

## **DEDICATION**

To my beloved son and wife for enduring my absence and unwavering sacrifice.

To my father and loving memory of Gertrude Mbao Sitambuli, my mother, you instilled in me the value of education.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This thesis would not have been completed without the contributions and varying support of many people. Sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Tatek Abebe for his time, valuable guidance, critical comments, and suggestions throughout the course of my writing process.

I would like also to extend my special gratitude to all the lecturers at the Norwegian Centre for Child Research (NOSEB) for equipping me with skills that will ultimately prove worth during my career trajectory. Special thanks goes to Randi Dyblie Nilsen for useful comments and insights in the Master thesis seminars. I would like also to extend special thanks to Rannveig Singasaas, for her guidance and logistics support of studentship at NOSEB.

I am also indebted to the Norwegian government, through the Norwegian State Loan Fund for providing financial support to pursue the MPhil programme at NTNU and the International office for facilitating it.

My appreciation goes to the Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child Health (MCD-MCH) and in particular the department of social welfare in Kalomo, Kalomo Community District Medical office and Kalomo Municipal Council for availing research materials, policy documents and assisting with other logistical issues throughout the research project.

I also extend my appreciation to the children, parents, grandmothers and caregivers for their support, information and cooperation during fieldwork.

My sincere gratitude also goes to the following individuals for their support and assistance during my fieldwork and throughout the entire research process. To each of them I say thank you; Miss. Hamonga (DSWO), Mr. Mabvuto Chungu (CWAC secretary Mawaya catchment area), Mr. M Marshap (Director of works kalomo Municipal council), and to Douglas Tendai phiri, Charity Chinyama , Muule Mutinta Monga, Aaron Farroh Mvula thank you for your moral support.

Above all my special thanks and praise to Jehovah God for the favour, mercy and grace granted throughout my study and in all spheres of my life.



## **ABSTRACT**

The focus of this thesis is to explore orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) experiences of social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) in Kalomo district, Zambia. The research aimed at gaining knowledge on OVC experience and perspectives of cash transfer scheme for provision of basic needs, the key problems that OVC face, local conceptualisation of orphanhood and vulnerability, how OVC benefit from social cash transfer scheme, and other livelihoods alternative they engage in besides social cash transfer scheme.

This thesis is informed by the theoretical perspectives of the sociology of childhood which argues that childhood is a social construct; children are social actors capable of making meaning of their lives and the lives of those around them. In addition, the thesis is grounded on the rationale for social protection and children in Africa because children have the right to social protection and that social protection contributes to poverty alleviation, inclusive growth and the ultimate potential role of social protection in enhancing families' capacity to take care for their children.

The perspectives presented in the thesis draw on different qualitative research methods such as semi-participants observation, informal dialogue, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and researchers' diary with twelve OVC, four guardians/caregiver and one programme officer coordinating SCTS. The data collected was qualitatively analysed.

The study revealed that OVC are locally understood in terms of socially fluid criteria such as lack of care and basic needs rather than what SCTS defines them which is based on the biological aspect of parenting. The study reveals that OVC benefit from cash transfer through the provision of extra meals to households they come from thereby able to go to school energetically and also they benefited from in-kind support such as payment of school fees and procurement of school materials particularly those coming from benefiting households. More importantly the study shows how cash is utilised for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options and the agency of children in contributing to household livelihoods. SCT and household livelihoods strategies reinforce each other and help vulnerable households break away from the cycle of poverty. However, the findings shows that SCTS programme is underfunded and meeting education needs was the major problem faced by OVC. In addition, SCTS only covers labour constrained households, consequently this kind of the scheme need to be complemented by labour-based social protection schemes, so that all OVC are covered regardless of whether they are coming from labour constrained or non-labour constrained households. These findings have important implications for policy in terms of rethinking social protection schemes to vulnerable children in Zambia and beyond.



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AUC	African Union Commission
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CWAC	Community Welfare Assistance Committee
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfers
DSWO	District Social Welfare Officer
DWAC	District Welfare Assistance Committee
FBO	Faith Based Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
MCD-MCH	Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child Health
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
MGCD	Ministry of Gender and Child Development
MSYCD	Ministry of Sports Youth and Child development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTNU	Norwegian University of Science and Technology
NOSEB	Norwegian Centre for Child Research
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PS	Permanent Secretary
PWAS	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SCTS	Social Cash Transfer Scheme

UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UN-CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USD	United State Dollar
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic Health Survey
ZMK	Zambian Kwacha

## **1 Introduction**

Social welfare is the wellbeing of an individual, family or community. This is a cross cutting discipline that borders on the provision of goods and services relating to health, education, nutrition, employment, housing, and legal matters, especially to the vulnerable people of a society. In this regard, social welfare is meant to be a public social safety net for citizens who among others include orphans and vulnerable children, the physically challenged children, incapacitated individuals, the old and the sick. These citizens are supposed to benefit from the national welfare system that offers different forms of insurance and assistance programs. However, in Zambian context the national social welfare systems alone cannot meet the needs of the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children hence, the traditional welfare systems in which the extended family seems to play a crucial role in caring for the orphans and vulnerable children needs to be strengthened.

Some of the social support schemes introduced by the Government of the republic of Zambia to its citizens living under extreme poverty among others include social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) administered through Public welfare assistance scheme. This kind of scheme is meant to improve the wellbeing of the most Vulnerable group of the society and those individual living under extreme poverty.

The Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCD-MCH) and the Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MGCD) are the key ministries in Zambia responsible for the welfare and development of the child. The welfare and development of children is guaranteed in the constitution and through the National Child Policy and other related policies and legislations. However, the situation for the Zambian children remains unfavourable. Providing care and support for OVCs is one of the biggest challenges Zambia faces today, as the growing numbers overwhelm available resources (MSYCD & MCDSS 2006).

In this thesis, I will therefore, explore children (OVC) experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer/Public welfare scheme by looking at their views about what they benefit and how OVC experience/encounter social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) for provision of basic needs. In addition, I discuss the local understanding of orphanhood and vulnerability, challenges of the scheme (social cash transfer) and based on my empirical study; I will further discuss other livelihood alternatives OVC engage in. My thesis will also explore the

extent to which the Government of the republic of Zambia is fulfilling the implementation of Provision Rights of children enshrined in the UN-CRC. I feel it would be imperative to discuss OVC experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer because their lived experience has the potential to provide valuable sources of knowledge for purposes of formulation and designing of policy/intervention for the wellbeing of children.

### **1.1 Initial Interest**

My initial interest to study OVC experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) emanated from the fact that the Government is fundamentally invested with the responsibility to ensure that the wellbeing of all children is guaranteed. I have had keen interest in knowing how vulnerable groups of the society are faring with their lives bearing in mind that the state is there for them through implementation of various social safety nets programmes. Social protection measure is one of the Government's priorities in Zambia. Social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) which is being administered through Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) under MCD-MCH is one of the Government's major social welfare packages aimed at providing the basic necessities to the most vulnerable and those living in extreme poverty. PWAS as a social protection strategy is in form of cash, food, clothing, basic shelter, education and health care support.

In Zambia like many other developing countries, there exist International and local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as UNICEF, World Vision International, Plan International, Community Based Organisations (CBO) and Faith Based Organisation (FBO) that have responded to supplement Government efforts to improve the wellbeing of orphans and vulnerable children. Although there are many service providers in the social welfare field of which the Government is not an exception and plays a major role in the delivery of services, such services have had lapses in service delivery (MCDSS, 2011). As a result, the best interest of the vulnerable has been affected. This is in spite of the fact that both the UNCRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Child (ACRWC) focuses on the role the state must play in promoting child wellbeing. There is little known or knowledge gap regarding the impacts, strengths and weaknesses of social safety net programme provided by the Zambian Government to orphans and vulnerable children on child point of view.



## **1.2 Research questions and objectives**

The aim of my thesis is to explore children (OVCs) experience/encounter of social cash transfer scheme for provision of basic needs in Kalomo district, Zambia. This study seek to answer two research question:

- How do OVC experience/encounter social cash transfer scheme for provision of basic needs in Kalomo district, Zambia?
- What are the key problems faced by OVC in Kalomo district, Zambia?

Therefore, the research project has the following objectives:

- Explore the local understanding of orphanhood and vulnerability.
- Explore key problems faced by OVC.
- Assess how OVC basic needs are met through provision of SCTS of welfare services.
- Assess the benefits and unintended consequences associated with social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) on Orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs).
- Explore other livelihoods alternatives children engage in beside social cash transfer scheme.

The above research objectives are addressed by the following research questions;

- What is the local understanding of orphanhood and vulnerability?
- What are the key problems that OVC face in Kalomo?
- How are the basic needs for OVC met through provision of SCTS of welfare support?
- What are the benefits and unintended consequences associated with social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) on orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)?
- What other livelihoods alternatives children engage in besides social cash transfer scheme?

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

It is imperative to note that, formulation of good and sound policies relies heavily on the availability of relevant information. Due to the fact that assessment of impacts of welfare services on OVCs in Zambia tend to focus on Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs), there is little known about OVCs experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer scheme. It is in view of this that this study will generate knowledge specifically from the child point of view by exploring children's (OVCs) experience/encounter of the social cash transfer scheme for provision of basic needs. Taking into account the child's point of view is what Katz refers to as the "bottom-up perspective on quality". She argues that the children's experience of a programme is a determinant of the programme's effects Evans (1996, p. 19), citing Katz 1993. This has the potential for informed policy formulation processes and programme planning by the government aimed at improving the welfare and development of children. The study will further contribute to the ongoing debates that focus on how best children's wellbeing can be improved. In addition, my study will address what I view as the knowledge gap on intervention programmes designed for OVC because there is little research existing on impacts of interventions particularly from the government. Not only that, there is lack or little research that takes into account how OVC experiences are linked to interventions in their daily lives.

### **1.4 Outline of the thesis**

My thesis is organised into eight chapters. The introduction is presented in chapter one in which I have looked at the aim, objectives, research questions and significance of the study. In this chapter, I have also presented the reasons why I got interested to study children's (OVC) perspectives and experience of social cash transfer (SCTS). In chapter two, I will present the country profile of Zambia and in particular demographical data and the general condition of children. I will also look at socio-economic context of Zambia, OVC situation and institution policies that are put in place aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of the children. At the end of this chapter, I will give a description of Kalomo district which formed the context of my study. In addition, I will present chapter three of my thesis that will cover the methodology. In this chapter I will present the methodological process undertaken and methods that I used to gather data in the field, the ethical considerations, challenges and limitations of the study. In chapter four, I will discuss the main concepts and theoretical perspectives that informed me in my study. In chapter five, I will present and discuss findings about Community understanding of Orphanhood, Vulnerability and the role of SCTS in

strengthening the extended family. Moreover, in chapter six I discuss the findings in relation to the programme manager experience and perspectives of welfare scheme on OVC and the extent to which the Government of the republic of Zambia is fulfilling provision rights to children. In chapter seven, I will discuss my findings on interface between social cash transfer and livelihood alternatives with further analysis by linking them to my theoretical perspectives in chapter four. I will finally present the summery, concluding remarks and recommendations in chapter eight by highlighting the main issues emanating from the study.



## **2 Country profile, and research context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I will describe the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Zambia in general and Kalomo district. In particular the chapter will highlight the general living condition of children by focusing on infant and child mortality rate, maternal mortality rate, nutrition status of the children and OVC school attendance and basic material needs. This will be done in order to provide contextual data for understanding of challenges faced by OVC. This chapter also highlights situation analysis of OVC and the institutional and policy frameworks that are vital for the enhancement of the wellbeing of the children in Zambia. In addition, it presents the study context by describing the characteristics of the local area where the study was undertaken.

### **2.2 Geographical location of Zambia**

Zambia is a land-locked sub-Saharan African country sharing boundaries with the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania in the north; Malawi and Mozambique in the east; Zimbabwe and Botswana in the south; Namibia in the southwest and Angola in the west. Zambia covers a land area of 752,612 square kilometres, and lies between 8 and 18 degrees south latitude and between 20 and 35 degrees east longitude. Administratively, the country is divided into (10) ten provinces and each province is further divided into districts which act as decentralised administrative centres. Zambia is a former British colony which gained its independence on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1964.

For administrative purposes, Zambia has the following provinces that include Lusaka and Copperbelt which are more urbanized and the others are Central, Eastern, Western, Southern, North- western, Luapula and the newly created province called Muchinga.



Figure 1. Map of Zambia, with administrative boundaries and neighbouring countries.

Internet Source: <http://www.mapsofworld.com/zambia/zambia-political-map.html> on 06th October 2014, 14:02 hours.

## 2.3 Demography, and general condition of children

Central Statistical Office (CSO) records indicate that Zambia has an estimated total population of 13 million people as captured in the 2010 National population census (CSO, 2012). Males comprised 49.3 percent and females 50.7 percent of the total population. The country has a youth population of which 45.4% of the population falls below the age of 15 years, and 20.8% between the ages of 15 and 24.

### 2.3.1 Infant and child mortality

Information on infant and child mortality is a basic indicator of a country's socio-economic development and, as such, is important for the planning and evaluation of health policies and programmes. Statistics and data regarding infant mortality that I will present in this section are purely based on the Zambia Demographic Health Survey 2007. According to CSO (2009), early childhood mortality rates for the three five-years period preceding the 2007 ZDHS survey shows that, under-five mortality was 119 deaths per 1,000 live births. The child mortality rate, which was 52 deaths per 1,000, was the rate at which children survived by their first birthday but not to their fifth birthday. The infant mortality rate was 70 deaths per 1,000 live births and neonatal mortality rate was 34 deaths per 1,000 births. An examination of mortality levels across the three successive five-year periods suggests that under-five mortality decreased from 157 deaths per 1,000 births during the middle to late 1990s (1993-94 to 1997-98) to 119 deaths per 1,000 births during the first half of this decade (2002-03 to 2007-08).

According to trends in under-five mortality for successive five-year periods before the four rounds of the DHS surveys in Zambia (1992, 1996, 2001-2002, and 2007), The data indicate that neonatal mortality decreased from 42 deaths per 1,000 births in the first ZDHS in 1992 to 34 deaths per 1,000 births in the 2007 ZDHS. Similarly, post neonatal mortality shows a decrease from 65 deaths per 1,000 births in 1992 to 36 deaths per 1,000 births in the period 2003- 2007. Infant mortality decreased by 35 percent in 15 years, and under-five mortality has decreased by 45 percent over the same period.

#### ***2.3.1.1 Socio-economic differentials in infant and child mortality***

Based on mortality estimates that were calculated for the 10-years period before the survey, childhood mortality rates do not differ significantly when comparing urban and rural areas. For example, the under-five mortality rate was 132 deaths per 1,000 births in the urban areas, compared with 139 deaths per 1,000 births in rural areas. Among the provinces, under-five mortality ranged from 103 deaths per 1,000 births to 159 deaths per 1,000 births.

#### ***2.3.1.2 Gendered differentials in early childhood mortality***

According to ZDHS 2007, childhood mortality data shows differentials between female and male children. For all childhood mortality indicators, male children were more likely to die than female children. For example, approximately 151 male children per 1,000 births were likely to die before their fifth birthday, compared with 124 per 1,000 female children. Infant mortality for males and females was 66 and 55 deaths per 1,000 births, respectively. The mother's age at birth was a key child survival determinant. The data indicated that the lower the mother's age, the higher the likelihood that her child will die before age five. For example, the infant mortality rate for children born to mothers who were less than age 20 at the time of the survey was 100 per 1,000 live births, compared with 78 for children whose mothers were age 20-29.

Childhood mortality rates was higher among first-borns than other children. For example, the infant mortality rate for first-born children at the time of the survey was 105 per 1,000 live births, compared with 75 for children who were second- or third-order.

#### ***2.3.1.3 Perinatal/maternal mortality***

Pregnancy losses occurring after seven completed months of gestation (stillbirths) plus deaths among live births within the first seven days of life (early neonatal deaths) together constitute perinatal deaths. Perinatal and maternal health are closely linked. The perinatal mortality rate for the five-year period preceding the ZDHS 2007 survey for Zambia as a whole was 38

deaths per 1,000 pregnancies. It appeared that perinatal mortality tends to decrease with increasing length of birth intervals. Perinatal mortality was higher among children of mothers younger than age 20.

### **2.3.2 Nutritional status of children**

For the 2007 ZDHS, the nutritional status of children was calculated using new growth standards published by WHO in 2006. Although data were collected for all children under age six, the analysis was limited to children under age five. Height and weight measurements were obtained for 93 percent of the 6,453 children under age five who were present in ZDHS households at the time of the survey.

The results of the survey indicated that 45 percent of children under five were stunted and 21 percent were severely stunted. Stunting was apparent even among children less than 6 months of age. Male children (48 percent) were more likely to be stunted than female children (42 percent). Education and wealth status of mothers were both inversely related to stunting levels. Stunting decreases with increasing levels of mother's education. For example, data showed that children born to mothers with primary level education are more likely to be stunted (49 percent) than children born to mothers with more than secondary education (21 percent).

Five percent of children under five were wasted. Wasting varied greatly by age and peaked among children age 9-11 months (12 percent). Boys were slightly more likely to be wasted than girls (6 percent compared with 5 percent). Children reported to be very small at birth were more likely to be wasted (9 percent) than those reported to be of average size or larger (5 percent). Wasting among children born to thin mothers was higher than for children born to normal mothers and overweight/obese mothers. There was slight difference in wasting between urban (4 percent) and rural children (6 percent). Education was inversely related to wasting. For example, children whose mothers never attended school had the highest levels of wasting (7 percent), while children whose mothers possessed secondary and tertiary education had the lowest levels of wasting (5 percent). Children born to mothers in highest wealth quintile were also less likely to be wasted (4 percent) than those in the lowest wealth quintile (6 percent).

### **2.3.3 OVC school attendance and basic material needs**

Orphaned and vulnerable children are likely to be at greater risk of dropping out of school. This can happen for many reasons, such as the inability to pay school fees, the need to help



with household labour or to stay at home to care for sick parents or younger siblings. In general, school attendance for orphaned and vulnerable children according to ZDHS 2007 shows that they were slightly disadvantaged with respect to school attendance in comparison to other children. 88 percent of OVCs at the time of survey were attending school compared with 91 percent of the other children. Double orphans were less likely than children whose parents were both alive and who lived with at least one parent to be currently in school. With regards to basic material needs for OVC, the 2007 ZDHS obtained information as to whether or not the minimum basic material needs of children age 5-17 were being met. Basic material needs were considered to have been met if the child had a pair of shoes, two sets of clothes, and a blanket. The minimum basic material needs were met for more than half (56 percent) of all children age 5-17. In terms of the basic items, children were least likely to have a pair of shoes (58 percent) and most likely to have at least two sets of clothes (88 percent). Children who were OVCs were slightly less likely than children who were not OVCs to possess the three basic needs (53 percent and 56 percent, respectively).

## **2.4 Socio-economic context**

At independence, Zambia was one of the few countries in Southern and Central Africa with a vibrant economy. During this period, the country did not face as many socio-economic challenges as is the situation today and as such, the demand for social welfare services was minimal. In the first decade after independence, poverty and unemployment levels were very low. However, after 1980 the demand for welfare services began to rise as the economy started deteriorating because of many economic shocks that the country began to experience. Due to rise in crude oil prices coupled with a decline in the pricing of copper on the international market, which was then the mainstay of the economy, the country started experiencing severe stagnation. In addition, during this period Zambia was very committed to the liberation struggle for other African states, and hence heavily involved its resources in the struggle, which negatively affected the economy and development. In an attempt to address these challenges, in 1991 Government adopted the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), with the intention of creating macroeconomic stability in the economy. Some of the measures taken included liberalisation of the economy in marketing and pricing of agricultural produce, interest and foreign exchange rates. Government also did away with subsidies, embarked on the privatisation of state-owned companies, reduction in public expenditure and public sector reforms. These measures resulted in massive loss of employment as companies collapsed or downsized, which contributed to a sharp increase in unemployment rates. Prices of goods

and services also increased with the introduction of cost sharing in the provision of health and education services. These measures had a negative impact on children, the poor and vulnerable groups who turned to social welfare for survival and as a means of accessing the basic needs and services.

Despite the economic malaise, the Government has strived to improve the economy for the wellbeing of its citizens. Over the years, the country has achieved some success in the economy. In 2010, the country recorded a real GDP growth of 7.6 percent which is the highest level recorded since 1972 (CSO, 2012). In addition, CSO report shows that between the year 2000 and 2010 the annual inflation rate dropped from 30.1 percent to 7.9 percent.

Even though there has been a slight improvement in the economy, the country still has high levels of poverty with the majority of the population living in poverty. According to CSO (2012), 60.5% of the Zambian population fall below the poverty line with 42.2% of them living in extreme poverty. The rural population has a high level of poverty. Estimates according to the 2010 National census indicate that 77.9% of rural population are living in extreme poverty when compared to 27.5% of the urban population (ibid).

High levels of unemployment have also exacerbated high poverty levels in the country. A small segment of the population is in formal employment and that the majority of the population are engaged in informal sector for their livelihood. HIV/AIDS pose a serious public Health challenge alongside high levels of poverty and unemployment. According to WHO (2011), 14% of the adult Zambians are living with HIV/AIDS. The high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is more in the urban areas as WHO reports indicate that 20% of the urban population has HIV/AIDS compared to 10% of the rural population. HIV/AIDS is not only a national public health challenge but a leading cause of orphanhood in Zambia. The multiple effect that HIV/AIDS has had on the community has further contributed to the increase in the demand for social welfare service, as the breadwinners die or are rendered unproductive. As the epidemic takes its toll, older persons have to support their grandchildren, as the intermediate generation dies, and resources that may previously have supported elderly people are now being stretched to accommodate the increasing number of OVC who are now dependants of the elderly in society.

## **2.5 OVC Situation in Zambia**

The Zambian government defines an orphan as a child below the age of 18 years who has lost one or both parents (MSYCD, 2006). Although children have been orphaned as a result of losing one or both parents through various causes, the majority of orphans have lost parents to HIV/AIDS. This has led to an increase in double orphans as children lose parents followed by the other. Losing both parents places many children in very vulnerable situations such as deprivation, property grabbing, lack of schooling, and poverty. A vulnerable child is defined as a child below the age of 18 years and has been in or is likely to be in a risky situation where he or she is likely to suffer significant physical, emotional or mental stress that may result in the child's rights not being fulfilled (MSYCD, 2006). Vulnerability in children is usually closely linked to poverty. Increased poverty predisposes children to many vices which may threaten their survival and protection. The Zambia Demographic and health survey (2007) defines a vulnerable child as a child below 18 years who has a chronically ill parent or who lives in a household where an adult has been chronically ill or has died in the last 12 months. HIV/AIDS, fuelled by high poverty levels, is the primary contributor to OVCs incidence in Zambia. It account for more orphans than all other contributing factors combined (MSYCD, 2006).

