

# SWAps and Civil Society

The Role of Civil Society Organisations  
in Zambia's Basic Education Sub-Sector  
Investment Programme (BESSIP)

Zambia

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discussion



**NORAD**  
DIREKTORATET FOR  
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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The role of civil society organizations in  
Zambia's Basic Education Sub-Sector  
Investment Programme (BESSIP)

Final Report

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## Acronyms

BESSIP	Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CIS	Chief Inspector of School
CS	Community Schools
CSM	Community Schools Movement
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSPR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction
DEO	District Education Officer
DSO	District Standards Officer
EFA	Education for All
ESIP	Education Sector Investment Programme
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalists Zambia
GRZ	Government Republic of Zambia
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HQ	Headquarters
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JTRC	Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
MIT	Management Implementation Team
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NGOCC	The Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Committee
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for development co-operation
OVC	Orphans Vulnerable children
PAF	People's Action Forum
PAGE	Programme for the Advancement of Girls' Education
PCC	Programme Coordinating Committee
PCSC	Parents Community Schools Committee
PEO	Provincial Education Office
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parents' Teachers' Association
SCN	Save the Children Norway
SNE	Special Needs Education
SPARK	Skills, Participation, Access and Relevant Knowledge
SWAp	Sector –Wide Approach Programme
TTC	Teacher Training College
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Funds
UPE	Universal Primary Education
ZANEC	Zambia National Education Coalition
ZATEC	Zambia Teacher Education Course
ZCEA	Zambia Civic Education Association
ZCSS	Zambia Community Schools Secretariat
ZECAB	Zambia Education Capacity Building
ZNUT	Zambia National Teachers' Union
ZOCS	Zambia Open Community School

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Study

The case study presented here is part of a larger comparative study commissioned by NORAD. The aim is to explore the roles of civil society organizations in countries where NORAD has supported SWAp processes in the health and education sectors. The background, purpose and design of the overall study have been presented in the report "SWAps and CSOs. The Role of Civil Society in Sector Wide Approaches" (2002). The purpose of the country studies is<sup>1</sup>:

- *To review the roles of civil society organisations in selected sector programmes, in particular in relation to roles played by CSO, analysis of opportunities and constraints, and results achieved.*
- *To provide advice and recommendations to NORAD, Embassies and Norwegian NGOs on how to improve the interaction between social sector SWAps and civil society.*

After an overview of the country context and relevant programmes, chapter 4 seeks to summarise the discussions of the following key questions and assess the relevance of the hypotheses mentioned in the mandate of the study (Annex 1).

### **Assessment of CSO Roles**

What is the level of involvement of CSOs in the formulation and implementation of SWAps in the country?

What CSOs were asked to take part and why?

What roles have CSOs played and how have they played those roles?

- As contributors to policy discussion and formulation
- As advocates and lobbyists
- As service deliverers (operators)
- As monitors (watchdogs) of rights and for particular interests
- As innovators introducing new concepts and initiatives
- As financiers

### **Effects of the SWAps**

To what extent and how are CSOs funded as part of the SWAp?

Have SWAps supported or delayed ongoing decentralisation efforts in the country?

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<sup>1</sup> See Mandate Annex 1.

Have Norwegian/international organisations been involved and how are they affected?

What are potential, promising and realistic approaches to strengthening the participation of civil society at local and national level in sector programmes?

## **1.2 Methodology**

The field visit included visits to three open community schools, where the consultant had meetings with students' representatives in Student Councils, supervisors and teachers at the school and Parent Community School Committees. Interviews were further conducted with MOE and BESSIP managers and with Lusaka District Education Office. Focus group interviews were conducted with the NGO community involved in education programmes and the consultant also had a brief meeting with bilateral donors in support of BESSIP. The linkage between the Norwegian Teachers' Union and Zambia National Teachers' Union was further explored by interviews in Norway and in Zambia respectively. Save the Children, Norway, a prominent player in the education field in the Southern Province, was met in Norway. The timing was not the best. The study was carried out during a particularly busy period at the Norwegian Embassy and a separate meeting could not be arranged at this level. This limited systematic access to BESSIP documentation and information.

## **2 Issues regarding civil society organizations in education SWAps**

### **2.1 Characteristics of SWAps**

The introduction of the sector-wide agenda in education has significantly changed the modalities for external assistance to the education sector and the roles of stakeholders in international development cooperation. In brief the sector-wide approach (SWAp) is a term used for current international thinking that focus on the development needs of a sector as a whole. Central to SWAps is a long-term partnership of national governments, donors and other possible stakeholders, under the leadership and ownership of national government authorities. The partners develop a medium-term work programme, which includes the formulation of a coherent sectoral policy and common financial, managerial and procedural arrangements, and joint strategies for the programme's implementation. The SWAps are intended to reduce aid fragmentation, improve coordination, strengthen national institutional capacity and promote institutional reforms. The external funding agencies should be prepared to change their own support modalities; concentrate on policy dialogue, participate in assessments and reviews and give up earmarked funds to specific projects.

SWAPs have often proven to be quite complex, fast-moving and demanding initiatives shaping decisions at all levels of the education system from the Ministry of Education down to the schools and classrooms. In practice, however, not all SWAPs move in the same direction or are being developed according to the ideal criteria for programme support. Not all external agencies have reached a point where resources are being pooled in non-earmarked budget support to the sector. The project approach may continue in parallel with the sector programme. Harmonised joint review procedures, including reporting, monitoring, and evaluation and auditing may take a long time to get established. Targets are often unrealistically set and therefore expectations regarding outcomes may be unrealistic too.

SWAPs usually generate a number of consultative mechanisms at national levels. There are varying arrangements for official meetings between donors and relevant government authorities. Sometimes these consultations are led by the Ministry of Education, sometimes by the planning and /or financial ministries. The point is that they bring together all concerned donors, periodically, to discuss issues and make efforts to streamline the SWAPs. Procedures for procurement, accounting, reporting and monitoring are to the extent possible harmonised and synchronised. Governments have also initiated Joint Reviews, which include key stakeholders and donors.

It is generally recognised that the introduction of SWAPs has at least gone a long way in enhancing accountability and transparency in the budgetary process. Concerning CSOs in particular, bilateral and multilateral agencies have usually financed them from separate allocations which are not always accounted for as part of the sector budget. Funding for both international and national CSOs may therefore not be part of the SWAP.

As many countries have undertaken far-reaching decentralisation, the roles of local education authorities have become more pronounced in SWAPs. Relations with local education authorities, local governments and CSOs are therefore very critical. Effective implementation of SWAPs depends to a large extent on the capacity the education authorities at province and district level to collaborate with local governments and to strengthen their capacity to coordinate and manage education programmes. There is a general concern that local governments often have weak capacity in critical skills related to planning, budgeting, accounting, and management as well as monitoring. An earlier study conducted by LINS of decentralisation in the education sector also shows that financial decentralisation has not yet happened to the degree envisaged, and that current poverty levels and prevalence of HIV/AIDS tend to exclude many groups from the education system at an increasing rate.

Relevance and quality of education have been on the international policy agenda for a long time, and one of the arguments for countries shifting to SWAPs are that more concerted efforts can be put on reforming the content and quality of the education provided. This has had implications for the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, teacher development programmes and the involvement of parents and communities in the school system.

## **2.2 CSO roles in the education SWAps**

How do CSOs fit into this picture? What do sector-wide approaches imply for them and what are their possibilities to influence SWAps and to integrate their own experiences into broad-based sector wide education programmes? Do CSOs have a specific role to play in the various mechanisms and structures set up for implementing SWAps, or do they operate independently of these structures? Are CSOs primarily considered to be responsible for provision of education to those social groups that are difficult to reach with government-run programmes?

For UNESCO, civil society interlinked with education embraces<sup>2</sup>:

- **Learner organisations**; student groups, activity-based children's clubs and youth clubs (could be formal scout movement, theatre/drama groups, informal clubs), ethnic/religious/ geographical/political groups involving students
- **Associations involving parents**. Parent-teacher Associations(PTA), or School Management Committee (SMCs), or other associations involving parents in school-related activities
- **Teachers' associations**, trade unions, professional associations
- **Community based organisations** involved in education- community education committees, community development groups, HIV/AIDS groups, adult literacy groups, women's associations/groups, churches
- **Media**
- **Traditional community leadership structures**
- **National and international research networks**
- **District, national and international NGOs** working with education programmes- or with an active stake in the education sector

At the Dakar World Education Forum 2000<sup>3</sup> the international community strongly recommended an enhanced involvement of CSOs in education programmes. Indeed the role of the state as the core providers of basic education to all was underscored, but governments committed themselves to develop and improve mechanisms and structures of democratic participation

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<sup>2</sup> Address by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura Director-General at Special Session on the Involvement of Civil Society in Education for All. September 2001

<sup>3</sup> The Dakar Framework For Action. 2000. IV: Strategies para 53-54



and accountability to civil society. According to the Dakar Framework for Action, CSOs should be given a more prominent role as partners in education development and it was particularly underlined that CSOs have developed methods and approaches more attuned to the needs and conditions of the poor, especially in the area of non-formal education. The Dakar World Education Forum recognized that CSOs were particularly well suited to reaching marginalized and excluded persons. CSOs are usually considered to be more flexible than the state, closer to the grassroots and local cultures and more innovative. They are in good positions to provide alternative services to those parts of the population not reached by the state.

There are various ways in which CSOs can operate within the government education system and be more or less part of a SWAp. The design of a SWAp may in principle embed CSOs as partners in development involved at the grassroots level. They can seek out the voices of the poor and speak for the educational needs of disadvantaged minorities and marginalised groups and articulate these demands at various levels of government. The media can play a strong advocacy role and create public awareness and demand for education. Associations involving parents in school-related activities can be involved in both construction and management of schools. There is great potential for their roles to be strengthened as a result of SWAp, but this depends on the roles given to them and in particular whether they can influence the quality of education being provided. Teachers' associations may, as professional associations, be involved in policy dialogue and bring classroom experiences into the education reform process. A large number of organisations run their own schools, with or without innovative approaches. Traditional leadership structures might have to be involved if the SWAp incorporates components that require changes in behaviour and attitudes, such as HIV/AIDS prevention and civic education. SWAps are likely to build and sustain more effective partnerships and as signatories to the Dakar agreement, all governments' national education policies recognise the critical role CSOs play in assisting governments in reaching the 2015 Education for All (EFA) targets.

Involvement of CSOs in education is not, however, a straightforward matter. In his paper<sup>4</sup>, Swift argues that there are many vested interests in education, both within the Government and CSOs, defending the needs of the majority and the elite. Not all CSOs are developmental and not all CSOs are necessarily a constructive development force. Not all seek to channel resources to the poor and marginalised. Not all CSOs necessarily support gender equity in education. International NGOs are not always good representatives of developing countries' CSOs and may have varying affiliations to their immediate country partners. Swift claims that CSOs can only be effective if they are well coordinated with each other and with the government. This is, however, often not the case. By nature of their funding, many developmental CSOs are in strong competition with each other.

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<sup>4</sup> Civil Society and the Sector Wide Approach to Education Reform. Digby Swift. June 2000.

SWAPs are likely to favour some CSOs and disfavour others. The education policies underlying SWAPs to mobilise resources at community level in the establishment of and running of schools, may favour those CSOs involved directly in service provision. Activist organisations may be seen as less appropriate for partnership. Activist organisations may have a view that “filling the gap” by providing services to the poor and marginalised may dilute governments’ responsibilities to provide equal educational opportunities to all. CSOs that in the past have received funding for their activities may find it hard to receive funding under a SWAP because donor agencies prefer a streamlined approach through the SWAP financial arrangements. Involvement of CSOs is also dependent upon well-established mechanisms that define the respective partners’ roles. The extent to which a government is engaging with civil society is also a function of the strength of the civil society itself. Central governments may have access only to strong CSOs with offices in the capital and little interaction with the CSOs based at district levels. When SWAPs are implemented within a decentralized structure, however, the scope for close interaction with grassroots oriented CSOs and education authorities at local levels increases.

