desire for informal communication were important as was evidenced by the increased productivity resulting from the attention the workers received from the researchers. In view of this, managers were now taught to consider informal as well as formal organisational communication systems and to listen to their employees and stimulate upward communication.

Farace, Monge, and Russel's (1977) theory provided an early, very influential synthesis of systems concepts for organisational communication. The three theorists take a structural-functional approach to systems and they first identify the key

elements of the organisational structure. According to them, an organisation system consists of interdependent parts which use energy to process environmental inputs, produce throughputs, and finally outputs or products. Their theory describes four sublevels of the system hierarchy: individual, dyadic, group, and organisational. At every level, communication is structured in formal and informal networks. Inputs may be relatively complex or relatively simple and flow to individuals at a particular rate per unit of time. When the flow is too great to manage, a person experiences communication *overload*. If the rate is too slow, *underload* occurs. The concepts of *rate, flow, complexity, overload* and *underload* may also be used to describe other levels of the organisational hierarchy. It is possible for the entire organisation to experience communication overload during a time of changing environmental conditions.

An important element of the structural part of the theory deals with networks. Information in groups or organisations flows in patterns called networks. These may be formally established by management, or informally set up to meet the communication requirements of the group. The micronetwork links individuals in the group whereas the network along which messages are transmitted between groups in the organisation is the macronetwork. The macronetwork forms the organisation's overall communication structure. Networks consist of members and links between members.

Organisational members may play different network roles. Members who have few or no links with others on the network are called communication isolates. Bridges and liaisons link two groups but play different roles. A liaison links two groups but is not a member of either group, whereas a bridge is a group member who links two groups and actually belongs to one of them. Although the use of a bridge to link two groups increases the number of links in the communication chain, it is effective because the quality of communication between bridges tends to be better than that between other members of each group.

The second part of structural-functionalism consists of the functions which the parts of the system perform. Communication enables the organisation to (1) produce throughputs and outputs (production); (2) change the system and generate new ideas for procedures and products (innovation); and (3) maintain interpersonal relationships among organisational members (maintenance). Therefore, production, innovation, and maintenance are the three essential activities of communication systems. Most of the group roles and properties described by Farace, Monge, and Russell are designed to help groups co-ordinate their activities and communicate better (Infante et al., 1997: passim).

Effective communication in organisations contributes to the attainment of development goals in any organisation. This suggests that organisational communication, which is key to the organisation's development, can be regarded as a form of development communication. In order to appreciate this analogy, it is necessary to understand the concept of development.

### **3.4 Development**

Development is seen from different perspectives and therefore has different meanings for different people in different disciplines. Inayatullah (1967) cited in Moemeka (1994) defined the concept of development as:

Change towards patterns of society that allows better realisation of human values, that allows a society greater control over its environments, and over its own political destiny, and that enables its individuals to gain increased control over themselves (Moemeka, 1994:10).

Rogers (1976) also cited in Moemeka (1994), defined the concept as:

...a widely participatory process of social change and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued

qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment (Moemeka, 1994: 10-11).

Rodney (1972), considered development in society as a many-sided process. He split the concept into two levels — the personal level, and the societal level. Rodney stated that, “Every people have shown a capacity for independently increasing their ability to live a more satisfactory life through exploiting the resources of nature” (Rodney, 1972: 11). This shows that he believes that as long as man has control over his environment, he can develop albeit in a limited way. As far as Rodney (1972) was concerned:

Development was universal because the conditions leading to economic expansion were universal. Everywhere, man was faced with the task of survival by meeting fundamental material needs; and better tools were a consequence of the interplay between human beings and nature as part of the struggle for survival (Rodney, 1972: 11).

This led to a tendency towards increased production leading to an increase in the quantity of goods. This increase, Rodney says, was associated with a change in the quality or character of society. It should be noted that in the definitions of development given so far, change is a common element. One could, therefore, safely say that development denotes change in one way or another, and change is development.

Kasoma (1994) defines development as:

improvement in the human life condition at individual and societal levels which is achieved through desirable but fluctuating changes or adjustments in the environment (Kasoma, 1994: 403).

The environment is another common element in the given definitions of development. Kasoma (1994) defines environment as, "...the sum total of all that which goes into making the human life situation" (Kasoma, 1994: 403). This confirms the holistic nature of development despite the fact that it is viewed from different angles and thus defined in different ways. Psychologists will emphasise individual or personality variables in their definitions while sociologists will concentrate on the process of differentiation that characterises modern societies. The political scientists on the other hand may concern themselves more with political awareness and ability to resolve conflict, while the communication specialist will view development as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills (Moemeka, 1994). Moemeka (1994) further states that these different angles from which development is viewed, are not exclusive, but are interwoven. According to Moemeka,

...though seen from different perspectives, development means one basic thing in all perspectives and to all people — a change for the better in the human, cultural, socio-economic, and political conditions of the individual and consequently of the society. It is not solely a matter of technology or of gross national product; more importantly it is a matter of increased knowledge and skills, growth of new consciousness, expansion of the human mind, the uplifting of the human spirit, and the fusion of human confidence (Moemeka, 1994: 11).

Melkote (1991), says that development is not simply the transfer of technology but also the communication of ideas, knowledge and skills. This is somewhat in agreement with Moemeka's view. Melkote further talks about how, in the seventies, development was no longer viewed as just economic development or economic growth. He states that it was noted that the real indicators of development were decreases in rates of poverty, income inequality, unemployment, and human suffering. However, Melkote notes that ironically, almost the world over, and especially in the so called developing countries, unemployment, income inequality, and poverty seemed to be increasing and it was being realised that connected with

development were other negative trends. In view of this, Melkote criticised the earlier models which defined development in narrow terms and viewed it as economic growth obtained through greater industrialisation and increased urbanisation. He said that there was need for a more broad-based definition of development which should include the physical, mental, social, cultural, and spiritual development of an individual. He commended the 'new' seventies' concept of development which he said was more qualitative as it considered all aspects of the environment (Melkote, 1991: passim).

Heilbroner, cited in Kahn (1969), argues that:

economic development is primarily a political and social process rather than an economic one. The kind of economic development currently sought is dependent upon the existence of a society in which wealth can be accumulated and incomes and employment progressively enlarged. Development, (therefore), occurs only if supported by social institutions and individual habits and skills. In this sense, much development is pre-economic and is largely concerned with shaping attitudes and creating needed institutional structures (Kahn, 1969: 301).

Such social institutions would contribute to the well-being of individuals in society, who will in turn contribute to development. The well-being of individuals, which is a type of development — human development — is an important aspect in the development process. GRZ/UN Report (1996), states that:

If economic growth is pursued narrowly and to the detriment of human development, then eventually the neglect of human conditions and human infrastructure may be expected to act as a brake on economic growth (GRZ/UN, 1996: 16).



Human development has been defined as:

the process of enlarging the range of people's choices — increasing their opportunities for education, health care, income and employment, and covering the full range of human choices from a sound physical environment to economic and political freedoms (UNDP, 1990; 1992 cited in GRZ/UN, 1996:13).

The institutional structures which contribute to the well-being of individuals in society, require information in order for them to function effectively. The development process also requires unrestricted flows of information if it is to succeed. This is because development initiatives are a social activity and social activities always involve communication. Mercado (1992), cited in Ngugi (1995), says that development is:

a process of providing disadvantaged people the opportunities to realise and improve their knowledge, attitude, and skill to utilise, sustain, and improve their productivity of available resources within their environment in order to improve the quality of their life and the society where they belong (Ngugi 1996: 278).

This process requires information and therefore communication. Okigbo (1985) tells us that “communication is an indispensable ingredient in any meaningful development package...” (Okigbo, 1985, cited in Okigbo, 1996: 340). This implies that wherever there are development initiatives, communication is inevitable. Ngugi (1995) supports this notion by pointing out that the history of communication for development can begin at any point in history because human beings have always communicated and these communication activities must have contributed to the process of development.

The deliberate use of communication for development purposes gave rise to what is referred to as development communication. The role of development communication can be seen as a facilitative one; the means to an end called development. According to Oliveira (1993), development communication is “the planned and systematic use of communication, through interpersonal and mass channels (Oliveira, 1993, cited in Ngugi, 1995: 279). It can be said to be communication with a purpose and as Mercado (1992) states:

development communication is a subsystem of the larger system of communication, which deals with the planned use of communication resources to gain multisectoral support in attaining national development goals. It is distinguished by the fact that it is purposive and has clear, well defined objectives such as to change people’s attitudes, skills, or behaviour (Mercado, 1992, cited in Ngugi, 1995: 280).

Therefore, an organisation like NSSN whose objective is to promote development through co-ordinating the other safety nets, requires an effective communication network to enhance its contribution to sustainable development in the country.

# Chapter 4

## Personal Experiences

This chapter gives an account of the personal experiences the student went through during the attachment. It is based on the student's own perception of the NSSN and it reveals what the student learnt from the experience. It is important to note that whatever is contained in this chapter is based purely on the personal reflections of the student, and could therefore be subjective.

### **4.1 Location of the attachment and initial contacts**

The offices of the NSSN are located on the fourth floor of Lusaka House, a building owned by the Zambia National Provident Fund. The building is situated at the south end of town and it has six floors, housing various organisations. Some of the floors are occupied by more than one organisation. These premises are, however, not the organisation's permanent location.

As stated earlier, the attachment was for a period of four months commencing on 1 July 1999 and ending on 31 October 1999. Prior to commencement, the student made the necessary arrangements and confirmed the terms of reference of the attachment with the Programme Director of NSSN. She was also given a document to study, which the Director felt would acquaint her with the organisation. The student was informed that there was also a student from the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), who was to start her attachment on the same day, though for a shorter duration.

### **4.2 Reception and orientation**

On arrival on Thursday 1 July 1999, the student received a warm reception and was taken around, together with the other student, to meet the members of staff. Apart from staff members of NSSN, it was felt that the students be introduced to the staff of Jobs for Africa and those of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Labour Sector, who were occupying offices on the same floor as the NSSN. The

students were introduced as new members of staff who would be there for a certain period. This introduction made the student already feel a part of the organisation.

Apart from the physical orientation, the student was given an orientation manual to acquaint herself with what was required and expected of members of staff (see Appendix II). In addition, the student was given a schedule of activities for the first month of the attachment. This, she was told, was to help guide her in her activities during the first month (see Appendix III). The schedules for the subsequent months were to be prepared by the student herself. This was in consideration of the student's planned visits to the other safety nets which were to take place in August and September, as indicated in her proposal.

As can be seen from the given schedule of activities for July (Appendix III), the student had a one-week orientation period during which she studied various NSSN documents in the organisation's files. This helped her put into perspective the various activities, constraints, and achievements of the organisation and in the Programme Director's words, to have "in-sight knowledge" of the NSSN's modus operandi.

#### **4.3 Office accommodation**

When the student began her attachment, the organisation had six offices on the floor. Two of these had been temporarily allocated to the Jobs for Africa Project, leaving the NSSN with four offices. As such some members of staff had to share. The staff strength at the time was seven — the Programme Director, 1 Senior Programme Officer (Media and Policy), 1 Programme Officer, 1 Communications/Administrative Officer, 1 Secretary, 1 Driver, and 1 Office Orderly. The Programme Director, Senior Programme Officer (SPO), and the Secretary occupied an office each, while the Programme Officer and the Communications Officer shared an office.

The student, therefore, had to share an office with the SPO (Media and Policy), while her colleague from NIPA shared an office with the Programme Officer. The Communications Officer was temporarily placed with the secretary. This situation proved beneficial as it provided a more conducive atmosphere for observation than

would have been the case had the student been placed alone. This is more so because the SPO's office appeared to be the centre of a number of the organisation's activities which were related to the student's area of interest.