According to the Zambian Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS, 2007), 19.2% of all children living in households were vulnerable while 14.9% were orphans. Between 2004 and 2008 the number of orphans grew by 13% to 1,302,307. Current estimates based on available data show that there are 1,603,928 OVC in Zambia (MCDSS, 2011). The aforementioned statistics simply shows how serious the problem of OVC is in Zambia. In an effort to improve the wellbeing of these children, the Government of the republic Zambia in collaboration with development partners has put in place policy and strategic measures to address the OVC situation. These include among others, National welfare policy, Public welfare Assistance Scheme, cash transfer scheme and National Child Policy.

## **2.6 National welfare policy**

In Zambia, social welfare services are mainly provided by the Government and complemented by co-operating partners, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), faith based organisations (FBOs), community based Organisations (CBOs), communities and individuals. These service providers take into account the fact that the basic human unit of any society is the family. Therefore, most social welfare programmes currently strive to

strengthen the capacities of individuals, families and communities by developing socio-economic interventions that are practical, effective and sustainable (MCDSS, 2011).

The advent of HIV and AIDS has had devastating effects on the community and productivity in Zambia. The situation is exacerbating poverty, contributing to the rise in OVC, child headed households and old persons having to take care of their young grandchildren, among others. The prevailing socio-economic situation where large numbers of people were living in poverty, demanded for immediate social welfare interventions by Government and the other stakeholders. In response to the challenge, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services which has been re-aligned to the Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child Health (MCD-MCH) formulated the National Policy on Social Welfare. MCD-MCH is now the key ministry responsible for delivery of social welfare services. The policy provided a framework for delivery of welfare services and considered among the existing legislation and examined its adequacy and relevance in facilitating the effective and efficient delivery of social welfare services in the country.

## **2.7 Public welfare assistance scheme (PWAS)**

PWAS is a government programme which work through the department of social welfare (MCDM-CH). It is a programme through which the most need people and the different vulnerable people are assisted in their various basic needs or rather it's a government programme through which the problems of the most need are alleviated. PWAS is the overall body through which different social safety nets services are delivered to the poor and cash transfer scheme is one of the social welfare programme that falls under PWAS. Before SCTS was introduced, the government was giving the poor different services as well as in-kind support. In-kind support refers to provision of food stuff or rather food ration to the poor and also provision of things like blankets, shoes and clothes as well as shelter. According to the guidelines of the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS), under the Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child Healthy (MCD-MCH), the aim of PWAS is as follows:

*Provision of better services by reducing starvation and extreme poverty in the most destitute and incapacitated households and individuals (MCDSS, 2008, p. 2).*

### **2.7.1 Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCT)**

The Social Cash Transfers Scheme is one component of Zambia's social protection strategy and gives bimonthly grants to households who are destitute and have no or limited capacity to access basic needs. This social safety net package was introduced based on the reasoning that households and individuals can regain control over their lives that they can access education and health and that local and national economy in the long run can benefit (MCDSS, 2011). Moreover, it is widely accepted that social protection is a basic right of all citizens and that it is the responsibility of the state to safeguard that right. In Zambia, social cash transfers are a response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has led to a growing number of households with no adult breadwinners and to households headed by members who are aged, too sick or too young. The elderly and the incapacitated caring for OVC are provided with special services such as social cash transfer scheme. These extremely poor and incapacitated household cannot be reached by labour-based or micro credit programmes such as food security pack, food for work programmes, fertilizer support programme and so forth. They need regular & continuous social assistance to survive and invest in the education of their children.

The Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS) is administered by the Ministry of Community Development mother and child health through the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS). Its main objectives are;

- *To assist the most destitute and incapacitated households in society meet their basic needs, particularly health, education, food and shelter.*
- *Generate information on the feasibility, costs and benefits and all positive and negative impacts of a SCTS as a component of a Social Protection Strategy for Zambia.*
- *To streamline the Disability in the SCTS.*
- *To streamline Gender in the SCTS (MCDSS, 2011).*

### **2.7.2 How beneficiaries are targeted**

The entry criterion for households to be considered for the scheme is that they are 1) destitute and 2) incapacitated. 'Destitute' means that the household struggles to survive, adopt negative coping mechanism, has less than 3 meals a day, indecent shelter and clothing, limited access to education and health and only irregular and insufficient support. 'Incapacitated' means that the household has either no household member who is fit for work

and of working age or that there is a very high dependency ratio. The ‘incapacitated’ criterion is used to tailor the programme to households that cannot be reached by labour-based schemes such as food or cash for work or micro credit (MCDSS, 2011). Targeting is done by the Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs) which are the grassroots level structure of PWAS. The CWACs use a multi-stage participatory process to identify the most destitute and incapacitated households in their area involving the headpersons/section headpersons. The monthly transfer of cash for households approved by the scheme is ZMK 140.00 which is given bimonthly. The transfer is based on the annual average price of a 50kg bag of maize, which allows a family of 6 at least a second meal a day (ibid).

### **2.7.3 Welfare assistance to OVC**

In order to improve the wellbeing of the children and in particular OVC, the national welfare policy outline among other the following measures.

- *Offer direct support to OVC with basic needs as-well-as support institutions targeting OVC and those with special needs.*
- *Build capacities of institutions working with OVC.*
- *Reintegrate OVC into families and society and provide psychosocial support to OVC and their families.*
- *Co-ordinate programmes targeting OVC needs.*
- *Raise awareness on issues concerning OVC by encouraging positive traditional and cultural values and practices of extended families and communities caring for OVC.*

## **2.8 National child policy**

The national policy on the welfare of the children incorporate a set of broad guidelines put together for purpose of improving the welfare and quality of children’s life in various circumstance in order to achieve the much needed social and economic progress. It provides a general framework within which relevant intervention by different actors can be implemented. The Zambian Government is a signatory to many international conventions on human rights that affect children such as the UN-CRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). Zambia signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in September 1990 and ratified it on 6 December 1991. This implies that the government is obliged to implement the principle stated in the convention such as survival, development and protection of the child in order to promote the wellbeing of children. The

World summit for children of 1990, in which the then incumbent president was in attendance led to the 1992 declaration as the year of the Zambian child. In addition, this development set the stage for the agent need to formulate a National Child Policy and in 1994 the first policy document for the welfare of the children in the country was published. However, children's living condition was deteriorating in the country. This was further exacerbated by bad prevailing economic conditions in the country coupled with emerging issues such as increasing household poverty, child labour, child trafficking, HIV/AIDS, child abuse in its various forms and so forth. These affected children in the areas of survival, development and protection. As such the Government through (MSYD) embarked on the process of reviewing the National Child policy of the 1994 in order to incorporate the new and emerging issues affecting the wellbeing of the children. This brought in the new National child policy of 2006. The revision of the 1994 National Child Policy was meant to demonstrate Government's commitment to creating a favourable socio-economic environment for the development and welfare of the child.

The revised policy thus provides the required framework for responding to the concerns, rights and needs of children. In particular with regards to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), the policy has the following specific objectives:

- *Provide OVC with adequate care, protection, and developmental opportunities*
- *Establish an integrated and well-coordinated national response for OVC; and*
- *Increase OVC access to basic social services.*

## **2.9 The study context (Kalomo district)**

In this section, I will present the context of my study. This is a brief description of the main characteristics of my research site.

This study was conducted in Kalomo, one of the districts located in the southern part of Zambia. Kalomo is one of the southern most Districts in Southern Province. The district lies between  $-16^{\circ}$  and  $-17^{\circ}$  south and  $26^{\circ} 00'$  and  $27^{\circ} 00'$  east. The town is situated along the Lusaka – Livingstone Road (T1) at about 120 km north of Livingstone town and about 400 km south of Lusaka. It lies at 1300m above sea level. The district has a total surface area of 15,000 sq. km. To the Northeast, it borders with Choma district, Itezhi-tezhi district and Namwala district in the North, Kazungula and Livingstone district in the South, Sinazongwe district in the East and it also shares an international border in the East with Zimbabwe.

### **2.9.1 Ethnicity and Culture**

Kalomo district is home to the Batonga people who are the dominant tribe in the district. It is divided into 4 reference zones and these are, 6 agricultural blocks (keys areas where maize is commercially produced), 3 constituencies and 20 political wards as well as 4 chiefdoms (Schubert, 2005). Chiefdoms are traditional authority/institutions that plays a vital role and have an influence on rural life in Kalomo. Rural communities are organised on the basis of villages, normally led by a village headman who is assisted by elders. Traditionally, the men of the village would gather to discuss issues of importance until a decision is reached by consensus. Traditionally each area is under the jurisdiction of a Chief. There are four chiefs in the district namely Sipatunyana, Simwatachela, Chikanta and Siachitema. Customs, beliefs and practices still have an important bearing on how the society in the district functions. These serve to mould many people's lives from an early age both in rural and urban areas for instance when death occurs rituals are performed on the surviving spouse and children. However, with advent of HIV/AIDS some rituals such as sexual cleansing of widows and widowers has been replaced by non-sexual cleansing. Cattle ownership is the traditional form of wealth where men's prestige and the respect they acquire are related to the number of cattle they own.

### **2.9.2 Polygamy marriages**

There is a strong cultural belief among the Batonga speaking people regarding the practise of polygamy. It is believed that the Batonga men can marry as many wives as they can, provided that they are able to support the children and the wives. This belief and cultural practise has contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS in the area. This in turn has also contributed to increasing numbers of OVCs. Abebe & KjØrholt, (2013), argue that contextualisation of children's lives within family, community, institutional and geographical settings is vital. Contextualisation is achieved by representing the perspectives of not only the children but the parents, grandparents and other community members by elaborating on how their perspectives explain and are explained by a wider social, cultural, demographic, economic and political transformation (ibid). Therefore context is important beyond the physical environment in which children experience their lives but also the ideologies, beliefs, values and attitudes of those with whom they experience their lives and childhoods.

### **2.9.3 Gender profile of the district**

In Kalomo, patriarchy is very pronounced. While women are the mainstay of household economies, child development and community development, they have low economic status



than men. Only few women own land for crop production, are involved in leadership and decision-making roles or own productive assets and have access to resources. This results in women having lower incomes than men. Furthermore, women suffer the humiliation of polygamous marriages, ritual cleansing and property grabbing. This culture of gender inequality passes on to the next generation with little hope of stopping.

#### **2.9.4 Main livelihoods strategies**

There are four main livelihoods strategies that the majorities of the people engage in and these are small scale farming, livestock production gardening and piecework. Both agricultural and livestock production is done on commercial as well small scale farming. Crops that are grown on commercial scales include, Maize, Tobacco and groundnuts. The majority of peasant farmers grows maize, cotton and sweet potatoes. Maize and sweet potatoes are usually grown for home consumption. Ownership of livestock among peasant farmers is more biased to the males. Females mainly concentrate in keeping smaller livestock like poultry and goats. Livestock is mainly used in the following ways:

- Source of income
- *Lobola* (bride price)
- Source of food e.g. milk and meat
- Source of manure (animal manure)
- Ceremonial functions

#### **2.10 Summery**

Providing contextual as well as background information is important in a research project. In this chapter, I highlighted the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Zambia in general. Drawing from the *Zambian Demographic and health survey (ZDHS 2007)*, I gave a description of the general living condition of children particularly by highlighting their health and nutrition status, school attendance and basic material needs as well as institutional and policy frameworks that are vital for the enhancement of the wellbeing of the children in Zambia. This was done in order to provide contextual data for understanding of challenges faced by children in Zambia. Finally I presented the study context by describing main livelihoods strategies and the characteristics of the local area where the study was undertaken.



### **3 Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I will elaborate on the methodological approach of my study. I will discuss the rationale for the use of qualitative methodological approach as being the most appropriate for my study and further justify the methods that I employed to explore children's (OVC) experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer in Kalomo district, Zambia. This chapter will also describe the procedures that I undertook to complete the process of data collection. I discuss the methodological approaches I used in the field such as how I gained access to my research participants and site, sampling procedure and sample size, recruitment of participants, selection of research site, as well as the process of building rapport. I will further elaborate on ethical challenges that I encountered whilst in the field, how the collected data is stored, challenges and limitations of my study.

#### **3.2 Research design**

It is argued by Ennew et al. (2009, p. 10.11) that “research methodology explains the reasons for using certain methods and the principles for using them”. Qualitative research is important because it engages us with things that matters, in ways that matter (Mason, 2002). Mason argues that through qualitative research, we can explore a wider array of dimensions of the social world including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understanding, experiences and imaginations of the participants. The use of methodologies that celebrate richness, context, nuance and depth have the potential to explore the ways that social processes, institutions, discourse or relationships work and the significance of the meanings that they generate (ibid). A qualitative research method helps in factoring analyses and explanations instead of editing these elements in search for the average or the general picture. In addition, qualitative research has been indisputably found to be richly endowed with depth and enterprising methods that can give a researcher deep insights about a particular social phenomenon (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; McCracken, 1988).

It is in view of the above that my study adapted a qualitative method of enquiry. My methodological approach and choice of methods were partly influenced by two sets of paradigms of which the first one postulate that children are active social actors, hence they are knowledgeable, experienced and so they are capable of participating in research projects (Christensen & James, 2000; Prout & James, 1990). The methodological implication of this is

that, the information given by children when they participate in a given research project should be taken serious, reliable and valid. In this vein children are actively involved in the construction of knowledge through interviews, focus group discussions and other methods and technique that a researcher employs in a research project. The second paradigm that influenced my methodological approach is a shift in thinking to view children as rights holders. This is manifested in the convention on the rights of the child (CRC) adopted in 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly. Ennew et al. (2009, p. 1.17), hold that ‘children are not objects of concern but subjects of human rights’. Children are thus human beings and are subjects of their own rights. Linking the view that children are rights holders, with the idea of doing research with children implies that children have the right to be listened to and properly researched. Article 12.1 of the CRC outlines that;

*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*

Furthermore, Article 13.1 of the CRC holds that;

*The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.*

Therefore, the methodological implication of the rights perspective when researching with children is that, children’s perspectives are fundamental in research as well as adult’s opinions (Ennew et al. 2009). In addition, when researching children’s perspectives, the researcher need to design and use participatory methods that can help children to have their perspectives and opinions expressed freely in research. The aforementioned Articles of the CRC are among others that underpin the overall philosophy of the right to be properly researched. The methods and techniques that I employed among others included semi-structured interviews, semi-participant observation, focused group discussions, informal dialogue and researcher’s diary.

### **3.2.1 Involving Children (OVC) as young Researchers in Kalomo**

It is worth to note that scholars are incorporating children’s voices and views in their research approaches and by so doing, this has enriched the understanding of children’s everyday living

experiences and continue to transform research to perceive children as competent and intellectual human beings (Clark, 2005; Habashi, 2013). Children are thus perceived knowledgeable with the ability to participate and share their views in research projects. Participation rights include the right to freedom of expression, thought, conscience, religion and association (Article 12 &13). Participation rights are synonymous with the notion that children have rights to participate in a given research projects and this adheres to the provision enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC). The notion of rights is stipulated in the right based approach in which children have the right to take part or be involved in every step of the research process (Habashi, 2013 citing, Heath et al. 2009; Tisdall et al. 2009)

The rights-based approach is premised on the assumption that children are the same as adults and have the right to be involved as early as the planning phase of the research project that impact their lives (Ennew et al., 2009; Habashi, 2013). The participation of children at the planning stage of research provides insight into the process and enable children to collaborate effectively with adults researchers to find successful means of communication during data collection, analysis and interpretation. Not only does the right-based approach considers and value children's narratives and opinions but also considers their rights within the research process (Habashi, 2013 citing, Beazley et al. 2009). For instance children should be protected from being harmed and have the right to whether participate or not and withdraw from the research at any time. The aim of this approach is to integrate children's views in the development of research process and outcomes, in that the research is framed, produced and reported within children's perspectives (Heath et al. 2009). In other words, this approach looks at the practise or idea of merely adopting children's voices in the data collection and findings thereby appreciating children's potential and enhances the research practice through children's role as co-researchers. My study was therefore premised within the right-based approach. The implication for this is that I designed participatory methods and technique that enabled children (OVC) as my informants to express their views and opinions freely and I regarded children as active participants in my research study.

### **3.3 Selection of field site**

My study was conducted in Kalomo district in a compound called Mawaya. The choice of my field site was based on the prior knowledge I had about Kalomo as the district in which the Government of the Republic of Zambia decided to introduce social cash transfer scheme. The social cash transfer scheme was introduced in the above mentioned district as a pilot phase in the early 2004. However, I was not very sure whether this programme was still being implemented because of changes in Government regime and re-alignment of Ministries, hence I thought of Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia as a second option of my research site. Lusaka as being my other option, I was particularly interested in recruiting my key informants (OVC) especially those that were directly affiliated to the Government welfare scheme. In contrast to Lusaka, the target of my key informants in Kalomo district were those children (OVC) living under households that were benefiting from the social cash transfer scheme programme. In this regard, these children were indirect beneficiaries of the scheme.

After I left for my field work to my home country, I eventually decided to pick Kalomo district as my field site. I chose Kalomo district because I discovered upon reaching home country that social cash transfer scheme programme was no longer a pilot phase but a fully-fledged government welfare scheme programme to the vulnerable group of the society in the district. In addition, Kalomo district presented to me a typical rural area where one would find the most vulnerable group of the society of which children are not an exception. Therefore, this was vital for me because I would get a rural perspective and experience of social cash transfer scheme from children (OVC) alongside adults. Besides, logistic issues also contributed for my preferred choice of the site. My family and I are based in Kalomo district and it is approximately about 400 kilometres from Lusaka, this was going to be expensive on my part if I decided to be commuting or having two homes. It is in view of this that Mawaya compound in Kalomo district was chosen as my research site.

### **3.4 Access to the field site and informants**

Earlier in chapter one in the introduction of the thesis I alluded that the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCD-MCH) and the Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MGCD) are the key ministries in Zambia responsible for the welfare and development of the child. However social safety net programmes such as social cash transfer scheme and public welfare programmes are coordinated by the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCD-MCH). All districts have a department of social welfare services and the District Social welfare Officer (DSWO) is the

responsible officer for coordination of the programme in the district. Suffice to note that the scheme is a community driven programme in that it has community structure called Community Welfare Assistance Committee (CWAC). This committee consists of the chairperson, secretariat and committee members whose main responsibility is to identify Potential beneficiaries who are later selected by ranking method upon calling for a meeting of all community members to participate in the exercise. It is against this background that access to my key informants and the field was largely dependent on the above mentioned gatekeepers. Simply put, the department of social welfare services and community welfare assistance committee (CWAC) were the two starting point of entry into the field as well as accessing key informants (OVC) of which I will discuss now how I went about this process of seeking access to informants and the research site.

### **3.5 Entry to the Field**

The initial schedule of my field work was planned to take off on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and I was supposed to finish my research by 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014 but this did not work according to the planned schedule. I was very much confident that my study would proceed as it was planned because I thought access to the research site and informants was going to be easier. I took this for granted because I'm an employee of the same ministry (MCD-MCH) which is responsible for coordination of social cash transfer scheme though I work under a different department (Health). I prepared myself and carried with me an introduction letter from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) via Norwegian Centre for Child Research (NOSEB) and the official letter from the Ministry (my employer) which stated that I was granted study leave to undertake my MPhil programme in Norway. My thinking was that, the inclusion of the other letter from the ministry together with the letter from NOSEB was going to facilitate a quick access to the key informants from social welfare department.

Upon reaching this Government department, I introduced myself and explained the objectives and purpose of my study and presented these two letters. However, the officer I found in the office was apparently acting on behalf of the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). The officer explained to me that the DSWO was out for a workshop which was running for about 1 week and that she was the only responsible officer in the district to give me permission to go ahead with my research. I was further informed that the district had been receiving quiet a number of researchers on the programme (social cash transfer scheme) who came with official introduction letters from the headquarters of the ministry. So I was encouraged to travel to the headquarters of the ministry so that I can be given a letter granting me authority

to do my research even though I have had ethical clearance for the research prior leaving Norway from NSD. In other words, I was expected to go through a multiple institutional gatekeepers as a student studying from the global north going to do research with children in the global south (Tatek Abebe & Bessell, 2014). I was also given a second option to wait for about 7 days until when the DSWO was back in the office that would perhaps give me a go ahead. Now travelling to the headquarters of the ministry to obtain permission to some extent meant that my request needed to be presented to the permanent secretary (PS) of the ministry and that this was going to take longer than one week due to government procedures. Moreover, apart from time wastage, the other implications that would have been raised by going through multiple institutional gatekeepers could be that, I was going to encounter different expectations from these authorities and it would have been not cost effective for me due to travelling expenses. It is argued by Tatek Abebe and Bessell (2014), that the implication of going through a multiple gatekeepers leads to multiple accountability and contradictory expectations. Furthermore, getting involved in these processes can not only result into not ensuring that children are treated in an ethical and respectful way but also resource intensive without necessarily adding to the quality of the research (ibid). Therefore, I decided to wait for the DSWO to be back in the office with the hope that I was going to be granted access to the informants and site.

After 7days I made two attempts to visit social welfare department to seek consent from the DSWO as I was promised. Unfortunately, the officer was still not available in the office but when I went there for the second time the following day, I managed to meet the officer. I was warmly welcomed and I introduced myself, explained the purpose of my visit and presented to the officer my letter of introduction from NTNU. The officer was so helpful regarding my request to undertake the study on social cash transfer scheme, though I was informed that the programme was not only targeting OVC but also the destitute and incapacitated members of the community. I got so amazed with the officer's keen interest on my study because I was promised that the department would do their best to help me with whatever I needed for my research. She further explained to me that the programme was being implemented in the entire district and it was up to me to choose the catchment area I would undertake my study.