A crucial issue is that of flow of funds. Save the Children, Norway’s team in Uganda, has noted that the SWAP in that country has blurred the roles between government, civil society and private business at the district level. All the money goes to government/districts that then “commissions” NGOs and private business for tenders. Most district based NGOs do not have capacity to compete with private business who walk away with tenders to implement activities at the community level. This results in infrastructure being established and bore holes being drilled without communities being consulted. Community participation has been affected negatively and this has long term consequences for sustainability, ownership and accountability.

The concept of “partnership” is usually very much present in policy documents regarding SWAPs. However, the word partnership has different meanings for different people. For many it denotes a move from mere collaboration and cooperation in activities to a stage of equality in relations as well as in resources. There is also a notion of commitment over time. Mutual trust and respect between actors are also intrinsic values of partnership. According to OXFAM<sup>5</sup>, a successful educational reform under SWAPs will depend on co-ordinated participation of NGOs which complements state activities and capitalises on their special contributions - support to local initiatives, capacity building, public awareness, and participation.

All education SWAPs are not the same, and the roles of CSOs appear to vary a lot within the different countries that have or are in the process of implementing education SWAPs. Concerns are often raised with regards to tendencies to centralising decision-making procedures and top-down programming, which again may make it difficult for CSOs with micro-experience in innovations to bring those experiences into the pedagogical reforms that often follows the introduction of a new sector-wide programme.

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<sup>5</sup> OXFAM Aid and Education : The Squandered Opportunity March 2000

CSO programmes are generally recognised for their important contribution to expanding access to basic education for groups that are difficult to reach by the government, e.g. street children, young adults who have dropped out of schools for various reasons, child labourers, HIV/AIDS affected and other vulnerable groups. However, NGO activists, such as for example the UK-based ActionAID, would question why governments do not take full responsibility for the education rights of all children. Instead of leaving education for vulnerable groups to CSO actors, governments should commit themselves to fulfilling children's rights to education for everybody. Activist groups would claim that children's rights are violated unless curricula are comparable, students get official recognition of performance which allows them to continue to other levels of education, teachers undergo the same type of training etc. Policies and practice concerning SWAs articulate such problems to a varying degree, and solutions for the roles of CSOs within such frameworks may vary accordingly.

### **3 The Zambian education context**

#### ***3.1 Education goals remain elusive***

Zambia has to contend with many obstacles to attain its educational aims of reaching EFA goals by 2015. UNESCO has recorded <sup>6</sup> Zambia among those countries at risk of not achieving universal primary education. Many of the problems originate back to the late 1980s where government expenditure levels sank in the midst of rising population growth and increased demand for education. The total government expenditure on education ranged between 13% and 16% of the total budget between 1982 and 1985, but this proportion fell to 10% after 1990. A study on "cost sharing in education in Zambia," carried out by JCTR and Oxfam, showed that in the year 2000 households were spending nearly twice the amount per child that is provided through the public budget on primary education. Government funding of primary education has been highly erratic, with actual expenditure being only a small percentage of authorised expenditure. Minimal capital expenditure is available and teacher's salaries and living conditions have deteriorated with resultant negative effects on education. The study also shows that continued use of the system of user fees is both ineffective in providing the needed resources and discourages the enrolment of pupils from poorer backgrounds. There is a shortage of teachers because more teachers are dying of AIDS than can be trained to replace them. The Zambian Government recognizes<sup>7</sup> the severe threat of HIV/AIDS and reports that teachers are among the four most infected groups in Zambia. Teachers dying from the pandemic each year are estimated at over a thousand.

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<sup>6</sup> The 2002 Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Is the World on Track?

<sup>7</sup> GOZ State of the Nation Report, December 2000

The budget allocation to education in Zambia is among the lowest in the region, although the government has allocated more resources to the sector in recent years. Until 2000 the education budget remained at just over 2% of the GDP compared to 5%-6% in neighbouring countries. But according to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2001 saw an increase in government spending to 3 per cent. In 2001, the education sector received 21% of the HIPC resources available, which accounted for 10% of the education budget. MOE notes that achievements of the targets put forward in the Strategic Education Plan 2003-2007 would necessitate a significant increase to finance the recurrent expenditures alone.

Many development cooperation partners in Zambia attribute a large number of out-of school children to the school fees that students have been obliged to pay until recently. Donors and other stakeholders have asked for more specific data on household vulnerability and prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Data is highly uncertain and many people living with HIV/AIDS do not know that they have it. The National AIDS Council has estimated that HIV prevalence (15-49 years) is about 20%. At the time of the study, unofficial estimates put the number of out- of school children at over 800,000, or 29% of the children in age group 7-13. The majority of these are girls and orphans who have never been to school, or who have dropped out of school at an early age due to poverty, inadequate school places, and inability to afford necessary school requisites or to travel long distances to school. The number of out-of-school children is expected to rise even more in the years to come, mainly due to the raise in HIV/AIDS. Many of these children end up as street children, in particular in urban areas. It is also clear that the number of orphans has risen dramatically in recent years. Despite the fact that responsibilities traditionally assigned to the extended families to become caretakers of orphans are functioning to some extent, there is a general view that these traditional safety nets are stretched to the limit. In acute poverty situations, orphan children are not necessarily treated in the same way as the family's own children. Children met during the field work could tell many stories about receiving less food, doing hard work and suffering other ordeals which added to the trauma of having lost their parents.

The UNDP Human Development Report, 2001 and 2002 ranks Zambia as 161st among 174 countries on the Human Development Index. The Zambian Central Statistical Office estimated in 1999 that more than 70% of the population has an income below the poverty line. In more recent publications this level seems to have increased to more than 80% of the population.

The lack of learning in many of the primary schools is another big challenge in the education sector. The report on Zambia's National Assessment Project <sup>8</sup> concluded that learning achievements in Grade 5 were very low and indeed much lower than teachers and other educators expected. Only one out of five pupils had reached what teachers would consider as the minimum achievement level, and only one on forty had what they would consider as a desirable achievement level. The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection

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<sup>8</sup> 1999. Report on behalf of BESSIP. Kelly et.al.

(JTRC) confirmed that one of the biggest problems in the education system has been the continued deterioration in education standards with such negative effects as engendering apathy on the part of parents in sending children to school. The language of instruction is also part of the problem. In JTRC's view parents take the position that children will not benefit much even if they complete the education process.

### **3.2 Relevant education policies**

#### **Educating Our Future**

The Government of Zambia launched the current national policy, "Educating Our Future" for Universal Primary Education in 1996.<sup>9</sup> This policy forms the framework for all programmes within the basic education sector, including the sector-wide programme. The policy emphasizes partnership in educational provision. It should be noted that this policy opened up for a fairly broad partnership to include government and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, local communities, religious groups, individuals and families.

More specifically the national policy welcomes the non-government sector to establish community schools. Such schools would operate in parallel to regular government schools outside the District Education Board system. The Ministry of Education further commits itself to contribute to the running of these schools through the provision of teachers and teaching supplies, or through a system of capitation grant<sup>10</sup>. The national policy is open to allow programmes specifically designed to explore ways of establishing out-of-reach learning programmes that will bring benefits to children who for valid reasons are not able to attend school in a conventional way. It is also interesting to note that the government allocates specific roles for communities to the operation of government schools, although these roles were limited basically to parts of construction, maintenance and repair of basic schools.

#### **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)**

In 2000 Zambia Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) embarked on the preparation of the PRSP. In contrast to the earlier Interim PRSP (IPRSP) which had seen no stakeholder consultation, the real PRSP is generally recognised for having been developed with a broad-based consultative approach. The final draft was approved by the Cabinet in May 2002 and subsequently by the Board of the IMF and the World Bank. The PRSP was officially launched in July 2002. In the PRSP, the government states clearly that health and education are among the top priorities along with addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As far as the latter is concerned, the PRSP points to the near collapse of the traditional social security system of the extended family and calls for state funded safety nets need to be managed and supported financially. A new department, Planning and

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<sup>9</sup> "Educating Our Future: National Policy on Education", May 1996

<sup>10</sup> Op.cit page 19.

Economic Management Department (PEMD) was created in January 2002 in order to coordinate the national strategic planning process for poverty reduction. A National Long-Term Development Vision, Vision 2005, is being developed to guide the medium- term strategic plans.

The process of PRSP preparation was initiated by the Government through 8 Working Groups. One of these was Education. The education working group consisted of representatives from all key stakeholder groups, various representatives from the MOE, civil society (NGOs such as Forum for African Women Educationalists Zambia (FAWZA) and the Zambia Open Community Schools Secretariat (ZCSS) and the church. It appears that civil society groups were well organized for participation in the PRSP process. They formed an umbrella organisation called Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) with some 90 representatives of different organisations. They conducted their own studies and produced their own PRSP document as input into the process.

The PRSP document consists of 17 chapters, including one on Education. The PRSP stresses the importance of basic education and states that 27% of the population has never had any schooling at all. The vision put forward is to fully implement BESSIP by 2005, and ensuring universal primary education (UPE) for all children. The PRSP notes the great concerns of teacher attrition in schools. There were more than double as many teachers that had died in 1998 as in 1996. In terms of training new teachers it is underlined in the PRSP document that the goal for teacher supply during 1990-2000 was to provide 4,400 new teachers per year, but only 2,226 was produced. The PRSP notes that funding to the education sector has declined real terms. From 1997 to 1999 the sector was allocated 9% of the national budget. In the year 2000 this allocation increased sharply to 19.6%. The PRSP does not provide information about the real national expenditure patterns. The PRSP provides the framework for expansion of the BESSIP to cover also grades 8 and 9. It appears that in terms of influencing the education part of PRSP, the CSPR brought strong messages about the need for free education and for special attention to vulnerable children. The need to introduce to ensure free and compulsory education stands out in the PRSP. It appears also that the linkages to cross-cutting themes became stronger in the final PRSP than in the draft versions. There was no working group established for HIV/AIDS, Gender and environment in the preparatory phase for the PRSP, and the civil society organisations jointly stressed the importance of these themes in the final report. However, the CSPR regretted not having a representative in the final drafting committee. The CSPR also claimed that key documents remained classified in Zambia, in particular those related to how savings from the HIPC Debt Relief would be spent.

The CSPR stated clearly that in order for the PRSP to be effectively implemented, the civil society must be directly involved in monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process. Civil society stressed their readiness to continue cooperation as equal partners with the government in the process. The PRSP does not give further information of possible

institutional arrangements to be set up to sustain the consultations between the government and civil society organisations in this respect.

The CSPR further notes that reaching UPE and the basic education targets is bound to be a tall order. This will imply an annual increase of at least 96,000 in primary enrolment. 275,000 additional basic school places (government and community) are needed. The PRSP recognises that for a long time in Zambia, the church, NGOs and the private sector have played an important role in providing childcare, formal and non-formal education, and skills training to vulnerable groups of children. The PRSP is not clear, however, on strategies on how to reach the growing number of orphans and other vulnerable groups in the future and how these groups would be ensured their rightful place in formal government schools. An implicit assumption is that CSOs will continue to take a large share of responsibilities for these children also in the years to come.

### **The National Education Strategic Plan**

Whereas the national education policy document laid down clear vision for reforms of the whole education sector, no practical sector-wide strategy or implementation plan were developed to realize the vision. The newly developed “Strategic Plan 2003-2007” is the most recent government framework to guide the education provision process in the country. The strategic plan covers early childhood education, adult literacy and vocational training and covers also high school and tertiary education. While some of the strategies belong under the EFA framework, there is an absence of direct mentioning of the six EFA goals, and how the MOE wishes to address them in terms of strategies and finances.