#### **4.4 Work hours**

The morning office hours were from 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours with a one hour lunch-break from 13:00 hours to 14:00 hours. In the afternoon, work was expected to commence at 14:00 hours and end at 17:00 hours. There were no stipulated tea times and the student was informed that this was left open for members of staff to take tea at their own time. The office orderly was, therefore, under no obligation to provide tea at a specific time unless he was requested to do so. This practice was based on the principle of flexi-time (a flexible system where employees can report or knock-off at their convenience, as long as they make up the required number of work hours per day) which, in the student's opinion, would be more suitable in a place where there is a vending machine. However, during the student's attachment, the practice worked quite well, probably because of the small number of staff involved.

#### **4.5 Organisation's expectations and perceived role of student**

As already mentioned, the student was treated as a full time member of staff and was therefore expected to report for work and leave at the stipulated times. She was also advised to inform either the Programme Director or the SPO (Media and Policy) whenever she left the office. The student, like any other member of staff, was also expected to work extra hours — when necessary — either at home or at the office, to complete any urgent assignment.

When it came to the daily operational activities, the student was expected to work as independently as possible and only consult when absolutely necessary. Although she was given some assignments to work in conjunction with either the SPO or the Programme Officer, she also had a number of individual assignments which were her sole responsibility.

Apart from the daily routine activities, the student, in line with her proposal, was expected to conduct a review of the NSSN's activities and provide the organisation with a mid-attachment evaluation report at the end of August as well as a terminal report at the end of the attachment period. The student's intended visits to the other safety nets were very welcome as it was felt that she would provide the NSSN with information on what the other safety nets felt about the NSSN. This information was expected to be incorporated in the reports to be submitted to the organisation. The student, however, felt that by preparing these reports, she would be pre-empting what was to be contained in her final report to the university — a copy of which would be given to the NSSN. In view of this, she requested that the organisation wait for the final attachment report. She, nevertheless, did discuss some of her observations and findings with both the Programme Director and the SPO (Media and Policy).

Although the information from the other nets was going to be beneficial to the NSSN, the planned visits to the other safety nets were not regarded as part of the organisation's activities. As such, the student had to make her own transport arrangements for these visits. However, in visiting the other safety nets, the student was expected to act as a sort of liaison between the NSSN and the other safety nets in that she would collect information from the other safety nets regarding the NSSN, and at the same time, provide the safety nets with some information about the NSSN.

#### **4.6 Designation**

In consideration of the long duration of the attachment period, it was felt necessary to specify the student's designation in the organisation. As such, the student was designated as a Senior Programme Officer (Programmes), and was expected to carry out all the duties related to the position. According to the Programme Director, the title "was meant to operationalise (the student's) status during the attachment phase" (see Appendix IV). This designation contributed greatly to boosting the student's confidence in carrying out her daily activities and in her interactions both within the organisation and with outsiders.

#### **4.7 Work environment**

Although work environment does not change personality as such, it does affect day-to-day behaviour profoundly (Brown, 1971). Work environment is, simply stated, the work atmosphere which is influenced by, among other things, the area within which the organisation operates—including the surroundings; the system of values and norms of the organisation; and the relationships among the people within and outside the organisation.

As already stated, at the time of the student's attachment, the office accommodation at the NSSN was not adequate and the staff had to share. The offices were, nevertheless, big enough to accommodate two officers, and were well furnished and each equipped with a computer for use by the officer(s). The provision of a computer for each office helped lessen the burden of typing for the secretary as most of the officers could type their own work. It also proved convenient for the officers especially when they needed something urgently. There was, however, only one printer in working condition and it was placed in the secretary's office. Officers therefore saved whatever work they wanted printed, on diskettes which they passed on to the secretary for printing.

The number of staff was quite small at the time of the student's attachment and as such, it was like a closely-knit family. As a result, there existed among the staff, cordial relationships and the student found herself easily fitting in and establishing rapport with the members of staff. Brown (1971), states that, "In small employment hierarchies ... tension and hostility seem to occur much less often than in those employing large numbers" (Brown, 1971: 26). For the NSSN, the small number was not a deliberate policy but was a result of delays in recruiting. Due to the small number of staff, there were no strict bureaucratic channels and members of staff could easily have access to the Programme Director.

The cordial relationship was also extended to the members of staff of the SADC Labour Sector and Jobs for Africa employees. This was evidenced by the co-operation between and among them and the mutual assistance they gave each other.

The planned informal get-together functions, one of which this student was privileged to attend, was another indication of the cordial relations among the three organisations. The student felt that developing and maintaining cordial relations even with the other two organisations was very important as they were also a part of the NSSN's environment and NSSN's members of staff could not avoid interacting with staff of SADC Labour Sector and Jobs for Africa. This was even more so that they operated under the same jurisdiction — Ministry of Labour and Social Security. This cordial atmosphere that the student found, greatly facilitated her observation process.

#### **4.8 Overall impressions**

The student was impressed with the personal calibre as well as the co-operative spirit of the people she interacted with. She was further impressed by the kind of fraternal relationships that existed within the organisation and the openness with which the members of staff dealt with each other. This appears to have contributed to the overall openness of the organisation, as was evidenced by the way the student was easily and unconditionally accepted as a member of the organisation.





# Chapter 5

## Challenges and Constraints of the NSSN

### 5.0 Role of the NSSN

The NSSNCC was primarily established to co-ordinate the implementation of the various social safety net schemes throughout the country. These safety net schemes are meant to benefit the retrenched in their search for alternative income generating activities. Despite currently having offices only in Lusaka, the NSSN is a nation-wide programme which is part of the government's programmes on social security reform. The NSSN is intended specifically to co-ordinate social protection programmes for the workers who are displaced as a result of SAP. The mission, as stated earlier in this report, is:

‘To create alternative income generating activities designed to cushion the displaced/retrenched from the negative social and economic impact.’

The main objectives of the NSSNCC are:

- i). To develop policy guidelines of the National Social Safety Net for displaced workers,
- ii). To mobilise resources for the effective implementation of various national social safety net programmes, and,
- iii). To co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the National Social Safety Net programmes.

Interventions in support of displaced workers include:

- Training and retraining;
- Counselling;
- Redeployment;
- Resettlement; and,

- Entrepreneurship.

The NSSN was mandated to co-ordinate all activities in regard to the above interventions so as to avoid duplication of efforts. In order to achieve this, it was necessary for the NSSN to establish an effective network system among all the institutional stakeholders and agencies involved in providing pre and post retrenchment programmes. The institutions identified as stakeholders/implementing agencies are as follows:

- Cabinet Office;
- Office of the Vice President
- Ministry of Community Development and Social Services;
- Training Institutions;
- Future Search;
- Non-Governmental Organisations;
- Trade Unions;
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries;
- Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry;
- Ministry of Lands;
- Local Authorities (Councils); and,
- Private and Public Social Security Institutions.

The NSSN was, therefore, not expected to carry out the stated interventions, but was expected to work through the above named agencies which it would co-ordinate.

Apart from developing policy guidelines, mobilising resources, and co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of social safety net programmes, the NSSN was expected to mount a media and public awareness campaign to disseminate information about the work of the NSSNCC and all the other safety nets in Zambia. This need for a media and public awareness campaign was identified after the realisation that although social safety nets were available and the NSSNCC had been

established, many potential beneficiaries were not aware of these safety net schemes and therefore did not know how to access them for assistance. In addition, in order to ensure effective implementation of safety net programmes, the NSSN had to see to it that the implementing agencies had the capacity to carry these out. This entailed building and strengthening the capacity of these agencies.

At the time the student was on attachment, the NSSN was working towards redefining its scope and mandate. This was with a view to broadening its role so that it does not only cater for the workers retrenched or displaced as a result of privatisation and economic reforms, but it also addresses the general unemployment problem. The new role will encompass the element of capacity building for employment creation. As such, the nature of the organisation and its activities will have to be modified and refocussed.

## **5.1 Achievements of the NSSN**

In order to achieve effective implementation of national social safety net programmes, there is need for policy development, programme co-ordination and capacity and institutional building of the various safety nets.

### **5.1.1 Capacity and institutional building**

The capacity building of personnel in the various safety nets is a major priority of the NSSN especially since one of its main objectives is to ensure effective implementation of social safety net programmes. Effective programme implementation can only best be achieved by people with the capacity and the required resources. The NSSN, therefore, undertook to strengthen the capacity of institutions undertaking pre and post retrenchment programmes. During the period 1995 to 1999, the NSSN undertook a number of personnel development initiatives. These have been in the form of training programmes, study tours, and seminars.

The strengthening of institutional capacity of the various safety nets within the public sector began in March 1997 with the provision of computers, printers and modems to key safety net institutions as part of the Co-ordinated NSSN Information System. The

commissioning of this system was supposed to have taken place in the same year, but due to some operational problems with the main computer server at the NSSN, this was not done.

Apart from installing computers, printers, modems and faxes, the NSSN also undertook to train staff of various safety nets and some stakeholder institutions. Table 2 shows the programme support provided by the NSSN, while Table 3 shows a breakdown of the training provided to various safety nets and stakeholder institutions and the field of training.

In early 1997, the NSSN funded a counselling skills workshop for all labour officers from all the provinces in the country. This was done in anticipation that retrenched workers were likely to visit labour offices, and so the officers there had to be ready to provide counselling where necessary. This training of labour officers was important not only for this reason, but, as already mentioned, for the reason that the NSSN operates through the labour offices in the provinces.

**Table 2: Programme Support Provided by the NSSN to Implementing Agencies**

<b>Implementing Agency</b>	<b>Number of Staff Trained</b>	<b>Capital Equipment Support</b>	<b>Financial support</b>
Labour Department	55	Computers(2), Printers (2), and Modems (2)	-
Future Search	8	Computer, Printer and Modem	K 5 million
Ministry of Community Development	13	Computer, Printer and Modem	-
Public Service Management Division	2	Computer, Printer and Modem	-
Zambia Federation of Employers	-	-	K 5 million
Ministry of Science and Technology	5	Computer, Printer and Modem	-
Resettlement Division	9	Computer, Printer and Modem	-
Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry	5	-	-

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

*Table 3: Capacity Building of Safety Net Institutions*

Institution	Number of Officers Trained and Fields Offered 1995 - 1998				
	Entrepreneurship and Counselling Skills	Basic Computer Training	NSSN Information System	General Management	Management Information System
Labour Dept.	19	6	22	2	3
Future Search	-	2	1	1	3
Ministry of Community	-	4	6	1	1
Ministry of Commerce	-	2	-	1	1
PSMD	-	1	1	-	-
Resettlement Division	-	4	4	-	1
NSSNCC Secretariat	-	-	-	-	2
Ministry of Science	-	1	1	1	-
Compensation Board	-	-	1	-	-
Local Government	-	-	1	-	-

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

### 5.1.2 Resource mobilisation

The NSSN has to a certain extent managed to mobilise resources from both government and co-operating partners (multilateral donor agencies). These resources have been used for institutional and capacity building as well as for operational and programme expenses. Funding from the Government budget to the NSSN commenced in 1993 while that from multilateral agencies such as UNDP and the World Bank commenced in 1995 and 1996 respectively. The funding from Government is channelled through the parent ministry, i.e. the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, while the multilateral assistance is provided directly for the programmed activities.

**Table 4: Expenditure on Government Budgetary Allocations**  
(K million)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Authorised Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual Releases to NSSN</b>	<b>Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>Programme Expenditure</b>	<b>Institutional and Capacity Building Expenditure</b>
94	43	29	9	2	18
95	43	34	11	9	14
96	43	35	7	18	10
97	200	135	13	74	48
98	200	88	20	45	23
99	200	29*	10	6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>126</b>

\* It should be noted that this figure does not include the funding expected for the period August - December 1999 which is in the region of K80 million.

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

Table 4 shows the NSSN's expenditure on the budgetary allocations provided by government, while Table 5 shows the expenditure on funding from the multilateral agencies.