### **3.5.1 Recruitment of research participants**

After having a long discussion regarding my research with the District Social Welfare Officer, she asked me when I was intending to start my data collection process. I informed her that I needed to start my field work as soon as possible due to the fact that I was already



behind schedule. I further requested that I needed a catchment area (community) that was at least nearby for easier access to my key informants and so I was given Mawaya catchment area for SCTS. She also explained to me that each catchment area had a committee (CWAC) and hence I needed to go through this committee in order for me to have easier access to the research participants. She then made a phone call to the secretary of the committee for Mawaya catchment area so that he can help me with the mobilisation of the children from those benefiting households. The secretary to the committee responded promptly and availed himself to social welfare department whom I was introduced to and I explained to him the purpose and objectives of my study. We then sat down and strategies on how best we would recruit research participants. Since my targeted children partly included those living under households that were affiliated to cash transfer scheme, I decided that myself together with him (secretary) embark on households visits so that I can be introduced to the would be potential research informants. Access to these households was much easier as we went round with the secretary because he was well known and seemed to be regarded as playing a mediating role between the community and the social welfare department. In all the households attached to the scheme that I visited, the parents/guardian and children welcomed me very well. After being introduced and explaining the research aim, objectives and with a couple of routine household visits, it became a good opportunity for me to identify potential informants. Consent to have children participate in the study was requested from parents and children themselves and both parents and children from the identified households were willing to take part in the research study.

Accessibility was thus vital for my study to be undertaken and as such I needed to gain the co-operation of various gatekeepers in order to gain children's consent and involvement in research. These adult gatekeepers are invested with the powers to limit researchers' access to the children (Fraser, 2004; Punch, 2002), and my experience in the field seems to agree with this argument. To substantiate this claim, I will now elaborate on one instance when the guardian completely refused to allow her two nephews to take part in the study despite the children consenting to be part of the research.

In my study, I had some interest also in knowing the feeling and experience of both children and parents who were not benefiting from social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) but somehow were eligible. There was one household that I identified through the help of the CWAC secretary and this household was caring for OVC. The household composed of 3 orphans, and other dependents, the aunty and grandmother to the orphans. At first, I approached the

grandmother to the children to seek consent so that the children can participate in the research. She informed me that she was not in a position to endorse the involvement of the children in my research and instead, referred me to the aunty of the children. Unfortunately at that time, the aunty was not available at home and I made an appointment to meet her during the weekend. I went to see her over the weekend as arranged and explained what the research study was all about and my intentions to have her 2 nephews be among the informants in my research. She however did not agree or consented to involve her nephews in the research and expressed her displeasure regarding the way the selection of beneficiaries for the scheme was being done and this is what she stated to me;

*‘There is too much favouritism when writing names of people to be on this scheme (SCTS). World Vision also came to this house and wrote down names of these children and promised that they will sponsor them and since then they have never come back to us and they are announcing claiming that they are paying school fees for my nephews and yet it’s us who struggle looking for money to pay school fees, I will not allow you to involve my nephews in whatever you are doing’*

Realising how emotional she became as she spoke at the top of her voice, I politely thanked her for allowing me to talk to her and I reminded her that neither was I coming from social welfare nor World Vision but I was a student currently studying in Norway doing a research on SCTS. I further informed her that I would not force her to let the children participate in my research as participation was voluntary and then I left this household. Therefore I feel that acceptance of situations in the field in relation to the above encounter as well as reflexivity is vital when doing research.

### **3.5.2 Research sample and sampling technique**

I used a purposive sample to select children as my key informants particularly from those households that were benefiting from social cash transfer. I drew up a study sample that consisted of 17 research participants. The children that I decided to include in my sample were 10 in total aged between the ages of 10-17 years. I preferred this age group because this had an influence on the methods and technique I employed which I will discuss later in this chapter. Among these key informants, two children (OVC) did not belong to the households that were attached to the scheme, and the remaining eight were coming from households that were attached to the scheme. In my sample, I also included one child headed household attached to the scheme as one of the child informant. In addition, I chose four key

parents/guardians from the household benefiting from the scheme and two parents that were not affiliated to the scheme. I also decided to incorporate one programme officer (the District Social Welfare officer) coordinating the programme at local level in order to have their views regarding how the programme was being coordinated and the extent to which OVC provision rights were being met. The justification for using purposive sampling procedure was that these children in those vulnerable household attached to the scheme were my main target since they were indirectly benefiting from social cash transfer scheme.

### **3.6 Methods of data collection**

Using appropriate methods is a central concern in any given research and more so in research with children where there is a growing desire to design child friendly and fun methods (Punch, 2002). Such methods are likely to be drawn from children's particular interest or familiar sources. This simply imply that in practice, a researcher researching children's perspectives need to take into account each child respondent's competence and interest while participating in particular chosen research methods. It has been argued by O'Kane (2000) that there are a number of factors likely to influence the selection of research methods. These include among other things, the availability of resources, time, access, researcher's training, and goals. Punch (2002), note that the perception of children by the researcher can have an influence on what methods to employ. Researchers who perceive children as the same as adults employ the same methods as those used with adults, because children are seen as mature and competent individuals (Clark, 2005; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998). Therefore, the choice of my methods were influenced by the view that children are social actors who are 'experts' on their own lives (James et al., 1998; Mauthner, 1997). I employed a multiple methods and technique that provided me with in-depth insight of children, parents and programme officer's experiences and perspectives of social cash transfer. I now discuss these research methods and techniques that I used in my study.

#### **3.6.1 Semi structured interviews**

In order to seek the perspectives of children it was vital for me to use methods that would empower the children and engage them more in the entire research process. Scholars have argued that semi-structured interviews have the potential to draw the researcher and the informants as co-producers of knowledge (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Thus, it is from an inter-view that is the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee where knowledge is constructed (ibid). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), asserts that interviews endeavours to situate understand of the world from the informants' points of view, to unfold

the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world before scientific explanation. In addition, semi-structured interviews further promote interaction and reduce the formality of an interview. Ennew et al. (2009), also view semi-structured interviews as ‘conversation with purpose’ and that this method is usually used with individuals and key informants or experienced observers of the local conditions who are willing to share their views and knowledge. In this regard I had specific areas of interest with the DSWO that I wanted to explore, at the same time wanted to gather as much information as I could about the Government fulfilment of provision Rights to the children enshrined in the UN-CRC. In this study I noted that the use of this technique had an added advantage in rural settings where oral tradition is common and people are illiterate to take part in other research methods such as essay writing and story writing. My informants particularly guardians/caregivers were able to express themselves verbally in their local language without difficulties as it would have been if I employed essay writing technique because most of them were illiterate.

Semi-structured interviews were also used with individual children to explore their experiences regarding the programme and it was the main method employed in my study because I used it with children, guardians and the programme officer (District Social Welfare Officer). However, using semi-structured interviews with OVC to explore their experiences about social cash transfer presented to me a unique challenge. The challenge emanated partly from the fact that, the CWAC secretary from inception had introduced me to both children and guardians as a person who was one of the employees under the Government ministry responsible for social welfare though it was made known to them that I was working from a different department of Health. However, there was still a perception from my informants that I was working or rather coming directly from the social welfare department and as such it became evident during interview sessions that some children were attempting to answer questions in a positive way about their experience regarding social cash transfer. To some children, it seemed that answering some questions in a negative way particularly about their problems and challenges of the scheme somehow would lead to their household being removed from the scheme. Besides, there was that perception that I would report any negative remarks about the programme to social welfare department since I worked within the ministry. For instance 17 years old Mariah when asked if at all she sees any challenges regarding social cash transfer, she responded as follows;

*We appreciate the Government for giving us this money. I see no problem and I can't complain because grandpa receives the money and he receives the correct amount due to*

*him. Like the way our grandfather receive this money, it helps us to buy food for the house and other different things that we may need in the house apart from food. Us who receive this money should not complain because there are so many people that need this money and the government cannot manage to give everyone.*

However, on a separate interview with her grandpa, he vividly informed me that the money received barely covered expenses for food at home and they could not afford other things because the money was too little.

To deal with such a challenge as mentioned above, I assured my informants that whatever information availed to me would remain in confidence between me and them. I further informed them that no individual or household would be removed from the scheme because my study was being conducted purely for academic purposes. Moreover, the use of informal dialogue and participant observation partly helped to minimise this challenge emanating from semi-structured interviews due to the informal way of talking and not having a direct contact with children respectively.

### **3.6.2 Participant observation**

According to Mason (2002), participant observation is a method of data collection that involves the researcher to engage wholly or deeply themselves in a research setting in order to observe and experience a range of dimensions of social phenomena in and out of that setting at first hand. Participant observations as one technique employed in my study helped me to take note of the patterns of children's everyday practices and experiences of cash transfer scheme. Ennew et al. (2009), argues that observing what children actually do and how they do it, provides valuable information throughout any research process. This is also noted by Mauthner (1997); participant observation allows a researcher to see what children chose to do at particular times, how they make choices and whom they chose to be with in particular activity. During my field work, I used participant observation in order to explore other livelihoods alternatives that children engaged in besides the utilisation of social cash transfer scheme. Some of these activities that I participated in with children included gardening (watering the garden), selling of second hand clothes and groundnuts at the market. Furthermore, I observed some children being involved in some piece works such as ferrying sand used for construction of houses to supplement household income. Participant observation proved to me as one valuable method to watch, listen, reflect and engage with the children in conversation and their everyday activities. In addition, participant observation

played a crucial role in reducing the power differential between the children and me as a researcher because there was no much direct contact with them. Moreover this technique also helped me to build rapport and it was through this that I was able to identify some of the potential informants.

### **3.6.3 Focus group discussion**

I used focus group discussions with both OVCs and guardians in order to find out their perspective about what benefits social cash transfer scheme has on the lives of OVCs and how these OVCs benefit from this programme. My initial plan was to conduct individual interviews with the guardian but I only managed to conduct one interview due to their busy schedule. Each time I would make appointment to meet for interviews, I would find that they were not available as they were engaged in other activities such as selling at the market and piece works. With the help of the CWAC secretary, I was able to arrange a focus group discussion with parents/guardian at an agreed time. This method proved to be the most appropriate one for parents/guardians because they had tight time schedule which to some extent made some of individual interviews challenging to be conducted. I conducted two focus group discussions with guardians and all were held at mayawa zonal health centre. These focus group discussions approximately lasted about 30 to 45 minutes. The two focus group discussion consisted of four participants. Regarding the sex composition of the focus group discussion, there were two grandmothers, one grandfather and one single mother. The themes that were discussed included, local understanding of orphanhood and vulnerability, livelihood strategies that guardians engaged in besides welfare support they received from the government, problems that OVC were facing, how children benefited from social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) and how SCTS fund were being utilised etc. This method enabled me to obtain a variety of responses that I feel would have not been obtained from individual persons. Furthermore, focus group discussion was used with children to explore their experience regarding SCTS and in particular what they benefited, how the money was used, livelihood strategies and problems that they were facing etc. During focus group discussion with the children, I noticed that some would remain quite while others would be active. However, my role was to ensure that each child was given a chance to speak out freely, facilitate the flow of discussions and keeping the discussion on track.

### **3.6.4 Informal Conversation**

Informal conversations were used with the children during my data gathering process particularly in an effort to get to know their lives, families as well as knowing them better as

my would be participants. This enabled me get closer to the children thereby making rapport building process easier. I used to have informal dialogues with my participants before and after individual interviews, observation and focus group discussion. We would also engage in informal conversation with the children when going to watch football matches and even when walking around in the compound they lived, whilst we would share snacks. Due to the flexibility and informal way of interacting with the children, it seemed to me as useful method of gathering data from the children. Informal dialogue with children centred on topic such as how they would spend their free time and social life and this would eventually lead to them explaining to me other livelihood venture they could engage in to supplement the cash their guardian received from social welfare.

### **3.6.5 Researcher's Diary**

This method enabled me to take note of certain important conversation I had during informal dialogue with my participant and observed scenarios that would have otherwise not been possible to capture with the digital voice recorder whilst conducting interviews. Then at home later in the evening, I endeavoured to reflect on those informal conversations and observed events and then I expanded the notes that were taken during a particular event.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

According to Alderson and Morrow (2011), ethics in research are moral issues that are concerned with protecting and respecting research participants by using and adhering to certain provided standards. In order for research to be in the best interest of the children as it is noted by Fraser (2004), it is vital that researchers take into account a number of critical issues of which ethics are not an exception.

Ethics can thus be understood as sets of moral principles regarding to what is right or wrong. These principles/standards among others include, informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and privacy, reciprocity and dealing with power differential. In my research study, I was cautious and observed ethical standards in an effort to safeguard the interest of my informants. I ensured that my research methodology and conduct in the field was ethical. From inception of my study, I explained to my informants about how the collected information from the research would be treated and how informant's names will be protected. Ethical issues that were central to this study with children (OVC) included, informed consent, confidentiality, privacy and finding appropriate space for research, reciprocity, power differential and building rapport.

### **3.7.1 Informed consent**

During the research, I endeavoured to seek informed consent in order to undertake my study. I assured the children that participation is voluntary and children themselves hold an exclusive opinion or say to pull out their participation at any time. In addition I asked individual children to be free to choose to either participate or not, pull out or continue, answer or not answer certain questions. Kvale and Brinkmann note that,

*Informed consent entails informing the research participants about the overall purpose of the investigations and the features of the research as well as any possibility of having risks and benefits from participants in the research project (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 70).*

In this regard I explained in details to my informants what my research was about and how information would be used for and that children had the right to consent, refuse or pull out from the study. Written consent was sought from the programme officer coordinating SCTS at the district level. However, obtaining written consent was not as easy as I expected with some of the OVC and guardians due to high levels of illiteracy as they were not able to read and write. This resonates with Abebe (2009), in his study with marginalised children in rural and urban Ethiopia where the informed consent of guardians and the children was verbal, as securing written consent proved difficult because people were illiterate to read and sceptical about signing documents. Skelton (2008), also argue for instance that in Caribbean region, there are places where relatively high levels of adult illiteracy exist and deep scepticism of filling in forms and as such informed consent might be extremely problematic as parents, guardians and grandparents for the children who need to participate in research might be illiterate or very suspicious about signing official documents. Therefore, as a challenge for me, I dealt with this problem by obtaining verbal consent from both the OVC and guardians.

### **3.7.2 Confidentiality and privacy during interviews**

Confidentiality in research is concerned with ensuring that all collected research information is kept between the participant and the researcher. In view of this the researcher is expected to protect the identity of the informants and the information which they are privy to. In order to ensure confidentiality in my research, anonymity of names whilst writing the thesis and confidentiality of the data obtained during the study were among the issues that were highly considered. I assured my informants of confidentiality before and during the actual study. I employed the use of pseudo names so that the identity of my informants is concealed. As such no one would be able to trace their identity. In addition, I kept all recordings and interview transcripts in pass word protected forms and interviews were erased from the



digital voice recorder. It is argued for instance Fraser (2004), that confidentiality entails taking considerable care not to pass information to individuals connected to the research respondents in whatever way and disclosing/letting out information only in a manner which protect the identity of those providing the information.

As regards privacy, obtaining exclusive private spaces for interviews in particular was problematic during the study. As I mentioned earlier, my study often involved household visits because I was more interested in those households attached to SCTS. As such, most of the interviews were conducted within the home or family setup. It also turned out that the CWAC secretary whom I worked hand in hand with eventually become my research assistant. I decided to make him my research assistant because of language barrier as I could not speak and understand well the language (Tonga). The CWAC secretary was a man well known in the community, and at the same time had a mediating role or responsibility between the community and the social welfare department as earlier mentioned. Therefore, whenever he was seen with me by other community member's, especially when conducting interviews, some community members were very much interested in knowing what was going on. There was a perception from some community members that we were going round writing names of people to be included on the scheme. Consequently, some individuals would simply pop in and interrupt even in the middle of an interview because they wanted to know what exactly was happening. In some instances I would just pause an interview and then the CWAC secretary would start explaining what the activity was all about.

Moreover, privacy was further compromised due to the fact that there was lack of private space within households because it was being shared between children, parents/guardians and other family members. As a result parents and other members of the family were able to hear whatever conversations I had with the children because sometimes they were present when I was conducting interviews with children. It was somehow difficulty to tell these members of the family to leave me and the children in privacy. Abebe, (2009), hold that negotiating or finding appropriate spaces for research in the global south can prove to be difficulty particularly within the home or family setup due to limited shared physical spaces. It was thus difficulty to negotiate privacy and keep total confidentiality.

### **3.7.3 Building rapport and negotiating power differential**

Rapport building is yet another important issue to consider when doing research with children though it may often be ignored or disregarded and not given attention as noted by (Punch,

2002). It enables the researcher to develop cordial relationships with the research participants. During my study, I spent about 14 days in an effort to get to know the children and also allowing them to know me better. I was actively involved in various activities that children engaged in, both in homes and away from home. Some of these activities included unshelling groundnuts, preparing meals together with children, watching popular football teams in English premier league, such as Manchester united, arsenal, and Liverpool among others, and these were preferred by the children themselves. In addition I played soccer with the children and on two (2) occasions I went out with the children to watch local soccer matches. Whilst watching football matches, we would share and eat together some snacks. It was through such activities that helped foster friendship with OVC and further enhanced my interaction (Abebe, 2009).

During rapport building process, I do remember very well at one point asking the children as to whether I can play or hang out with them the following day. They told me that it was ok for me to join them though they explained that they were going to prepare a football playing ground because there was a misunderstanding between these children and the other children within the community over the football pitch as the other children claimed that it belonged to them. Apparently one of the children had asked one guardian if they could use her old maize field as a playing ground because it was not being cultivated. The children were allowed to go ahead to make the ground. I went with the children the following day to the place they wanted to make a football playing ground and together we started preparing the land. Whilst we were preparing the ground, one of the children in the group said this to me in a common local language called chinyanja; *'Ba Oliver taona ati ndimwe wanzathu elo mutikonda chifukwa mwabwela kutithandiza kuseula ground. Tifuna kuti imwe munkhale couch wathu'*. These words that were spoken by a child in vernacular language can simply be translated in English as follows:

*'We have seen that you are our friend and you like us because you have come with us to help making a football playing ground. We want you to be our couch'.*

In Zambian society children are identified using their given names. The use of 'ba' before a name is a sign of respect being accorded to a person. The child called me 'ba Oliver' to show respect and recognition of my 'adulthood'. With regard to the children's request, I never promised the children that I would be their couch neither did I instil hope in children that I

would look for somebody to be their couch. However, I responded that it was going to be a good idea for their team to have a couch who would guide them.



**Figure 2. Rapport building with children through interaction and making of football playing ground.**

Source: field Data in Kalomo, Zambia between June to August 2014

After a critical reflection about the request from the child to make me a couch of their team, I realised that even though children had accepted and welcomed me in their lives, they still regarded me as an adult person as evident from the manner in which they addressed me for instance the use of ‘ba’ before my name. Therefore, I tried by all means to minimise power differences by engaging myself in their different activities and decided to practise what Mandall (1991) cited in Abebe (2009) calls ‘least adult role’ by dressing informal for instance, and the casual manner in which I spoke with the children. Though the difference still existed between me and them, I endeavoured to establish friendly and trusting relationship with the children by not exerting authority over them, respecting them and having that desire to be with them. Power differentials between adults and children whilst

doing research cannot be totally ignored and it expected that the adult researcher should be able to strike a balance.

#### **3.7.4 Reciprocity**

Reciprocity is a highly contested issue in research. It involves compensating/rewarding research participants for their time invested on research related activities. I could not completely ignore the issue of reciprocity due to the fact that, the nature of my study involved the most Vulnerable group of the society. In other words, households targeted for social cash transfer scheme are considered to be Vulnerable and that children within these Households are not an exception. SCTS was introduced as a pilot phase in the area I conducted my study and eventually it was implemented as a fully-fledged government social protection measure. This area became a model in terms of SCTS for the majority of southern African states and as a result, the community has been exposed to developmental projects and research being undertaken by local and international Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) which in return rewarded individuals for participating in community projects. Due to this, individual expectations are that, at the end of research or project they needed to be empowered with a reward usually in monetary terms.

However, as a student researcher, I explained from the beginning of my study that participation in the research did not involve any remuneration or whatsoever material exchange because I did not want to compromise the research findings as well as raise high expectations from my informants. Nonetheless, my experience in the field was that, sometimes I was compelled to help with whatever little money I could afford. For example, one afternoon when I visited a certain household and as I was chatting with them after having an interview, the household head (a woman) was complaining to the other members of the family about what relish they would have for supper whilst she was looking directly into my eyes. She further mentioned that it would be a relief if she was in a position to find a KW2.00 to use it to buy relish for their supper. When I looked at the manner in which the woman expressed herself and also knowing some problems the household was facing, I realised that somehow it was one way of asking for some money from me so that they can buy relish. Consequently I quickly removed a KW10.00 from my pocket and gave it the woman. I could see how relieved the woman was after giving her the money and at the same time she was so grateful for this good gesture I showed to her. In another instance, I bought sugar and bread to one household. The household head was a man who had difficulties with walking because his legs could often get swollen. He was living with two granddaughters who are orphans and

these two girls were also my informants. The fact that they struggled to make ends meet and knowing that I sometimes stole their time during research, I was just compelled to show a little good gesture to them.

In addition, during my focus group discussion, I ensured that all my participants were provided with snacks and refreshments. At the end of my research, I arranged a special meal from one of the famous local restaurant managed by a Lebanese investor and together with all the OVC participants we had a meal as a way to appreciate them for their time for taking part in the study.

### **3.8 Storage of empirical data**

The storage of data collected from the field was both kept in hard and soft copies. It was in form of recordings, interview transcription and secondary data. All the interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed from vernacular language to English bearing in mind to keep them as precisely and exactly verbatim of my informants. In order to ensure privacy and confidentiality, all data was stored using pseudo-names in password protected mode and at the end of writing the thesis, I destroyed the raw data to protect my informant's privacy.

### **3.9 Data analysis and interpretation**

Data analysis and interpretation was an ongoing process throughout the research. It started in the field as I took field notes, held informal dialogue, made observation and reflected on the collected raw data. During field work the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed precisely and exactly as recorded in their original verbatim without editing them. I analysed and interpreted the data after triangulation and the raw data was thematised and categorised based on the research questions. Only themes that were prominent and of interest for the study were identified and used for analysis and interpretation.