The strategic priorities for Zambia as laid down in the plan are:

- improved access, gender equity and quality in basic education (Grades 1-9)
- improved quality and efficiency in high school and tertiary education
- effective decentralization of decision-making, procurement and financial management to districts and schools
- management/ mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS.

The Strategic Plan has absorbed all the major PRSP education strategies and targets into its goals. The plan also underscores MOE’s intent to continue to be working with civil society and specific non-governmental organizations. Strategic Plan expresses an interest of the government to collaborate with other stakeholders and to set up a regulatory framework for Special Needs Education (SNE) and orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC). The need for better institutional linkages between MOE and organizations is recognized. An institutional focus will be created within the ministry in the Standards and Curriculum Development Directorate to liaise with the various bodies and groups with specific interest in education.

While not yet in a form of a well-defined SWAp, the Strategic plan for 2003-2007 is to address all sub-components of education. The plan encompasses all EFA goals for education, including adult literacy, early childhood and vulnerable groups. The Strategic Plan adopts the principle of an integrated sector-wide approach to the development of the education sector, and contains clear commitments to discourage separate projects. The mechanisms for this will be to streamline all funds under a common framework, but whether this will actually be the case remains to be seen. The government states that alternatives to the government primary schools will have to go on also in the years to come. The same applied to the Interactive Radio Centres. MOE's strategy is to establish quality control measures with such programmes through standard setting and formal registration with the Ministry before community schools are to be provided with government support. There will also be an establishment of an NGO desk within the MOE which will facilitate interaction between the two systems and open a window of opportunity for NGOs to generate more government financial support to their programmes. The MOE has established a Strategic Planning Task Force with representatives from other line ministries, development partners and key CSOs such as FAWEZA and ZOCS.

### **“Free education”**

As of February 2002, the Government introduced the policy of “Free Education” which in principle abolished all sorts of PTA levies and demands on having school uniforms. In general, this move seem to have been welcomed by most agencies, and indeed many saw this as a result of a continuous push from the bilateral agencies in support of BESSIP, to remove a severe obstacle for school participation among the poor. Yet, not all schools have changed the practice of levying school fees, although have ated obstacles to school enrollment, although money demanded from the parents might not any longer be labeled school fees as such. Necessities such as chalks and exercise books must still be absorbed by schools using general-purpose funds and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) levies. And uniforms may still be required, particularly in urban areas. For poor people, especially in rural communities, even minor costs may negatively impact enrolment and retention of children. Many CSOs met during the field trip claimed that despite all good intentions, the “free education policy” in practice did not mean “free” for all groups of children. Their concerns were particularly directed towards all those children who attended community schools or similar alternatives in one way or another. Unless a fairly well-off organization stood behind the initiative to bear the costs of schooling, parents who enrolled their children in community schools would still have to pay for teachers' salaries. Teachers in regular government schools, on the other hand, were on public payroll, and hence no direct pay from parents was required in such schools. Thus the introduction of this policy had to some extent become a two-edged sword. On the one hand, organizations that promoted community schools and as such met a hugely unmet need for education were no longer in a position to demand levies from parents to keep the school going. This threatened the sustainability of these schools in the long run.



## 4 Characteristics of CSOs in education in Zambia

Since 1980s CSOs have claimed an increasingly larger space as major players in education, primarily in non-formal education and for running community schools. With support from UNESCO, national Zambian CSOs appear to have prepared themselves well in connection with the Education for All process. A national task force on EFA in Zambia was formed following the Jomtien Conference in 1990. This national task force continued to be active prior to and during the Dakar World Forum on Education in 2000. Six Zambian CSOs participated in the Dakar conference and People's Action Forum which led the Zambian NGO delegation during the Forum underscored that the good relations that had prevailed between the two delegations during the Forum. In their view, however, the same level of interaction had not been possible to sustain after the Forum or when the Zambia national EFA plan was developed as a follow-up to the Forum. Apparently, one of the problems emanated from the limited number of CSOs who were invited to sit on the national EFA committee.

The participation of CSOs in provision of education takes a number of forms. There are more than 120 known organisations operating within the education sector in Zambia. These are church related organisations, NGOs in general, Welfare Associations sensitising communities on civic education, umbrella organisations, economic inclined organisations with focus on productive and commercial issues, cultural organisations promoting ethnic group rights, development organisations aimed at improving infrastructure and the quality of life of the community, issue-oriented organisations promoting women's and children's rights and so on.

Examples of networks working in education are the Adult Education Association of Zambia, FAWEZA (Female Association for Women Educationalists in Zambia), PAF (People's Action Forum), ZCSS (Zambia Community School Secretariat) and Zambia Pre-school Association. The Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) has a membership base of more than 65 organisations. These maybe more or less involved in education through various strategies for empowering women. The area of interest for many of the organisations under the NGOCC umbrella, however, is empowerment of women at various levels of the society. Few of the members appear to be entirely education-focused. To the extent education is part of their programmes, focus tend to be on broader community welfare issues, adult education, gender training, human rights and various strategies for training in skills and income generation.

## **Why Community Schools?**

*Community schools in Zambia strive to attain the same primary education in 4 years that children receive in 7 years in the formal education sector.*

*Community schools do not have uniforms, they do not charge school fees, and they provide a basic education following the SPARK curriculum (School, Participation, Access and Relevant Knowledge). The SPARK curriculum is based on Grades 1-7, and has been designed to reflect the needs of community school children. It provides a primary education in 4 years, covering such topics as Maths, English, Nyanja, Science, Social Studies, Health Education , Life Skills and Physical Education . The teachers in Community Schools are not formally trained and come from the community where the school is based. They use whatever building or open space they find to teach in, and have limited resources (books, desks, blackboards etc).*

In 1997, the Zambia Community Schools Secretariat (ZCSS) was established to meet the need for an umbrella organization that co-ordinates the movement of the community schools and provides the basic services for the increasing number of CSs in the country. ZCSS is supervised by a Board whose members are elected by representatives of the registered CSs. The Board also includes a representative from the MOE. The ZCSS is concerned that with a view of the growing number of community schools in the country, the links and functional relationships of the CSM and ZCSS at zonal, district and provincial levels are not yet clearly defined.

The CSOs have been involved on EFA related issues in various forms including holding debates on print and electronic media, organising marches and workshops to debate on various issues affecting the education sector. The education provided can be both formal and non-formal in nature and aimed in particular to persons with disabilities, girls, youth, women, skills training, health, agricultural and environment related education, advocacy etc. Many CSOs take cross-sectoral holistic approaches to education and combine education with various inter-related themes.

Among the challenges for CSOs involved in education has been the lack of co-ordination between them. Currently a new initiative to address this issue and establish a coalition, Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC) was incepted in 2000. Its overall aim is to co-ordinate and harmonise activities of member organisations and ensure resonance with the government programme on education.

Major international organizations are also present in the education sector in Zambia; such as for example Save the Children, Norway (SCN) and World Vision. SCN operates in the Southern Province, with support directly to the Provincial Education Office and five districts.

## **5 Zambia's Education "SWAp": The Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP)**

The Ministry of Education (MOE) is currently implementing the final stage of Zambia's first generation SWAp in education. The conceptualization and development of sub-sector programme came to fruition in 1998/99 after having been through several stages of reduction. Initially an attempt was made at developing a comprehensive Education Sector Investment Program (ESIP) coordinated by an ESIP Secretariat. Higher education was excluded from the beginning on the basis that it was an area of lower priority for new investments. At the time there were too many and too complex relationships between several ministries. Eventually all actors agreed that finding the right modality for a full sector programme was not feasible.

BESSIP is being managed through a committee system within the MOE with the Coordinator as its chief executive. It is overseen by the following structures; the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for provision of policy direction, the Programme Coordinating Committee (PCC) for technical support and monitoring, and the Management Implementation Team (MIT) for day-to day operations.

BESSIP forms one of Zambia's major strategies for poverty alleviation. Its principal objective is to ensure that every child can complete a seven-year primary education cycle, and that education is relevant for its needs. The overall objectives aim at:

- increasing enrolment
- reducing disparities between urban and rural areas
- enhancing learning achievements for all pupils
- achieving equity in enrollment by gender and socio-economic status

Under BESSIP priority has been given to constructing schools and classrooms in rural and peri-urban areas and to providing access in small remote rural communities. The focus on construction has been on permanent structures to replace schools built in pole and mud. BESSIP has also included many quality-enhancing activities such as teacher training, material supplies, curriculum reforms, strengthening decentralization and community mobilization in support of education. In 2001 40% of the total financial inputs went to quality improvement activities.

BESSIP has included a number of components:

- School infrastructure
- Gender and Equity
- School Health and Nutrition
- Education Materials
- Teacher development and Deployment
- Basic education Curriculum Development
- HIV/AIDS
- Capacity Building and Decentralization

Corresponding task forces or working groups meet regularly within MOE to assist and inform MIT. CSOs are invited to sit on the Gender and Equity and School Health and Nutrition groups.

Key strategies for BESSIP have included:

- removal of statutory fees, though some users fees by schools through the PTAs have remained part of the costs until recently,
- involving parents and other stakeholders through the establishment of district education boards,
- high emphasis on equity and gender

BESSIP receives funding from external donors including Netherlands, Irish Aid, NORAD, UNICEF, IDA/World Bank, Finland, DFID, UNESCO, DANIDA, ADB. The total cost of BESSIP was estimated to US\$ 340 million; with \$ 40 million from IDA funds, \$ 167 million from government and \$ 133 million from donors. Four distinct financial mechanisms have been used:

- Case 1 entails pooled funds controlled by the MOE and available for all BESSIP components
- Case 2 is still controlled by MOE but requires a separate parallel account (IDA loans)
- Case 3 is project funding for designated projects controlled by Moe
- Case 4 is project funds where the donor controls the funds

Some donors channel their contributions to the multi -donor basket funding (e.g. United Kingdom, Norway, Netherlands, Ireland and Finland). Denmark has kept some of its funding as special project support. Some donors have supported BESSIP as a policy framework but have continued to support projects directly. EU has operated a parallel bursary scheme directed to poor children within the MOE framework but outside the basket. . USAID has funded projects such as the Programme for Advancement of Girls' Education (PAGE) which is within the BESSIP framework, yet outside the pooling mechanisms. JICA has also funded schools infrastructure development as a separate project. Whether funding is within or outside the basket, however, it should nevertheless be seen as being part of the BESSIP framework. All external funding g to basic education such as curriculum revision, textbook development, teacher education reform, school rehabilitation and

infrastructure and education resource centers are for the most funded through basket funding.