**Table 5: Funding from Multilateral Agencies 1995 - 1998**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Funds Approved</b>	<b>Funds utilised for Programmes</b>	<b>Funds utilised for Training</b>	<b>Funds utilised for Equipment</b>
World Bank	US \$ 292,000	US \$ 232,000	US \$ 60,000	-
UNDP	US \$ 424,000*	US \$ 234,000	US \$ 40,000	US \$ 100,000

\* A balance of \$ 50,000 is to be fully expended on the UNDP project.

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

The government recognises the importance of technical co-operation in promoting national development and it is against this background that the NSSN negotiated and secured technical co-operation agreements with the World Bank and UNDP. The assistance from the World Bank was conducted under the auspices of the Parastatal and Industrial Reform Credit (PIRC) which provided funds for entrepreneurship training, the media campaign and the purchase of equipment. As seen in Table 5, a total of US \$292,000 was approved for these activities between 1995 and 1996.

Government also secured US \$ 424,000 from UNDP (see Table 5) for the establishment of a National Social Safety Net Co-ordination System. This was part of the Reform of Social Security Systems Project. The main objective of the project was to assist in the development of capacity in the various safety nets through:

- i). the establishment of a safety net information system, and,
- ii). capacity building of safety net staff.



At the close of the technical assistance projects in 1998, substantial progress had been made in the targeted areas. The funds and technical assistance extended by the World Bank and the UNDP had been utilised for their intended purposes, resulting in the initiation of the safety net co-ordination mechanism and the enhancement of technical capacity in the various safety nets.

### 5.1.3 Co-ordination mechanism

Co-ordination is the key role for which the NSSN was established. The mechanism through which this co-ordination is conducted is the existing NSSN organisational and management framework. In implementing planned activities, the NSSN management is supposed to liaise and collaborate closely with implementing agencies.

In order to ensure effective co-ordination, networking among the safety nets became necessary. The establishment of an information system therefore, became pivotal in the NSSN's programme strategy. In this regard, computers, printers, modems and faxes were purchased and installed in the key safety nets. The main aim was to establish both a Wide Area Network (WAN) and a Local Area Network (LAN) which was to comprise 7 institutions identified from the existing safety net institutions. A server for the information system was also purchased and installation of the system was effected in March 1997.

Board meetings are also regarded by the NSSN as another mechanism through which co-ordination is conducted. As stated in the NSSN's Position Paper (1999), the functions of the Board are:

- To develop policy guidelines for NSSN programmes,
- To mobilise resources for NSSN programmes, and
- To co-ordinate and monitor NSSN programmes.

As can be seen, the Board, whose membership is drawn from stakeholder and safety net institutions, is also responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the organisation's programmes. This it does through discussions at Board meetings and through the various sub-committee activities (See Appendix V for composition of NSSN sub-committees). The organisation feels that through the Board, stakeholders have actively participated in the activities of the NSSN since its inception in 1993. However, it is the general feeling of the various nets which the student visited, that the co-ordination and the envisaged monitoring of social safety net programmes have not really been accomplished.

#### 5.1.4 The media and public awareness campaign

The NSSN contracted a consultant to develop a media strategy. This media strategy, whose draft version was presented to stakeholders for consultations in December 1996, recommended that electronic and print media, drama, brochures and testimonial advertising were the most effective media for disseminating information. After extensive discussions and the media strategy was approved, the NSSN undertook to recruit consultants to implement the strategy. Consultants were identified after advertisements were done and interviews conducted, and work started in August 1997.

According to the initial timetable, the official launch of the NSSN Media and Publicity Campaign was scheduled for early 1998. The campaign material, therefore, had to be ready before then. However this was not achieved. As of August 1999, the official launch had not yet taken place. Table 6 shows the status of the publicity material as of July 1999.

**Table 6: Status of the NSSN Media and Publicity Campaign**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Status</b>
Brochures	Art and Design	8,000 brochures printed in English and 7 vernacular languages
Posters and Folders	Dapeg International	Three sets of posters, and folders
Drama	Women in Theatre	First draft of script enacted and is due for amendment
Electronic Media	ZNBC	Draft programme already developed as part of the NSSN Media Campaign strategy
Articles	Dapeg International	Pending

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

## **5.2 Other activities**

### **5.2.1 Capacity building for employment creation**

Although the initial emphasis of NSSN programmes was on the retired and retrenched employees, it became apparent that there was need to revisit this object, given the emerging nature of unemployment in the country. The mandate of the NSSN has, therefore, been redefined to target a wider group. As well as this, the scope of the NSSN programmes has been broadened and refocussed to encompass capacity building for employment creation as the main goal. In view of this, the NSSN has included in its activities, the preparation of project proposals in order to facilitate employment creation particularly in the informal sector.

The idea of preparing proposals in areas such as bricklaying, fisheries, dairy farming, general farming, and bee-keeping, was formulated during a briefing that the Programme Director had with the Minister of Labour and Social Security in July 1999. At that meeting, it was decided that the NSSN should prepare proposals on capacity building in the above mentioned areas. These proposals would then be used to solicit for funds from co-operating partners to facilitate the implementation of these programmes.

The preparation of these proposals commenced in August 1999 and by the time the student was completing her attachment, one proposal had been submitted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. This activity entailed a lot of work outside the office as it required extensive consultations with experts in the specific areas.

#### 5.2.2 Programme meetings

In order to ensure that activities of the organisation run smoothly and assignments are carried out accordingly, the organisation holds programme meetings every Friday. These meetings are attended by all NSSN technical staff and are held for purposes of:

- i). conducting regular reviews of NSSN activities;
- ii). developing strategies on specific assignments; and,
- iii). planning for future assignments.

Assignments for the week are allocated, reviewed, discussed, or reported at these meetings and members of staff are free to bring forward any operational or general management issues that need addressing.

### **5.3 Constraints**

The outlined achievements of the organisation have not been without problems. In fact, the NSSN has faced some considerable constraints in the carriage of its programmes. The submissions from management and stakeholders interviewed, highlighted the following as main constraints:

### 5.3.1 Lack of a comprehensive Policy Framework

Between 1993 and 1995, the NSSN had no clear and firm policy relating to its existence and functions and was therefore operating without clear-cut, dedicated and committed goals and objectives. For the most part of its early years, therefore, the organisation was still grappling with the issue of policy development and could, therefore, not do much in terms of programme activities. It was only in 1995 that the National Policy on Retrenchment was completed, and provided some guidance on the NSSN's activities.

### 5.3.2 Ambiguous autonomous status

Some of the decisions of the NSSN are sometimes subjected to consultations and ratifications by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. It is thus felt that the NSSN's autonomy is ambiguous as their decisions can be subject to variations by the Ministry. This might well stem from the fact that the organisation does not derive its authority from a statute but from mere policy pronouncements contained in the following documents:

- i). Cabinet Memo (1992) on the Parastatal and Industrial Reform Credit (PIRC);
- ii). Policy Framework Paper 1995 -1998;
- iii). Cabinet Memo (1996) on the National Policy on Retrenchment; and,
- iv). Budget Speech of 1998.

### 5.3.3 Inadequate funding to finance operational and programme activities

The NSSN has suffered from lack of sufficient funds to finance its planned programme of activities and provide for support services such as motor vehicles and office equipment. As seen in Table 4, of the funding given from 1994 to July 1999, roughly over 20 percent has been spent on operations, 44 percent on programmes, and 36 percent on institutional and staff capacity building. Ideally, over 60 percent of the total allocation is supposed to be expended on programmes.

#### 5.3.4 Inadequate staffing

This constraint refers to the lack of sufficiently technically qualified and experienced staff especially during the organisation's first two years of existence. During this period the organisation had management problems as it did not have the right calibre of personnel. This problem could not be addressed in time as funding for recruitment of adequately qualified and experienced staff was not readily available. It took the organisation up to 1997 to conclude the conditions of service and remuneration. Meanwhile, the recruitment of key personnel was only effected in October 1999.

*Between 1993 and 1999, the organisation has depended mainly on staff seconded from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and others on short-term contracts of up to three months. Even then, from mid-1996, management has averaged 2 - 3 professional staff against the establishment of 13. This lack of adequate technical expertise has had a negative impact on the pace of the programme.*

#### 5.3.5 Co-ordination mechanism

It is felt that the absence of a long-term national policy on employment and a comprehensive action plan has hampered the effective delivery and co-ordination of NSSN programmes. This is coupled with other operational problems. For instance, despite considerable investment in the form of equipment and training for the establishment of an information system, this system, which was scheduled for commissioning in 1997, is not yet operational. This is mainly because of problems with the server which got burnt soon after instalment. As a result, the information system has never really been used for its intended purpose.

As regards the Board, lack of legitimacy or non-binding nature of its policy decisions is cited as a constraint. This is attributed to the lack of a legal framework. This has somewhat weakened their co-ordination. Apart from this, there has been a lack of commitment by some institutions represented on the Board. This is evident from the number of meetings they have attended. Table 7 shows the attendance at the NSSN Board meetings between 1993 and 1998.

*Table 7: Survey of NSSN Board Meetings 1993 - 1998*

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Meetings attended</b>	<b>Meetings at which the institution was absent</b>	<b>Attended by designated member</b>	<b>Representation by alternate</b>
Ministry of Labour	17	-	13	4
Ministry of Commerce	15	2	8	7
Ministry of Community	14	3	11	3
Ministry of Finance	10	7	8	2
Ministry of Local Govt	8	9	7	1
PSMD	15	2	13	2
NIPA	12	5	12	-
NCDP	12	5	12	-
Resettlement	15	2	14	1
ZCTU	10	7	8	2
ZFE	11	6	7	4
ZAMIM	14	3	13	1
MSB	8	9	5	3
ZPA	13	4	11	2
ZACCI	7	10	5	2

*Source: NSSN Position Paper, July 1999*

Apart from the aforementioned, the NSSN has not had any significant liaison with NGOs. This non inclusion of NGOs in most of the NSSN programmes has been attributed to capacity constraints at the NSSN to effectively develop a framework of actively involving this group of stakeholders.

#### 5.3.6 Media and public awareness campaign

The launch of the NSSN media and public awareness campaign has not taken place as scheduled because of both institutional and logistical constraints. Although most of the campaign material is ready, it is the Board's view that management should first ensure that the main safety nets which are to be publicised are fully operational before the campaign is launched. This is a serious constraint on the NSSN's part because by the time the student was completing her attachment in October, some safety nets were not yet fully operational. This was due to logistical and organisational constraints. This has affected the pace of the media campaign.

Most of the constraints outlined in this section are externally oriented in that they stem from a lack of adequate support in terms of funding as well as the delay in formulating a sufficiently comprehensive policy framework. As well as this, the problems have also been compounded by the rapid pace of privatisation which among other things, has entailed high labour turnover and retrenchments which require the attention of the NSSN.

### **5.4 Suggested solutions**

In order to overcome the constraints outlined in the previous section, the following have been suggested:

- i). That the employment segment of the labour market policy be reformulated to reflect emphasis on capacity building for employment creation. This proposed policy would clearly state the role to be played by various institutions in employment creation;



- ii). That the composition of the Board be reviewed with a view to strengthening its effectiveness and incorporating membership that would reflect its new mandate. Representation on the Board should be reviewed every three years;
- iii). That financial arrangements be improved and the Board conduct a regular review of the conditions of service;
- iv). That the NSSN undertake the recruitment of relevant staff to improve the organisation's staff strength;
- v). That the NSSN should conduct regular consultative meetings at technical level with the other safety nets; and,
- vi). That a comprehensive programme of action be developed by the organisation to facilitate the effective co-ordination of safety net activities.

At the time the student was leaving, the organisation had recruited five members of staff to fill the positions of, Chief Programme Officer, Programme Officer (2), Administrative Assistant, and Accounts Assistant.

