

Zambia Virtual Social Protection Week

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Social Protection Week (SPW) is an open week for the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), Social Partners, Cooperating Partners, United Nations Agencies, Civil Society Organisations, Social security institutions, Academia, Faith Based Organisations, Parliamentarians, Media and the public, as well as those at the frontline of social protection service delivery to be part of a broad and inclusive discussion on opportunities and challenges for an effective and sustainable social protection response to poverty and vulnerability in Zambia. Since its inception, the SPW has proven to be a useful platform for sharing information, best practices and experiences, as well as learning among practitioners of Social Protection and with the public.

The event is hosted by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, and Ministry of Labour and Social Security in collaboration with the United Nations in Zambia. Since its inception in 2016, the event has been successfully organized with different themes. Among the themes for the previous editions of the Social Protection Week are: "Achieving Prosperity for all" for 2016; "Inclusive Sustainable Social Protection: Leaving No One Behind" in 2017, and 'Decentralisation and Innovation' for 2018. There was a break in the SPW over the 2019 and 2020 cycle, due to amongst others the COVID 19 pandemic. This program was resuscitated in 2021 under the theme "Responsive Social Protection in a Changing World."

The SPW 2021 programme attracted a lot of attention from donors, social partners and stakeholders as it focused on the resilience and adaptability of the Zambia social protection system in the face of increased uncertainty and vulnerability. It is also worth noting that collaboration of the Government, UN family in Zambia, Cooperating Partners, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) led to the roll-out of a unified COVID-19 Emergency Cash Transfer programme, which to date has extended support to over 225,000 households. The programme targeted high-risk population groups to receive temporal support to enhance their food security, as well as to negate the socio-economic impact.

Innovation was a key driver for the delivery of the 2021 SPW, which took place against a backdrop of increased COVID-19 health and movement restrictions. The event was timely to highlight the key role of shock responsive social protection in alleviating hardships experienced by the poor and vulnerable against the health and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was also utilized as an important advocacy tool to call for increased social protection investments. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the SPW was for the first time hosted virtually, taking advantage of multiple platforms held virtually, using various platforms such as Radio Stations,

Television Stations, Newspapers, and Social Media Platforms such as; Facebook, Twitter, and Zoom Meeting Links.

Objectives of the 2021 Social Protection Week

The Social Protection Week aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Facilitate an engagement of social protection policy makers with the general public;
- Promote a coordinated program to deliver public sensitization and awareness on the importance of social protection in addressing poverty and vulnerability challenges;
- Share information with the general public on Government's ongoing social protection programmes and reforms;
- Facilitate exchanges of information on alternative practices regarding effective social protection programming to promote innovations against a volatile environment;
- Strengthen the participation of civil society in setting the social protection agenda, as well as their role in the governance thereof; as well as to
- Raise media knowledge and awareness of social protection.

Overview of the Social Protection Week 2021

The Social Protection Week 2021 took place from 28th June to 2nd July 2021. The week was characterized by multiple thematic discussions centered around the theme, "Responsive Social Protection in a Changing World". The event which took place against the backdrop of the national period of mourning in honour of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, First Republican President of Zambia. In this respect, SPW 2021 sought to honor the late Dr. Kaunda as a social protection champion, having introduced multiple social welfare initiatives such as; school feeding and food subsidy programs, free universal access to education and health care, as well as public works schemes, which have laid the foundation for today's framework.

The programme comprised of various discussions across multiple radio shows with the highest national listenership, namely: Hot FM, Phoenix FM, ZNBC Radio 4 and Millennium Radio. Against these radio stations, their most popular and interactive programs were targeted to host SPW discussions, as well as to accommodate caller interventions to facilitate interactive discussions.

Television stations, both public and private (ZNBC TV 1, Muvi TV and Millennium TV) were also utilized to host

additional SPW events. Numerous articles relevant to social protection and SPW event flyers were also published in the national newspapers, namely the Daily Mail and Daily Nation.

A dedicated ZSPW Facebook page was created to serve as the primary event host, as well as amplifying the various national radio and television feeds to related institutional social media feeds, as well as international participants and stakeholders. Over the week, the ZSPW 2021 Facebook page registered traffic of 78 563, with 15 812 evidencing active in the program sessions.

The ZSPW benefitted from high-level support from the Zambia Government. The program was officially launched on primetime national television (ZNBCTV) by the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, Mrs. Pamela Chibonga Kabamba, on Sunday 27th June 2021.

On Monday 28th June, a virtual media briefing presenting an overview of the ZSPW event was jointly hosted by the Permanent Secretaries for Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Mr. Chanda Kaziya; as well as the Ministry of

Community Development and Social Services, Mrs. Pamela Chibonga Kabamba in partnership with the UN Zambia heads of agency Director ILO Country office for Zambia, Malawi & Mozambique, Mr George Okutho Director ILO; and World Food Program Country Director Ms. Jennifer Bitonde.

Multiple themes were discussed during the week, with the participation of technical officers from GRZ, UN Zambia, academia, and social protection practitioners (both local and international), encompassing the outlined topics, and the registered digital outreach via the ZSPW Facebook page.

IMPACT OF THE ZSPW DISCUSSION

The event had an overall digital outreach to 78,563 persons, with 15,812 people registering active participation. This outreach is severely underestimate as it does take into account the audience engaged via radio and television feeds, across the 6 radio stations and 2 television stations, (please see table 2 for the additional reach).