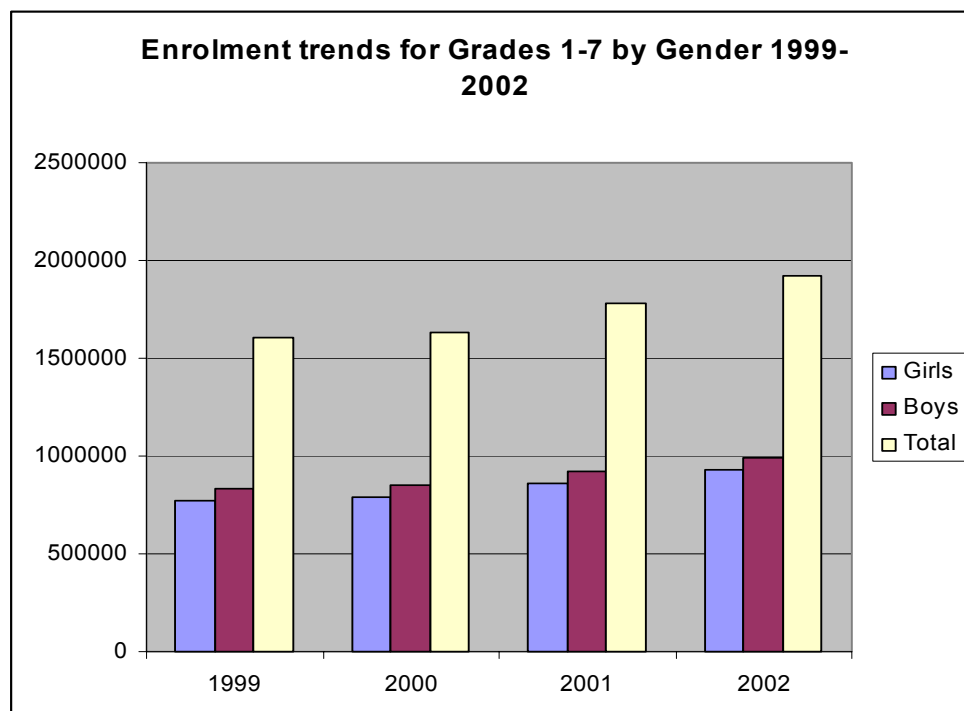
How has BESSIP measured up?

It should be noted that BESSIP has had a very short time span, four years. 2003 is considered a bridging year over to an expanded program vision as mentioned in the Strategic plan for Zambia.

In terms of progress on core indicators there is positive development on several fronts:

	<b>2002 targets</b>	<b>Baseline 1999</b>	<b>Status 2002</b>
<b>NER</b>	84%	66%	68%
<b>GER</b>	89%	78%	81%
<b>Net Admission</b>	68%	38%	35%
<b>Drop out rate</b>	2.4%	3%	3%
<b>Progression rate</b>	50%	47.7%	
<b>Repetition rate</b>	3%	6%	8%
<b>Pupil teacher ratio</b>		47:1	46:1
<b>Textbook pupil ratio</b>		1:4	1:2

Source: BESSIP Trends Performance Indicators 2002



Source: MOE- Planning Unit 2003.

Enrolment has steadily increased throughout BESSIP implementation period. The Zambia Demographic Education Survey (ZDES) report for 2002 has

revealed that education is becoming more widespread, leading to a significant improvement in girls' education. It should be noted, however, that for the years 2001 and 2002 children from community schools and Interactive Radio Communication Initiative (IRI) are incorporated in these statistics, whereas students enrolled in these programmes were left out in 1999 and 2000. In community schools alone there were more than 170, 000 children enrolled in 2002. The increase in enrolment is therefore not attributed to formal primary education alone but is to a large extent a result of children being enrolled into non-formal programmes outside the formal government primary schools.

The number of schools has also steadily increased, from 4,290 in 1999 to 4,558 in 2002. More than 3,000 classrooms have been constructed during this time.

But progress in BESSIP performance is more than can be measured in quantitative indicators alone. A lot of efforts, for example, have gone into establishing better management procedures at all levels. The management committees are in operation and reporting appears to have improved at all levels. BESSIP programme planning has become more focused through the introduction of quarterly plans against which quarterly progress could be measured. This has helped activities being more realistically paced. In 2002 quarterly financial disbursement plans in order to have a more coordinated and harmonized disbursement of substantial resources at one time to the provinces, districts and schools. This is an achievement which also helps in the efficient administration of the disbursement to the provincial and district levels.

Teacher training, both in-service and pre-service, was also said to have improved greatly, and new programs such as the Breakthrough to Literacy were said to have improved the quality of learning in Grade 1. It should be noted that some of the community schools visited saw this particular programme as one of the greatest achievements of BESSIP, which benefited government and community schools alike. The Government has shown its commitments to addressing HIV/AIDS through the education system, and is testing out new curriculum for teacher training students at David Livingstone TTC with the aim of replicating this in all teacher training colleges throughout the country. The school health and nutrition programme which is piloted in the Eastern Province is also said to be on track, although scaling up of programme to a national level seem to move slower than first anticipated.

But BESSIP is not without problems. One concern is that this programme has received very much attention both within the Ministry and from the donors at the cost of other parts of the education system. Another concern among donors and MOE alike are the challenges related to poor learning in the classrooms. At the December 2001 BESSIP Semi- Annual Review , the Joint Steering Committee adopted the theme "Taking BESSIP to the Classroom" as a focus for BESSIP activities in 2002. This resulted in targeting more resources and activities at the District and School levels. MOE admits that many of its procedures e.g. for procurement of textbooks are slow and cumbersome. But overall, all the components tried to decentralize activities

with some success. 63% of the activities are currently focused on the school level.

In a report from the meeting of the International Working Group on Education in November 2001, it was stated that amongst the problems which had plagued BESSIP from the start was the lack of restructuring of the MOE and lack of expanded decentralisation follow up. As far as lack of restructuring was concerned was that BESSIP functioned as a “project” within the ministry, separate from decisions on other policy analysis and resource allocation procedures.

In recognition that formal education cannot be expanded to all-under-served areas in Zambia, MOE launched the Interactive Educational Radio Instruction Programme (IRI) was launched in July 2000. This is a programme linked with the Educational Broadcasting Service. IRI is essentially a form of distance education where lessons are delivered through radio. The mentors who are instructors at the centres are paid by the communities themselves. Some representatives from CSOs met claimed that IRI was a sad statement of the fact that the government has failed to deliver equal opportunities to all children. The IRI managers on the other hand held the view that experiences with the programme are promising and that children learn a lot through IRI. Centers which received no external support from international NGOs were said, however, to perform rather poorly. The communities’ ability to pay for mentors and for radio batteries appear to some extent to have been over-estimated.

## **6 Assessment of CSOs roles in BESSIP**

### **6.1 Level of Involvement**

What is the level of involvement of CSOs in the formulation and implementation of the sector programme for education in Zambia?

- *There has been an increasing involvement of CSOs in SWAps, but originally the involvement was marginal and CSOs contributions were not recognised as important.*

The Zambian education policy “Educating Our Future” opened for a broad-based partnership in all service provisions in education. The official stand was that inter-ministerial collaboration, community participation and civil society were all stakeholders in the process. In principle MOE was willing to cooperate with anyone who wanted to contribute to the overall objectives of national policy in education. There are different views about how well CSOs were involved in the initial process. Many documents refer to BESSIP planning stage as being informed by extensive consultation with stakeholders at all levels. Some of the actors being involved in education today claim,

however, that their role was marginal, basically because MOE did not know what they were doing in the sector.

BESSIP has included several arenas for formal “official relations”. In November, 1998 the first Joint Appraisal of BESSIP took place. The Joint Appraisal was the responsibility of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). All funding agencies, Ministry of Finance, Health and Education Sector ministries were invited to participate. There are few traces of active participation from CSOs from this period. Other official arenas for review and monitoring of BESSIP, the Semi-Annual Review and the Annual Review have had civil society participation. These reviews have attracted a large number of participants. More than 130 people participated for example in the Semi-annual Review of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2000. From a look at the list of participants, only four seem to represent CSOs.

At decentralized levels, and particular at district level, contacts between the education authorities and the CSOs may take the informal form of exchanges of information and participation in technical meetings. When specific activities have been identified, collaboration may be taken a step further as the CSO reports to the decentralized education authorities. In some cases this works well, but the District Education Office in Lusaka often experience that organizations do not report about their activities to the District Office at all. The importance of this is underscored by the fact that the District Education Office estimates that 50 out of 200 community schools in Lusaka District are neither registered nor involved in any interaction with the district authorities at all. Thus the authorities would have no information about the quality of the teaching/learning process, the number of children enrolled, availability of textbooks and other quality measurements. Furthermore the District Education Office had experienced absence of genuine seriousness of some individuals who had opened such schools. There had been examples of individuals who had tried to claim public funding for schools which were far below standard and where no genuine education of children actually took place. Such concerns were shared by the representatives of the ZCSS and central Ministry of Education, who felt that a system of guaranteeing a minimum quality of teaching and learning for the community schools need to be put in place before official recognition of these schools could be granted..

The Lusaka District Education Office had experienced that not only national Zambian CSOs failed to report to the district education authorities. International agencies had also been found to run programmes without prior notification to the district level authorities or to report to them on activities, progress and results. In some cases programmes were of inter-sectoral nature, and in other cases they were directly education-related. Literacy training of women, HIV/AIDS education and non-formal education to address child labour, were cited as examples. This suggests that effective communication mechanisms for keeping the districts informed and updated about activities and programmes in operation are still lacking. At the level of MOE there was no database or record available to keep track of the various NGO activities being in operation within the education sector. Nor were there any mechanism put in place to ensure that NGOs reported back on progress



and outcomes of their programmes. In the case of Lusaka District, however, many such problems were eventually being solved after the education authorities had taken steps to establish formal linkages with the organizations and demand for adequate reporting had been put forward.

- *The new generation SWApS have moved towards a redefinition of the state – providing a framework for enabling interventions by a variety of actors.*

The state's role as the main provider of the goals under Education for All remains firm, but at the same time BESSIP has in some ways reinforced the idea that the government is not the only provider of basic education, because it has had a limited outreach to in particular poor communities. The vision of the MOE, however, is that by 2015 all basic education projects will be under the government's responsibility. He sees alternative non-formal approaches as transitional measures. BESSIP has, to some extent, designated new tasks to actors involved in education. At the level of MOE, BESSIP has contributed to the understanding of need to streamline procedures and place all projects under one single policy agenda. BESSIP has also strengthened the decentralisation process and contributed to the creation of District Education Boards, and thus very much followed in the same path as High School and College Education Boards. An important step to support the role of the districts, has been to loosen up the centralised planning system. Both Provinces and Districts were said to have reached a stage where autonomous planning and budgeting can take place. The recently established system of quarterly disbursements as a replacement for the former cash budget system supports this. BESSIP has also definitely changed the role of donors. Whereas not all of them have pooled funds into the common basket, they have created a strong coordinated donor collaboration mechanism where they meet regularly.

BESSIP has been sub-sector investment programme focusing essentially on expanding access and quality of primary education. The BESSIP phase I is moving towards completion, but the programme will be carried over into a second generation SWAp covering the education sector as a whole.

- *Interactions between Government and CSOs is still limited and strained by mutual scepticism and reluctance.*

Representatives from CSOs have characterised the relationship between Government and CSOs as a "love-hate" relationship. The Government through MOE argues that it is not at all clear who is doing what in the sector and with what results. MOE is sceptic about the quality of education offered and to what degree CSOs measure up to what can be expected from providers of education. There is concern about the mushrooming of organisations and that some have not started up with a serious intention to provide education to the children. From the point of view of MOE, learning, transparency and accountability in the NGO sector have been relatively weak. MOE does not have any legitimate basis on which to claim insight in issues

such as funding and accounts and there is also no formal mechanisms whereby NGOs can register themselves within MOE.

The CSOs on the other hand argue that the MOE has done little to systematize its relations with the CSOs sector. One of the problems is that MOE has no special desk or focal point with whom CSOs can interact. There was also a feeling that MOE did not fully recognise the contributions made by the CSOs. Most CSOs appear to be willing to work in close collaboration with MOE structures at all levels, but admit that that this is easier at district level than at the central level.

The relationship between CSOs and the Government has improved for the better, but it is not possible to attribute this only to BESSIP. The level of both participation and interaction has increased also during the PRSP process. The strong involvement of civil society appears largely to be an outcome of demands from the donor community.