# Chapter 6

## Student's Input

This chapter outlines the activities which the student was involved in, and her findings from the observations and interviews that she conducted during her attachment. The chapter also includes suggestions that the student made in order to solve the identified problems.

### **6.0 Intended purpose of student's attachment**

As stated earlier in the report, the attachment is an important requirement of the MCD Programme. The student sought to specifically analyse the organisation's internal and external communication patterns and to establish the type of networks and relationships that exist between the organisation and its affiliates. Since the NSSN is a co-ordinating body, the student intended to evaluate the activities of the NSSN with a view to establishing the effectiveness of the communication methods used in the co-ordinating function. In doing this, the student not only undertook to study the NSSN's documents and observe its activities but also arranged visits to the various social safety nets that are supposed to be co-ordinated by the organisation. This was done with the intention of getting an objective view in order to make an objective analysis of the NSSN's co-ordinating function.

### **6.1 Student's allocated assignments**

During her attachment period, the student undertook a number of assignments both individually and in conjunction with other officers. Although her main interest was the communication aspect, the assignments she was given to undertake were not solely communication related. Apart from the daily routine tasks of drafting correspondence, the main assignments allocated to the student included, preparing a television programme schedule, drafting advertisements, participating in the staff recruitment interviews, observing the ILO evaluation exercise, and preparing project proposals.

### 6.1.1 Television programme schedule

As part of the preparations for the media and public awareness campaign, the organisation had to prepare a workplan for the media which entailed drafting a schedule of television programmes. This was to be submitted to the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). When the student joined the organisation, she found that although there was already a draft schedule of television programmes, it was somewhat outdated and some of the items had been overtaken by events. For instance, there was a change in focus from 'displaced workers' to 'the general unemployment problem'. This necessitated a change in the lined up discussion topics. The student worked with the Senior Programme Officer (Media and Policy) in revising the schedule of the television programmes in readiness for the launch of the campaign. The campaign is basically aimed at creating awareness of the existence of social safety net schemes in the country. The launch of the campaign is dependent on the readiness of the safety nets. The NSSN is of the view that it is most ideal to launch the campaign when all the social safety nets are in place and ready to cater for the people likely to approach them.

### 6.1.2 Advertisements and interviews

In order to improve the staff strength, the organisation had to recruit more staff. The student worked with the Programme Officer in drafting advertisements for the positions of, Chief Programme Officer, Programme Officers, Administrative Assistant, and Accounts Assistant. These advertisements were first approved by the Board before they were placed in the daily papers. The student also participated in shortlisting candidates for interviews which were held a few weeks before the end of the student's attachment. During the interviews for the positions of Programme Officers, Administrative Assistant, and Accounts Assistant, the student was secretary of the interview panel. The panel comprised members of the staffing sub committee. After the interviews, the student prepared a summary of the interviews including the recommendations made by the panel.

### 6.1.3 Impact evaluation

Sometimes the NSSN works in collaboration with other organisations in running certain programmes. One such instance was when they worked with the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE) and the ILO in running the Start Your Business (SYB) and Improve Your Business (IYB) workshops in Lusaka, Chipata and Livingstone. The NSSN provided the funding for the workshops while the ZFE and the ILO conducted the training. In order to assess the success of the workshops, the ILO decided to conduct an impact evaluation exercise. The student and the Programme Officer were sent to observe the ILO evaluation exercise and were required to prepare a brief for the Programme Director. The aim of this evaluation was to find out the opinions of the people who had participated in the SYB and IYB workshops and to solicit for suggestions for improvement.

The brief discussions that the student had with some of the workshop participants revealed that although most participants acknowledged the benefits of the training, they pointed out that lack of initial capital for starting their businesses was a major constraint. They indicated that favourable loan facilities were not readily available and that that was a hindrance to their putting into practice the skills they had acquired from the training. Most participants felt that there was need to integrate a financial assistance component into the programme so that those who received training could easily access loans and initiate actual business activities.

### 6.1.4 Preparations for consultative meetings

In a bid to have closer liaisons with the NSSN's affiliates, the Programme Director assigned the student and the Programme Officer the task of arranging for consultative meetings with the safety nets and other relevant government departments. The two were asked to prepare a schedule for these meetings and to also prepare an aide memoir which would give some background information of the NSSN and the reasons for having these meetings. It was planned that initially, the NSSN would hold meetings with individual safety nets and government departments and then later, meetings involving more than one group would be organised.

Unfortunately, the planned preparations never really took place because of the emergence of other activities which took precedence. The issue of lack of staff had not been addressed and this greatly affected the implementation of a number of planned activities. Even if the complete schedule of consultative meetings were to have been prepared at that time, convening these meetings would have been difficult. This was because there was need for relevant staff to be in place; these would have been responsible for holding the planned meetings. At the time of the student's attachment, there were only two permanent technical staff — the Programme Director and the Senior Programme Officer (Media and Policy). It would have been too much for the two to handle the planned meetings in addition to the multitude of other things they had to deal with.

One meeting that did take place during the student's attachment period was an interdepartmental meeting between the NSSN and the Labour Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. This meeting was important because the NSSN had a number of issues in common with the Labour Department. The issues which needed to be addressed included:

- i). the Employment Policy;
- ii). publicity and the media; and,
- iii). the hosting modalities for the Jobs for Africa Project

This meeting proved very beneficial as the two groups were able to freely discuss issues of common interest.

#### 6.1.5 Project proposal writing

A major activity of the NSSN which the student participated in individually was the preparation of project proposals which commenced at the beginning of August 1999. As indicated earlier, these project proposals were in response to the need for employment creation activities and were to be submitted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security for possible funding. The main aim was to create income generating activities for those who could not be absorbed in formal sector

employment. Great emphasis was placed on sustainability of these activities. The NSSN Position Paper (1999) clearly states that, “ ‘securing sustainable employment’ is the main goal of the NSSN interventions” (NSSN Position Paper, 1999: 10). Therefore, in writing the project proposals, careful consideration had to be given to this very important aspect of employment creation.

The student was assigned to prepare a proposal on beekeeping. With absolutely no knowledge about beekeeping and bees in general, the student set out to gather as much information as possible. In order to get the required information, she visited the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources’ Forestry Department and interviewed the relevant people. Lengthy discussions were held with the District Forest Officer in Lusaka who provided some very useful information and relevant literature on beekeeping in Zambia. Apart from this, the student also visited Keepers Zambia Foundation, an NGO which is involved in providing training and equipment for beekeeping. From this organisation, she obtained quotations for the various pieces of equipment required for keeping bees and also quotations for the training courses. The Export Board of Zambia was another organisation that the student visited during her information-gathering. These were able to give an idea of the demand for honey and beeswax on the export market and also provide the prices for honey and beeswax on the export market. The information-gathering stage was quite involving as it entailed visiting a number of different organisations and consulting various people.

With all the information gathered, and basing on an outline for project proposal writing provided by the Programme Director, the student prepared a proposal on ‘Capacity Building for Employment Creation in the Beekeeping Industry’. By the time the student was completing her attachment, she had submitted the proposal to the Programme Director for final comments.

Although beekeeping is not a communication activity as such, project proposal writing is itself a communication act. This is so because through the proposals, the NSSN is relaying information on how to create income generating activities. This

information may either result in further discussions or in the creation of the much needed employment opportunities albeit in the informal sector.

#### 6.1.6 Survey on salaries and salary structure

The student was also assigned to undertake a survey of salaries and salary structures on comparative basis. The survey was aimed at finding out the existing salaries in some selected establishments with a view to providing a benchmark in determining competitive salaries for NSSN staff. This survey exposed the student to the difficulties faced in obtaining information on matters of salaries and salary structures. Most organisations tended to be very secretive on this issue which they said was sensitive. However, after building enough rapport and providing assurances to the targeted organisations, the required information was obtained. The information was duly documented and submitted to the Programme Director.

One of the most interesting findings was the disparities in salaries paid by different organisations for similar jobs. Also, almost invariably, most organisations offered salaries on the basis of their ability to pay.

### **6.2 Student's own activities**

The student's main concern was to determine the effectiveness of the NSSN as a co-ordinating body. The student realised that in order to get an objective view of this, it was necessary to get the opinions of the various safety nets being co-ordinated by the NSSN, and not solely to depend on the observations she made at the organisation and the opinions of the NSSN staff.

The student prepared a schedule of visits that she intended to make during the months of August and September. These visits to the relevant social safety nets and the ZPA were for purposes of collecting information for the report. The student had, in most cases, to make more than one visit to each of these safety nets as the initial visits were basically for purposes of introducing her to the safety nets and arranging for interviews. In this regard, the Programme Director prepared an introductory letter addressed to the representatives of the five public social safety nets, namely, the

Public Welfare Assistance Scheme; Future Search; Land Resettlement Programme; Small and Micro enterprises Promotion Unit; and Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority. It was easy to address these because they were members of the NSSN Board whereas the NGOs or private safety nets such as World Vision and Care International had not yet been incorporated onto the NSSN Board. Introduction to these was done by the student herself. A list of the people interviewed by the student is at Appendix VI.

According to the information gathered during interviews with the representatives of the safety nets, the general perception was that there was no effective co-ordination by the NSSN. Most safety nets felt that they were operating on their own and whatever liaison or collaboration they had with other nets was a result of their own initiative. Some safety nets even felt that the NSSN was diverting from its mandate of serving as a co-ordinating body. They stated that instead, it seemed to be concentrating on carrying out some programme activities such as training, which should be undertaken by themselves.

Generally, the social safety nets seem to be operating more or less in isolation as there is no real liaison or networking between or among them. As such, the issue of duplication of activities is still very much there and there are no observable efforts being made at establishing complementarity between/among them. Representatives of the safety nets usually only meet at Board and sub committee meetings and in most cases these are more of roundtable discussions and paperwork without much follow-up action. These meetings have been the main fora for information exchange/dissemination, which meant that if there were no meetings, then there would be no flow of information. This was actually the case during a particular period when Board and sub committee meetings were few and far apart (See Table 8 for a survey of Board Meetings from March 1994 to August 1999). This resulted in information blackout and the safety nets did not know what was going on at the NSSN.



As well as the above, a number of safety nets also complained of lack of correspondence and liaison between themselves and the NSSN. At the time of the student's visits in August and September 1999, some of the safety nets indicated that the last correspondence they had had with the NSSN was in 1998. Some safety nets even wondered whether the NSSN was still in existence as they had not heard from the organisation for a very long time. The student, however, assured them that the organisation was still very much 'alive' and would be in contact with them.

As a corollary, the safety nets further complained about the lack of an effective networking system and indicated that despite having computers installed and connected to the main server at the NSSN, there were no networking activities. This, as mentioned earlier, was because of the problem of the burnt server which was never rectified. With improved networking, joint ventures could be organised and this could lessen or completely eliminate duplication of efforts. Another major complaint was with regards to meetings. It was felt that meetings were not enough and the few that took place were irregular. Some safety nets noted that there was a lapse in activities at the NSSN between 1997 and early 1999, especially during the absence of the current Programme Director.

**Table 8: Survey of Board Meetings - March 1994 to August 1999**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Meeting number</b>	<b>Members present</b>	<b>Members absent</b>
9th March 1994	7th	13	4
8th September 1994	9th	10	7
24th November 1994	10th	15	2
21st December 1994	11th	10	7
25th January 1995	12th	14	3
26th May 1995	1st Extra-ordinary meeting	(information not readily available)	-
13th July 1995	13th	12	5
15th August 1995	2nd Extra-ordinary meeting	(information not readily available)	-
17th October 1995	3rd Extra-ordinary meeting	“	“
23rd January 1996	14th	12	5
15th August 1997	16th	13	4
24th September 1998	17th	15	2
25th August 1999	18th	17	0

*Source: NSSN Board Meetings File*

A further complaint from the safety nets was that the NSSN lacked a comprehensive programme of action. In this regard, it was felt that the NSSN should work with the safety nets in developing a programme of action and that it should also be responsible for the mobilisation of material and financial resources necessary for the implementation of the programme of action. Apart from this, the NSSN would need to conduct evaluations after disbursement of such material and financial resources in order to assess how the resources have been utilised.