### **3.10 Challenges and limitations of the study**

There were various challenges that I encountered during field work. However, I will only highlight the major ones. As discussed earlier, the context from which the empirical material was collected is a district in the southern part of Zambia. The indigenous or local language commonly spoken in this area is called 'Tonga' and as such I had a challenge in terms of language barrier. Even though I was able to understand few words spoken in 'Tonga', I could not speak the language and consequently I had to look for an assistant researcher. However, not all my informants were speaking 'Tonga' because there were some children that spoke and understood one language that I'm so conversant with (Chi Nyanja). For those children

that spoke ‘Tonga’, the challenge was how precisely and accurately my research assistance could translate the words from ‘Tonga’ to English without altering the actual words spoken by a child. Nonetheless I was so cautious such that each time we had interviews with a child in Tonga, I reminded my research assistance to be precisely and accurate when translating the words.

Another challenge emanating from my study is that, I conducted my study only in one community/compound even though SCTS had been implemented throughout the District. I had limited time because my research was supposed to be done within 2 months and as such it was difficult for me to involve other nearby community in order to have a broader perspective of how children encounter SCTS in the district. An important issue that can be raised from this is, how to generalise the findings of the study to other context?

The other challenge I faced while doing research with OVC concerned their state of vulnerability and inadequacy in terms of basic needs. The lives and households of these children are characterised by a perpetual struggle to make ends meet. Consequently, as I became close to them, I knew there were problems in terms of lack and this was somehow a challenge for me. I was very much aware that my capacity to go out of my way to help would somehow lead to methodological issues such as biasness and reciprocity that are highly contested in research. However, I was flexible only to do so during focus group discussions by providing snacks and refreshments and where I felt it was necessary but never raised any high expectations.

### **3.11 Summery**

This study adapted a multiple use of methods for purposes of exploring the experiences and lives of my informants and maximising or rather taking advantage of their varying abilities and strength to share views in research. These methods were used with a consideration of time and their applicability on my informants so that the research objectives are realised. The multiple method approach was used with children in order for one method to compensate the weakness of another, consequently this made it easier for me to achieve the research goals within the scheduled time. In this chapter, I highlighted my experience in the field regarding the use of each method, the process of getting access to my informants and research site, as well as the challenges encountered.

## **4 Theoretical perspectives and Concepts**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In this study with children (OVC), the research was influenced by certain key theoretical perspectives and concepts that are relevant to my research topic. I will discuss in this chapter the discourses and concepts that informed my study embedded within the sociology of childhood with a major focus on the social constructionism and the social structuralism thinking. I will also incorporate the social actor and agency perspective, generation and family relationship. I discuss also the role of the extended family on the care of vulnerable children in Africa, and in particular I shall make reference to the social rapture thesis and the theory of social resilience. Finally I will present a discussion on social protection and children in Africa with a focus on the approaches to social protection and the rationale for strengthening social protection and children in Africa as well as the rights-based approach to researching with children and how this perspective situate and conceptualise children in the wider society. I will first begin by giving a brief background to the sociology of childhood and then will present the theoretical perspectives.

Social phenomena are complex and diverse such that sometimes it is not easier to describe them in a detailed manner with one's understanding. Therefore, theories and concepts have the potential to provide explanations, guides and predictions to social phenomena that are being studied. A theory according to Keenan and Evans (2009), refers to a set of interconnected concepts used to integrate and to interpret empirical observations. Theory therefore provides a framework for organising and understanding of observed social phenomena. In view of this, my theoretical perspective underpins the understanding of everyday lives and experiences of OVC in relation to SCTS in Kalomo.

### **4.2 The sociology of childhood**

As earlier mentioned, my study was informed by theories or paradigms that are embedded in the sociology of childhood. The advent of the sociology of childhood is a critique to the dominant theories of child development and socialisation theories that have its roots in psychology and sociology (Prout & James, 1990; Tisdall & Punch, 2012). The dominant developmental approach to childhood that psychology provides is premised on the idea of natural growth and rationality as a universal mark to adulthood with childhood representing the period of apprenticeship (Prout & James, 1990, p. 10, citing Jenks 1982). Childhood is

thus perceived as a biologically determined stage whereby children progress in a path to adult status. Here, the argument is that children grow naturally and hence the notion of the universal child. In other words, dominant theories of socialisation and child development viewed children as human becoming rather than being, who were shaped into fully human beings through the process of socialisation (Prout & James, 1990; Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003).

It is argued by Tisdall and Punch (2012), citing Jenks (1996), that traditional theories, such as Parson's socialisation theory and Piagetian child development, saw adults as mature, rational and competent whereas children were viewed as incomplete or unfinished and consequently not full human beings. Lundy and McEvoy (2009), citing Mathews, 2007, contends that, the theorisation and conceptualisation of children by the dominant framework as irrational, incomplete, incompetent and a product of socialisation resulted in approaches to research which privilege adults' views over children's on issues relating to children's experiences. In this regard, children were seen as objects of research rather than children as subjects. It is such theorisation and conceptualisation of childhood that the new sociology of childhood dispute. The new sociology of childhood also known as the new paradigm deconstructs such views or assertions and provides an alternative conceptualisation and understanding of childhood (Prout & James, 1990). This new epistemological break focuses on the social construction of childhood, highlighting historical, geographical and social variability of childhood and not excluding cultural and political contexts of assumptions about children (James et al., 1998; Prout & James, 1990; Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003). In other words, childhood is a social construct meaning that childhood is constituted or determined by the local cultural context of a given society in a given period of time. The new paradigm further perceives children as social actors with agency and holders of rights rather than seeing them as passive and dependent beings (Tisdall & Punch, 2012, citing Qvortrup 1994, Mayall 2002). According to Prout and James (1990, p. 8), the following are the key tenets of the new paradigm (new sociology of childhood).

- *Childhood is understood as a social construction. As such it provides an interpretative framework for contextualising the early years of human life. Childhood as distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor universal feature of human groups but appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many societies.*
- *Childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender or ethnicity.*



- *Children's social relationships and culture are worth of study in their own right, independent of the perspectives and concerns of adults.*
- *Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they.*
- *Ethnography is a particularly useful methodology for the study of childhood. It allows children a more direct voice and participation in the production of sociological data than is usually possible through experimental or survey styles of research.*
- *To proclaim a new paradigm of childhood sociology is also to engage in and respond to the process of reconstructing childhood in society.*

It is vital to note that it is this new sociology of childhood that influenced my study by situating my research participants within their context they live and perceiving them as social actors thereby acknowledging that they are knowledgeable and experienced to share their views in research project. According to James et al. (1998), they identify four approaches in which the child is constituted sociologically or rather how childhood should be studied. These perspectives are namely; the socially constructed child, the structural child, the tribal child and the minority child. However, for purposes of my study with Orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), I will discuss the social structural child and socially constructed child. The justification for using the above mentioned perspectives is that, I agree in this study that orphanhood is socially constructed and that children's everyday lives are shaped by structural forces such as high poverty levels, HIV/AIDS pandemic and so forth.

### **4.3 Childhood as a Structural form**

The social studies of childhood advocate for studying children as a structural phenomenon as Alanen (2001 p. 13), citing Qvortrup (1994), acknowledges that, childhood 'is both structured and structuring'. As a structural form, childhood is conceptually comparable to the concept of class because it acquires its defining features by what the members of childhood are doing and the position that childhood is assigned in relation to other members of the society and in particular the dominant groups (adults) in society (Qvortrup, 2002). He further argues that childhood is exposed to and influenced by societal forces just like adulthood but in different ways. In other words, he suggest that macro parameters such as socio-economic forces, environmental forces, natural disasters and so forth have profound impact on the lives of children and as such children as a social group in society has no other option than to react and adapt to such forces.

Similarly, Children's lives in Kalomo are shaped by both socio-economic and cultural factors. This in turn determines the kind of childhood they experience and live. For instance, HIV/AIDS, coupled with high poverty levels, is the primary contributor to OVCs incidence and increases children's vulnerability. These socio-economic factors such as poverty and HIV/AIDS when factored in my study helped me to understand the way children navigate in these structural forces and problems OVC face that I will later discuss in the analysis chapter. Foster and Williamson (2000), has argued that children are not only directly affected by HIV/AIDS when they are orphaned, but also affected indirectly when their close or extended family, their community and, more broadly, the structures and services which exist for their benefit are strained by the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It has been argued that children's vulnerability begins long before parental death. Children may face dramatic changes in circumstances during parental illness, as families navigate changing household finances and caring for a sick person over extended periods (Abebe 2012; Schenk et al., 2008). As parental health declines, children may face increasing household adversity and levels of responsibility, including earning income, looking after sick parents and younger siblings and are likely to be exposed to exploitation and abuse (Ansell et al., 2006; Williamson, 1995; Wilson, Giese et al., 2002 cited in Schenk et al., 2008). This to some extent shape or determine the lives of children. Therefore, the social structural child perspective perfectly situates my participant in this study as it depicts how socio-economic forces such as HIV/AIDS and poverty shape children's lives in Kalomo.

#### **4.4 The socially constructed child**

The social constructionism of childhood is based on the assertion that childhood does not exist in a finite and identifiable form or facts of nature but rather social constructs (James et al., 1998; Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003). James et al. (1998, p. 27), contend that 'to describe childhood, or indeed any phenomenon, as socially constructed is to suspend a belief in or a willing reception of it's taken for granted meanings' In other words, the socially constructed child discourse does not view childhood as a universal form but instead argue that children and childhood are viewed, interpreted, understood and experienced differently in various societies. James, Jenks and prout contend that;

*'though we all know what children are and what childhood is like, for social constructionists this is not a knowledge that can reliably be drawn on. Such knowledge of the child and its life world depends on the predispositions of a consciousness constituted in relation to our social, political, historical and moral context.'* (James et al., 1998, p. 27).

Therefore, various socio-cultural factors within the context that children live determine and define childhood and differentiate it from what other context or society perceives childhood. This discourse or perspective advocate for variability of childhood and the argument forwarded in this perspective is disputing a single form of childhood or an ideal type of childhood but instead diverse construction of childhood. Childhood in the views of social constructionist is shaped by unique experiences in a particular society in a given period of time and children inhabit a world of meaning built by children themselves (ibid). The implication of this is that, to construct a child socially, social constructionists embark on exploring children lived experiences by employing participatory methods and technique rather studying children in the laboratory set up. I grounded my study with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) within this discourse situating them contextually how they are perceived and exploring their lived experiences in relation to Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS) through the use of participatory methods and techniques.

#### **4.4.1 Orphans and vulnerable children as socially constructed.**

In many developing countries, including Zambia, national policies and welfare support on children are largely influenced by the western model of childhood. Suffice to note that such global discourse and Western viewpoints or perspectives of childhood have become a universal norm and cornerstone of what proper childhood ought to be. In Zambia, donor-driven interventions are powerful in defining what kind of support that vulnerable populations receive and how. In addition, certain aspects of social welfare service provision are governed by various pieces of international legislation, which provide for the legal protection of children and the promotion of their human rights. These legislation to which Zambia is a signatory and has ratified among others include, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Union policy framework, Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is as a result of close tie or relations with western countries who support and finance children's programs and welfare.

The Zambian government defines an orphan as a child below the age of 18 years who has lost one or both parent and a vulnerable child is defined as a child below the age of 18 years and has been in or is likely to be in a risky situation where he or she is likely to suffer significant physical, emotional or mental stress that may result in the child's rights not being fulfilled (MSYCD 2006). The Zambia Demographic and health survey (2007) defines a vulnerable child as a 'child below 18 years who has a chronically ill parent or who lives in a household where an adult has been chronically ill or has died in the last 12 months'. However these are

adopted donor driven definitions of vulnerability and orphanhood by the Government or simply put global discourse of conceptualising orphanhood and vulnerability. It is argued that such conceptualizations of orphanhood are locally spread over with the works of International Non-Governmental Organisations that not only work on pre-determined global definitions but also set the parameters for national policies and programs towards these children (OVC) and neglect the complexity of how other children who are non-orphans but are in extreme poverty position themselves (Abebe, 2012; Schenk et al., 2008).

Suffice to note that being identified as an orphan, in order to comply to donor notions of vulnerability and associated criteria for support is particularly striking considering the local meanings and sentiments linked with the term ‘orphan’ in some local African languages and cultural practice. Drawing on the work of Meintjes and Giese in South Africa, on the mythologies of constructing orphans in the article called spinning the epidemic, Meintjes and Giese (2006, pp. 411-425), argues that, in Xhosa (South Africa), the term *inkedama* includes the verbal root *kedama*, which means ‘to be cast away, deserted, orphaned, to become downcast’. The term ‘orphan’ is locally applicable only to children who do not have parents and no substitute caregiver, as well as children experiencing acute poverty and economic marginality, putting more emphasis on the social than the biological aspects of parenting (Abebe, 2007; Meintjes & Giese, 2006; Smørholm, 2007). Therefore, the labelling of a child by a donor driven definition of orphanhood is not only stigmatizing of the child, but a direct insult to those participants in the social network providing care and support to the child (Abebe & Aase, 2007; Meintjes & Giese, 2006). In short the global discourse of orphanhood associates orphaned children as those who have lost one or both biological parents with a range of vulnerabilities. However, local African-language equivalents of the term in South Africa are similarly associated with implicit vulnerability but this may or may not be a result of the death of parents, and is not necessarily an absolute or irreversible state, children’s situations of a lack of care or destitution both have the potential for support. The global preoccupation with the categorization of orphans centres analytical attention on absence of parents, and loses sight of the latter.

By ascribing to the social constructionism discourse as mentioned earlier, my study with Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) situate them contextually/locally how they are perceived and explores their lived experiences with regards to Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS). In particular I make comparisons between the global discourses of orphanhood (donor driven definition of an orphan and vulnerability which the Government of Zambia and

NGOs uses) and local conceptualisation of orphanhood and vulnerability. By engaging with how an Orphan and vulnerability is understood in principle and locally, my study highlights the social fluid understanding rather than the static biological definition of the two concepts.

#### **4.5 Agency, structure and children as Social actors**

The sociology of childhood acknowledges the above two interrelated important concepts and argues that children should be viewed as social actors with agency. James and Prout gives a definition of what the idea or notion of children being regarded as social actors embraces:

*Children are and must be seen as active in the construction of their own lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structure and processes (James, 2009 citing James and Prout 1990, p. 8)*

According to Robson, Bell, and Klocker ( 2007, p. 135), agency should be understood as;

*individual's own capacities, competencies, and activities through which they navigate the contexts and positions of their life worlds, fulfilling many economic, social, and cultural expectation, while simultaneously charting individual/collective choices and possibilities for their dairy and future lives.*

To regard children as agents thus simply means acknowledging that they are capable of negotiating the structures and spaces in which they are found in while creating their own experiences (Robson et al., 2007 citing, Panelli et al. 2002). Hence children are competent social beings implying viewing them as ‘doers’ and ‘thinkers’ rather than human becomings (Valentine 1996, in Robson et al 2007). The structures that children are able to negotiate among other things include, the home, school, poverty etc. To view children as agents, I thus situate my informants (OVC) within their context they live and perceiving them as social actors thereby acknowledging that they are doers and thinkers rather than human becomings. According to Mayall (2002), cited in James (2009, p. 41), the actor is someone who does something; the agent is someone who does something with other people and in so doing make things happen, thereby contributing to wider process of social production. To follow Mayall’s argument to viewing children as agents is thus regarding them also as having a party to play in the lives of those around in societies in which they live (James, 2009). There has been a wider acknowledgment in literature about children’s creative, active agency. However, children’s agency is dependent on particular circumstances and contexts shaping the limitations (structure agency debate). In other words, even though children have agency,

exercising of this agency is highly constrained by structure forces such as social contexts (relations between adults and children, children's position within the family), spatial relations (exclusions from adult spaces, identification with particular sites such as school), and personal biography like (age, personal abilities) etc. Children can be both powerful and powerless simultaneously with respect to different aspects of their social worlds (Robson et al., 2007). Hence children's agency move back and forth along a continuum of diverse experiences in relation to changing degrees of power and powerlessness. Children and adult power relationships as well as decision making are negotiated and renegotiated with different people in different contexts at different times.

In this study, the structural forces in which OVC navigate include adult power relations and decision making in the family and poverty. Children's vulnerability and impoverishments (hardship and lacking) compel them to exercise agency through engagement in income generating activities. Although these children are able to earn an income, the decision on how the money is spent is constrained and negotiated with the guardians/care givers. In other words there exist negotiated interdependence between OVC and their guardians.

By embracing the social actor and Agency perspectives (concepts) in my study, it provided an understanding and highlighted some vital roles that children's agency plays within household targeted by social cash transfer scheme. In these households, children's agency was evident as OVC engaged in income generating activities like piecework (*ganyu*) besides the cash that parents/guardians received from the social welfare thereby supplementing household income. I will elaborate more about this in chapter 7 of the analysis (children's agency). Such children's agency challenges a global model of childhood/ideal type of childhood which attempt to put children away from work. The concept of agency is important in my study as it highlight the agency of OVC in constructing their life world and those they live with in the households targeted by Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS).

#### **4.6 Generational and Family Relationship**

In the new sociology of childhood, children and childhood are arguably perceived as a generational phenomenon. This is another structural perspective to studying children but employs relational thinking. In other words, not only are the lives of children shaped by policies and practices, but children are also agents, capable of making a life for themselves through their relationships with adults and other children (Mayall, 2002b). This perspective conceptualises childhood as a socially generated position within a generational structure and

its subsequent definition as a figuration of specifically generational relations in which children, on everyday basis, engage themselves in practical relations (i.e. in practices) with other generational groups (Alanen, 2007). Consequently, it is imperative to take account of both child-adult relations (generational relations) in order understanding childhood. Mayall (2002b, p. 27) describes 'generationing' as 'the relational processes whereby people come to be known as children, and whereby children and childhood acquire certain characteristics, linked to local contexts, and changing as the factors brought to bear change'. Alanen (2001), holds that studying children's experiences and perspectives with that of other generation groupings such as the adults (parents/guardians, grandparents and so forth) correlate well into the sociology of childhood. It has been argued that like social structures in general, the generational structure of the family is a nexus of connection among members of the generation where the actions of one's position or category causally affects the actions of the holders of those position while in turn being causally affected by their action (ibid, p. 19, citing porpora, 1998). There exist a strong interdependence and reciprocity between parents/guardians and children (Alanen, 2009; Mayall, 2002a). The interdependence between childhood and adulthood stands in a relational of mutual constitution (Alanen, 2009). In other words child-adult relation are linked into a reciprocal interdependency, as well as relationship of power mainly exercised by the adults. Children perceive the family and the home as valuable sources of comfort, material goods and relationship (Mayall, 2002a) and they are involved in the daily construction of their own and other individual's everyday relationships as well as life trajectories (Alanen, 2009).

In Zambian society and in particular Kalomo district, children are perceived as members of the family collective. Zambian children share a lot in common with children in other parts of Africa where they are regarded as members of collective family and they have family duties and obligations for securing their rights, existence and well-being (Abebe, 2012). Family relationship as well as kingship ties are vital as Payne (2012) note that in Zambia, like other African countries, kinship ties are more significant and notions of personhood and individuality are dependent on one's relationships with others. Hard work, obedience, and respect are important aspects of a child in the Zambian society. Children grow up into responsible adults and are trained to work hard for the wellbeing of the family.

Punch (2007), in her study in rural Bolivia, observed that children and adult daily power relations and responsibilities are not set but negotiated between family members. In addition, households renegotiate the ways in which power is played out in relation to family

responsibilities, work, and education, as well as according to the different constraints and opportunities that exist, including household wealth. It is further argued that interdependent power relations within rural households are dynamic and evolve over the life course such that when children acquire economic power, it tends to increase their social power, and relationships between children and parents are renegotiated accordingly (ibid). Power relationships are thus negotiated and renegotiated with different people in different contexts at different times.

#### **4.7 Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Africa**

In the past, the duty and responsibility of extended families towards other members was vital and almost without limitations even when the family did not have sufficient resources to care for existing members, orphaned children were taken in (Foster, 2000; Foster & Williamson, 2000). As result of this, there has been an assertion that, traditionally, there is no such thing as an orphan in Africa. The majority of African traditional cultures are premised on patrilineal kinship systems. According to Bourdillon (1991), cited in Foster (2000, p. 56), writing on the Shona kinship system in Zimbabwe, he argues that;

*the extended family used to be, and still is, the ambition of a man to gather around him a growing lineage of descendants and dependants who would act as a corporate body for economic purposes and also a united body in times of crisis or tension within the community.*

In this case, traditional life is characterized by brotherhood, a sense of belonging to a large family and by groups rather than individuals. The extended family thus gives security and support and the members share many assets. Traditionally, the concept of a 'social' orphan did not exist for instance in Zimbabwean societies (Foster, 2000) and Orphaned children were being cared for by members of their extended family, especially by paternal aunts and uncles who took on the caregiving functions of parents. The extended family was therefore a traditional social safety net system and its members were responsible for the protection of the vulnerable, care for the poor and sick and the transmission of traditional social values and education. Families, particularly in traditional societies, involve a large network of connections among people extending through varying degrees of relationship including multiple generations, over a wide geographic area and involving reciprocal obligations.

##### **4.7.1 The social rapture thesis versus theory of social resilience**

In sub-Saharan Africa, even more devastating than elsewhere, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has led to deepened poverty and exacerbated extremely deprivations (UNICEF., 2005). Drawing



on this, the social rapture thesis is premised on the assumption that the traditional system (extended family) of caring for the orphans is overstretched and eroded by the strain of AIDS, and is actually collapsing (Kidman, Petrow & Heymann, 2007; Tatek Abebe & Aase, 2007; UNICEF., 2005). In other words, the responsibility of orphan caring is seen as a major factor in pushing many extended families beyond their ability to cope. With the number of children that require protection and high degree of support as well as ever-larger numbers of adults falling sick with HIV/AIDS, many extended family networks have simply been overwhelmed (UNICEF., 2005). HIV/AIDS has depleted the traditional social safety net system to a point of collapsing, reducing the number of adults in their prime age and putting new responsibilities on the elderly, who are likely to die soon (Kaleeba, 2004, cited in Abebe & Aase 2007). Similarly, Guest (2003), cited Abebe & Aase, (2007) argue for the severe economic stress that the extended family system is faced with as a result of the huge burden of accommodating orphans according to African cultural norms and traditions and as such, the extended family has completely broken down.