The collaboration between the partners has focused more on various events and arrangements concerning the EFA process than directly within the BESSIP mechanisms. Increased interaction between education authorities and organisations running community schools has led to better understanding and recognitions of different roles. At a stakeholder's workshop on Civil Society Coalition on Education for All in May 2001, the Minister of Education officiated at the opening of the workshop. He acknowledged that the current state of education in Zambia needed the active participation of all players. Partnership in education was emphasised. He urged the CSOs, however, to come up with workable mechanisms of how the MOE and the CSOs could work together and collaborate. Unfortunately the good intentions appear not to have been followed up by the national EFA Forum. Some CSOs held the view that the composition of members to the Forum was too limited and that information from the Forum was not disseminated to the CSO community.

- *Policies of stronger public/private partnerships are still more aspirational than providing clear and realistic guidelines.*

Guidelines for CSOs partnership were generally lacking in BESSIP policy document. There is, however, a reference in the current Education Strategic Plan to the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between MOE and ZCSS and that MOE would intend to continue establishing similar contracts with other partners. The content of the MoA has not been agreed upon and formally signed between the partners. ZCSS considers the MoA as major step forward towards full recognition of the community school movement by the government.

According to the MoA the role of the ZCSS is to:

- co-ordinate the development of community schools,
- accredit schools,

- do curriculum development
- provide teacher training
- provide education materials
- mobilise resources
- improve access to funding
- facilitate teacher recruitment
- make available quarterly and annual reports to MOE

The role MOE is to:

- work together with ZCSS to develop and approve community school curriculum
- support the community school movement at all levels; provincial, district and community school
- support training of teachers provided /paid by MOE
- support material development and distribution
- provide infrastructure
- make an effort to mobilise funds
- provide teachers salaries and/ or appropriate allowances
- give full recognition and support to ZCSS as the umbrella body
- provide teachers
- work to provide finance
- provide teaching supplies

Despite the fact that with this agreement MOE clearly recognises the importance of community schools and hence the role of CSOs within education, the MoA may lead to many unmet expectations from both sides. It is, for example, not clear what role ZCSS should take as far as curriculum development is concerned. One question regards the expected role ZCSS is to take in curriculum development. Currently there are two options for community schools, SPARKS and the one used in formal government schools. The SPARKS curriculum is a condensed and modified version of the formal government curriculum and seen as appropriate when children are old enough to catch up lessons faster. According to examination results this curriculum seems well justified, but it is rather unclear how ZCSS may position itself to tap on these experiences to influence the formal government school curriculum. ZCSS gives BESSIP great credit for having speeded up the process of deploying government teachers to community schools. Several organizations complain, however, that this is moving very slowly and that the need for teachers on the government's payroll is far from being met due to chronic shortage of teachers in the entire school system. Some CSO seem to have high hopes that teachers currently employed by the community will be taken over by the government. Lack of poor communities' ability to pay for the teachers was the single most common problem referred during the field visit. For this to happen on a large scale, the capacity and resources set aside for teachers training must be increased at all levels.

## **6.2 What CSOs were Involved?**

What CSOs were asked to take part in the design process and why?

- *Participation is first and foremost based on invitation from Government.*

Many CSOs were unaware of arrangements around the design phase of BESSIP, but was aware that mostly umbrella organisations representing a fairly large membership base have been invited to sit on the BESSIP committees or invited to participate in policy debates. It was noted that participation is basically at the Governments' discretion.

SCN's involvement in Zambia is a result of the sector sponsorship between Norway and Zambia. In 1997 NORAD requested Save the Children Norway (SCN) to assess its possibilities to support the Norwegian efforts to strengthen the education sector in Zambia. SCN was asked to work with the MOE. The MOE invited SCN to work in the Southern Province. An initial visit discussing potential co-operation with the MOE in 1997, was followed by an exploratory mission in February 1998. The recommendations from the mission became the basis for the project proposal that was submitted to NORAD and approved for funding in 1998. In August the same year SCN opened up its office in Livingston hosted by the main partner, the Provincial Education Office, Southern Province (PEO). A three year agreement was signed. Implementation started in January 1999.

- *The basis on which involvement from CSOs take place is unclear.*

The framework for BESSIP was narrow, and focused on formal primary education. This in itself limits the involvement of CSOs who are often involved in non-formal education. Partnership in BESSIP was basically designed on the basis of funding to the programme and this has been outside the scope of most CSOs. Participation from CSOs is regulated in Semi-Annual and Annual Reviews for policy and monitoring matters, and in most cases directly with Provincial and District Education Offices for operational matters.

- *Mostly national CSOs are involved in SWAps*

No overview of total number CSOs involved in BESSIP was available. International organisations such as Save the Children and Care International are strong actors within the BESSIP framework at provincial and district levels.

## **6.3 Roles CSOs Played**

What roles have CSOs played and how have they played those roles?

As contributors to policy discussion and formulation:

- *The involvement of CSOs as contributors to policy discussion is on the increase, especially at national level.*

The umbrella organization for community schools, ZCSS, considers that the joint review meetings under BESSIP have gained in importance. The last reviews have also taken community schools into consideration, and the reviews have provided a platform for mutual learning for all parties involved. In terms of impact it was felt that ZCSS main contribution was to make BESSIP actors more aware of what is actually happening at the grassroots. In their view BESSIP so far has focused too much on establishing a well-functioning management system in itself at the expense, but that recent policy changes to “take BESSIP to the classrooms” would make MOE more sensitive also to community schools.

ZCSS has a major problem in reaching all community schools and assist them. In Lusaka District alone there are more than 200 community schools. CSOs have complained that they are not adequately served and that ZCSS is giving too much of its attention to interact with MOE at the expense of assisting them directly. ZCSS is of the opinion that a careful balance between policy issues and implementation must be struck.

- *Policy formulation is still extremely centralised*

Forss et.al <sup>11</sup> characterizes BESSIP as being small, hierarchical and richly coupled among the most centrally placed actors e.g. the donors. The NGOs are described as having a peripheral position in the network. The vision of the sector-programme to reform technical co-operation through a broad agreement on policy, through pooling of funds, joint procedures for management, monitoring and evaluation rested with agencies such as DFID, Ireland Aid, Dutch Aid, NORAD and the World Bank. Not all actors e.g. NORAD, would agree with the above notion that BESSIP is small. On the contrary, despite the fact that it is focused on a sub-sector, BESSIP has nevertheless been a large investment with far-reaching implications for the whole education sector in the country.

Some representatives from CSOs suggested that the proliferation of policy documents that Zambia had to produce made real influence from their side difficult. CSOs in general tended not to involve themselves much at central level, but focused more on decentralized levels of operation.

- *Consultations have tended to be strongest at the development stage of a SWAp and fade away once the programme gets underway*

Representatives from MOE agreed that in the design period the process had been more exclusive. MOE had not invited NGOs to participate and it was

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<sup>11</sup> Sector-wide approaches; from principles to practice. By Kim Forrs, Harriet Birungi and Oliver Saasa page 22

also not clear what sort of roles they would have played had they been more involved. The above-mentioned study provides the following illustration of the peripheral role of CSOs in BESSIP:

	Visionary	Networkbuilder	Financier	Operator	Controller
Ministry of Education	***	*	***	***	*
Provinces				***	
Districts				***	
World Bank	**	*	***		***
NGOs				*	
Private sector				*	
Dutch Aid	**	*	***		**
DFID	***	***	***	***	***
Irish Aid	**	*	**		*
NORAD	**	*	***		***
USAID			*		*
DANIDA			***	***	***

NORAD is, in addition, given credit for its role as facilitator in the BESSIP process.

Most CSOs would not agree that consultations have faded away. But discontent about the quality of consultations nevertheless prevailed. There were complaints that some consultations were merely superficial. A case in point was when the Zambian National Teachers' Union (ZNTU) was invited to comment upon the MOEs restructuring plans as far as teachers' positions were concerned. The document was released at such a late stage that in reality all decisions had been made and no real comments from the union would be meaningful.

- *CSOs lack the capacity and skill to take part in policy discussions*

There is no evidence that CSOs in general lack capacity and skills to participate in policy discussions on education. Many of the larger CSOs in Zambia have a strong membership base, develop their own strategies and are vocal in debates and media. The PRSP process was followed up by numerous workshops and retreats on education, and the civil society gave inputs to the process with a coordinated separate paper to be fed into the

policy processes at macro-level. Furthermore, six Zambian CSOs participated during the Dakar conference, and made essential contributions to the overall process. On the other hand, there is a general consensus that the problems do not always lie in policy formulations, but actually how these policies are followed up and implemented at grassroots levels and in the schools. Most CSOs are busy with implementation of own programmes and cannot always be expected to take full part in national workshops and consultations.

There is also a question on how CSOs position themselves to take part in policy discussions. As a labour union, the ZNUT organises 80% of the government teachers in Zambia. In an evaluation report <sup>12</sup> for the sister organisation in Norway, the Norwegian Union of Teachers, ZNUT was commended for its work on classical union matters, but criticized for not being an effective driving force in Zambian educational policy formulation nor an effective watchdog over professional development, implementation and management for the education sector. ZNUT had not taken the opportunity to participate actively in BESSIP workshops despite being invited by the Government. According to ZNUT this could partly be explained by the fact that the interests of the former leadership had focused mostly on union matters. A delegation of four had participated in the 2002 Annual Review meetings.

While some CSOs have found themselves excluded from participating in the policy arena at central levels, they feel better positioned to enter into dialogue and interaction at provincial and particularly district levels.

- *There is limited capacity in Governments to interface with CSOs and the private sector.*

The capacity within the MOE central is generally insufficient in all departments and bureaucratic procedures are slow and cumbersome. The concerns about slow procurement procedures have already been mentioned.

As advocates and lobbyists:

- *Governments are uncomfortable with CSOs in their roles as advocates and watchdogs and reluctant to accept the legitimacy of an oppositional "voice".*

Advocacy is an element in all education activities of the CSOs, whether the organization has a specific advocacy strategy or not. All the organizations try to empower the communities to become in charge of their own educational needs in the absence of relevant formal authorities. Most CSOs are actively engaged in mobilizing and dissemination information and var. Organizations such as ZOCS take several steps to ensure that the impacts on the community are positive and sustainable. ZOCS is aware of the danger involved in influencing the communities at a faster pace than they can absorb.

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<sup>12</sup> More than bread and butter; The role of Zambian National Union of TEachers in a changing educational environment. Jan Ketil Simonsen and Chilese L. Mulenga

Doing things for the communities is felt to aggravate rather than relieve problems ZOCS try to address

Advocacy as organized efforts and actions has mainly focused around Zambia's participation in the Dakar EFA preparations and not around BESSIP. The lead domestic NGO in the EFA process, the "People's Action Forum" (PAF) organized several capacity-building and training workshops for other CSOs during these processes, accompanied by solid moral support from the MOE. The Minister himself launched the workshops and gave significant government recognition to the process. PAF was of the opinion that the CSO campaigns and workshop gave a broad civil society voice to the Zambian EFA preparation to the Dakar World Forum and this was reflected during the Forum itself. Since then, there has been no concerted action on the MOE side to include a broader representation of CSO in the process of formulating an EFA National Plan. Some organizations, such as FAWEZA, are actively involved partners on both EFA and BESSIP working committees, and are therefore well positioned to bring the broader EFA discussions into BESSIP.

Advocacy as a purposeful rights-based strategy seems not to have taken off in Zambia and there was not much information available about oppositional "voices" although all organisations work on the premise that education is a right for all children. Some representatives from CSOs met claimed that people are too used to promises being broken and that they have few traditions of being engaged in forceful demonstrations as far as education is concerned.

There are signs that this will change. Some organisations have started to express the intent of putting political leaders to task so that they recognise that the dramatic decline in the education system at very level over the past decade *"is not only a sad situation but also a very dangerous situation because it means that all efforts to economic reform is meaningless if significant commitment is not made to improve the educational sector"*. They claim that generation of political will to improve education should be a focus in the election campaigns in the future. Parties and candidates should be questioned about what they intend to do to turn around the current wastage in education.