The safety nets also perceived the need for the NSSN to get as much information as possible on the various social safety nets, including their policy documents, which it could redistribute among them. This would help the safety nets to get to know each other better and understand each other's role and activities. With such information, the safety nets would be in a better position to identify areas where they could work with each other and provide complementarity. It was interesting to note that the social safety nets visited, showed willingness to work in co-operation with other nets and with the NSSN.

In reaction to the social safety nets' sentiments regarding lack of information exchange, the NSSN felt that they were doing their best in disseminating the available information through the Board and sub-committee meetings. They are of the view that the lack of information flow is the result of the failure by some Board members to communicate the necessary information to the safety nets which they represent. As far as the NSSN is concerned, it is the responsibility of the social safety net representatives who attend these meetings, to disseminate the relevant information to their safety nets. In order to mitigate this problem, it was felt by the safety nets themselves, that institutional Board representation should be limited to those individuals who run the safety nets. In other words, Board members should be drawn from the people on the ground — the safety nets themselves — and not from the higher levels of the ministries (See Table 9 for a list of the organisations/ministries on the Board, the designations of their representatives, and the safety nets they represent).

**Table 9: NSSN Board Membership**

<b>Ministry/Organisation/ Department</b>	<b>Designation of member</b>	<b>Safety net represented</b>
Human Resources Development Project, ZACCI	Project Co-ordinator	Chairman of the Board
Ministry of Labour and Social Security	Permanent Secretary	-
Future Search	Director	Future Search
National Institute of Public Administration	Principal	-
Planning Unit, Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training	Director	TEVETA
Resettlement Division	Director	Resettlement
Planning Unit, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services	Deputy Director	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
Department of Industries, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry	Director	Small and Micro Enterprises Promotion Unit
Zambia Privatisation Agency	Manager, Social Impact	-
Cabinet Office	Director of Separations, Public Service Reform Programme	-
Zambia Federation of Employers	Executive Director	-
Zambia Congress of Trade Unions	Secretary General	-

(Table 9 Contd).

Zambia Institute of Management	Director	-
Management Services Board	Director	-
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development	Budget Advisor	-
NSSN	Programme Director	NSSN

Information dissemination is clearly therefore, a major area of concern among the safety nets. As indicated, the general view is that the NSSN has not done enough in this area and thus needs to be strengthened. There has been no regular flow of information from the NSSN as a co-ordinating body to its affiliates — the safety nets. The NSSN is supposed to serve as a data bank which should be able to provide relevant information to the safety nets when it is required; such information as that relating to numbers of retrenched workers in a given period, unemployment statistics by industry and/or occupation, and skills needs of retrenchees. The NSSN would get the required statistics from the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and the ZPA. The organisation could also conduct needs analyses among would-be retrenchees. By doing this, it would be able to identify the areas of training required and would thus assist the safety nets involved in training to develop appropriate training programmes.

The student's visits to the safety nets and the in-depth interviews she had with representatives there, brought to light the major concerns of the safety nets regarding the NSSN's co-ordinating functions. Safety net representatives took this opportunity to freely express their honest opinions about the NSSN as a co-ordinating body. The NSSN also benefited in that it became more aware of what the safety nets really felt about it and it could thus organise its activities to correct some of the identified shortcomings.

### **6.3 Student's suggestions**

The student noted that the main concern of the safety nets was that of the lack of co-ordination. Most of the safety nets including the private ones indicated that they were willing to work closely with other nets as long as they could complement each other and work towards a common goal. In view of this, the student thought that it was important for the various safety nets to get to know each other's activities. This could, according to the student, be achieved through consultative meetings and also through a fact-sheet or newsletter. The student, therefore, suggested that the NSSN establish a newsletter which could carry articles on the activities of the various safety nets. She also suggested that the organisation conduct more consultative meetings in order to bring the safety nets together.

The suggestions made by the student were very welcome, but the organisation was at the time of the student's attachment, still faced with the problem of staffing. It was, however, hoped that when the staffing situation had improved, the student's suggestions would be adopted.

# Chapter 7

## Discussion of Findings

This chapter provides a discussion of the student's findings in the light of the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 3. In linking the findings to the conceptual framework, it will revisit Chapters 5 and 6 and thus will provide a synthesis of Chapters 3, 5, and 6 in a bid to provide solutions to the organisation's problems as identified in Chapters 5 and 6. It will also look at whether the objectives of the attachment have been achieved.

### **7.0 Objectives of the attachment**

The NSSN, being a co-ordinating body whose objective is to promote development through other safety nets, requires an effective communication network. The student, therefore, sought to establish the effectiveness of the organisation's communication methods by:

- i). Analysing the communication patterns in the organisation;
- ii). Establishing what type of communication networks and relationships exist between the organisation and its affiliates;
- iii). Analysing the organisation's communication patterns with funding agencies;
- iv). Examining the communication technology in use in the organisation and the capacity of the organisation to sustain this technology; and
- v). Analysing the effectiveness of communication within the organisation and with its affiliates.

The student met her outlined objectives and her findings, as detailed in Chapters 5 and 6, show that the NSSN has not yet established the kind of effective communication network that would enable it to fully achieve its objective of co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of National Social Safety Net programmes and thus enhance its efforts at contributing to sustainable development.

## 7.1 Organisational problems

At inception the NSSN did not have any policy to guide its operations. This lack of a clear and firm policy relating to its existence and functions resulted in the organisation operating on a more or less ad hoc basis. Consequently, its activities during the early years did not reflect its intended objectives and original terms of reference. This trend even spilled over into the present period because, as stated earlier, the organisation still has no clear cut policy guidelines. Jere, Chisupa and Chipimo (1994) indicated that:

Government does not have a national policy on how workers made redundant as a result of the structural adjustment programme are to be assisted so that they maintain a productive role in economic development. The lack of such a policy has meant that Government has been unable to assist workers made redundant effectively through co-ordinated programmes, which equip workers with the requisite skills and knowledge to sustain themselves in gainful employment (Jere, Chisupa & Chipimo, 1994:2).

The three authors recommended that there was urgent need for the NSSNCC to develop a national social safety net policy because most of the social safety net activities which were being undertaken by both governmental and non-governmental organisations were not being co-ordinated. “This was mainly due to the lack of a clear policy framework outlining priorities and the roles to be played by the major players” (Jere, Chisupa & Chipimo, 1994:8).

After analysing the results of the interviews with stakeholders it became clear that the problem of lack of policy caused a major setback in the organisation’s advancement towards its set goals. This lack of a clear cut policy also meant that there was inappropriate focus as to what the core business of the NSSN was. This lack of clear focus or understanding of the core business of the organisation contributed to the fact that there were no clear and cohesive plans made to tailor the organisation’s activities



to the core business. This linkage of policy, planning and core business is critical to the successful carriage of the operational objectives. In relation to this, Linden indicates that “Planning is concerned with the construction of methodologies and strategies to assist the rational implementation of policy” (Linden, 1999: 160). She further states that, “Planning objectives cannot be articulated with any precision unless overall goals and policies are clearly understood” (Linden, 1999: 160). This lack of focus is also indicative that the organisation’s mission was becoming redundant or forgotten by management. This probably accounts for the rather slow establishment of the organisation during its formative years. It was not therefore surprising that the stakeholders held varied views regarding the relevance of the organisation and whether or not it was achieving its objectives. The responses in this regard as earlier indicated reflect that while some felt that the organisation was achieving some of its objectives, others felt that it was not and yet others could not even comment. This scenario alludes to the fact that without clear operating policies you cannot have appropriate criteria for achieving the organisation’s objectives.

From the findings, it appears that the problem of lack of technically qualified and experienced staff also caused a major setback in the organisation’s advancement towards its goal. World-wide trends point to the need for specialisation in both the management and running of organisations as well as in the technical competence of operating staff. Writing on the value of technical competence to the successful carriage of the organisation’s programmes, Hasenfeld & English (1978), state that, “The technical-administrative skills of the executive are of key importance in creating the technical competence of the organisation” (Hasenfeld & English, 1978: 154). This view seems to be confirmed in the case of the NSSN in that reports indicate that during the early years of the NSSN’s existence, the management did not seem to have the required skills and hence the lack of impact in the organisation’s area of operation.

Inadequate funding to finance the operations of the NSSN has also been identified as a major weakness and threat. An indication of this is seen in the variance between authorised expenditure (which reflects the actual needs), and the allocated resources

as shown in Chapter 5. This problem has inhibited the capacity of the NSSN to achieve its mission and objectives. The organisation therefore, has to endeavour to reduce this impediment if it is to reduce its effect on the operations of the institution. One way is for the NSSN to enhance its ability to generate some income through project management and other initiatives. The opportunities are there particularly that the internally oriented problem of management capacity and administration are being addressed. The development of project proposals for capacity building for employment creation are a step in the right direction. The dependence of the NSSN on government funding also means that their autonomy is in jeopardy. As the saying goes, 'In need, freedom is latent'. The question of financing the NSSN as a co-ordinating social service organisation is vexing and this is not unusual as its immediate benefits are incomprehensible to many. As Eyden argues,

the pattern of financing the social services and other aspects of social policy is a complex one giving rise to many problems concerned with decisions about priorities, the distribution of national income between the public and private sector and the best methods of raising money to finance the former (Eyden, 1969: 109).

One other problem that featured during the interviews was that during the first two years management lacked the administrative will to carry out certain administrative activities. This predicament was clearly a result of having staff seconded from government service without any significant incentives. This problem also clearly contributed to the uncertainty of the organisation's functions during its early years of existence. Lack of an executive leadership as was the case with the NSSN in its formative years, created another serious problem in its operations. Hasenfeld & English state that, "Executive leadership is expressed in the formulation of policy decisions that commit the organisation as a whole to the particular domain, mandate, and mode of operation" (Hasenfeld & English, 1978: 153). The NSSN management was not granted executive powers and so could not develop its own policies.

Therefore, nothing much happened in terms of policy development and so the organisation had no proper direction. The two authors further state that:

The ability of the executive to direct or redirect the organisation as a whole (...) is determined not only by his personal skills but also by the degree of autonomy he has to make major policy decisions (Hasenfeld & English, 1978: 153-154).

The NSSN did not have the kind of autonomy that could enable the early leadership to make their own decisions because the organisation was placed under the jurisdiction of a ministry — Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry initially, and later Ministry of Labour and Social Security — and thus had to report to the Permanent Secretary of that ministry. Such a situation required a very strong-willed leadership who could stand their ground in the face of dictation, resistance or opposition from the ministerial quarters. This kind of leadership was lacking since the organisation did not have the right calibre of personnel at the time. This created a poor foundation which could have contributed to some of the present problems that the organisation is facing. Hasenfeld & English state that, “At no time in the life of an organisation is the role of an executive more critical than in the founding stage” (Hasenfeld & English, 1978:154). This is because:

The executive at this stage, shapes the character of the organisation by defining its mission (Selznick, 1959) and by selecting its social base. This process involves the formation of relations and power centres in the community, development of administrative ideologies, and the recruitment of personnel committed to these ideologies. The charisma of the executive at this stage of organisational development will be a major factor in determining the extent of institutionalisation of the organisation (Hasenfeld & English, 1978: 154).