This perspective is grounded on the unfortunate situation of child-headed households, female-headed households, and grandparent-headed families. These households are often progressively unable to adequately provide for the children in their care (UNICEF., 2005) and hence problems of streetism, delinquency and child labour. Strategic measures to such problems encompasses promoting external interventions of care in foster homes, children's village and orphanages (Abebe & Aase, 2007).

However, on the contrary the theory of social resilience postulate that the capacities and strengths of the informal, traditional childcare system can still support a larger number of orphans, in spite of the huge threat posed by the AIDS epidemic. This perspective is optimistic and critically argue against the notion of societal breakdown (Bray, 2003; Chirwa, 2002; and Mardhavan 2004 cited in Abebe & Aase, 2007). The traditional social safety net system in Africa have long been accustomed to curter for most of the basic needs of children and proving a protective social environment in which children can grow and develop (Nyambedha et al., 2002; Verhoef, 2005 cited in Abebe, 2012 p. 541). This perspective further maintains that the flexible traditional arrangements for children during normal courses of events when fostered by appropriate interventions, has the potential to offer a range of possibilities for care of orphans. The social resilience theory emphasises the importance and necessity of preserving the strength of the extended family responsibilities and advocates for the promotion of culturally appropriate orphan-care interventions to manage the problem.

Some studies have suggested the capacities of various local coping mechanisms that are amazingly resilient in finding ways to build livelihoods, muster resources and care for those affected by the devastation of HIV/AIDS (Kalipeni, Craddock, Oppong, & Ghosh, 2004). Contrary to the social rupture thesis, my empirical data as well suggest that the extended family still exist and plays a critical role in the provision of care to OVC. The provision of cash transfer to the most vulnerable groups of the society and especially those households that are Incapacited and at the same time caring for OVC is based on the idea of strengthening the extended family to provide care to these children.

#### **4.8 Children and social protection**

Social protection is widely acknowledged as a critical investment for children, particularly in assisting families and children to overcome financial and social barriers. The African Union Member States takes high cognisance that social protection is a paramount component of social development and inclusive growth strategies in Africa (AUC & UNICEF, 2014). The 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa acknowledged the importance for increased coverage and enhanced effectiveness of social protection as a response to chronic poverty. The 2006 Livingstone conference granted a further recognition of social protection as a human right, as well as included specific government commitments to social protection and the 2008 Africa Union (AU) social policy framework explicitly identified social protection as one of its key components (AUC & UNICEF, 2014). The aforementioned series of actions taken have contributed to building a critical impetus for social protection in Africa. Even though some parts of Africa have had increased economic growth, poverty, exclusion and inequality continue to prevail across the continent and as a result, there has been a heightened recognition of the need to redefine and develop social protection systems to ensure equity and prospering societies.

##### **4.8.1 Conceptual definition of social protection**

The concept of Social protection is a broader concept that goes beyond social policies and social welfare. According to Farrington and Slater (2006, p. 500), Social Protection incorporate ‘a sub-set of public actions that address risk, vulnerability and chronic poverty’. Meanwhile, the World Bank define social protection as a programme that covers social risk management, and goes beyond the traditional area of social protection (labour market interventions, social insurance and social safety nets) to redefine its strategies to deal with risk (Hiensch, 2009; Woldehanna, 2009, citing Holzmann and Jorgensen 2000). The three strategies of the World Bank’s Social Risk Management are prevention, mitigation and

coping, which can be provided through informal mechanisms (storing in the form wealth, and transfer of cash within the household), market-based (insurance) and publicly mandated such as social insurance, transferred payment of various kinds and public work (Woldehanna, 2009). The most inclusive definition of social protection is that provided by Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004), which goes beyond raising income and reducing poverty. They argue that social protection must promote and increase the social equity and social rights of poor, vulnerable and marginalised populations and hence they define social protection as;

*'The set of all initiatives, both formal and informal that provide: social assistance to extremely poor individuals and households; social services to groups who need special care or would otherwise be denied access to basic services; social insurance to protect people against the risks and consequences of livelihood shocks; and social equity to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse' (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004 cited in Woldehanna 2009, P.6).*

For purposes of this thesis, I will use the concept of social protection as defined by Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) because it is broader, inclusive of all provision of social protection (formal and informal) and all dimensions of poverty including all initiatives that helps protect the rights of children. Although social protection include both public and private initiatives that addresses destitution and household vulnerability to shocks, in this thesis I consider social protection as welfare assistance programmes provided by government particularly in-kind support and cash transfer scheme.

#### **4.8.2 Approaches to social protection**

Generally there are a broad range of social protection programmes that target the destitute, poor and the most vulnerable members of the society. These include the following;

**Social assistance:** these among other include non-contributory transfers to those deemed eligible by society on the basis of their vulnerability or poverty (Farrington & Slater, 2006). Examples include social transfers like non-contributory pensions, child welfare grants, food vouchers and other initiatives such as school feeding or fee waivers for education or health. In addition, it also involve conditional cash transfers and conditionality's are based on child and maternal health care practices, school enrolment/attendance, nutritional standards, or simply using the welfare assistance as intended/desirable. Social assistance may also cover livelihood support payments targeted at households below the poverty line, in which they are

allowed to spend the money as they wish as well as payments made as part of emergency relief, or to facilitate post-emergency transitions (Woldehanna, 2009).

**Social insurance:** generally this involves individuals pooling resources by paying contributions to the state or a private provider so that, if they suffer a shock or a permanent change in their circumstances, they are able to receive financial support for example, contributory pensions and health insurance. Despite having an important role in preventing individual from dropping into poverty, social insurance is generally, more appropriate for better-off individuals (Farrington & Slater, 2006).

**Cash transfers:** cash transfers are a form of social assistance given to individual households and it is an alternative to in-kind transfers such as agricultural inputs, shelter and non-food items, as well as an alternative to food aid distribution. Cash transfers can either be in developmental or humanitarian contexts and generally are designed to increase or smooth the consumption of goods and services provided through the market system, such as food or construction materials, or through public provision, such as many aspects of health or education (ibid). Some cash transfers are highly conditional on monitorable responses by the recipients, such as attending health clinics or sending children to school as I mentioned earlier.

#### **4.8.3 Rationales for Social Protection and Children in Africa**

During an expert consultation meeting held in May, 2014 in south Africa under the theme, *Children and Social Protection Systems: Building the African Agenda*, that was jointly prepared by African Union Commission (AUC) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), there were three major arguments that were put forth to support the case for developing and strengthening of social protection systems and children in Africa. The discussion paper draft for the conference outlined the following: Firstly, it was argued that all children have the Right to social protection, and secondly, it was noted that social protection contributes to poverty alleviation, and inclusive growth. Thirdly, the discussion paper draft vividly stressed the potential role of social protection in enhancing families' capacity to take care of their children, increasing investment in human capital and ensuring a healthy transition to adulthood (AUC & UNICEF, 2014).

##### **4.8.3.1 Social Protection as a 'Right'**

The Right to Social Protection is being recognized by a number of African and international conventions, that include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25) and the

International Covenant on Economic and Social Cultural Rights (Article 9 and 10) to which the majority of AU Member States are signatories. Moreover, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) also acknowledges that children have the right to social security, including social insurance, hence social protection contributes to the realization of specific social security rights, as well as other rights such a right to education and survival as stipulated in Articles 26 and 27 of the CRC.

#### ***4.8.3.2 Investment in child-sensitive social protection***

Many African children encounter multiple and compounding vulnerabilities. In addition to sharing many of the same sources of vulnerability with their care givers and communities, children also face age-specific deprivations such as increased vulnerability to malnutrition, disease or abuse. Even in middle income countries in the continent, children continue to face disparities and are disproportionately represented among the poor (AUC & UNICEF, 2014), hence social protection represents a vital investment for children, specifically in helping families and children to overcome financial and social barriers. As a result of social protection, families and care givers are able to invest on children's well-being, increase expenditures in education and health, enhance dietary diversity and improve nutrition. It is further argued that, social protection can reduce negative coping mechanisms during period of stress with clear effects on children because benefitting households are not likely to reduce their diets and pull children out of school to contribute to family income generating activities. Moreover, social protection can contribute to increasing the time that caregivers spend with their children, removing some of the social, legal and financial barriers to quality parental care (AUC & UNICEF, 2014). The impact of social protection on child development can potentially go beyond childhood, thereby contributing to enhance the transition to adulthood, the accumulation of human capital, and the interruption of cycles of intergenerational poverty and exclusion.

#### ***4.8.3.3 Social Protection and poverty alleviation***

It was argued during the conference that social protection contributes to poverty alleviation and inclusive growth. Over the last decade Africa has been experiencing impressive achievements in terms of economic growth and social development. The estimated region's average rate of economic growth between 2009 and 2012 was 4.2 percent, accompanied by a steady decline of child mortality and the improvement in access to basic education across the continent (AUC & UNICEF, 2014). However, in spite of this progress, there are still significant barriers that hinder equitable access to basic social services. These include,

persistent poverty, inequality and social exclusion. In Sub-Saharan Africa, about half the population lives on less US\$1.25 a day and in middle income countries, a considerable percentage live just above the poverty line and are extremely vulnerable to falling in poverty, while experiencing high levels of income inequities (ibid). In addition to that, the economic and social vulnerabilities currently being experienced in the continent are further exacerbated by economic shocks, political instability, food insecurity, high HIV/AIDS prevalence, and limited supply of services in remote and hard to reach areas.

Generally studies on cash transfers have shown that social protection programmes, particularly cash transfers, have an impact on chronic poverty, household resilience, risk management, economic dynamics at household and community levels, and on maximizing equitable outcomes in social sectors (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006; Davies & Davey, 2008; Handa & Davis, 2006; Schubert & Slater, 2006; Schubert, Webb, Temin, & Masabane, 2007). Cash transfers contribute to productivity poverty alleviation and human capital accumulation as outlined below.

- *Predictable and long-term social transfers contribute to alleviating chronic poverty, addressing the social and economic factors that shape vulnerability to poverty.*
- *Well-designed social protection also helps to decrease income inequality and encourage social inclusion and social cohesion.*
- *Social protection has also proven to reduce and eliminate financial and social barriers to access services, particularly among the most vulnerable and excluded, and thus contributes to maximize equitable outcomes in key social sectors such as health, nutrition and education.*
- *Impacts are visible on demand stimulation, promoting investment in households' productive activities and creating income multiplier effects in local economies.*
- *Predictable social protection strengthens the capacity of households and families to respond, withstand and bounce back from a particular economic or social shock, while reducing the specific welfare losses when shocks occur (AUC & UNICEF, 2014)*

#### **4.9 The Rights Based Approach**

Children's rights discourse are embedded within the principles and standards of the international human rights system and are enshrined in the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC). Freeman (2002), cited in Te One (2011, p. 41) defines rights as

“claims or entitlements that derive from moral and/or legal rules.” In view of this, children’s rights can be explained as legal entitlements or human rights that address the special need for provision, protection and care for children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was the first international human rights treaty to adopt a comprehensive approach on the protection of children, and has been acknowledged as a watershed in the history of children. The CRC covers a wide range of issues and establishes legally binding obligations by laying down international standards, in which countries must meet both within their domestic legislations and policies affecting children (Fottrell, 2000). The convention contains 54 articles, and 40 of these provide substantive rights for children. Children’s rights on the CRC can be broadly grouped into 3 major categories known as the ‘3Ps’; provision rights, protection rights, and participation rights (Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003).

The rights of the child are also enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) but with a few amendments. This is a regional human rights instrument and its application is contextual because it presents the rights of children in a way that reflects the existing situation of children in Africa with regard to cultural context, social economic situations and socio-political conflict (Tine & Ennew, 1998). The UN-CRC and ACRWC are both guided by the four core principles: The best interest of the child, Non-discrimination, the right to life, survival and development, and the respect for the views of the child. However, as I mentioned earlier the application of the instruments are contextual.





## **5 The extended family, community understanding of orphanhood and vulnerability**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I shall present community ideas and understanding of what constitute orphanhood and vulnerability in the context of Kalomo district. In particular, I will highlight adult participant's perception and their understanding of vulnerability and orphanhood in order to depict the context in which orphanhood and Vulnerability is locally understood. However I shall first begin with a briefly discussion about the global discourse of orphanhood which plays a crucial role in determining policy and programming for the wellbeing of OVC and engage this with my findings particularly how eligibility for SCT is determined. I shall present my findings as drawn from informal dialogue, focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews. The focus of this chapter is to engage with how vulnerability and orphanhood is perceived locally in comparison with how the Government defines orphanhood and vulnerability. In this chapter I will particularly engage with the contested global discourse understanding of orphanhood in comparison with the local understanding of Orphanhood and as such I will argue for the social construction of orphanhood. In addition, I shall argue for the viability of the extended family due to the fact that government social safety nets programme for instance Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS) in the context of Zambia, normally targets those households and individuals who are vulnerable and incapacitated. The majority of the targeted households are providing care for the Orphans and that the idea is to strengthen the extended family in caring for these children through the provision of cash and other welfare services.

### **5.2 Global discourse of Orphanhood**

The English word "orphan" has its roots from Greek and Latin which literally mean a child bereaved by the death of one or both parents. Whilst it is true that some orphan estimates are specific to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, others include orphans from all causes (Foster & Williamson, 2000). In Africa, policies and programmes have quite often focussed on children who have been orphaned. The wider definition is more useful for programming purposes since it is inappropriate at community level to determine eligibility for assistance based on specific cause of parental death. Most estimates and models define an orphan as a child whose mother has died. From a practitioner point of view, most community programmes

target children in difficult circumstances which includes maternal and paternal orphans under 18 years.

According to the definitions provided by UNICEF/UNAIDS, (2005), 'An orphan is a child below the age of 15 who has lost its mother or both parents'. A child who has lost the mother is termed as 'maternal orphan' where as the child who has lost the father is termed as 'paternal orphan'. The definitions incorporate age thresholds and usually the age is within the range/limit of 15 to 18. A child made vulnerable by AIDS is below the age of 18 who has lost one or both parents, or has a chronically ill parent (regardless of whether the parent lives in the same household as the child), and lives in a household where in the past 12 months at least one adult died and was sick for 3 of the 12 months before he/she died (UNICEF, 2005).

### **5.3 Local perspectives and understanding of Orphanhood, a case study of Mawaya, Kalomo**

Zambia is a multi-ethnic country which consist of 73 ethnic languages. Each ethnic language has its own local name given to an orphaned child. In Kalomo district where the empirical material for my study was gathered, the widely local name given to a child who is an orphaned is *mwana muchala*. This is a name given to an orphan in 'Tonga tribe' (local ethnic group in Kalomo). The local word *mwana muchala* when translated into English word literary mean a child left without adult care due to death caused by HIV/AIDS or other causes of death. In another local language called *Chichewa* which is one of the top 6 languages spoken in the country and in Kalomo at large, an orphaned child is named as *mwana wa masiye*. To translate this into English, *mwana* means a 'child' and *wa masiye* means 'left behind'. Similarly, in Bemba language which is one of the ethnic group, an orphaned child is named as *mwana wanhsiwa*. The two local words *masiye/nshiwa* depicts the same meaning. The two words are also associated with neglect, suffering and mistreatment of the child. I was so eager to learn diverse local understanding of these words. On two separate informal dialogue, Jenifer (F/31) a single mother with 2 sons and Royce (F/65) a grandmother caring for her 3 grandchildren had similar insights and understanding of what the words *muchala/nshiwa/masiye* are locally synonymous with.

Royce: I'm the guardian to these children and I make sure that I give them the care they deserve within whatever little resources I find. I sell '7days' (name given to a local/traditional beer). I do not want to see my grandchildren suffer because when people see them suffering and neglected they will call them as *bana wama siye/nshiwa*. Even though my daughter died,

I'm now the mother to these children (*makolo ba bana*). When I get the money from the welfare I add it on top of the money that I earn by selling beer. So I'm able to manage to provide to these children with these little earnings but they go a long way.

Jenifer: if children are mistreated and abused in the home people or neighbours will start saying that these children are kept like *ba shiwa/masiye*, if I mistreat my own children the community will call them *nshiwa/masiye*

The above expression indicate that understanding the concept of orphanhood goes beyond lack of biological parents and should not be understood in terms of fix age but rather social fluid. One would argue that a child who lacks the basic needs, neglected and mistreated is synonymous with orphanhood. This piece of empirical findings is similar to that of Chirwa, (2002) cited in Smørholm, (2007 p.41) who argues that the concept of orphanhood among the *Chewa* and *Tumbuka* speaking people depicts social and economic processes. As such the concept of orphanhood is not a rigid construction such that the main tenets should be loss of biological parents and age. Being an orphan involves much more about how children are cared for than who is caring for them as evident from the above narrations. In addition one would argue that an orphan should not be understood as a child with no parents but a child with parents as it was pointed out vividly by Royce (F/65) in the preceding expression saying '*Even though my daughter died, I'm now the mother to these children (makolo ba bana)*'.

In most communities in Zambia, there is a strong sense and spirit of togetherness. For instance there is common principle regarding the fight and adverse impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that, '*if you are not infected by the pandemic then you are affected*'. When interpreted in terms of HIV/AIDS as a leading cause of orphanhood, the care for OVC falls in the hands of the community. In other words this literary means that individual and the community need to take an active role in the fight of the pandemic because eventually the care for OVC will always be in the hands of the community implying the effect of the pandemic. In short and in principle an orphan is a child who belongs to the community, a child who do not have adult care and lacks the basic needs. In her study in Ng'ombe, one of the most densely populated compound in Lusaka, Zambia, Smørholm, (2007) share similar findings that orphans in Ng'ombe are defined as children who belong to the community highlighting the social fluid understanding rather than biological definitions. Based on my empirical findings, I would argue that the global understanding and conceptualisation of orphans differ from that of local understanding of orphanhood in the sense that orphanhood is locally conceptualised and understood in terms of social fluid such as lack of the basic needs,

care, as well as a child who is neglected and mistreated. On the other hand the global orphan is understood in terms of lack of biological parents and fixed age. Local conceptualisation of orphans is thus different from how orphans are globally understood and conceptualised and as such I argue that orphanhood is socially constructed.

There are so many INGOs in Kalomo district among other includes World Vision International, Plan international, save the children and so forth that supplement Government effort in the provision of the welfare support. Conceptualizations of orphanhood in kalomo is suffused by the works of these INGOs as they work using pre-determined global definitions of orphanhood. Children and guardians that were part of my informants precisely knew the English word 'orphan'. The English word 'orphan' to them denoted a child who has either lost one or both parents.

#### **5.4 Adult/guardian understanding of Vulnerability**

I employed informal dialogue and focus group discussion in order to get the adult/guardian perception of what constitute vulnerability within the context of provision of welfare support to the most need in the community. The informants mention that *buchete*, a local concept in Tonga tribe was associated/synonymous with the English word vulnerability. In another ethnic language called *chichewa*, a common ethnic language spoken in the area I conducted this study, vulnerability is associated with *umphawi*. The two local concepts, *buchete* and *umphawi* when translated into English word are more closely linked to problems that I will now highlight. The 4 guardians that I asked provided responses that were similar. The most common issues that were highlighted regarding what constitute vulnerability were; lack of food, insufficient or lack of schooling support, providing care to many orphans, agricultural production problems (especially the lack of farming inputs) and the lack of money, material goods and earning opportunities. Individuals that were identified by participants as vulnerable to these problems include, child headed households, households headed by a person who is female, elderly, widowed or disabled (including visual impairment and mental disability); and those including children who have been orphaned or fostered. In addition, it was reported that non-orphaned children living in a household that had fostered other children were also identified as being potentially vulnerable, as fixed household resources are shared between more mouths despite living with their biological parents. The 4 guardian's consistently highlighted that female-headed households often face great challenges providing for their households, and that the challenge is exacerbated by caring for orphans. My participants

reported that children experiencing the death of their mother were more vulnerable describing how mothers, as the primary caregiver spend most of the time with children, as such they are key for supporting children's school attendance and generally the rearing/upbringing of the child. This is consistent with the findings by Schenk et al. (2008) in their study in Zambia about supporting orphans and vulnerable children affected by AIDS where they found that female participants reported that children experiencing the death of their mother were more vulnerable while male participants asserted that it was the death of the father that left children more vulnerable.

#### **5.4.1 Child vulnerability: evidence in a child headed household**

My house is a child-headed household. I live with three (3) siblings, my young brother (14yrs), and two nieces (the daughters of my late elder sister). There were people that were passing through houses writing names of those people living in problems like those who do not have guardians or if their guardians died and then only children remained such that they cannot find a living for themselves. My sister who was taking care of us died and being the eldest I look after 3 siblings. The money we get from social welfare is not enough for the daily needs in this house because there are so many things that we need to do. The house we live in is very small and we cannot build or extend it with the small money that I receive and I would like to start a business to help me, so all these things cannot be done from this money that I receive I have to put food on the table and pay school fees for my siblings. I have taken up responsibility of looking after my siblings. I like school but attending school won't put food on the table or pay for the much needed school fees. I go around to look for piece works then when you find it you do the work and then you are given the money and then it helps you. (Source: interview narration)

The above expression was from a child headed household, Peter (M/16) during an informal dialogue when we were talking about general issues and challenges that he faces being the head of the house. Based on Peter's narration, there is a similar sharing of the problems when compared to what the other 4 guardians considered vulnerability. In the above, Peter struggles to make ends meet, he points out inadequate money for food and paying school fees for his siblings. He plans to extend the house they live because it's small but he does not have the capacity to do so. The position of Peter as child who is at the same time the head of the house coupled with how he struggles reflect the extent to which he is exposed and finds himself and the sibling in a vulnerable state.

## 5.5 Orphanhood and eligibility for Social Cash Transfer

In chapter 4 of this thesis I provided a donor driven definition of orphanhood. This definition is widely used by the Government of Zambia in most policy document. Interestingly, even though the Government uses a donor driven definition of an orphan, it does not play a crucial role in determining eligibility to receive welfare support in terms of social cash transfer. At this point I will elaborate based on my empirical findings how eligibility for social cash transfer is determined.

The social welfare system of the Government of Zambia (PWAS which is the main system of welfare service delivery) has structure that it uses to deliver and identify beneficiaries for whatever support needed. PWAS has the following structure that it uses to identify potentially eligible beneficiaries. There are committees in the hierarchy of community welfare committee (CWAC), area committee and the district committee. The committee at the community level are the ones that interact directly with the beneficiaries and they are the same committee that the government use to identify who should receive what support. These committees are drawn from within the community members who live with the same people in need of welfare support. This makes it very easy to identify potentially eligible households. Even though these households are identified by the community structure, they are subjected to a screening process to make them qualify to whatever services that they need. At community level there is a CWAC and area level there is the area coordinating committee which is superior over the CWAC. However, the overall body of PWAS in the district is the District welfare assistance committee (DWAC) which comprises of the members from the line ministries which are education, Council, Health, Community members and other NGOs.