- *Civil society is fragmented with competing networks and umbrella organisations.*

This was confirmed. The CSO world in Zambia is a world of very unequal partners which are not coordinating their projects between themselves. Some organisations aspire to achieve a high quality in all the education they offer. They are usually linked to external donors in one way or another and have the ability to tap into all sorts of resources that can be of support in their efforts. Others simply struggle along with small-scale projects with hardly any access to external resources at all. The quality of the education offered may of course vary.



- *There is a weak articulation of cross cutting issues like HIV/AIDS in the SWAp.*

In Zambia, the MOE is a member of the National HIV/AIDS Council, a body that has a number of line ministries that were identified as key. The MOE realised that HIV/AIDS represents one of the most urgent challenges in the country in general and to MOE in particular. In order to address this serious problem the Ministry produced an HIV/AIDS strategic plan education system where learners, families, educators, churches and non-governmental organisations collaborate to achieve a society free of AIDS and its stigma.

In order to implement this policy the MOE took the following steps:

- a) HIV/AIDS was made the eighth component of Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP);
- b) Embarked on material production on HIV/AIDS;
- c) Carried out (and continues to do so) a vigorous sensitisation campaign on HIV/AIDS to pupils, parents, educators and communities;
- d) Worked with line Ministries in finding good alternatives and practices for infected and affected.

Sensitisation is being conducted in our planned activities, including formulation and dissemination of HIV/AIDS guidelines for all MOE staff. This is done by conducting an HIV/AIDS impact assessment on education, training MOE planners in HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and mitigation, and developing a participatory monitoring tool for HIV/AIDS programme activities.

The last National Assessment survey (2001), which measures learning achievement at middle basic level, indicated that 66% of pupils got information about HIV/AIDS from their teachers, although 76% of their teachers said that they were not comfortable talking about HIV/AIDS. Armed with this information the MOE has identified a need to pay particular attention to attitudes, behaviours and active development of young people (learners) through the school system. In this vein, ten life skills have been identified as key and are included in the basic school curriculum, these are:

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Decision making         | Problem solving             |
| Creative thinking       | Critical thinking           |
| Effective communication | Interpersonal relationships |
| Self awareness          | Empathy                     |
| Coping with emotions    | Coping with stress          |

Practical skills are to be re-introduced into the school system.

All the HIV/AIDS programmes and activities that are under MOE are implemented by teachers and all the other officers working under the Ministry. The Ministry has regulations and a built-in reporting system under which the HIV/AIDS activities are implemented.

Officials, especially those at MOE HQs are highly committed to the HIV/AIDS cause. Every working Friday all officers working at MOE HQs are clad in HIV/AIDS T-Shirts including the Permanent Secretary. The same style applies to provincial and district officials. There is still some reluctance in schools on the part of some teachers.

There are numerous activities going on, including establishment of AIDS clubs, dissemination of materials to school levels and training of both teachers and communities. The combined impact of these activities is not known. A particularly interesting component is a collaborative effort between David Livingstone Teacher Training College and LINS, Oslo University College to incorporate HIV/AIDS as a component in the teacher training programme. This component is funded as a pilot project under BESSIP and will eventually be taken to all the teacher training institutions in Zambia.

CSOs are also involved in various HIV/AIDS programmes at community levels. Many of them possess a wealth of information and knowledge of what works and do not work from a grassroots perspective. There was a concern that MOE did little to tap into this knowledge base or use strategies which CSOs regarded as having at least some positive outcomes in terms of community reception of the messages conveyed.

- *The gender perspective is weakly articulated.*

In terms of policy, gender equity has a strong place in BESSIP.. The original idea was to integrate an already ongoing programme "PAGE" into BESSIP framework. PAGE had been a joint MOE/UNICEF pilot project in operation with NORAD funds since 1995, and consisted of ten very specific strategies which aimed to reduce gender disparities in primary enrolment. These strategies have included bursary schemes to vulnerable girls, sensitization and advocacy through media and at community level, involvement of traditional leaders, training and materials supplies. One of the critiques put forward in the PRSP, is that PAGE has moved forward in an uncoordinated manner.<sup>13</sup> At local level, several NGOs have been involved in its implementation. Several CSOs sit on the permanent Gender and Equity Committee of BESSIP, such as ZCSS and FAWEZA. Experiences from PAGE seem to have been widely discussed in Zambia and one of the positive effects of this is that equity elements have been taken more consistently on board by the CSOs, and in particular in community schools. Still representatives from CSOs felt that gender was far from mainstreamed or permeated all relevant aspects of BESSIP.

As service deliverers (operators):

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<sup>13</sup> PRSP 2001 Chapter 9 Education: 9.3.2.1. Equity Programmes

- CSOs are mainly being invited and involved in SWAps as service providers – sub contracted by national or district authorities.

CSOs are generally not sub-contracted by the educational authorities. Individual and communities have contributed to the expansion of primary schools by helping to build new schools on self-help basis in areas and in communities which did not previously have any school. The expansion of primary schools through self-help initiatives has long traditions in Zambia. Currently there are more than 50 Zambian organisations involved in setting up and running community schools. These schools have emerged based on the need to provide basic education for out of school children and youths. A community school (CS) is defined “*Community- based, owned and managed learning institutions that meets the basic/primary education needs of pupils, who for a number of reasons, cannot enter government schools*”. (Zambia Community Schools Secretariat).

The number of Community schools has grown very rapidly. From about 120 Community Schools in 1997, there are currently mote than 1,300 Community Schools all over the country

#### **Community schools from 1996 to 2002**

Year	No of schools	Teachers	% Female teachers	% Girls	% Orphans	Total no of pupils
1996	38	131		46	3	6599
1997	123			42	19	19050
1998	220	568		47	18	28604
1999	473	799		48	20	47276
2000	701	1320		52	21	75362
2001						
2002	1335	3078	34	50		176629

Source:Community School Movement in Zambia Strategic Plan 2002-2006

One organisation; Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) alone provides community school education to more than 4,800 children in 17 schools. The education programme involves the provision of basic education, community development, teacher training, micro-finance and administration. Some community schools train the students also in vocational skills. ZOCS provides basic education to orphans and vulnerable children who lack access to the formal government school system for many varied reasons. ZOCS gives specific emphasis to children of age 9 to 16 years with a stated preference for girls, orphans and those most vulnerable.

Within Zambia, CSOs have emerged for a variety of reasons, but one of the main reasons has been to supplement government efforts in the provision of services.

- *CSOs are seen to have comparative advantages in providing services to marginalised and hard to reach groups in ways Government cannot.*

This was confirmed at all levels. The EU funded Zambia Education Capacity Building (ZECAB) project under MOE operates through CSOs only. ZECAB is a bursary scheme designed to assist with costs associated with schooling. The bursary includes covering PTA fees, user's fees, learning materials and other expenses. According to ZECAB going through CSOs is a much preferred way to the BESSIP arrangement in which bursaries are channelled through the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare. CSOs have a much better knowledge of who the poor are compared to a government ministry and generally have much better system for keeping track of receipts and use of the funds. According to ZECAB the BESSIP bursary scheme had to return 20% of its allocated funds to the Treasury despite the growing need for bursary schemes in the country. It was not possible to confirm this figure.

It is quite clear that community schools meet a big demand for more school places among the most vulnerable. At Livingstone's Linda Open Community School, for example, 165 out of 650 pupils were orphans. The school is in high demand and many more children have to be turned away than those who enter each year. In the more established community schools such as those operated by ZOCS the classroom size is limited to 40 pupils to ensure that quality learning will take place. 20 % of the children are on a bursary scheme.

It is food for thought that parallel to huge investments in BESSIP, there is a growing stream of children who need to be provided for outside the formal government framework. If the growth continues Zambia might end up with a massive number of schools outside the public system. The community schools visited had not seen a decrease of students after the introduction of "Free education policy" as had been expected. On the contrary, children were applying to these schools in a higher number than ever before. With a growing number of orphans and other vulnerable children one may end up with a system that reinforces perceptions that orphans and other vulnerable children have to suffice with non-formal education and not the universal approach which the government formal system delivers. Many of the more well-resourced organisations can probably provide as high or even higher quality education to their students. The majority of CSOs are not well-resourced, however, and cannot be expected to keep up with the expected standards.

This does not suggest that the Zambian Government does not do anything to ensure that marginalised groups are reached within the mainstream system. One example is its intention to introduce inclusive education into formal government schools. Currently there are 120 Special Needs Units with

teachers having been trained at the Zambezi Institute of Special Needs. While these efforts are commendable, this only a drop in the ocean and CSOs have therefore to a certain extent stepped in to supplement the public efforts.

- *CSOs involved in service delivery often have higher legitimacy as lobbyists and greater impact on policy processes than CSOs only doing advocacy.*

Save the Children, Norway does not confirm this statement. This organisation has a clear policy not to deliver education projects or to work outside the mainstream formal system. Instead the aim is to build capacity in the government structures in the provinces and districts of focus. Despite its lack of delivery of services SCN has become an active partner in policy dialogues with the Provincial and District Education authorities in the Southern Province.

In the current situation in Zambia, there is no such clear division between service delivery organisations and lobbying organisations. The closest to a non-service organisation met was the ZCSS, which serves as an umbrella organisation for CSOs running community schools. MOE has expressed concerns that ZCSS should not be too much engaged in active lobbying for the expansion of community schools, but instead should focus on trying to find mechanisms to streamline those organisations already involved in the movement.

As monitors (watchdogs) of rights and for particular interests:

- *The Government is not willing to open up for systematic review and impact analysis of SWAps from field based CSOs.*

Reviews and impact analyses have been initiated by some of the CSOs themselves, usually with funding from an international NGO. A major study was conducted by OXFAM-Zambia and the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JTRC) on the impact of cost-sharing in primary schools. The study states that this policy was encouraged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in recent years in order to curtail the government budget allocated to education. This had resulted in exclusion of children from poorer families. MOE invited JTRC to present the findings of the study at the BESSIP Annual Review Meeting in 2001. The findings revealed in the study are widely held to have speeded up the government's policy decision to introduce free education in 2002.

From the point of MOE, learning within the CSO sector has been relatively weak. The CSO sector itself has commented that research and documentation of experiences for learning purposes is a luxury within the sector. Good innovative practices are seldom captured for learning purposes. The Civil Society Coalition Forum is of the opinion that the reason for this is dwindling financial resources.

As innovators introducing new concepts and initiatives:

- *There is little evidence that CSOs contribute to SWAps as innovators – introducing innovative concepts and initiatives.*

One of the major innovations of the community schools has been the development of an alternative curriculum. These two curricula are Skills, Participation, Access and Relevant Knowledge (SPARK) and Government Basic Education Course. The SPARK curriculum targets specifically pupils who are aged between 9 and 16 years. Teaching is organized in such a manner that a child covers the 7 years conventional primary programme in 4 years. After completion of the 4 years programme, children are allowed to sit for the National Grade 7 examinations, and if they pass, they can enter Grade 8 in the government school system. At present, 10 % of the CSs follow the SPARK curriculum and 90% follow the Basic Education Curriculum, although in different ways. The SPARK curriculum is approved by the MOE and MOE has recently adapted the emphasis of this curriculum to vocational skills training.

It should be clear that CSOs in education means more than their relations to the formal government education structure. There was strong opinion among many of the CSOs met that their approaches to communities give more attention to building empowerment and human capacities in the communities, bringing about participatory democracy and strengthening communities own skills than the government could possibly do. Some CSOs do not see themselves only as providers of education to fill the gaps where the government fails, but to empower communities through community initiatives and strengths. Many more CSOs and alternative approaches have surfaced in the last few years. As more resources are channeled to CSOs to support their education programmes, particularly at a time when the Zambian government is experiencing serious economic recession, the sensitivity of donor support to CSOs is likely to raise some concerns at the Government level.