Lack of administrative will as earlier mentioned, could be attributed to the fact that the early management was seconded from the ministry and no proper recruitment procedure was followed to facilitate recruitment of appropriate people. Later in March 1994, however, a technical team was commissioned to undertake a study in order to address the early management and operational problems that the organisation was experiencing. This study, undertaken by Jere, Chisupa and Chipimo revealed that capacity constraints and the initial delay in securing funding for the NSSNCC had a negative impact on the amount of work done by the organisation in the early years. In reference to the period between May 1993 when the NSSN secretariat was established and March 1994 when the study was undertaken, Jere, Chisupa and Chipimo (1994) state that:

The secretariat has since its establishment not been able to secure full-time staff but instead been managed by an Acting Director seconded from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and supported by one or two members of staff from the same ministry. This is the main reason why the secretariat has been unable to develop workable programmes of action for the National Social Safety Net activities (Jere, Chisupa & Chipimo, 1994: 18).

The three authors seem to imply that administrative will was lacking in the early management. This could be attributed to the fact that these people were operating in an acting capacity and therefore were not sure of their status in the organisation. This could have led to lack of commitment to the NSSN's programmes. In addition, the technical team noted that secondment of staff was not a very good option because,

...firstly, most institutions are not likely to second their best staff; and secondly, such officers are likely to lack the required motivation if they maintain their civil service conditions. this (sic) will lead to low output (Jere, Chisupa & Chipimo, 1994: 25).

This is probably what happened during the first two years of the organisation's existence. There was, therefore, need for the organisation to consider recruiting its own full-time staff who would be fully committed to its objectives. The technical team also noted that there was an immediate need for the NSSNCC to have a functional secretariat in operation. This was in order to facilitate implementation of activities which required to be carried out between then (May 1994) and the end of that year. Taking into consideration the capacity constraints at the secretariat, the team proposed certain recruitment options and made recommendations as shown in Table 10.

**Table 10: Analysis of Recruitment Options**

Option 1 — Engagement of full-time staff

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
1. Qualified persons will be recruited.	1. NSSNCC not yet legal entity
2. Speedy implementation of work programme.	

Option 2 — Secondment

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
1. At least work programme will commence.	1. Most institutions are not likely to second their best staff.
	2. Low output due to lack of motivation.

### Option 3 — Contracting out (Local Consultants)

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
1. Qualified persons will undertake policy and programme development.	1. This option is likely to be resisted by those who will feel left out.
2. Funds are available for contracting out.	
3. This option will motivate the contracted staff.	

*Source: A Study on the Programme of Action of the NSSN Secretariat, 1994*

The NSSN acted on some of the recommendations of the study report, one of which was the recruitment of a Director, following conventional recruitment procedures. The position was, therefore, advertised and after interviews held on a competitive basis, the current Programme Director was offered the job in 1994. This was, however, not a solution to the many problems as the Director still required qualified support staff to help him in institutionalising the organisation. According to Hasenfeld (1978), institutionalisation is,

The process of translating an organisational mission into an operative client-servicing system ( and it) involves a series of critical decisions about the nature of the clientele, the mobilisation and allocation of resources, development of ties with other organisations in the community, establishment of a service technology, and the recruitment and training of personnel (Hasenfeld, 1978: 686).

Hasenfeld further quotes Clarke (1956) and Vinter (1967) as saying that the degree of institutionalisation of an organisation is a major factor in determining its effectiveness. It, therefore, follows that an organisation which has fully operationalised its mission, successfully mobilised and adequately allocated

resources, developed congenial ties with other organisations in the community, established a service technology, and recruited and trained personnel, has reached a high degree of institutionalisation and can, therefore, be said to be extremely effective. In the student's opinion, the degree of institutionalisation of the NSSN is quite low and this is as a result of a number of technical and administrative problems.

Hasenfeld (1978) identifies some basic organisational problems that contribute to the precariousness of a human service organisation. These are:

- i). the inability to develop stable bases of support in the community;
- ii). failure to establish crucial and systematic linkages with other social service agencies;
- iii). lack of an information system to guide their service functions;  
and,
- iv). difficulties in developing effective staff - client relations.

(Hasenfeld, 1978: 686).

Of the outlined problems, the student noted the failure to establish crucial and systematic service linkages with other social service agencies, and lack of an information system to service functions are the main problems of the NSSN. The organisation has, since inception, been facing a number of operational and organisational problems which to date it is still trying to resolve. Because of this, the quality of its co-ordinating function is said to be poor. Hasenfeld (1978), points out that the nature and quality of an organisation's service will depend on its ability to successfully resolve the organisational problems it faces.

#### 7.1.1 Lack of service linkages with other social safety nets

In order to consolidate its co-ordinating function, the NSSN needs to establish an effective network of exchange relations with the other safety nets. The NSSN's role would be to identify the needs and problems of the clients — the retrenched and the unemployed — and identify the safety nets that would cater for those needs or solve

those problems. The organisation would then be able to direct clients to the appropriate safety nets. Information on the various safety nets could be disseminated to clients through interpersonal and or mass media channels. In addition, the organisation could identify emergence of new problems among the clientele and in turn inform the respective safety nets so that they could develop new programmes or strategies to deal with these. The NSSN should thus serve as a data bank which should be able to provide relevant information to the safety nets and clients when it is required. Such activities require the establishment of viable interorganisational exchange relations. These exchange relations require effective communication linkages and this is what is lacking at the NSSN.

The absence of communication linkages could partly be attributed to the lack of an adequate information system to routinely collect and disseminate information, and partly to the absence of an established organisation structure. It has been stated earlier in this report that, the shape of the overall structure of the firm determines the shape and nature of the communication networks that the firm sets up. The structure of the NSSN has not yet been fully established as a number of key positions have not yet been filled. Therefore one could say that the structure has not yet taken shape and consequently the expected communication networks are not there.

The development of viable interorganisational exchange relations requires that the NSSN obtains information and successfully monitors its environment in order for it to know what is going on and thus be able to effectively provide the information needed by the safety nets. Hasenfeld & English talk of focal organisations. They say that a focal organisation is usually in an environment of input and output organisations with which it has interactions. Input organisations provide various types of resources for the focal organisation while output organisations receive a product, new knowledge, a service or a client system from the focal organisation. The NSSN could be identified as a focal organisation which gets inputs in form of capital and equipment from the government and donor agencies, and also information from the social safety nets. It is expected to provide outputs in form of information, financial support and a client system to the various safety nets.



Since the effectiveness of a focal organisation will partially be determined by the type of exchanges it establishes with organisations providing complementary services, there is need for the focal organisation to establish effective service linkages with those complementary organisations. In the case of the NSSN, not only does it need to establish linkages with other safety nets, but it also needs to facilitate the establishment of linkages among the safety nets themselves. The safety nets need these linkages because although they may not realise it, the success of their interventions or the measurement of success of their interventions does to a certain extent depend on the contributions of the other safety nets. An example can be given of Future Search or TEVETA which provide among other programmes, entrepreneurship training. The effectiveness of these training programmes can best be seen when trained individuals successfully set up their own businesses. This may in most cases need the intervention of other safety nets such as the Small and Micro Enterprises Promotion Unit for provision of starting capital and/or Resettlement Division for provision of land.

This brings in the concept of interdependence which Litwak and Hylton, cited in Hasenfeld & English (1978), discuss when they present their theory of interorganisational relations. The two argue that low interdependence leads to no co-ordination between organisations and they are of the view that co-ordination occurs only where there is some level of interdependence. According to Hasenfeld & English (1978), "The measure and degree of interorganisational interdependence is defined as the number of joint programmes that an organisation has with other organisations" (Hasenfeld & English, 1978: 544). The NSSN is supposed to be highly interdependent on the other safety nets but because of no properly organised joint ventures, this is not the case. In the case of the social safety nets, there have not been many joint programmes despite the fact that these organisations are meant to be complementary in nature. According to the safety nets, the NSSN itself does not have much in terms of exchanges with other nets. As a result, the effectiveness of its co-ordination is almost nil.

As mentioned in Chapter 6, the student was informed that the safety nets were operating more or less in isolation as there was no real liaison or networking between or among them. Although the representatives of the safety nets meet at NSSN Board and sub-committee meetings, they do not seem to make much effort to liaise or network with each other outside these meetings; this is what the NSSN should encourage. Apart from this, it is evident that organisations which exist mainly to serve society, require quality communication in order to get information about the society's needs and wants. Such information will facilitate the development and provision of efficient service. The NSSN which exists to serve the safety nets therefore requires knowledge of the safety nets, and also needs to disseminate information among the safety nets in order to achieve effective co-ordination and achieve complementarity.

Shown in Fig. 3 are possible network patterns which the NSSN could establish with the safety nets. Such patterns will facilitate exchange of information through the NSSN as well as among the safety nets on their own. This can only be facilitated if the safety nets have adequate information about one another's plans and activities. This kind of information may not be adequately conveyed in fora such as Board and sub-committee meetings as it is quite extensive and may not be of interest to everyone at that particular time. The best medium for conveying such information is a computerised information system. Such a system is currently not in existence at the NSSN.

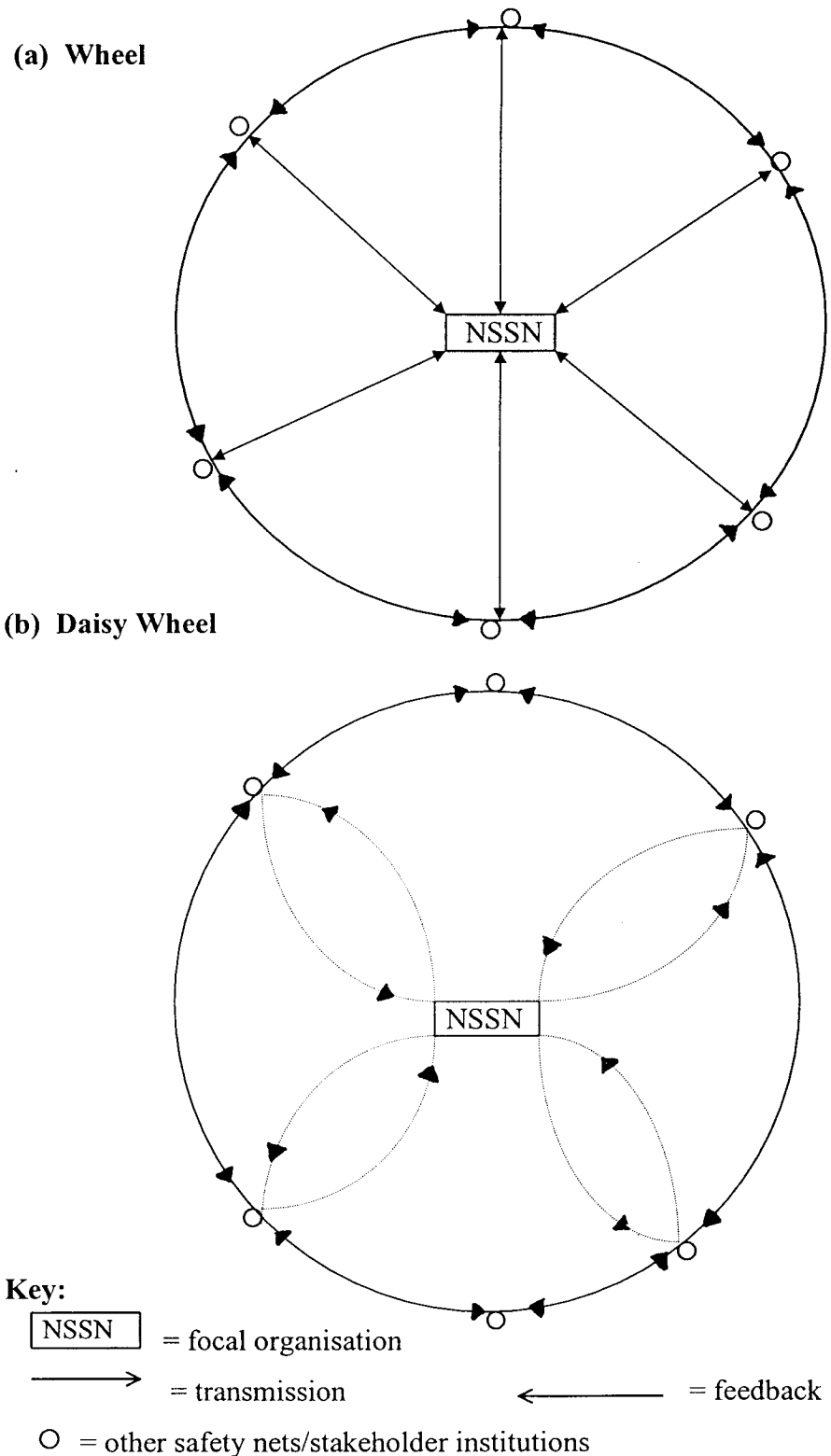
#### 7.1.2 Lack of an information system

The technical team of Jere, Chisupa and Chipimo noted that there was a lack of data on the profiles of those being made redundant in terms of education, skills, age, and work experience etc.. They stated that, "the development of a comprehensive data base is a (sic) important priority of the NSSNCC" (Jere, Chisupa & Chipimo, 1994: 7). As indicated in Chapter 5, computers, printers, modems and faxes were purchased and it was the NSSN's intention to establish a National Social Safety Net Information System comprising 7 institutions (including the NSSN) as shown in Table 2. In addition to the purchase and installation of the necessary equipment, the staff of the

concerned safety nets underwent training on how to manage the NSSN information system.