Table 1: Social Media reach for each discussion

DAY	TOPIC	DIGITAL AUDIENCE REACH
Monday, 28 th June	Media Launch Speeches by WFP, ILO, MLSS & MCDSS – Facebook Live	2,681
	The Rights of Domestic Workers In Zambia – Millennium Radio	640
	Better systems for social protection service delivery in Zambia – Hot FM	1,500
Tuesday, 29 th June	Impact of Covid-19 among learners with Disabilities – Radio Phoenix	1700
	Using Data for Decision-making in Social Protection Programs – ZOOM LIVE	149
Wednesday, 30 th June	Extension of Coverage To The Informal Economy – Christian Voice	387
	Coordination for Sound and Responsive Social Protection Systems: A Case of the Single Windows Approach – ZNBC Radio 4	2500
Thursday 1 st July	Vulnerable groups are protected from the worst impacts of risks and shocks as a result of climate change Skills Training, Livelihood Empowerment Support Scheme, Food Security Pack – Millennium Radio	448
	Responsive Social Protection in a climate change Environment – Hot FM	1500
	Disability inclusion in the times of COVID-19 – MuviTV	1500
	Climate and Sustainability/digital tools for social protection programming / adapting to climate change practices – ZNBC Radio 4	2500
Friday 2 nd July	Social Accountability for Responsive Social Protection – Radio Phoenix	1600
Monday 5 th July	A Review of Policy Responses and Potential Alternatives for Responsive and Sustainable Social Protection Systems in the Context of COVID-19 – Facebook Live	564
TOTAL		17,669

Table 2: Geographical and audience reach for each media channel used for the above discussions

MEDIA HOUSE	LOCATION REACH	AUDIENCE EACH-WEEKLY
ZNBC RADIO 4 & ZNBC TV1	Lusaka, Copperbelt, Central, Western, North-western, Luapula, Southern, Northern, Eastern and Muchinga	9.3 Million
Phoenix FM	Lusaka, Southern, Central, Copperbelt, North western and parts of Muchinga, National transmission enabled via DSTV and GoTV.	3 Million
HOT FM	Lusaka, Kapiri & Copperbelt. National transmission enabled via DSTV and GoTV.	2.8 Million
Millennium Radio	Lusaka, Kabwe, Kapiri Mposhi and Ndola	2 Million
Christian Voice	Copperbelt, Kapiri Mposhi, Livingstone, Ndola, Solwezi and Lusaka.	3 Million

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Below are a number of key recommendations for future Social Protection Week:

1. The multifaceted discussion and impactful engagements is fully attributed to the collaborative planning and implementation of ZSPW through the Poverty and Vulnerability Communication Cluster (PVCC), which includes the membership of 11 ministries and UN partners. There it is recommended that the following ZSPW should use PVCC for a coordinated approach to advocacy and communication of social protection programmes.
2. Technology challenges during virtual discussions resulted in delays for some sessions; therefore, there is need for risk assessments to be undertaken two (2) days prior to the event, to evaluate the reliability of the connectivity.
3. Use of virtual platforms and main media were not inclusive of certain sections of society that did not have access to the radio, television and internet especially in the rural areas.
4. The use of virtual platforms such as Facebook, radio and TV resulted in increased participation from the public especially the youth and students, compared to past SPW that were held at central locations.
5. The event spurred a demand on media to seek information on various social protection programmes and therefore, there is need for continued partnerships with the media.
6. Engagement of the media through the planning and the implementation of the ZSPW is necessary to ensure their participation in play an advocacy role to influence policy action and decisions.

In review of event execution a few areas for improvement in planning for future events are listed below;

1. Most callers made many inquiries on social cash transfer; therefore, there is need for further sensitization on the SCT programme, as well as other programmes to ensure the public are well informed.
2. Presenters/interviewers lacked in-depth knowledge on social protection, there is need to ensure a training is conducted prior to the week to ensure all moderators, radio/TV presenters and interviewers are well informed on the various social protection programmes.
3. Technology risk assessments to be undertaken two days prior to the event, to evaluate the reliability of the connectivity.
4. Need for support towards strengthening capacity of journalist for quality reporting on social protection programmes is still on-going. MISA trainings are of essence and there is need to enhance such partnerships;
5. Programme, Discussion Topics and Panellists must be finalized 3-4 weeks prior to the event date. Need for

technical experts to listen through public discussion to inform programming and delivery on social protection

6. Ensure inclusive communication to ensure no one is left behind by the use of sign language interpreters, braille and local languages during the discussions, as well as community radio stations in various provinces.



Radio Talk Show on Phoenix FM and streamed LIVE discussing Social Accountability for Responsive Social Protection

Overall, the 2021 Virtual Zambia Social Protection Week noted great success despite being the first time event was being held virtually. According to the social media analysis, the event had an overall virtual reach of 78,563 and an attendance of 17,669 people, with a combined a combined weekly audience of the

listenership across the 6 radio stations (see table 2). Following the ZSPW, there was an increase on social media reporting, with an average of 10 articles were written in print media (see annex). Therefore, the virtual and multimedia interphase would be a good platform for the poverty reduction and vulnerability cluster to take advantage of to continue with ongoing stakeholder engagement. Below is an analysis of ZSPW attendance since 2016.

Table 3. ZSPW Annual Trends in Attendance

YEAR	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5 & 6	OVERALL PARTICIPANTS PLUS MEDIA
2016					-	545
2017	163	157	152	99	-	616
2018	330	284	190		-	911
2021	4,821	1,849	2,887	5,948	2,164	17,669