Some CSOs are also cautious that they should not only act as a lengthier arm for the government, reaching places and communities GoZ cannot. In their view community schools represent an alternative strategy within education. The key is the ability to identify the difference between innovation and substitution. MOE is aware that many CSOs run poor quality programmes, with no innovations at all. Such programmes can hardly even qualify as substitutes for the government schools. CSOs that focus much on innovation and empowerment also focus on capacity building with the communities and for their own community school teachers.

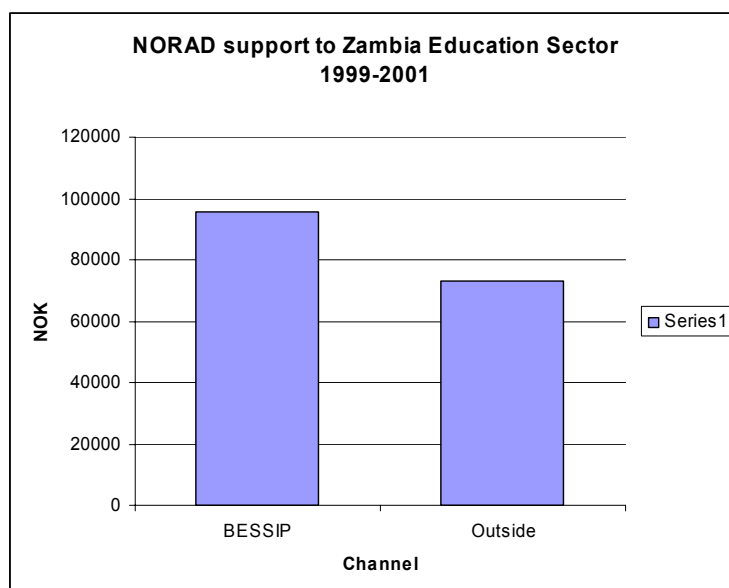
Collaboration in educational innovations works both ways. While there was an initial hope among many actors in the Zambian education system that BESSIP would lead to fundamental changes in the quality of education in government schools, the process of change has taken a long time. Through BESSIP a number of pedagogical reforms developed have been transferred to community schools. A case in point is the “Breakthrough to Literacy program which has been adopted by all major CSOs.

As financiers:

- *CSOs play a marginal role as financiers of SWAps*

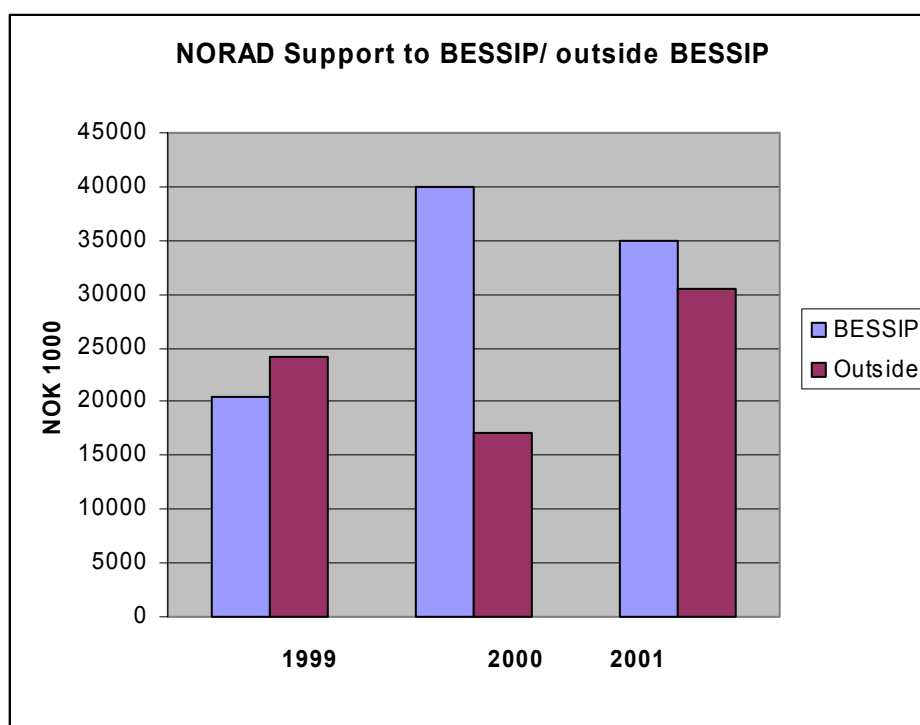
Most CSOs finance their programmes from external sources which are not accounted for in the BESSIP framework.

The sheer volume of donor funds to BESSIP makes contributions outside this channel less visible. NORAD has not, however, focused only on BESSIP, but supports organizations such as ZOCS and Save the Children directly. NORAD does not see a contradiction between the two channels, but has coordinated these efforts internally within the Embassy.



Funds outside the BESSIP framework are not always in basic education but include support to higher and tertiary education, research and support to the institutional collaboration between the MOE in Zambia and MOE in Norway. There are also some small scholarship programmes and a small share for the Norwegian Volunteer Service. The single largest recipient of NORAD funds outside the BESSIP framework is through UNICEF (total approximate NOK 25 Million for 1999-2001) with support to various programmes related to girls' education such as policy work and a continuation of the Programme for the Advancement of Girls' Education (PAGE). As it would take some time to integrate the basic principles of PAGE into BESSIP it was decided to continue to support this programme for an interim period. Two Norwegian NGOs, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Save the Children, Norway (SCN) received NOK 19 Million and NOK 9 Million respectively. NCA's activities are mainly focused on pre-school education, whereas SCN's core activities are all related to basic education in the Southern Province. Zambia Open Community School

(ZOCS) was the largest Zambian NGO receiving funds from NORAD. Several smaller projects were geared towards HIV/AIDS information and textbook distribution.



The level of support to BESSIP has been in the range of NOK 20 Million in 1999, NOK 40 Million in 2000 and NOK 35 Million in 2001. The total frame for support is NOK 140 Million. Support outside the BESSIP framework has remained high throughout the period, and the number of CSO partners has remained more or less the same. NCA, SCN and ZOCS have all been channels for NORAD funds.

Some international agencies e.g. DFID, only support CSOs through the MOE structures. “Youth Media” is one example of DFID supported CSOs within the MOE HIV/AIDS budget. USAID’s policy is somewhat more flexible and CSOs can be supported directly. After BESSIP, however, USAID has reduced availability of funds for CSOs for the reason that the major share of education support should go to strengthening the government education system. NORAD funds to SCN are channeled from SCN HQ directly to the SCN Provincial office in Zambia.

- *CSOs are part of national sector policy, but funds do not flow through the Government budget.*

There is a difference between national and international CSOs in this respect. International organizations were generally considered by the MOE to have a higher level of integrity, being more transparent and having recognized reporting and accounting procedures. Funding for these international organizations may be through the Government’s budget either at central or



provincial level. Quite a few of the national NGOs involved in issues such as school health and nutrition or HIV/AIDS related areas received funding from bilateral donors through MOE's budget.

- *CSOs are increasingly funded directly by the government through contractual arrangements.*

Contractual arrangements are the way forward, as seen from the Government side. In some BESSIP sub-components there are already contracts with NGOs such as FAWEZA and Family Health Trust (FHT), but financial means are generated from external sources. FHT is working on information, communication and training in life skills as a sub-contracted partner to MOE. FHT has trained staff at the provincial levels, teachers and also staff at district levels. A major outcome was a brochure on how to live safe and happy and this brochure has been approved at national level by the Curriculum Development Centre. 30,000 copies have been distributed to schools.

#### **6.4 What are the Effects of SWApS**

To what extent and how are CSOs funded as part of the SWAp?

- *The funding of CSOs through SWApS is limited.*

The growth of the CSO sector in Zambia has had important implications for their status within the MOE. 2002 saw a significant increase in assistance from MOE to at least 40% of the community school. In line with the objectives set in the National Education Policy ("Educating Our Future" 1996), and Policies and Guidelines for the Development Of Community Schools in Zambia, Report of the Task Force, 2001, the Ministry is committed to supporting CSs. In May 2001, the MOE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ZCSS in which the Government stresses its commitment to support the movement and to provide regulatory service, as well as providing teachers training and salaries.

There was no information available to estimate the actual support given by MOE, but there is a general agreement that it has increased significantly. Not all support has been direct financial support to the CSOs, but has taken the form of indirect support to establish technical support structures at decentralized levels and teacher training. MOE has, for example, appointed and employed Focal Point Persons for CSs in all 9 provinces and districts. As of recent the Chief Inspector of Schools (CIS) has been appointed as the National Focal Point Person for CSs within the Moe HQs. The Focal Points will have an important role with respect to servicing the community school movement at provincial and district level. The actual functions of these persons remain yet to be elaborated.

Government teachers are increasingly being deployed to community schools, and these are then automatically on the government's payroll. 2002 saw a

significant contribution when MOE invited community school teachers for various in-service and distance Primary Teacher Training courses. This is generally recognized by the CSOs as a very critical support from the government.

The increase in government support in terms of school grants provision was also welcomed, although the change was said to have been sudden and not discussed with the CSOs beforehand. ZOCS felt that as a consequence, community apathy seemed more pronounced as a subtle attitude of shifting total responsibility for education was again seen to be belonging back in the realm of the government. In the past, ZOCS has placed tremendous effort in building local community capacity and participation in the management of the schools. With the surety of the government grant communities appear to be relaxed in their efforts to raise money for the schools. These teachers are on the government's payroll. Community school teachers have also increasingly been invited to in-service training at the local teachers' resource centers. So far there is no systematic overview of the total amount of financial support received by the CSOs through BESSIP.

Classrooms, desks and other infrastructure in CSOs operated schools have not yet seen support from the government. It was also noted that ordinary textbooks being provided through the Education Board systems would not usually reach community schools. The well-resourced international CSOs, however, seemed to find their way to tap the Curriculum Development Centre for books and material and could therefore have a fairly good supply of textbooks in the school. A concern was raised that many small CSOs did not have the same opportunities.

- *International CSOs and bilateral donors remain the donors of national CSOs*

This was confirmed for the larger national CSOs. A further issue is the relationship between domestic CSOs and international NGOs. Zambian CSOs would in most cases need to contend with requirements and agendas set by international organizations. Competition for funding is fierce and activities tend to be donor-driven. Some CSOs felt that it was very important to maintain a clear vision of what they themselves would like to do.

Both USAID and DFID admitted that funding to the BESSIP framework has significantly reduced resources available for CSOs in education. DFID has a clear policy that all funding for CSOs has to be channelled through MOE, except in some cases for which a separate HIV/AIDS allocation can be mobilised. CSOs that have been funded by DFID through the MOE system have found this as a mixed blessing. The Youth Media, for example, an organisation which produces newsletters about HIV/AIDS for dissemination at school level, found that slow procurement procedures slowed down progress and made dissemination of the newsletters less regular than originally planned. USAID, which is not among the pooling partners in BESSIP, has less rigorous mechanisms for support to CSOs and is free to support them also outside the BESSIP structure.

- *The Government wants to maintain control and dominate CSOs*

Control takes many forms and not all efforts by MOE to control the CSOs were taken as an effort to dominate the sector. One of the major concerns that has emerged on the education scene in Zambia is that of quality of the education being provided. Representatives from MOE clearly stated that government financial provisions to community schools can only be carried out according to a system of accreditation so as to ensure that a minimum level of standards is being adhered to. ZOCS has experienced that the interaction between MOE and community school teachers had become a positive force for quality improvement. Teachers have been monitored by teachers from the government primary schools. The more recognized large CSOs recognize that they claim legitimacy in provision of education in two ways. The first is that they work closely with the communities and as such contribute to a strengthening of the civil society base for support to education. The second is through results and achievements of the students. Many community schools can demonstrate that a large number of their students actually complete the full primary cycle and pass the Grade 7 exam.