Unfortunately, the system was never used for its intended purpose because soon after installation, the main server got burnt and was never replaced. From what the student found out, this was not because of a lack of funds, but there seemed to be a lack of commitment by the management to identifying priorities. The management should have realised that other than meetings, which are scheduled, the computer system was a very effective means of networking. Computer based information can be accessed at one's own time and over a period convenient to the user.

Fig. 3: Possible network patterns for the NSSN and other nets



Source: Adapted from Burton, S. H., 1980: 19

Although the NSSN recruited a consultant specialised in the field of information systems, the organisation does not appear to have adequately planned for the effective use, maintenance and sustenance of this system. The NSSN position paper (1999) indicates that despite the significant level of investment provided in the form of capacity building, equipment etc., the system is not yet operational. This delay has been attributed to the damage that occurred on the main server for the system. The paper states that, “This damage was caused during routine maintenance. Replacement of this system will require a total expenditure of US \$5,770 or K13.4 million at the prevailing Kwacha/Dollar rate” (NSSN Position Paper, 1999: 28). One wonders in the first place how the server would be damaged during maintenance work which was supposedly done by technically qualified personnel — this sends wrong signals about the process of offering contracts and the technical ability of the people who were contracted to carry out these maintenance works. According to Kasoma, “Successful technology transfer cannot occur at all unless a certain level of capability is built up in the recipient” (Kasoma, 1999: class notes). He also points out that when planning for new technology, we need to consider among other things, the following questions:

- ‘For how long will you be able to use the technology before it becomes obsolete?’
- ‘Is the technology serving its purpose?’
- ‘Is it compatible with the times?’ etc.

Kasoma further emphasises that there is need to identify the inputs that would be required to assemble the technology and also identify the experts who are going to assemble the parts that would constitute the technology. All this is part of the planning process. The identification of experts is a rather tricky process as in the majority of cases, people pretend to know and understand the functioning of a particular piece of equipment when they do not. This causes serious problems during installation as it may turn out to be a matter of trial and error — and sometimes, as in the case of the NSSN, the error can be quite costly.

The UNDP, which funded the installation of the NSSN information system, worked out an activity schedule in its project document ZAM/96/002/A/01/99 — Reform of Social Security Systems as shown in Fig.4. It was up to the NSSN to adequately plan on how it was going to implement the activities outlined in the Project Document. Of particular importance were activities 6.1.1 and 6.1.2. There was need to identify appropriate technology which would satisfy the needs of the organisation and there was also need to identify genuinely competent personnel in the information system arena, to provide the technical expertise during installation of the network. The short lifespan of the system that was set up indicates that something was wrong with the planning especially with regards to the equipment.

The NSSN, being the apex organisation which is supposed to co-ordinate social safety net programmes in the country, requires information in order to efficiently and effectively carry out its co-ordinating function. The social safety nets, being institutions which have been established to contribute to the well-being of the unemployed in the country, also, as already stated, require information in order for them to function effectively. These organisations contribute to human development and, as has already been stated, any development process requires unrestricted flows of information if it is to succeed.

*Fig.4: Planning for the establishment of the NSSN information system*

**Objective 6:** Establishment of a comprehensive computer information system.

**Specific Output:**

6.1. Computerised information network system connecting the various social safety nets and trained staff in computer information systems and data management.

**Activities:**

6.1.1. Identify and procure hard/software requirements for the computerised information system.

6.1.2. Recruitment of Consultant to assist in setting up the network.

6.1.3. Undertake pilot installation of information system for centralised social safety nets.

6.1.4. Undertake training of staff in computer information systems and data management and analytical techniques.

6.1.5. Develop pilot installation of network of information system.

6.1.6. Develop operative mechanisms that will facilitate smooth exchange of information between the various safety nets.

*Source: Status Report on the implementation of the activities relating to the establishment of a National Social Safety Net Co-ordination System (July - September 1996)*

Mercado's (1992) definition of development as cited in Ngugi (1996), implies that development is a type of social change intended to bring about social, material and psychological advancement. In order to achieve this advancement, information and, therefore, communication is required. This is confirmed by Okigbo (1985) when he says that, "Communication is an indispensable ingredient in any meaningful development package..." (Okigbo, 1985 cited in Okigbo, 1996: 340). It, therefore, follows that development goes hand in hand with communication as people cannot speak about development and leave out communication. Knowledge is necessary for people to realise that they are improving and that realisation needs communication whether interpersonal or with other people. This brings us to the concept of 'development communication'.

According to Ngugi (1995), development communication, as was used by its founders, Lerner, Pye and Schramm, "referred to technology-based communication networks which, regardless of message and content, tended to create a suitable climate for development. It was supposed to 'generate the psychic ambience within which economic and productive activity occurred' (Jayaweera and Amunugama, 1987: xix)" (Ngugi, 1995, cited in Okigbo, 1996: 279). In a similar vein, the NSSN as a focal organisation, requires a technology-based communication network — the computer-based information system. Through such a network, the NSSN can create a situation where the safety nets are able to easily access necessary information as it will be at their 'fingertips'. With the necessary information being readily available, the safety nets are likely to be able to plan more joint ventures as they will have a basis for establishing the much needed systematic service linkages with each other. This will reduce duplication of efforts and contribute towards enhancing complementarity. In addition, there is more likelihood of sustainability of the safety net programmes because of commitment to the joint programmes and thus concerted efforts towards the same goal(s).



# Chapter 8

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### 8.0 Conclusions

This chapter gives conclusions on the activities of the NSSN and also provides recommendations which may help resolve the organisation's problems, especially those relating to communication and information dissemination.

The student's findings as detailed in Chapters 5 and 6, indicate that the NSSN has not yet established the kind of effective communication network that will enable it to fully achieve its objectives of:

- i). co-ordinating and monitoring to ensure effective implementation of National Social Safety Net programmes; and,
- ii). providing adequate social and economic protection to displaced, retrenched and retired workers.

It is evident that there has been no real co-ordination among the safety nets as they are generally operating on their own and are independent of each other. The element of interdependence which would bring about the aspect of co-ordination has not been emphasised. The NSSN has been more preoccupied with solving its own internal problems of structure and policy and has not had the time to plan an adequate strategy for its co-ordinating activities. The safety nets thus, rarely co-ordinate their activities, making it difficult for the beneficiaries to benefit from the services of complementary safety nets.

During her attachment, the student also noted that there was lack of a well-formulated policy framework and objectives for the organisation which are necessary for it to achieve its mission in total.

#### 8.0.1. Comprehensive policy framework

The NSSN has had no clear and firm policy to guide its operations and as such, the organisation has faced numerous uncertainties regarding its existence and the extent of its co-ordinating functions. This problem has to a large extent also affected its relations with the other safety nets which it is supposed to co-ordinate. In addition, there has been no legal framework which binds them to the NSSN. As such, the safety nets are under no firm obligation towards the NSSN and vice versa.

Apparently although a National Policy on Retrenchment was completed in 1995 and provided some guidance on the NSSN's activities, this has not been adequate as it is too general — covering all aspects of retrenchment. What the organisation requires is a policy specifically meant for National Social Safety Net activities. The NSSN management and Board have themselves acknowledged that the absence of a guiding policy framework to specifically govern the formulation of programmes is a major factor hindering the effective management and delivery of programmes (NSSN Position Paper, 1999). Such a national policy to deal with capacity building for employment creation requires the development of a framework which would harmonise the various activities dealing with issues of unemployment and poverty alleviation.

The lack of an articulated policy, coupled with inadequate legitimacy (no legal framework) or non-binding nature of the NSSN Board's policy decisions is, therefore, a major constraint in the organisation's activities. It has even led to other related problems such as, lack of adequate funds, inadequate staffing, and lack of a comprehensive co-ordination mechanism as detailed below.

#### 8.0.2. Inadequate funding

The NSSN has never really been allocated the full amount of funds that it requires to carry out its programmes and meet its other expenses. As shown in Table 4, the actual releases to the organisation have always been below the authorised expenditure.

This problem of insufficient funding is possibly compounded by the fact that the NSSN gets its funding through the Ministry of jurisdiction — Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Dependence on the ministry for release of funds jeopardises the organisation's independence to do what they want, when they want. Despite the fact that it is an autonomous body, the NSSN is being treated like a government department under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and thus, the ministry decides how much the organisation will get from the ministerial receipts.

Although the budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance may indicate how much of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's allocation is meant for the NSSN, the Ministry of Labour seems to have the final say on how much is actually released to the NSSN at any particular time. The priority lists that the organisation submits monthly to the Ministry of Labour, are not always fulfilled as the ministry has other departments which it feels also require a fair share of the ministerial receipts. This means that the organisation cannot project how much it will get during any particular month. This has affected its planning and has resulted in a backlog of activities. That is why the organisation is still grappling with issues (such as staffing and co-ordination mechanism) which should have been resolved a long time ago. The lack of commitment to providing adequate funding to the NSSN could to a certain extent be due to the absence of a clear National Social Safety Net policy and the lack of a legal statute establishing NSSN.

### 8.0.3. Inadequate staffing

The NSSN was set up as an autonomous body but it was not given the authority to recruit its own staff. Recruitment (especially of full-time staff) had to be done with authorisation from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and this also heavily depended on availability of funds to pay the required salaries and wages. During the early years of its existence, the organisation needed whatever funds it was allocated to develop and implement programmes and to help build the institutional capacity of the various safety nets. Therefore, for the most part of its early years, the organisation in order to save on staff costs was deliberately staffed by personnel seconded from government ministries — Labour and Social Security in particular.

Dependence on personnel seconded from elsewhere, as shown earlier in the report, caused problems for the organisation as there was no real commitment and propensity to work productively from the seconded staff. In addition, there was a high turnover of staff since in a number of instances, the ministries would require the services of their seconded staff or they would not second their best staff. In cases where the organisation recruited its own staff, it would be only for short periods of about three months duration. This was not very conducive for programme development and implementation because by the time a new officer was settling down, his/her term of office would be over. This kind of arrangement, coupled with comparatively poor salaries, did little to motivate the contracted staff to re-apply for re-engagement. As a result, there has been an element of lack of continuity in the organisation's activities. Apart from this, the salaries offered by the organisation to its own staff have not been competitive enough to attract maintain and retain well-qualified and experienced personnel. This has been a major impediment in the NSSN's recruitment drive.

In the final analysis, the lack of adequate staff has not only hindered programme development and implementation, but has also contributed to the weaknesses in the organisation's co-ordinating mechanism.