The district welfare assistant committee (DWAC) is a committee of 10 members and also the other two committees I mentioned comprises of 10 members. The criteria to identify beneficiaries is any household which is incapacitated, vulnerable and poor. In practise the programme looks at both social and economic qualifiers. Below is a narration from the programme manger coordinating the provision of welfare services at the district level when I asked whether the definition of orphanhood the Government use determine eligibility?

Programme Manager: We look at the general characteristics of the household for us to qualify it. We don't just look at whether the household is keeping orphans or maybe the household is keeping disabled people or if the household is keeping an aged person that is not the only qualifier that we look at and such are what we call social qualifiers. We also look at economic Qualifiers because what it is, is that someone may be disabled but able to fend for

himself/herself able to have a decent income. One maybe an Orphan but being kept by Uncles or relatives who are well to do so we do not just look at the term Orphan, Widow or aged but we check for the general characteristics of the household and I would say that is the criteria we use. So we look at both the social and economic qualifier.

Based on the above findings, one would argue that conceptualising orphans in terms of lack of biological parents and fix age does not necessary determine eligibility for children to access social cash transfer in kalomo, Zambia. In spite of a wider acknowledgement in literature about orphanhood and care in terms of the role that a donor driven definition of an orphan plays in setting the parameters for national policies and programs towards OVC, my study highlight contrary findings.

## **5.6 The family of an orphan within the context of SCTS**

The extended family plays a critical role in providing care for orphans in Zambia. Throughout this thesis and based on my findings I have provided evidence that the orphan family lies within the extended family. Some children in this study were found within the care of either grandfather or grandmother though with some few exception who were under the care of their mother. In some cases for instance I have provided empirical material about a child headed household caring for nieces; the children to peter's late elder sister (refer to Peter M/16). The households that constituted part of my study sample were caring for orphans. These households were receiving welfare support in terms of Cash and in-kind support. The household were targeted for this kind of support based on the grounds that they were caring for OVC and also it was noted that the household heads in most instances were grandparents and single mothers struggling to make ends meet because of high poverty levels. The community plays an important role in strengthening the extended family because it is the community themselves that take an active role in determining eligibility for households to receive support from the welfare department as they consider various characteristics and attribute of the household.

Contrary to the social rapture thesis that I have provided in chapter 4 of theoretical perspective, that argues that the extended family in Africa has broken down such that it cannot absolve any more orphans, my findings indicate that the extended family is still viable. This is based on the evidence that SCTS usually target incapacitated, vulnerable and poor individuals and more importantly my findings showed that the household that I sample

were caring for OVCs. Therefore I would argue that the extended family still exist in Kalomo.

## **5.7 Summery**

In this chapter, I presented a brief discussion about the global discourse of orphanhood which plays a crucial role in determining policy and programming for the wellbeing of OVC and engaged this with my findings particularly how eligibility for SCT is determined. In general, this chapter highlighted how orphanhood and vulnerability is perceived locally in comparison with how orphanhood and vulnerability is understood globally. The findings revealed that global understanding and conceptualisation of orphans differ from that of local understanding of orphanhood in the sense that orphanhood is locally understood in terms of lack of the basic needs, care, as well as a child who is neglected and mistreated. On the other hand the global orphan is understood in terms of lack of biological parents and therefore I argued that orphanhood is socially constructed. Furthermore, the study highlighted that being an orphan categorically and its subsequent donor driven definition does not guarantee eligibility for SCTS and that the extended family still exist and plays a critical role in caring for OVC.



## **6 Programme manager experience and perspectives of welfare scheme on OVC**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is to get some insight into the overall welfare programme in relation to the extent to which orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) basic needs are fulfilled. The empirical data is based on the experience and perspective of the programme manager coordinating the provision of welfare services at the district level. In this chapter I discuss the main critical welfare support in which children in Kalomo district are helped. In addition I will also discuss the unintended consequences of providing welfare support services to children and main challenges that hinder effective and efficient provision of welfare support to children in the district.

### **6.2 Fulfilling OVC basic needs through welfare provision**

Providing and fulfilling the basic needs for OVC pose a challenge because the demand for the basic needs is high due to the rapid growing number of OVC in Zambia. The republic government of Zambia signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in September 1990 and ratified it on 6 December 1991. This international instrument emphasises on the critical role that states should play in ensuring the wellbeing of the children. As such, I was so curious to investigate some measures and ways in which provision of basic needs to OVC can be satisfactorily met through provision of welfare support. I asked the programme manager coordinating the provision of welfare services to OVC at the district how the department is ensuring that OVC basic needs are properly met. The response was that the Government is trying to move away from the in-kind support to improve the cash support so that the targeted households can attend to their own needs. In addition, the programme manager at the district level (DSWO) informed me that cash transfer programme has been improving since from the time it was started because the government has been adding a little bit of the money on cash transfer programme and her explanation was as I quote below.

‘when cash transfer scheme was introduced, we started with K30.00 (K30.00 Zambian Kwacha) per month this time we give K140.00 which is given bimonthly (K70.00 per month) we give them once in 2 months’ time so we have been improving and if we do away with the in-kind support I believe much more can be given to them because all these resources that we are directing to the in-kind support e.g. the beans, mealie meal will now be directed towards

the provision of the cash which will now be an addition income to what they are already receiving. The amount for cash transfer will increase because we have resources directed to one programme'

The idea of doing away with the in-kind support and directing in-kind support resource on cash transfer is an issue that can be subjected to a debate. Re-directing such resources would imply that the government or social welfare department need to increase the amount for cash transfer so that it caters for the education need of OVC. During an interview held with the programme manager coordinating the provision of welfare services in the district, I learnt that the Government do not have the capacity to sufficiently increase the amount of cash per month to cover education needs for OVC in the targeted households.

One would argue that, if the government moves away from the in-kind support and then increases cash transfer to these households so that it can cover educational needs, it is likely that the education needs for OVC in some cases may not be met because the extent to which the education needs of OVC are likely to be met would be highly dependent on who controls the transfer at household level. The academic debate on the advantages and disadvantages of social cash transfer is highly contested. It is argued that the heads of beneficiary households or whoever has control over the transfers is likely to misuse them for self-interest and for 'undesirable consumption' like alcohol, tobacco, gambling and prostitution (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006; Schubert & Slater, 2006). In order to control and reduce this perceived risk, most Latin American cash transfer schemes impose conditions on their beneficiaries. Studies indicate that cash transfer to heads of households does not necessarily guarantee that children would benefit from it, nor that the money is spent to the needs of children as such it is important to understand how households allocate resources within the home (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006). However, there is evidence in literature indicating that the identity of the recipient of a cash transfer does matter in terms of impacts. For example, it is documented that cash transfers targeted at women rather than men have a stronger impact on the wellbeing of their children, particularly girls (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006, citing Haddad et., al, 1997). Cash transfers that target women is likely to have equalising impacts on negotiating power within the household. Duflo analysed the impact of the South African social pension on the height-for-age of children. The findings indicated that the 'pension improves the nutritional status of children (girls in particular) if it was received by a woman, but not by a man' (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006, citing Duflo, 2000, P. 9).

My argument is that, the in-kind and the cash transfer programmes are needed where through public welfare assistance scheme (PWAS) the in-kind support are able to meet the education needs for OVC while cash transfer helps to provide an extra meal to their households. So if the wellbeing of OVC is to be realised I believe it would be imperative that funds for in-kind support are increased thereby able to meet the educational needs. Not only that but also increasing funds through social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) so that the nutrition need for OVC are met. Those are some of the things probably were there is a high demand that is education and food. There is need for the improvement of funding for the two programmes to improve and this is key because provision of social welfare services requires the availability of resources of which without the resources one cannot deliver.

In my background and context chapter, I gave a brief outline and overall purpose of PWAS. The empirical material from an interview held with the programme officer coordinating public welfare assistance scheme (PWAS) at the district level alluded to the fact that it a system that ensure that the most need in society have also the basic needs. The programme endeavours to upgrade the status of the most vulnerable and poor people from that of being poor to average. In essence, these poor people should not walk naked, should not sleep in the street and should be able to access health and education services. The focus is on that person who is not able to have these basic needs.

### **6.3 Education support services**

Based on an individual interview with the programme officer, the findings shows that, OVC are being given education support and in particular those that are not able to access formal education. The government through the department of social welfare has been paying for children who are coming from incapacitated families that are not able to take their children to school. In addition to that the department has been assisting the incapacitated households where the children come from with cash transfer and the overall objective of the cash transfer is to provide an extra meal in these households. During the assessment/baseline assessment it was discovered that most of these household categorised as poor survived on one meal or none at all per day. So because of that discovery the Government thought that giving them a little Cash which can help them buy a 50Kg of Maize grain, will enable them have an extra meal per day. The initial idea of SCTS was to provide an extra meal for these vulnerable household per day. It was also pointed out that after giving these people this cash they were able to have two or three meals per day and that the children they were keeping were as well

able to benefit by having more than one meal in a day. So because of this extra meal that is being put on these household, children are now able to walk to school energetically. This is one of the benefit that OVC have benefited.

#### **6.4 Psychosocial counselling/support**

Psychosocial support is provided to children in their various problems. Children who are coming from a poor household are vulnerable to a lot of danger in society. Some of the danger that children are vulnerable to in kalomo is stealing. Children engage in illegal activities or activities that are likely to bring them in conflict with the law not because they want to but because they want to meet a certain need. As such the department of the social welfare take up the responsibility to provide counsel to the children and also represent those that come in conflict with the law to ensure that the right order or rather an appropriate disposal of the case. The department speak on behalf of children who are in conflict with the law and investigate on what might have been the circumstances for the child to engage in stealing for instance. Among other things that the department consider looking at when investigating what could have compelled a child to engage himself/herself in illegal acts includes the following. Whether it's hunger from the home where the child is coming from or if it is because the relatives of the child do not want him/her or if he/she is an abused child. Such scenarios make children do wrong things in life and once these circumstances that compel children to come in conflict with the law are brought out, recommendations are made and forwarded to the Magistrate in order to facilitate the appropriate way of disposing that particular case and so many children have been assisted through this kind of support that the department is offering and in most cases these are OVC. I learnt from the district social welfare officer (DSWO) that the average theft cases by OVC in Kalomo at the time of this study was at 4 in a Quarter. Other cases that the department has handled apart from theft include, defilement, livestock theft and also house braking theft. These are some of the prominent cases which the social welfare department in kalomo district has handled.

In addition to the above social support that are often provided in kind, OVC benefit from cash transfer through their household and directly benefit from PWAS by buying for them clothes, school books, and uniforms. The indirect support are those where the programme targets the household where the children resides. In such cases children also become partakers or beneficiially of the services because the support goes through the parents or guardian. For those children with disability, the department of social welfare has also in some cases bought wheel chair for them and artificial walking legs (crutches).

## **6.5 Unintended consequences of welfare services on OVC**

One of the unintended consequences that the provision of welfare support has not only on the lives of children but also adults is that of dependence syndrome. The findings of this study indicate that some children and individuals that have been brought up in homes that have been receiving welfare support developed a dependency attitude. The programme manager coordinating the welfare services expressed that the children and individual always want to be assisted even when there is a bit of ability from the family they still want to be helped. Beneficiaries always think of welfare and would not want to use the family resources or probably the resources that the family might have probably raised overtime. Situations may change, one might have been poor at some point but because of this and that support it turns out that the status of the household improves a bit. In some cases people do not show it that they are now better able to stand on their own and hence be weaned off from support. Individuals would still get more and more welfare support. This is however not a positive development, because individuals needs to develop confidence even as they receive this support people should learn to believe in their own abilities and even believing also in family abilities (extended family).

## **6.6 Factors that impinge effective provision of welfare support services to OVC in Kalomo**

The effective delivery of social safety net services to the most need in society and in this case OVC in Kalomo is affected by quite a number of factors. My findings shows that one of the challenges being encountered when providing welfare services to children is that the demand is higher than the resources especially with the in-kind- support for example education support. Even though the social welfare department in Kalomo receives funds for both the in-kinds support and social cash transfer, it was noted that in most cases the funds that the department receives are way too little compared to the demand out there. In addition, provision of food is yet another challenge. The social welfare department in Kalomo has been receiving inadequate resources under the PWAS programme thereby making it difficult sometimes to provide adequate basic necessity. Sometimes not all the household would have adequate food and other basic needs because of the family size. For example if there are 100 bags of mealie meal to be given out and if there are 100 household in need of the food, the social welfare department give each household one bag without looking at the number of household composition. Hence, if a household has many members, the food will turn out not to be adequate. In other words, whatever resources that are available are shared across the

community without necessarily looking at the composition of the household because doing so would disadvantage others. The welfare department thus takes into account the total number of households that are there in need of support and not considering the total numbers of individuals within each household.

The other obstacle to effective provision of welfare services relate to the issue of pilferage especially with the in-kind support. Pilferage simply means stealing of something in small quantities. In the context of in-kind support, it thus describe the act of removing a bit of the stuff (i.e. food stuff) which is supposed to go to the intended beneficiary. In chapter 2 of this thesis (background chapter), I explained that targeting for provision of welfare support to the most need is done by the Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs) which are the grassroots level structure of PWAS. The CWACs use a multi-stage participatory process to identify the most destitute and incapacitated households and it is through this community structure in which the in-kind support are delivered to the beneficiaries. Due to the protocols or the process of delivering in-kind support such as food to benefiting households through PWAS structures (i.e. CWACs), there is a possibility that CWAC members can remove part of the package (in-kind support).

The programme manager coordinating the programme explained that pilferage is very common because many households reported and complained of not receiving the actual quantities of the welfare packages designed or meant for them. In addition she also pointed out that in cases of pilferage the challenge is that it's very difficult to argue such a case because there are no scales to weigh the package at every point till the package reaches the beneficiary. Measures can be put to control such but that challenge will still be there.

## **6.7 Summery**

In this chapter I presented the experience and perspective of the programme manager coordinating the provision of welfare services at the district level specifically by discussing the main critical welfare support in which children in Kalomo district are helped. The study indicated that OVC are being given education support and in particular those that are not able to access formal education. School fees are being paid for children who are coming from those incapacitated families that are not able to take their children to school. In addition to that the department has been assisting the incapacitated households where the children come from with cash transfer and after giving cash to these vulnerable households they are able to have two or three meals per day and that the children they are keeping benefit by having

more than one meal in a day. The extra meal that is now being put on these household has enabled children to walk to school energetically. In addition the study also shows that children are provided with psychosocial support in their various problems. However, SCTS programme is poorly funded and the demand for welfare provision is higher than the available resources.





## **7 Interface between Social Cash Transfer and Livelihood alternatives**

### **7.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the interaction and connection between social cash transfer and livelihood strategies that children and households benefiting from cash transfer engage themselves in. I shall first begin with the discussion on different forms of livelihood strategies children and their guardians are involved in, in order to meet their everyday basic needs. I will also discuss key problems that OVC face in Kalomo district. In addition, this chapter will also present an analysis about how children are able to negotiate between schooling and different livelihoods strategies they engage in.

### **7.2 Children and parents livelihoods strategies in supplementing SCTS**

In this section, I will discuss the various livelihoods strategies that children and parents involve themselves in addition to SCTS. As part of my study, I was interested in finding out specifically children's livelihood alternatives, consequently I will also discuss in this section the role of children in contributing to family livelihoods and supplementing SCTS. Based on my empirical data from individual interviews and semi-participant observation from both children and their guardians, the findings indicate a multiple use of SCTS. Social safety nets that comes in the form of cash targeting these vulnerable groups of the society and in this case OVC and the incapacitated households is used in so many different ways to meet the day to day basic needs. Children and their guardian take advantage of the cash received from the social welfare despite it not being adequate to meet their basic needs. It was noted that from most of OVC that I interacted with informally, and through individual interviews part of the cash received was used on productive activities that would in turn bring in an extra income into the household. Some of the household that were benefiting from cash transfer were actively involved in subsistence farming. One of the child participant narrated to me how the family utilises the money they received by investing it into procurement of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertiliser for maize grain production which is the country's main staple food. In addition the money received is used to hire animals (Cows/Bulls) to do the weeding of the fields. Akan (M/16) explained to me how his family make use of the money for farming purposes in the following excerpt;

Oliver: Would you describe to me what form of support do you get from social welfare (Public welfare Scheme)?

Akan: The money, we buy food at home but the food we buy is not enough. We do farming, gardening and sometimes we also pay the money for weeding the fields. We hire those individuals who have animals to do the weeding (Cows/Bulls). Sometimes we also use the money to buy some fertilizers.

Oliver: Ok so you do farming right? So what do you do with the Harvest? Do you use it for home Consumption or you sell it?

Akan: we use the Harvest for food at home.

Oliver: Would you describe to me that this support is adequate to meet your everyday needs?

Akan: Not everything but at least the money is able to solve one or two problems. It solves some problems bit by bit. If she gets paid in particular month one problem is sorted out then the next month another problem is sorted.



**Figure 3. Gardening as a livelihood option**

Source: field data in Kalomo June to August 2014

In the above interview excerpt, one would argue that children in these benefiting households knows best the problems of their households and as such they are able to articulate how the money received are priorities based on what would be considered as the most pressing issue. In other words these households knows what they need most and they are able to priorities how the money can be used. In this study, households utilises cash transfers for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options. For example many households

produce food items in their garden by using labour intensive production mechanism. That way the income generated from cash transfers is not used in paying for daily labourers. In this context children's labour has an important contribution to make as it lessens the burden of labour required from outside.

In his working paper on the review and analysis of the Kalomo Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme, Schubert (2005), observed that those households/beneficiaries with savings accounts left part of the transfers in the account so that they are able to use it later in the year when food becomes scarce. According to Wietler (2007), her study about the impact SCT on livelihood strategies for beneficiaries in Kalomo involved in small scale business highlighted that cash transfers did not directly activate people to start a business but enabled already performing small scale traders to extend their business. The transfers thus did not lead to the abduction of a commercial activity but rather to its intensification. For instance one beneficiary used one month's transfers to buy seeds and the next to buy fertilizer and thereby managed to harvest 2 x 50kgs of maize (ibid).

In addition and importantly, there is a link between livelihood strategies and the money received from the social welfare. I noted from various households how they were able to make use of SCT not only directly on home consumption purposes such as food and so forth but also on other productive livelihoods. Schubert et al. (2007), have similar findings when compared with my study. In their evaluation report on the Impact of Social Cash Transfers on children affected by HIV and AIDS from the Kalomo Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme, it was noted that cash was not only predominantly used for purchasing of basic needs such as food, accessing health services and expenditure relating to education (uniforms, books, pens.), but households also made investments in assets such as small livestock (chicken and goats) which are raised and resell. Moreover, households also repaid debts. Therefore, my argument is that, SCT and household livelihoods strategies reinforce each other and help vulnerable households break away from the cycle of poverty or rather helps them float and not to sink into absolute poverty.

### **7.3 Children's role in contributing to family livelihood and supplementing cash transfer scheme**

Cash transfer scheme and other welfare services such as in-kind support provided to children are not adequate to meet their day to day basic needs. Drawing from semi-participant observation and interviews the results shows that most households that were part of my study,

both children and parents would otherwise embark on some income generating activities in an effort to ensure that their households are viable economically so that they are able to meet their daily needs. In this section, I will highlight and discuss some of the income generating activities and other forms of livelihood strategies that children engage in, and this will be purely based on my empirical findings from those households that constituted the sample size for my study.

### **7.3.1 Selling salabula (second hand clothes)**

In Zambia salabula is a local name given to the selling of second hand clothes. In most cases the second hand clothes are ordered in big packages by sellers and then they are retailed either at a local community market or even in homes. One of my child informants was actively engaged in this business of selling second hand clothes. He would assist his elder brother whom they were not living together in one household because his elder brother had his own family that he was taking care of but most often he would call upon his young brother to help. The following is a narration from Akan (M/16) when I asked him if at all he was involved in other livelihood strategies to supplement cash their household received from the welfare department.

Oliver: What other activities do you do in order to earn a living apart from cash received from Social Welfare?

Akan: Yes there are other things that I do.

Oliver: Can you share with me some of the activities that you do?

Akan: I go in town to work at the market. There is a stand at the market so I sell second hand clothes. So when I sell my elder brother would give part of the money and it's this same money that I would bring back at home, to buy some things for home. There is community tap for drawing water whereby we are supposed to contribute some money, so after my brother gives me the money, my mother reminds me that we save the money to pay for the community tap. I also buy sweet potatoes and relish.

The above excerpt shows that Akan partly plays critical role to ensure the viability of their household. He assist his elder brother at the local market to sell second hand clothes and he is given part of the money from the sells of second hand clothes. He then brings the money home so that his family can buy food. In addition, by selling second hand clothes, the earnings helps the family to contribute towards a community tap as such their household is able to access clean and safe drinking water.

Children's involvement in market work in order to generate income is well documented in diverse African societies. Schildkrout (2002), observed in her study on socio-economic roles of children in *hausa* society in Nigeria that children (both girls and boys) participated in socially and economically significant activities. She noted that quite often girls looked after younger children, washed dishes, accompanied women out at night and in fatherless homes, girls helped their mothers through trading for purposes of either providing money for subsistence or in readiness for their own marriages. On the other hand she observed that boys who left their families in rural areas engaged themselves in work in the city that included street trading, cleaning gutters and carrying loads in order to support themselves. In her study, both girls and boys were involved in the cash economy at an early age and gender was not crucial in determining the tasks that children performed (ibid). In a similar study by Robson (2004a), she also observed that children's labour in *hausa* was heavily relied upon by *hausa* women who were traders but secluded in public spheres for religious reasons. On behalf of *hausa* women, children carried out income earnings activities. Children acted as intermediaries in trade as they took goods, money and information from place to place at the same time carrying out transaction under instructions. Robson (2004a), further found that children spent most of their time in the market and streets and as such they are regarded as the biggest economic assets for secluded women because they are important source of information about prices, quantities, competitors and so forth.