- *Decentralization has challenged the monopoly of a top-down Ministry approach and opened up for stronger CSO involvement*

It is a generally held view that BESSIP has helped initiate a process of decentralization of education. The degree to which CSOs have mushroomed at district levels appears to be a function of this process.

- *Have Norwegian organizations been involved and how are they affected?*

SCN operates in the Southern Province, with support directly to the Provincial Education Office and with a focus on Livingstone and Kazungula Districts.. SCN's involvement in Zambia is a result of the sector sponsorship between Norway and Zambia. In 1997 NORAD requested SCN to assess its possibilities to support the Norwegian efforts to strengthen the education sector in Zambia. SCN was asked to work with the MOE in these endeavors. SCN's involvement illustrates how CSOs can move away from stand-alone projects and micromanagement to becoming engaged in new partnerships and modes of operation within a SWAp framework whilst retaining their own characteristics as pro-poor organizations with a strong policy focus on local community participation and direct involvement of the grassroots in their pursuit of their educational goals. Selection of activities has aligned the SCN closely to policy processes at the level of the provincial government with SCN funds being integrated into the provincial budget framework. SCN has also built on existing district management structures and responsibilities and assisted both the PEO and DEOs in promoting ownership and capacity building. Evaluation reports show that local communities have become more aware of the importance of education. However, evidence also suggest that

educational authorities at local level are still rather dependent upon technical back-up in the process and that the CSO in question needs to stand back and focus on key messages over a prolonged period of time to influence changes in conventional top-down modes of delivery of educational services.

SCN appears to be the only Norwegian CSO that has been directly involved in implementation of BESSIP. The advantage lies in the possibilities to establish long-lasting benefits in support of the education system as a whole. The disadvantage appears to be that weak administrative systems at provincial levels make results slow and less visible.

## **7 Recommendations**

- The principle actors in the education sector processes are the national government, local government, the local communities and the CSO groups. The CSOs emphasized the need for governments and CSOs to move from coexistence into active collaboration. There seems to be a need for more active involvement of CSOs in formal government schools. This can improve community participation and ownership, while government's involvement in CSO activities can improve replicability of CSO-operated projects. The critical issue appears to be to speed up the process of accreditation of alternative routes to education. There is a need to ensure that community schools do not become a poor copy of the government formal schools requiring fewer investments and absorbing the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children.
- There is a need to evaluate and learn from promising alternative pedagogical approaches and for CSOs to share information among themselves and for MOE to learn from CSOs grassroots experience. The CSOs should be encouraged to intensify their efforts in a coordinated way.
- As MOE is in the process of moving towards a full sector approach which includes early childhood education, vocational skills training, civic education and so on, the roles of CSOs should be clearly stated in strategic policy plans and plans of action. In particular, MOE should indicate how the resources of central government, local communities, and CSOs are to be channeled to ensure that vulnerable groups are being reached.
- The government should see the contribution of CSOs in education as broader than just a means to implementing basic education to groups whose needs are not met by the formal government school system. The CSOs are resources in themselves and more efforts should be made to build on CSO institutional bases and know-how in providing innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

- Community participation usually requires different institutional arrangements, more time and more resources than can be found within the government structure. Though CSO effects at local level are indisputable, their benefits are sustainable only to the extent that the government pays for teachers and other critical resources. When the economy has not grown but poverty among people is growing dramatically, local communities cannot be expected to raise funds to sustain teachers from a long term perspective.
- Norway should support initiatives which use the expertise of CSOs fully in capacity building at local as well as central levels of the education system.

## **Annex 1: Mandate**

The purpose of the country studies is:

- (a) To review the roles of civil society organisations in selected sector programmes – in particular in relation to roles played by CSO, analysis of opportunities and constraints, and results achieved.
- (b) Provide advice and recommendations to NORAD, Embassies and Norwegian NGO on how to improve the interaction between social sector SWAps and civil society.

The country studies will be used to discuss the relevance and validity of the issues and questions developed in Chapter 4 in this report. The entry point is the interface between national CSOs and sector programmes. Within this context we will also review the roles played and contributions made by Norwegian NGOs.

In countries where NORAD has undertaken a study on Norwegian support to Civil Society, the insights from these studies should be linked to the studies proposed here.

### **Questions for the Case Studies**

1. What are the characteristics of CSOs in the social sector in the respective countries and who are the key players?
2. Who are funding CSOs and what is the role of Norwegian organisations?
3. What are Government policies and practices vis-à-vis civil society?
4. What is the background for and scope of SWAps in the country?

### ***Assessment of CSO Roles***

1. What is the level of involvement of CSOs in the formulation and implementation of SWAps in the country?
  - There has been an increasing involvement of CSOs in SWAps, but originally the involvement was marginal and CSOs contributions were not recognised as important.
  - The new generation SWAps have moved towards a redefinition of the state – providing a framework for enabling interventions by a variety of actors.
  - Interactions between Government and CSOs is still limited and strained by mutual scepticism and reluctance.
  - Policies of stronger public/private partnerships are still more aspirational than providing clear and realistic guidelines.
2. What CSOs were asked to take part and why?
  - Participation is first and foremost based on invitation from Government.
  - Controversial advocacy organisations tend not to be invited by the Government to discuss SWAps.
  - The basis on which involvement from CSOs take place is unclear.

3. What roles have CSOs played and how have they played those roles?
- (a) As contributors to policy discussion and formulation:
- The involvement of CSOs as contributors to policy discussion is on the increase, especially at national level.
  - Sectoral policy documents make limited reference to the involvement of civil society.
  - Policy formulation is still extremely centralised.
  - Consultations have tended to be strongest at the development stage of a SWAp and fade away once the programme gets underway.
  - CSOs lack the capacity and skill to take part in policy discussions.
  - There is limited capacity in Governments to interface with the private sector.
- (b) As advocates and lobbyists:
- Governments are uncomfortable with CSOs in their roles as advocates and watchdogs and reluctant to accept the legitimacy of an oppositional “voice”.
  - Civil society is fragmented with competing networks and umbrella organisations.
  - There is no common CSO voice and national networks are weak or absent.
- (c) As service deliverers (operators):
- CSOs are mainly being invited and involved in SWAps as service providers – sub contracted by national or district authorities.
  - Service delivery and rights based CSOs are perceived as antipodes while the relationships between service delivery and rights based programming remain unclear and under-defined.
  - CSOs are seen to have comparative advantages in providing services to marginalised and hard to reach groups in ways Government cannot.
  - CSOs involved in service delivery have often higher legitimacy as lobbyists and impact on policy processes than CSOs only doing advocacy.
- (d) As monitors (watchdog) of rights and for particular interests:
- The Government is not willing to open up for systematic review and impact analysis of SWAps from field based CSOs.
  - The Government is not willing to invite to discussions or fund their own critics.
- (e) As innovators introducing new concepts and initiatives:
- There is little evidence that CSOs contribute to SWAps as innovators – introducing innovative concepts and initiatives.
- (f) As financiers:
- CSOs play a marginal role as financiers of SWAps.
  - CSOs are part of national sector policy, but funds do not flow through the Government budget.

- CSOs are increasingly funded directly by the government through contractual arrangements.

### *Effects of the SWAps*

1. To what extent and how are CSOs funded as part of the SWAp?
  - The funding of CSOs through SWAps is limited.
  - International CSOs and bilateral donors remain the donors of national CSOs.
  - Local CSOs meet several barriers in accessing funds from the Government.
  - The Government wants to maintain control and dominate CSOs.
  - Cash strapped districts are reluctant to release funds for CSO activities.
2. Have SWAps supported or delayed ongoing decentralisation efforts in the country?
  - Decentralisation have challenged the monopoly of a top-down Ministry approach and opened up for stronger CSO involvement.
  - CSO involvement has provided support for a multi-sectoral response.
  - Mostly national CSOs are involved in SWAps.
  - If district- and community based CSOs are involved in SWAps, it is the role as service providers.
3. Have Norwegian/international organisations been involved and how are they affected?
  - Few Norwegian CSOs are involved in SWAps.
  - International NGOs are still the dominant technical and financial supporters of national CSOs.
  - There is no forum and few mechanisms through which Norwegian CSOs can take part in SWAps.
  - There has been a tendency in NORAD to view Norwegian NGOs mainly as service providers in relation to SWAps.
4. What are potential, promising and realistic approaches to strengthening the participation of civil society at local and national level in sector programmes?
  - What are the potential roles of formal and informal groups?
  - Which groups/organisations have capacity and skills to a more active involvement?
  - What are the most relevant area of involvement?



## Appendix 2. Programme and people met

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Activity</i>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Arrival
<b>7<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Pick up from ZOCS Garden School Mancilla School Linda School
<b>10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Pupils, teachers, parents and the management committees at all schools With ZCSS ( umbrella body for all community schools in Zambia- also sits on the BESSIP committees) to visit rural schools all day  Ndeke Community School Ndeke Community Centre
<b>11<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>Morning</b> <b>Afternoon</b>	Pupils, teachers, workshops <b>Ministry of Education and BESSIP managers.</b> Mr. Arnold Chengo (BESSIP Operations Manager) Ms. B.N. Chitambo (BESSIP Financial Manager)  Mr. J.G. McCormack (Programme manager ZECAB- Zambia Education Capacity Building)  <b>Zambia Teachers' Union.</b> Ms. Helen Mwiiky, (Director Gender Unit) Mr. Joel Camako, (Director Public Relations and International Affairs)  <b>Education Broadcasting Service (EBS).</b> Ms. Sera W. Kariuki, (Technical Advisor) Ms. F.M. Mubiana (IRI Outreach Manager), Mr. Foster Lobinda (Programme Director)
<b>12<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>13<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Zambian holiday <b>Meeting in the Informal Donors Group for BESSIP-</b> lead by Netherlands' Embassy Mr. Bert Huguenin,(First Secretary), Ms. Turid Hallstrøm, (Education Advisor Norwegian Embassy) Ms. Marianne Christensen (Education Advisor for Danida in MOE), Ms. Mette Knudsen, (Education Advisor Danish Embassy) Mr. Richard Arden, (Education Advisor DFID) Mr. Kevin Kelly, (Irish Embassy) Mr. Kent Noel,( Education Advisor, USAID)  <b>Meeting with People's Action Forum,</b> Ms. Jennifer Chiwela (Executive Director)

**Meeting with NGOs**

Sr. Marian Leaf (ZOCS)

Mr. Museweme K. Muweme ( Assistant Director Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection)

Ms. Mary Phiri (Executive Director, Youth Media)

Mr. Peter Sinyangwa (Family Health Trust)

Mr. Andre Irabishohoff (Director, Zambia Community Schools Secretariat)

**14<sup>th</sup> March**

**Visit to Bauleni Special Needs Unit**

Ms. Alice M. Nzala (Principal Education Standards (SPED) MOE)

Sr. Elisabeth Dawson ( Co-ordinator Bauleni Street Kids)

Ms. Mikala Mukorogula (Teacher I in charge)

**Meeting with Lusaka District Education Office**

Ms. Maureen M. Sinwatchambu, (District Inspector Schools)

**Meeting with DFID and USAID,**

Ms Catherine Mulenga (Programme Officer DFID)

Mr. Kent Noel (Education Advisor USAID)

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01	4	Aids Action Plan	Position
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03	3	Building demand-led and pro-poor financial systems	Position
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03	6	Study on Private sector Development and Prospects for Norwegian trade and investment interests in Vietnam	Discussion
03	7	Study on Norwegian Support to Civil Society in Uganda	Discussion
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04	2	SWAPs and Civil Society – The roles of Civil Society Organisations in Sector Programmes	Discussion
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