#### 8.0.4. Lack of a comprehensive co-ordination mechanism

The NSSN has never really established an effective and comprehensive co-ordination mechanism because it lacks an adequate information system to routinely collect and disseminate information. This has been basically because of lack of staff to conduct routine visits to the other social safety nets and also because of lack of an effective network of exchange relations with other safety nets.

In addition, despite its attempts at setting up an NSSN Information System, which would go a long way in facilitating co-ordination, the organisation has not achieved the kind of network (LAN & WAN) it had set out to achieve. This is because the server which was burnt during maintenance works has never been replaced. Given its noble task of co-ordinating the various safety net programmes, the NSSN needs to be adequately informed about the activities of these safety nets and in turn to disseminate

this information to the various safety nets. This will help it in establishing the much needed service linkages with and among the safety nets and will also promote complementarity.

#### 8.0.5 Lack of communication and information flow

The organisation lacks adequate computerisation to enable client individuals to obtain information which would help them in their business and entrepreneurial activities after retrenchment or retirement. Such information would be easily accessible through the computer system if it was operational. The NSSN, therefore, needs to reactivate its information mechanism which would enable these individuals to easily access the information they need.

In the final analysis, the field attachment has led to the main conclusion that every organisation needs a mission and a clear set of objectives and strategies as well as operating policies and programmes to survive and be appreciated. The objectives and the resultant strategies require to be evaluated from time to time in order to ensure that the organisation remains relevant and grows. Without these, the organisation will eventually be moribund.

### **8.1. Recommendations**

In order for the NSSN to effectively take root and win the appreciation of stakeholders and clients, it is recommended that it does the following:

- i). Review constantly, its mission, objectives, strategies and operating policies and programmes taking into account the rapid changes in commerce and industry as well as employment patterns, liquidations and redundancies. In this respect the organisation should employ techniques that will ensure full and effective participation from stakeholders/client organisations. This will resolve the identified problem of lack of a well-formulated and articulated policy and will also help re-engineer the policy towards the preferred mission, objectives, and strategies. In addition participation will also help win the support and co-operation for its operational activities.

- ii). Undertake an aggressive fund-raising campaign by developing more project proposals to be 'sold' to donors and also undertake public affairs and marketing campaigns to make itself known. This will help supplement any funding from government and therefore strengthen its financial base.
- iii). Endeavour to sustain and retain existing staff, recruit more staff at optimum levels and work out a staff development programme. The staff development programme will ensure acquisition of necessary and sufficient skills essential to the realisation of the mission, objectives, strategies and operating policies of the organisation while optimum staff levels will guarantee fulfillment of the organisation's operational activities.
- iv). Institute a safety net exchange investigation in order to establish the nature of existing relationships and establish ways of harmonising services provided by each other. This will ensure commonness of purpose despite the different roles in the provision of safety net services.
- v). Replace the burnt server and reactivate the NSSN Information system by acquiring the necessary equipment which is compliant. The established network should incorporate the main safety nets. This will improve the co-ordination mechanism and also provide a vehicle for information acquisition and dissemination.
- vi). Introduce a newsletter or brochure which will publish on a regular basis, news on the organisation's core business as well as the activities of the other safety nets. This is to be distributed to stakeholders/client organisations and will provide information on the various safety nets and attract clients to use them.
- vii). Conduct and facilitate more regular briefing sessions and consultative meetings with the various safety nets. This will promote information exchange and strengthen service linkages among the safety nets. It will

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## Appendix I: Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment, 1975 - 1996

(Some selected years)

<b>Selected Indicators</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>
Labour Force (000)	2,718	3,215	3,25	3,503	3,672	3,839	3,993	4,197
Total Employed Labour Force (000)	2,364	2,519	-	2,812	-	-	3,377	-
Formal Employment Total (000)	526.5	544.2	546	526	496	485	479	472
Agriculture (%)	14.7	14.3	15	15.9	15.8	14.2	14.2	14.1
Mining and Quarrying (%)	12.3	11.9	11.4	11.2	10.3	10.8	9.9	9.1
Manufacturing (%)	14.4	13.9	13.5	13.0	11.5	11.5	9.9	9.4
Services (%)	28.3	29.8	31.3	32.4	35.1	35.6	36.7	36.4
Others (%)	30.3	30.1	28.9	27.5	27.3	27.9	29.3	31.0
Formal Employment as % Labour Force	19	17	17	16	15	12	12	11
% Female of Total Formal Sector Employment	-	-	20	15	13	12	21	-
Unemployed Labour Force Total (000)	354	696	-	690	-	-	615	-
Male	124	328	-	349	-	-	307	-
Female	230	368	-	341	-	-	308	-
Overall Unemployment Rate (%)	30	21.6	-	*18	-	-	15.4	-

*Source: Central Statistical Office*

1. *Selected Socioeconomic Indicators 1996, March 1997*
2. *Selected Socioeconomic Indicators 1997, 1998*
3. *Employment Trends 1985 - 1993, September 1994*

Our calculation adjusting for secondary employment gives an estimate of 20%

**NATIONAL SOCIAL SAFETY NET**

Orientation Manual

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May 1999

## **1. Office Hours:**

08:00 - 13:00

13:00 - 14:00 - Lunch Break

14:00 - 17:00

However in urgent cases, officers may be requested to work beyond these times in order to meet specific deadlines. Officers are free to come on weekends and holidays to complete any pending assignment.

## **2. Assignments and Supervision**

Each officer shall be assigned work as follows:

- (a) in accordance with his/her job description
- (b) ability of officer to perform the task at hand
- (c) availability of officer

A supervising officer shall be designated for officer. This shall be specified in each officer's job description.

## **3. Computer Facilities**

Each office is equipped with a personal computer for use by the officers. Officers may submit assignments to other officers either by taking their hand written work to the Secretary in the Programme Director's office for typing or by taking a disk for printing to the Secretary. The latter arrangement shall continue until printers are sourced for all the offices.

#### **4. Telephone and Fax Facilities**

- All staff are urged to be courteous when communicating on the phone
- In cases where an officer is not conversant with the issue raised, it would be advisable to refer the call to another officer or to call back after making relevant consultations
- All official calls shall be cleared through respective supervising officers
- All non official but essential calls shall be cleared with the Programme Director's office
- All official international calls shall be recorded in the telephone book
- The above criteria shall apply to the non NSSN staff, except for Heads of Departments in the Ministry or their immediate deputies\* .

#### **5. Photocopier**

The photocopier is located in the office of the Senior Programme Officer. It shall be available for official copying of documents. In the event of outsiders (officers from other departments) wishing to utilize the photocopier, they should be requested to bring their own paper.

#### **6. Transport**

The NSSN shall when possible transport staff on permanent conditions or on contracts exceeding 6 months to and from work.

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\*There is need for officers to familiarize themselves with the list of HODs and their deputies in the ministry.

Officers wishing to utilize the NSSN transport on official assignments should liaise with the supervisor of the transport section for the necessary arrangements.

## **7. Submission of Assignments**

All internal communication shall be submitted on respective files with a blind copy for the third copy file. All external communication shall be in the name of the Programme Director (unless otherwise) and shall be on headed paper with two extra copies, i.e. a copy for the file and third copy.

Officers are advised to familiarize themselves with the existing format and style of NSSN internal memos and external letters on the third copy file, which is accessible from the office of the Programme Director's Secretary.

## **8. NSSN Files**

All NSSN files are kept in the office of the Programme Director's Secretary. Officers are advised to utilize relevant subject files when collecting background information on their assignments. All files collected from the file cabinets shall be recorded in the "File Movement Ledger".

## **9. Programme Meetings**

Programme meetings shall be held **every Friday**. The objectives of these meetings shall be to conduct a regular review of NSSN activities,

## Schedule of Activities: July 1999

<b>ATTACHMENT OF MRS. MWAPE CHAMBESHI MWIYA - JULY 1999</b>				
<b>TIMETABLE</b>				
<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>MAIN FEATURES</b>	<b>SUPERVISING OFFICER</b>	<b>EXPECTED OUTPUT</b>
<b>JULY 1 - 9</b>	Orientation	General introduction to NSSN "modus Operandi" and operational manual	Senior Programme Officer	In-sight knowledge
<b>JULY 12 - 16</b>	Preparation of Consultative meetings	Preparation of logistics and draft papers for the meetings with NSSN staff	Programme Director	Effectiveness of communication linkages of social safety nets and other MLSS departments
<b>JULY 19 - 23</b>  <b>AND</b>  <b>JULY 26 - 30</b>	Review of NSSNCC Board and Sub-committee meetings	Study and analysis of Sub-committee meetings from 1993 to 1998	Programme Director	Assessment of policy effectiveness of NSSN policies and programmes




Ms Mwape Mwiya

**Re: Designation at the National Social Safety Net - July - Oct 1999**

Following the commencement of your attachment on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1999, a tentative schedule of activities was prepared for your attachment for the month of July. It is hoped that the subsequent monthly schedules will be pursued in accordance with your attachment proposal.

I am also pleased to inform you that during attachment at the National Social Safety Net (NSSN), you will be designated as a Senior Programme Officer (Programmes). This title is meant to operationalise your status during the attachment phase. The terms and conditions of this designation shall remain as originally agreed upon between UNZA and NSSN.

We hope this designation will assist you in integrating and understanding the modus operandi of the NSSN.

  
N Chisupa

**Programme Officer.**

NSSN/101/1/9

8<sup>th</sup> July 1999

### Appendix V: Composition of NSSN Sub Committee

Ministry /Institution	Policy Sub Committee	Staffing Sub Committee	Projects/Media Sub Committee	Technical Sub Committee	Budget and Finance Sub Committee
The Chairman	*****				
Ministry Labour and Social Security	*****				*****
Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry			*****		*****
Ministry of Community Development and Social Services	*****			*****	
Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training		*****	*****		
Resettlement Division Office of the Vice President			*****	*****	
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development		*****			*****
Cabinet Office - Public Service Reform Programme		*****		*****	
National Institute for Public Administration		*****	*****		

Ministry/Institution	Policy Sub Committee	Staffing Sub Committee	Projects/Media Sub Committee	Technical Sub Committee	Budget and Finance Sub Committee
Zambia Privatisation Agency		*****		*****	
Zambia Federation of Employers			*****		*****
Zambia Institute of Management			*****		*****
Zambia Congress of Trade Unions	*****				*****
Future Search			*****		*****
Management Services Board			*****		*****

## Appendix VI: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

1. Mr. Mulaga — Director, Planning Unit, Ministry of Science  
Technology and Vocational Training
2. Mr. S.A. Mupanga — Director, Department of Technical Education and  
Vocational Training
3. Mr S. Govil — Deputy Director, Department of Technical Education  
and Vocational Training
4. Mr. J.P. Njeleka — Training Co-ordinator, Pulse Project, Care Zambia
5. Mrs. E. Jere — Manager, Social Impact, Zambia Privatisation  
Agency
6. Ms. D. Mutunwa — Deputy Director, Planning Unit, Ministry of  
Community Development and Social Services
7. Mr. M.C. Mulongo — Acting Director, Resettlement Division
8. Mrs. A. Mutambo — Director of Industries, Ministry of Commerce, Trade  
and Industry
9. Mr. J. Chilaisha — Training Manager, Future Search
10. Mr. F. Simposya — Executive Assistant/Communication Manager,  
World Vision Zambia
11. Mr. A. Lungu — Senior Economist, Industrial Development  
Programmes, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and  
Industry
12. Ms. C. Musonda — Ministry of Labour and Social Security
13. Mr. B. Nkole — Senior Social Welfare Officer, Ministry of  
Community Development and Social Services
14. Mr. L. Mulenga — Social Welfare Officer, Ministry of Community  
Development and Social Services
15. Mr. M. Sichula — Chairman, NSSN Board
16. Mr. N. Chisupa — Programme Director, NSSN
17. Mr. D. Simukonda — Senior Programme Officer, NSSN