By working in daily markets children not only generate income but also link the domestic spheres of production with that of the public sphere of circulation and commodity exchange. In my study, the above excerpt shows the agency of Akan being vividly demonstrated by the kind of work he does and the important contribution he makes for the survival of the family. However, even though Akan is able to exercise his agency by economically contributing to his household, it is clear that he does not decide on his own how this money earned should be spent. One would argue that even though Akan is able to buy sweet potatoes and relish for the family, his mother too reminds him that some money should be saved for payment of water bills. The argument is that, even though children are able to exercise their agency, interdependent generational relationship and structural forces play a critical role in mediating how children exercise agency. In other words, to a larger extent structural forces act as constraints for children to execute their agency. In the above scenario Akan's mother has a say on how the money earned should be spent and household decision making power is

negotiated. However, children also gain some power because of their ability to contribute to family sustenance.

### 7.3.2 Ferrying building sand and washing clothes

One of the child informant informed me that to supplement the cash received from the welfare department, he performed piece works such as ferrying building sand and washing of clothes in homes within the community and in turn would be given the money after doing the work. This is the case of Peter Siakantu (M/16), who is the head of the house (child headed household). Peter is looking after 3 siblings, 2 nieces and a 10 years old young brother. The 2 nieces are the daughters to his late elder sister. After the death of his elder sister Peter took up the responsibilities of caring for his young brother and 2 nieces. Being a child headed household, he receives cash from the welfare department. Below is an extraction from an interview as he explained how he acquired money from other sources.

Oliver: What other activities or things you do apart from this money you receive from the social welfare?

Peter: I go around to look for piece works (*ganyu*) then when you find it you do the work and then you are given the money and then it helps you.

Oliver: So what kind of piecework (*ganyu*) do you do?

Peter: I carry sand used for construction purposes, I also wash clothes because what is important is to earn money so that you can be helped,

Oliver; so do these piecework (*ganyu*) that you do give you adequate standard of living?

Peter: The piecework I do are not able to meet all my daily needs you find that you work then you earn little money that can only afford you to buy relish then you cannot buy mealie meal because it is not enough.

Piecework (locally called *ganyu*) is an important livelihood strategy in Zambia where children and adults from poorer households accomplish certain tasks for in-kind or in-cash payment. Piecework (*ganyu*) is an informal labour contract. Cole and Hoon (2013), argues that *ganyu* is a short-term, casual labour common in rural Zambia and neighbouring countries and during the period of neo-liberal economic reforms in the 1990s, it was a substantial survival strategy employed by households in rural Zambia. In her study in Kalomo, district, Wietler (2007), found that piecework included working on other people's fields as well as washing clothes or grading the yard. During the time she conducted her study in August

2006, the wage for piecework (*ganyu*) in Zambia ranged from K20.000 to K60.000 and this was dependent on the kind and duration of work.

During a focus group discussion that consisted of 5 children, I asked the children to discuss various forms of livelihood strategies children undertook to earn an income. John (M/15) also just like Peter mentioned that he would at times do piece works of ferrying sand used for purposes of construction of houses and other buildings.

For me, sometimes I do some piecework, I carry sand using wheelbarrow and then I'm given the money. Am given the money depending on the distance that I have to carry the sand. During the rainy season 1 wheelbarrow costs K3.500 and during dry season the cost is K2.500 (John, Aged 15).

Kalomo district has recently been growing in terms of the population and economic activities such as commercial production of Maize and other trading activities. Due to rapid population growth and good rainfall pattern there is a demand for both housing and space for agricultural production. The high demand for housing has resulted into individuals especially those with the capacity to invest in construction of houses to acquire land from the council. The aim for constructing houses to some extent is tailored towards providing accommodation to the growing population. As such these individual are able to take advantage of cheap labor from poor children like John and Peter. As a result, employment opportunities as daily labourers in the booming construction are one of the many informal jobs that young people take up. According to John, during rainy season though depending on the distance, ferrying 1 wheelbarrow of sand cost K3.500 while during dry season it cost K2.500. The cost of carrying 1 wheelbarrow of sand is relatively high during rainy season than during dry season probably due to difficulties in pushing the wheelbarrow because during this time the ground is usually wet with some mud.

Now, coming back to Peter, as he explained in the preceding excerpt, even though he engages in some of the income generating activities still the money he earns is not adequate but it still helps to buy something for instance relish. In addition, and based on my field notes, the life history of Peter from the time the elder sister died shows the challenge that he carries on his shoulder to care for his late sister's daughters. Before the elder sister to Peter died both Peter and the 2 little girls were under her care but after her death Peter now becomes an uncle to the 2 little girls as well as the bread winner for the household. In this piece of empirical material, I find one interesting issue regarding the extended family relationship. This shows

that the extended family system plays a vital role in providing care for children though in this case Peter can be considered to be young care giver in terms of biological age but he assumes an adult responsibility of caring for his 2 nieces and the young brother. I discussed my empirical findings about the extended family in more detailed in chapter 5 of the thesis.

### 7.3.3 Harvesting maize grain (Kutebula)

*Kutebula* is a local word which when translated into English word literary mean harvesting of the maize grain from the fields when it is dry. As I mentioned earlier in chapter two, maize production is the major economic activity in Kalomo district. It is produced both at commercial and subsistence level. Usually during the onset of the rains during early November, maize seeds are planted and the harvest is done between May to July after it has dried and most local farmers sell their maize produce to Zambia Food Reserve Agency (FRA). Zambia Food Reserve Agency is a parastatal established in 1996, whose mission is to ensure national food security and provide market access for rural based small holder farmers by maintaining a sustainable national strategic food reserve. The FRA also acts as a macro-economic stabilizer for food grown in the country, such as maize which is the nation's staple crop. During the period of maize harvest, the demand for labor is high because most farmers want to have their maize ready for sell to Zambia Food Reserve Agency (RFA). Some children engage in this kind of seasonal piece work and below is Kimmy (M/12) who performs this kind of work together with his elder brother as source of their income.

Kimmy: We go to do piecework/*ganyu (kutebula)* and then we are given some money after doing the work. I also go to do piece works at the grinding meal.

Oliver: Ooh, Ok. You mention to me that you do (*Kutebula*) would you tell me what *kutebula* is?

Kimmy: When the Maize in the field dries you remove it and then they give you the money afterwards.

Oliver: How much money do they give you after you have removed the maize (*kutebula*)?

Kimmy: we are given K30.00 each.

Oliver: Who do you go with to do this kind of piece work?

Kimmy. I go with my Elder brother John and some of my friends.



Despite being seasonal work, harvesting of maize grain (*Kutebula*) is such a valuable source of income for children and adult in Kalomo. Production of maize by commercial farmers and small scale farmers provide an avenue for children to earn an income. Most children in my study reported that their engagement in work related activities was important because it supplemented the household income in addition to strengthening the household assets. The children were actively engaged in piecework (*ganyu*) both during rainy season and dry season. Studies indicate that, while most rural small scale farmers primarily work on their own fields, off-farm labour is common among small-scale farmers. A growing literature indicate that off-farm labour is not the result of optimal labour allocation, but is instead driven by households' inability to cover short-term consumption needs such as food (Fink, Jack, & Masiye, 2014). More recently, Crooks and colleagues (2007, 2008), cited in Cole and Hoon (2013) noted that poorer households in southern Zambia coped with food insecurity by means of exchanging their piecework labour with maize (in-kind payment) and in-cash payment. However, it has been argued that reliance on piecework as a strategy to cope during food shortages in the rainy season in rural areas can potentially restrict own-farm production, thereby leading to households' vulnerability to food insecurity (Cole & Hoon, 2013; Fink et al., 2014; Whiteside, 2000). The major disadvantage of *ganyu* is that it competes with own-farm production of food because poor household quiet often engage themselves in piecework to meet the present food shortage instead of investing in the future harvest (Wietler, 2007). Poor households in rural areas are thus, more likely to spend much of the time doing piecework during the rainy season instead of concentrating on own-farm production and as such, the engagement in piecework perpetuate their vulnerability to food insecurity. None-the less, it has been argued that, throughout Africa, doing piecework (*ganyu*) is not only considered as one of the many coping strategies during period of food stress of the vulnerable poor but it is also being transformed into a regular livelihood strategy of chronically poor households (Whiteside, 2000; Wietler, 2007). In this study children were actively involved in piecework (*ganyu*) regularly in order to contribute to their household livelihoods and economic viability.

In his study, Whiteside (2000) found that low *ganyu* wage rates (low economic returns) lead to agricultural labourers not earning sufficient incomes thereby hindering them to invest in sustainable livelihood development. It is argued that a livelihood is more likely to be secure when there is sufficient access to cash and when other resources are maintained or rather improved upon over time such as access to safe and nutritious foods, schooling, safe water

sources, health services, and opportunities to build social networks (Cole & Hoon, 2013, citing Frankenberge, 1996). Most households throughout rural sub-Saharan Africa frequently face numerous risks that can impact their level of vulnerability (Casale et al. 2010). One predictable and noticeable risk in many rural households in sub-Saharan Africa is seasonality, because the majority of rural households depend on one mode/system of rain-fed agriculture to secure their livelihood needs (Cole & Hoon, 2013, citing Adamms1994; Kigutha et al 1998; Ndekha et al. 2000; Devereux 2009) and as such during persistent droughts, poor households in rural sub-Saharan Africa are more likely to be at risk in terms of food insecurity.

#### **7.4 Children and guardian interdependence in livelihood strategies in supplementing cash transfer scheme**

The guardians /parents among the households that where benefiting from the welfare package reported that they were engaged in small scale farming and other small business pointing out that they would not only depend on the cash received from the government. In most cases parents narrated that children played an important role in enhancing the livelihood for the family. Care giver/guardians were also dependent on the children in terms of bringing an extra income in the households. This is because children were actively involved in some income generating venture (*Ganyu*). Fink et al. (2014), defines *ganyu* as a local wage earning opportunities largely based on casual labour. In Malawi according to Whiteside (2000), *ganyu* is a concept that describe a variety of short-term rural labour relationships, of which the most common is piecework such as weeding or cultivating on the fields of other small scale farmers, as well as on commercial farmers. He defines *ganyu* as;

*Any off-own-farm work done by rural people on a casual basis. Usually covering a period of days or weeks, remuneration may be in cash or in kind (such as food), and is often, but not exclusively, calculated as piecework (Whiteside, 2000, p. 1).*

During one of the interview with Kalebet Banda (F/57) who is a household head had this to say when asked about other livelihood strategies her family engaged in to supplement the cash received from social welfare.

We have a small field in which we grow some maize grain each year, but sometimes like this year there was a drought so our maize was affected due to the drought. I depend also on the children that I live with, they go round looking for some piecework (*ganyu*) in farms. My last born son usually goes to the market where there is stand selling second hand clothes.

In a similar interview but this time a child, Mariah (F/17) living with both grandparents, her uncle and cousin in one household had this to say.

Currently am not doing anything but I depend much on grandmother after selling at the market. We depend on this money from her sells at the market and we use this money to buy things for the house as we are still waiting for grandpa to receive the other money from Government.

Oliver: What do you do at home when grandma goes to sell things at the market?

Mariah: We fetch water, sweep the house and clean plates (house chores). We also prepare food for grandpa and also making sure that grandma finds food the moments she comes back from the market. We can't wait for grandma to come back from the market and do the household chores, because she goes to look for money so that we can buy things, so us who remain at home we do the house work.

The above quotation suggest a lot of initiatives children make in order to undertake domestic chores. Boys and girls perform household tasks that free adults up for more specialty chores outside the home (Abebe & Kjørholt, 2009; Tatek Abebe, 2012). In many southern African countries adult migration is a common activity (Brummer, 2002; Whitehead & Hashim, 2005) and in Zambia children are often left behind with elder siblings when parents are engaged in daily mobility and labour outside the homestead (Cliggett, 2005; Ogura, 1991).

Kimmy (M/12) also shared with me how the money is spend when given to her mother after him and the brother have done some piecework (*ganyu*).

We usually bring the money home and give our mother then she adds it on top of the money that comes from social welfare then at least it's a bit more then she buys food and things for school.

The above narrations point to the fact that as much as children are dependent on their guardian for their upbringing and care, parents/guardians too depend much on their children in so many ways. In this sense care and household activities are interdependently carried out. In the case of Kalebet Banda (F/57), she uses 'we' in her narration denoting that she and members of the household exist as a family collective, able to grow maize for household consumption. As Abebe (2013) argues, in Africa, family collectives are the central units of social reproduction, and children have important role in the production of necessities for the health, welfare and smooth functioning of its household members. Furthermore, Kalebet

expresses her dependence on children under her care because they are able to bring income in the household by engaging in income generating ventures thereby supplementing the cash from the social welfare department. I would thus argue that in Kalomo district, both children and guardians do not exist as autonomous individuals but interdependent beings. Similarly, Abebe (2013, p. 72) in his study in rural Ethiopia, found that children are valued for their social-economic roles they play. Children grow up holding complex responsibilities and maintaining reciprocal relationships within the family. He argues that children are “neither independent citizens nor autonomous individuals with separate rights but interdependent beings whose daily livelihoods are intricately entwined with and are inseparable from that of the family collective” (Ibid, p. 72).

## **7.5 Major problem Faced by OVC in Kalomo**

In this section, I will give an empirical analysis and discussion of the problems that OVC face in Kalomo district, Zambia. One of the main issue that my study attempted to find out relate to problems that OVC encounter in their everyday lives. Drawing from individual interviews with children, and their guardians, informal dialogue focus group discussion and semi-participant observation, my study highlighted that, meeting education and nutrition needs are the main challenges that OVC face in Kalomo.

### **7.5.1 Challenges to meet education needs**

High school fees in the boarding schools lead to OVC withdrawal from school because most households do not have the capacity to pay huge sums of money meant for both school and boarding fees. This negatively affect children to enter into secondary school. Below is an excerpt from a narrative interview for a case study of one of the household, headed by a grandmother benefiting from social cash transfer scheme.

Kalebet Banda aged 57 who is a Widow and at the same time a grandmother lives with her last born son and a granddaughter. She decided to bring in the grandchild in her household to be cared for after both the mother and father for the child died. During one of the focus group discussion she explained that her granddaughter who had qualified to grade 9 could not go into high school because of lack of money (school fees).The 16 years old granddaughter was forced to get married due to lack of funds to pay for her school fees. Kalebet and some of the parents/guardians explained to me that social cash transfer received from social welfare could only afford extra meals and would not otherwise pay school fees for OVC. (Field note)

It is thus evident from the above that , financial challenges faced by most household caring for OVC coupled with high poverty level is a hindrance for children to enter into secondary education. Grandparent carers are among the most impoverished households in the context of AIDS. They not only lack the financial means but also are weaker in the context of labour intensive work that is needed to sustain children in a rural setting. I would thus argue that high poverty level within these vulnerable household negatively impact on the education advancement of particularly girls. Grandparents are also less likely to be educated and provide scholarly support to the children they care for (this is also the case of a 16 years old granddaughter to Kalebet Banda). I also had some time to speak to the programme officer coordinating PWAS programme at the district level regarding challenges that OVC mainly encounter, and she pointed out that most households taking care of OVC have challenges in meeting their education needs. The officer alluded that even though there was a parallel programme beside cash transfer scheme under PWAS which is called in-kind support programme still most of the education needs of children are not met with an exception of the OVC that are receiving such support. The in-kind support include among other things the, the provision education materials (i.e. stationary materials, books etc.), clothing, blankets and so forth.

In addition the above case study shows that, the provision of cash to these poor and vulnerable households hardly meet the education needs of OVC. This is due to high school fees, college fees and university fees. On average, boarding fees are K800.00 per child in Zambia and most of the school fees are within the range of K900.00, K1000.00 and K1100.00. Therefore, it is evident that, from cash transfer no matter how much the household can save they cannot be able to meet the education cost for their children. Generally there are higher fees of educating a child. During an interview with the district social welfare officer (DSWO) who is the key programme officer coordinating the provision welfare services in the district, I learnt that cash transfer to these most vulnerable household and in particular those caring for OVC is only meant for a 50Kg bag of Maize grain. It is evident from the empirical material that the welfare department provide cash, to the poor households, and that this is only done with an intention that these households are able to afford an extra meal without covering other basic needs that children may require such as education, shelter, clothing and so forth. Most of the guardians and parent during informal dialogue and focus group discussion mentioned that children required many other basic needs and emphasised that

K140.00 (the cash which is given bimonthly) is not adequate enough to meet the basic needs for children.

The other important theme that I identified and became an issue of interest in the above case study/scenario is parental or guardian decision to let a female child get married as a result of lack of school sponsorship. This finding shows that both economic and sociological factors are intertwined and play decisive role in determining or rather meeting the education needs of children. In terms of economic factors, female household especially headed by grandmother are more likely to have financial challenges and in turn the guardian may have no choice but to force children, particularly girls to get married in situation where they are not able to find school fees as evident from Kalebet. This piece of empirical finding in this study resonate with that of (Jensen & Nielsen, 1997). In their study to investigate what affects school attendance between children aged 7-18, using data from Zambia, Jensen & Nielsen findings showed that fewer girls than boys go to school because girls drop out of school earlier than boys. Among other factors that they found contributing to this includes, early marriage and pregnancy leading to many girls to leave the school system early. Early marriage is in fact one of the main barriers to reducing the gap in education between boys and girls in rural Zambia. Furthermore, their findings indicated that female dropout rate was higher than the male dropout rate because girls are overburdened with housework.

The preceding data analysis suggest that both programmes (cash transfer scheme and the In-kind support) need to be enhance and strengthened so that they are able to complement each other because with the in-kind support, the Government can pay the school fees for some of these vulnerable children.

### **7.5.2 Inadequate nutrition need and utilisation of cash**

Provision of adequate nutrition is yet another problem that children face particularly in most of the households targeted for SCTS. Drawing from informal dialogue and interviews from both children and the guardians the findings shows that meeting adequate food supplement for OVC is somehow still a challenge. Despite the fact that these households receive funds from the welfare department with an intention of providing an extra meal, there is inadequate nutrition supplement for children. In essence children are supposed to be the indirect beneficiary of social cash transfer in terms of their nutrition needs however, my findings highlight that some households usually re- direct the funds meant for provision of the meals

to other activities though with a good intention but at the expense of giving a decent meal to these children.

Moreover, inadequate food as a result of thieves stealing from these poor household was also evident. During one of the household visit when one of my child participant had knocked off from school, I was sitting next to him just outside their small house (one bedroom and living room space). We were chatting in an informal way while he was preparing a meal just after coming back from school. He expressed to me that he was worried about how their household would survive because they did not have any more stocks of Maize grain in their household. The following was what he told me.

We don't know what we shall do next. When my mother went to see my Aunty in Livingstone thieves broke in the house. They stole some of our belonging including the Maize grain, it was the only food that we were relying on. Stealing the Maize grain has led to us sometimes eating less food during the day. The people who store our Maize are the ones who have worsened the hunger situation here at home.

The above expression from this child informant depicts how the hunger situation in the household was worsened by thieves who store their maize grain. The only food the family was relying on was stolen by thieves thereby perpetuating their miserable situation. This implied that this child and the family would have limited nutrition supplement in days to come.



**Figure 4. Child informant preparing nshima (food made from maize meal)**

Source: field Data in Kalomo district, Zambia: between June-August 2014

In the following excerpt, I will present children's perspectives on how cash transfers are being utilised within targeted households. During an interview with Akan (M/16) when I asked him to find out what support they receive from the welfare department and what they use it for, here is what he shared with me.

Oliver: Tell me what kind/form of support do you have/get from social welfare (Public welfare Scheme)?

Akan: The money? We buy food at home but the food we buy is not enough. We do farming and we also pay part of the money received from social welfare for weeding the fields. We hire those individuals who have animals to do the weeding (Cows/Bulls). Sometimes we also use the money to buy some fertilizers.

Oliver: Would you describe to me that the support is adequate to meet your everyday needs?

Akan: Not everything but at least the money is able to solve one or two problems. It solves some problems bit by bit. If she gets paid in particular month one problem is sorted out then the next month another problem is sorted.

Oliver: Would you tell me some of the problems that were sorted out/solved using this money received from the social welfare?



Akan: Problems like when there is a funeral, we are able to use part of the money for transport. The money is also used when you want to travel and sometimes we send money to the village. We also use it to buy ports and relish.

In another dialogue, Kimmy (M/12) expressed to me how social cash transfers are being utilised in their Household.

Oliver: Would you describe to me how the money received from social welfare is utilised or used?

Kimmy: our mother buys food for us here at home, she also buys clothes and some other things needed for school.

Oliver: Would you describe to me the kinds of school materials and requirements that are bought using social cash transfers.

Kimmy: my mother pays school fees per term for me in grade seven, she pays K100.00. At school they also need some money for Cobra so every pupil pays K2.00

Oliver: You mentioned that the school buys cobra, where is it used?

Kimmy: We put the cobra in Classrooms twice in a week.

In another dialogue one boy narrated how the money received from the welfare department meant for nutrition purposes was redirected to buying medicine. The following is an expression from John (M/15).

My mother bought for me shoes for school. She also buys medicine though I cannot remember the medicine but one time our mother bought medicine for my young brother because he was hurt whilst we were working in the fields. After going to the hospital they prescribed some medicine for him then she went and bought the medicine in the Chemistry.

Even though there is evidence from my respondents that part of the cash received is used to buy food, the larger sum of the money is invested in other activities for instance procurement of fertilisers and seeds. In addition cash transfer to these benefiting households is also used and redirected on unintended activities such as covering for transport cost in case of funeral and when covering cost for health related services and when referred for specialised treatment. The above perspectives of children calls for a discussion on whether or not conditional cash transfer programs should be appropriate and be promoted. I will now turn to discuss conditional cash transfer (CCT) and unconditional cash transfers, stressing on the

merits and demerits of both models as well as the factors that need to be considered when implementing conditional cash transfer scheme in low income countries particularly in Africa.

Cash transfers programmes are increasingly on the agenda of governments, donors and NGOs in less developed countries so that the wellbeing of the most poor is promoted. The industrialised/high-income countries in Europe and North America have well-established and complex systems that provide social safety nets in the form of both conditional and unconditional cash transfers to people and households that are either temporarily or permanently unable to provide for themselves (Schubert & Slater, 2006). However, transfers in less developed countries, until the 1980s, largely were in the form of in-kind transfers such as in food or agricultural inputs and in Africa in particular, in-kind transfers or subsidies on commodities and services remained the norm. During the 1990s, Latin America has experienced a new generation of cash transfer programmes called conditional cash transfer (CCT) that particularly focus and target children living in poor households (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006; Farrington & Slater, 2006; Handa & Davis, 2006; Kakwani, Soares, & Son, 2006; Schubert & Slater, 2006).

According to Barrientos and DeJong (2006), conditional cash transfers (CCTs) refers to transfers conditional on specific behaviour by the beneficiary households, for example, school enrolment and attendance of children, regular use of primary health care by mothers and infants. They are also referred to as targeted human-development programmes because the major goal of the cash transfer is to promote investment in human capital (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006; Handa & Davis, 2006; Schubert & Slater, 2006). Practically, the significance of conditional cash transfers therefore is that individuals and beneficiaries are not merely supposed to use the transfers on any other consumption, but only on consumption of items preferred by the funder. Hence, conditions are applied in order to ensure that the beneficiaries act/behave in a manner that the programme designers consider appropriate. The main advantages of conditional social cash transfers are: conditional cash transfer (CCT) potentially influence beneficiaries how transfer income is spent. Some of the funding agencies perceive poverty as, according to context, particularly associated with inadequate access to nutrition, health, education and housing (Dos Santos, da Cruz Vieira, & dos Santos Reis, 2009; Schubert & Slater, 2006). In view of this, imposing conditional cash transfer would compel beneficiaries channel the funds on the aforementioned desirable expenditure in relation to poverty reduction, and as such transfers are tied to evidence that recipients have been

spending them as intended. In addition to influencing how the finances are spent, conditional cash transfers also influence the behaviour and attitudes of targeted households and as such the behaviour of beneficiaries is conditioned in a manner that is considered conducive to long-term poverty reduction. In other words beneficiaries enter into a contract with financing agencies or government whereby the desirable behaviour such as reducing child labour is 'bought' as is the case for CCTs in Latin America in which children spend most of their time in school (Barrientos & DeJong, 2006).

Unconditional cash transfer refer to those transfer aimed at reducing food insecurity, or at least ensuring the survival of people living in destitute households, irrespective of whether these households contain school-age children or orphans and are specifically being implemented in African countries (Schubert & Slater, 2006). Cash transfers targeted on these beneficiaries do not have conditions on how the funds are utilised and thus its utilisation is dependent on the priorities and the needs of the benefiting households, for example social cash transfers in Zambia (Schubert and Goldberg, 2004), and in Malawi, (Davies and Davey, 2008). In other words, Social cash transfers scheme in Zambia and Malawi focuses on ultra-poor households that are labour constrained (destitute and incapacitated households). However , the majority of these households are caring for orphans and vulnerable children (Schubert, 2005; Schubert et al., 2007). The advantage of unconditional cash transfers over conditional cash transfer is that, in addition to allowing beneficiaries build human capital, (for example when beneficiaries invest in education for their children) unconditional transfers also makes it possible for beneficiaries to engage in the accumulation of productive capital such as land or non-agricultural assets, which would have both long and short-term effects on poverty alleviation. It is therefore important to note that attempts to introduce CCT in African countries as argued by Schubert and Slater (2006) should consider a critical analysis of factors that include among other things such as the following.

First and foremost, government and funding agencies need to assess whether social services like schools and primary health centres are available in sufficient quantity and quality to absorb additional demand. During a feasibility study to assess the applicability of CCT scheme in the municipality of Chipata (the provincial capital of Eastern Province, Zambia), Schubert and Mwiinga (2005), found that the primary schools had no capacity to absorb additional children and as such, applicants for enrolment were turned away. It was observed that the number of applicants for enrolment was exceeding the capacity of schools by 20%. In addition to that it is also vital to critically assess if at all the implementation capacities of

the social welfare services is sufficiently strong to administer the complexities of CCTs. This may include analysing whether social welfare department in developing countries are capable of meeting additional administrative costs or demand relating to conditionality such as monitoring compliance and also whether the benefits resulting from imposing conditions outweigh the additional administrative costs (Schubert & Slater, 2006). These factors are key for any attempt to introduce CCT in less developed countries.

## **7.6 Orphanhood, schooling and children's work**

Being an Orphaned can affect the time use patterns of children in many possible ways. Due to high poverty levels in most of the vulnerable households targeted for social cash transfer, children may have to allocate more time to income generation, food production, household chores or caring for other family members. The incapacitated families especially those headed by single mothers may be less able to afford school costs, or be less willing to lose valuable hours of children's time each day to study. In these households children can be vulnerable to exploitative work and are more likely to drop out from school. However, it is important to note that many working children perceive work as an opportunity to contribute to family survival. Robson (2004b), highlighted the significance of work for children (young carers) in Zimbabwe as it helps to support their households in times of a crisis and also individuals quite often rely on extended family networks, in which young girls are often sent to the city to care for sick relatives. Children's social reproductive roles such as caring for sick parents in households burdened by HIV/AIDS is important but yet largely hidden, ignored and unappreciated (Tatek Abebe & Aase, 2007; Robson, 2004b). In HIV/AIDS affected households, children often take up new responsibilities which among other things include care giving activities such as feeding, bathing, toileting, giving medication and accompanying parents or relatives for treatment. In addition children undertake domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, carrying water, and agricultural or income generating activities and childcare duties (Abebe & Aase, 2007; Tatek Abebe, 2007; Foster & Williamson, 2000; Robson, 2004b). It is argued that although such kind of work is important and regarded in terms of helping out with households chores and in times of crisis, it has the potential to negatively impact on children's schooling (Bourdillon, 2006; Robson, 2004b). When a parent is ill, children's school attendance drops because their labour is required to pay medical expenses or because families are not able to pay school fees (Foster & Williamson, 2000).

In one interview session, John (M/15) living with the mother and brother whose mother struggles to make ends meet narrated to me the reason why he missed out attending school the first term due to lack of sponsorship and other school requirements. He explained to me that the time he qualified to grade ten (10), he could not go into school in the first semester because his mother did not have money to pay for his school fees. Even though his mother was a beneficiary for the cash transfer scheme, the little money the mother received was time and again channelled to her travel expenses because she was referred to the second level hospital for specialised treatment. In addition he expressed to me that during this same time when he was not able to attend school, their household was not economically viable and as such he had to do some piece work so that their household would earn an income for them to survive. The following is an excerpt from an individual interview I had with John when I asked him about livelihood strategies that he engaged in so that their household would have an income for survival.

Oliver: What other activities that you do to supplement cash from the social welfare?

John: yes, the time when I was not in school, I used to work. There is a man who runs a children's game in the community and so I would charge other children plying the game. In return I would get paid K10.00 per week. Sometimes when am not working where I charge children playing games, I go to the grinding meal especially during the weekend to do piecework.

Oliver: What kind of piece work do you do when you go to the grinding meal?

John: I grind the Maize (*kugaisha*)

Oliver: After you grind how much money do they give you?

John: it depends, sometimes if I go there in the morning till evening they give me K15.00, if go there around 4pm to 7pm they would give either K5.00 or K7.00

Oliver: Do you think this money is more enough than the one from social welfare to meet the needs at home.

John: the money from these piece work is not adequate, sometimes they do not give me piece work at the grinding meal, and this time that am going to school it is not possible again for me to go and do the game to charge other children after they play it because if I go there, school will be affected. Sometimes you find that they have employed somebody else to charge the game.

In my opinion, children may value education so much, however, structural forces such as acute poverty and HIV/AIDS may not only compel children to exercise their agency to engage in income generating activities to make their households economically viable but also children are likely to drop out from school and be exposed to exploitative work. From the above excerpt if we were to convert these earnings for instance to the US Dollar you would discover that this kind of work that this child performed is undervalued and somehow exploitative. Approximately \$1.00 is equivalent to K7.00 (7.00 Zambian kwacha). In this case a child is left with limited options and performs whatever kind of work as long as it is able to bring a small income.

One of the interesting issues that I noted regarding orphanhood, schooling and work is that children are able to negotiate between schooling and work without school being affected. During time for school, children concentrate on school and on their spare time they are able to do some piece work to earn an income. In some cases I noted that children are sent by their guardian to sell at the market when it's not time for school or when children have knocked off from school. During an interview one afternoon after coming back from school, Kimmy (M/12) shared with me the kind of work he often does when he knocks off from school or when he is not at school.

Kimmy: I also go to do piece works at the grinding meal.

Oliver: What kind of work do you do when you go to the grinding meal?

Kimmy: I wash the Maize (Zambia's staple food) and sweep.

Oliver: So when you wash the maize and sweep, how much money are you given after you have finished the job?

Kimmy: When you start in the morning till evening you are given K20.00

Oliver: Do you work during School times or you work when you have knocked off from school?

Kimmy: I work when am not at school and sometimes when I knock off from school.

Similarly, another child informant, X (F/14) shared with me how she is able to help her grandmother to sell groundnuts at the market when she knocks off from school. This was during an informal dialogue as I sat next to her while she was preparing vegetables for dinner.



**Figure 5. Female child informant preparing vegetables for dinner.**

Source: field data in Kalomo June-August 2014

Child X: when my grandmother orders groundnuts I go and sell it to the market after school?

Oliver: Do you make enough money from the sales of groundnuts?

Child X: just a little.

Oliver: What other things do you do at home after school and when you are not selling groundnuts at the market?

Child X: I clean plates, sweeping the house, preparing food.

## **7.7 Summery**

This section discussed interface between social cash transfer and livelihood alternatives that children are involved in besides cash transfer received from the government. The findings revealed that cash transfers is used in a multiple way. Children and their guardian take advantage of the cash received from the social welfare despite it not being adequate to meet their basic needs. Household benefiting from cash transfer were actively involved in subsistence farming such as gardening and some of the money was invested in procurement of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertiliser for maize grain production. More

importantly, the research findings shows that beneficiaries utilised cash transfers for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options. For example many households produce food items in their garden by using labour intensive production mechanism. By so doing, the income generated from cash transfers is not being used in paying for daily labourers. In this context children's labour has an important contribution to make as it lessens the burden of labour required from outside. In addition, this study revealed that there is a link between livelihood strategies and the money received from the social welfare. Benefiting households were able to make use of SCT not only directly on home consumption purposes such as food and so forth but also on other productive livelihoods. SCT and household livelihoods strategies thus reinforce each other and help vulnerable households break away from the cycle of poverty or rather helps them float and not to sink into absolute poverty.



## **8 Summary, conclusion and recommendations**

The focus of this chapter is to outline the main findings of the research that was undertaken to explore OVC experience of social cash transfer (SCTS). The aim of the study was to look at how children (OVCs) experience/encounter social cash transfer scheme for provision of basic needs in Kalomo district, Zambia. The research was an endeavor to get the views of OVC and their guardians benefiting from the scheme particularly by looking at how they experience social cash transfer scheme and what benefits do they have from cash transfer scheme. By taking into account the views of individuals who are actually beneficiaries and experiencing the programme, it hoped to gain insight on how social cash transfer scheme programme can be strengthened in order to promote the best interest of OVC thereby contributing to their wellbeing.

### **8.1 Local conceptualisation of Orphans**

In Zambia, donor-driven interventions are powerful in defining what kind of support that vulnerable populations receive and how. Consequently one of the objectives of this study was to explore how orphans are understood locally and establish whether the donor driven definition of an orphan determines eligibility for orphans to be given welfare support. The findings of this study indicated that the global understanding and conceptualisation of orphans differ from that of local understanding of orphanhood in the sense that orphanhood is locally conceptualised and understood in terms of social fluid such as lack of the basic needs, care, as well as a child who is neglected and mistreated. On the other hand the global orphan is understood in terms of lack of biological parents and fixed age. Local conceptualisation of orphans is thus different from how orphans are globally understood and conceptualised and as such I argue that the concept orphanhood is socially constructed. These findings are consistent with the findings of Abebe & Aase (2007), in Ethiopia and Meintjes and Giese (2006), in South Africa because their study shows the social fluid understanding of orphanhood rather than the biological aspect of parenting. In addition, in spite of a wider acknowledgement in literature about orphanhood and care in terms of the role that a donor driven definition of an orphan plays in setting criterion for assisting OVC and the parameters for national policies and programs towards OVC, my study highlight contrary findings. The donor driven definition of orphan does not necessary determine eligibility for children to access social cash transfer in kalomo, Zambia.

## **8.2 Fulfilment of OVC basic needs**

One of the objectives of this research was to find out how the social welfare department ensures that OVC basic needs are met. The findings in this study revealed that government has been implementing two parallel welfare programmes to the poor and most vulnerable groups (in-kind support and cash transfer scheme). However, the Government is moving away from in-kind support to improve the cash support so that the targeted households can attend to their own needs. The study also shows that, OVC are being given education support and in particular those that are not able to access formal education. The government through the department of social welfare has been paying for children who are coming from incapacitated families that are not able to take their children to school. In addition to that the department has been assisting the incapacitated households where the children come from with cash transfer and the overall objective of the cash transfer is to provide an extra meal in these households. It was also pointed out that after giving cash to these vulnerable households they were able to have two or three meals per day and that the children they were keeping were as well able to benefit by having more than one meal in a day. So because of this extra meal that is now being put on these household, children are now able to walk to school energetically and this is one of the benefit that OVC have benefited from cash transfer scheme programme.

Psychosocial support is provided to children in their various problems more specially to children who are coming from poor household because they are vulnerable to illegal activities likely to bring them in conflict with the law such as theft. As such the department of the social welfare take up the responsibility to provide counsel to the children and also represent those that come in conflict with the law to ensure an appropriate disposal of the case. The department speak on behalf of children who are in conflict with the law and investigate on what might have been the circumstances for the child to engage in stealing for instance.

## **8.3 Other livelihood strategies**

As part of my study, I was interested in finding out other livelihoods strategies that children and their caregiver engaged in to supplement cash transfer scheme. It was noted that cash transfers was used in a multiple way. Social safety nets that comes in the form of cash targeting these vulnerable groups of the society and in this case OVC and the incapacitated households is used in so many different ways to meet the day to day basic needs. Children and their guardian take advantage of the cash received from the social welfare despite it not being adequate to meet their basic needs. Some of the household that were benefiting from

cash transfer were actively involved in subsistence farming like gardening and some of the money was invested in procurement of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertiliser for maize grain production. These households know what they need most and they are able to prioritise how the money could be used. Households utilised cash transfers for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options. For example many households produce food items in their garden by using labour intensive production mechanism. That way the income generated from cash transfers is not being used in paying for daily labourers. In this context children's labour has an important contribution to make as it lessens the burden of labour required from outside. More importantly, this study revealed that there is a link between livelihood strategies and the money received from the social welfare. I noted from various households how they were able to make use of SCT not only directly on home consumption purposes such as food and so forth but also on other productive livelihoods. Therefore, my argument is that, SCT and household livelihoods strategies reinforce each other and help vulnerable households break away from the cycle of poverty or rather helps them float and not to sink into absolute poverty.

#### **8.4 Children's role in contributing to family livelihood**

Children were actively involved in income generating activities in the market such as selling second hand clothes, popcorns, fried groundnuts and so forth in order to ensure the survival of their households. Children's involvement in market work in order to generate income is well documented in diverse African societies. By working in daily markets children not only generate income but also link the domestic spheres of production with that of the public sphere of circulation and commodity exchange. In addition, by earning and contributing to their household, children's (OVC) agency is demonstrated because they make important economic contribution for the survival of their households. However, even though children are able to exercise their agency, interdependent generational relationship and structural forces play a critical role in mediating how children exercise agency. In other words, to a larger extent structural forces act as constraints for children to execute their agency. Household decision making power particularly how the money should be spend is negotiated. On the other hand, children also gain some power because of their ability to contribute to family sustenance.

Besides being engaged in market work children were also involved in piecework locally known as *ganyu*. Piecework (*ganyu*) is an informal labour contract and it is an important livelihood strategy in Zambia where children and adults from poorer households accomplish

certain tasks for in-kind or in-cash payment. Most children in my study reported that their engagement in work related activities was important because it supplemented the household income in addition to strengthening the household assets. The children were actively engaged in piecework (*ganyu*) both during rainy season and dry season.

### **8.5 Main problems faced by OVC**

In this study, it was noted that one of the main challenge that OVC face is meeting their education needs. High school fees in the boarding schools lead to OVC withdrawal from school because most households do not have the capacity to pay huge sums of money meant for both school and boarding fees. This negatively affect children to enter into secondary school. In addition to financial challenges faced by most household caring for OVC coupled with high poverty level as hindrance for children to enter into secondary education, this study also revealed that grandparent carers are among the most impoverished households in the context of AIDS. They not only lack the financial means but also are weaker in the context of labour intensive work that is needed to sustain children in a rural setting. In addition, grandparents are also less likely to be educated and provide scholarly support to the children they care for.

Moreover, the provision of cash transfers to these poor and vulnerable households hardly meet the education needs of OVC. This is due to high school fees, college fees and university fees. On average, boarding fees are K800.00 per child in Zambia and most of the school fees are within the range of K900.00, K1000.00 and K1100.00. Therefore, it is clear that from cash transfer no matter how much the household can save they cannot be able to meet the education cost for their children. The findings shows that cash transfer to these most vulnerable household and in particular those caring for OVC is only meant for a 50Kg bag of maize grain. The welfare department provide cash, to the poor households, only with an intention that these households can be able to afford an extra meal without covering other basic needs that children may require such as education, shelter, clothing and so forth.

In this study, both economic and sociological factors are intertwined and play decisive role in determining or rather meeting the education needs of children. In terms of economic factors, female household especially headed by grandmother are more likely to have financial challenges and in turn the guardian may have no choice but to force children, particularly girls to get married in situation where they are not able to find school fees.

## **8.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, despite financial challenges in the implantation of SCTS, benefiting households utilise cash transfers for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options. This study has shown that social cash transfer scheme to the most vulnerable members of the society like the destitute and the incapacitated (ultra-poor and labour constrained) and in particular those households caring for OVC in the context of Zambia has the potential to reduce childhood poverty and thereby contributing to child wellbeing. However, this approach to social protection focuses on ultra-poor households that are labour constrained and it does not strictly use any kind of vulnerable group such as OVC, disabled, HIV and AIDS affected as a target group criterion. Only children living in households that are incapacitated and destitute are able to benefit from this kind of the scheme. In essence the ultra-poor and the incapacitated households are by definition households that are composed of household members that cannot work. The members of these households are OVC, older people, disabled persons, and so forth. Consequently, all children living in an ultra-poor household are extremely vulnerable. Therefore such a scheme is inclusive in the sense that it reaches most vulnerable groups of the society. However, it is at the same time exclusive because it excludes low dependency ratio households, which may be able to access labour-based schemes because the households include members that are fit for productive work but caring for orphans and vulnerable children. Such schemes need to be complemented by labour-based social protection schemes, so that all OVC are covered regardless of whether they are coming from labour constrained or non-labour constrained households.

## **8.7 Policy recommendations**

In order for social cash transfer scheme (SCTS) programme to make significant impacts on the lives of OVCs thereby contributing to their long life wellbeing, the following policy recommendations are deemed vital.

- Government to ensure that SCTS is complemented by labour-based social protection schemes, so that all OVC are covered regardless of whether they are coming from labour constrained or non-labour constrained.
- SCTS need to be tailored towards strengthening the capacity of households to utilise cash for building assets that can be reinvested in creating livelihoods options.
- Funding should be improved and both in-kind support and social cash transfer scheme should be strengthened in order for the two programmes to complement each other

such that the in-kind support are able to meet the education needs for OVC while cash transfer helps to provide an extra meal to their households.

- Strengthen the protection and care of OVC within their extended families and communities.

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## **Appendix**

### **Interview guide for children**

#### **Biographical information**

These covers: Age, Sex, Household composition/who they live with

#### **Benefits of Social Cash Transfer (SCTS) on OVC**

Tell me what kind of support do you receive from Social Welfare?

Would you describe some of the benefits that you get from Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

How do you benefit from Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

Would you describe how Social Cash Transfers are used at home?

How beneficial is this kind of support to your everyday lives?

Would you describe to me that this support is adequate to meet your everyday needs?

#### **Other livelihoods strategies**

What kind of livelihoods activities do you do in order to earn a living apart from SCTS?

Where do you go to look for these other livelihoods strategies?

Do these activities provide a better livelihood than Social Cash Transfers?

What kind of activities or work do you do when you are at home?

#### **Key problems faced by OVC in Kalomo**

Tell me about any problems that you face or encounter in your dairy life?

What kind of problems do you consider to be the major ones?

Would you share with me how some of these problems are solved?

### **Interview guide for focus group discussion with children**

Discuss forms of support that your households receive from Social Welfare?

Describe the benefits that you get from Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

Discuss how you benefit from Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

Describe how Social Cash Transfers are used and utilised?

Discuss how beneficial is Social Cash Transfer Scheme to your everyday lives

Discuss whether SCTS is adequate to meet your everyday needs

Discuss livelihoods strategies that you are involved in to supplement SCTS

Where do you go to look for these other livelihoods strategies?

Do these other livelihood activities that you are engaged in provide adequate standard of living than Social Cash Transfers?

Discuss some problems that you face or encounter in your dairy lives

What kind of problems do you consider to be the major ones?

#### **Focus Group Discussion questions for Parents/Guardians**

How is the English word 'Orphan' translated into local languages and what do the terms mean locally?

Who are Orphans and Vulnerable children in the local community?

What is the meaning of Orphanhood and Vulnerability locally?

What are key problems that OVC face?

What do OVC benefit from cash transfer scheme?

Discuss how SCT are utilised

Discuss livelihood strategies that you are engaged in besides SCT from the social welfare?

What kind of livelihoods activities do children engage in to supplement household income?

#### **Interview guide questions for programme officer coordinating PWAS and SCTS**

What is Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) and Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

What is the main purpose of these programs?

What has been your experience regarding PWAS and SCTS on OVCs

What is the criterion for eligibility for PWAS and SCTS?

Tell me what kind of support do OVCs get from Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) and Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCTS)?

How do OVCs benefit from SCTS?

Would you describe to me that this support is adequate to meet their everyday needs?

What are the main challenges that the social welfare department is facing when implementing and administering PWAS and SCTS?

Could you describe to me how you ensure that the needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children are met under PWAS and SCTS?

To what extent is the Government implementing the provision Rights of the UN-CRC on OVCs?

What are some of the problems that OVC face in Kalomo?

What do you think are the un-intended consequences of PWAS and SCTS on OVC and benefiting households?