

NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS COORDINATING COUNCIL

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING

14TH SEPTEMBER 2006

OPENING REMARKS BY THE NGOCC CHAIRPERSON

The Non- Governmental Organization Coordinating Council Board Chairperson Ms. Lucy Muyoyeta gave the opening remarks. The chairperson extended a hand of welcome to all participants that attended the Economic, Social and Cultural Council meeting.

In her opening remarks, the chairperson described ECOSOCC as an initiative of the African Union formed in the wake of the realization that civil society involvement in development played a key and critical role. The chairperson further indicated that the birth of ECOSOCC in October 2005 paved the way and provided a platform for NGOs, Socio- Economic, Professional Association and Civil Society to be integrated in the AU business.

The chairperson outlined the objectives of ECOSOCC as follows:

1. Promotion of dialogue among all segments of the African Peoples.
2. Establishment of strong partnerships between the government and the civil society.
3. Realization of mass support for policies and programmes pertaining to peace, stability and security for purposes of gender and development.
4. Promotion of a culture of accountability and good governance.
5. Realization of the Social Justice, Human Rights and Democratic Principles.
6. Promotion of gender equity approaches

The chairperson indicated that the major aim of the meeting was to inform and consult the Zambian civil society on the operational process of ECOSOCC. The chairperson further alluded to the imperative need for forging partnerships and the important role that civil society played. The chairperson underscored the importance of developing regional and continental relationships among civil society institutions for purposes of creating a core structure and playing the role of observers and advisors to the process of the African Union.

The chairperson concluded that by urging members of various civil society organizations to fully participate in the proceeding of the meeting so that Zambia could be integrated and mainstreamed into the initiative.

PRESENTATION BY HEDER MALAUENE- CHAIRPERSON OF THE SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE (ECOSOCC)

The Chairperson of the Social Affairs and Health Committee of ECOSOCC gave the keynote address. The address mainly centered on the ECOSOCC Strategic Plan for 2005-2007. The presentation gave an overview of the strategic plan.

1.0 BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The presentation alluded to the building blocks of the strategic plan as in the following:

1. Strategic Vision, Objectives, Roles and the Added Value.
2. Governance, Transparency and Accountability.
3. Institutional Development Challenges of ECOSOCC.

2.0 FOUNDATIONS OF ECOSOCC

The presentation made reference to the foundations of the ECOSOCC. The presentation indicated that the Constitutive Act of the AU created ECOSOCC. The presentation also indicated that the constitutive act provided the statutes of ECOSOCC specifying its mandate, composition, functions and structures. The presentation equally indicated that ECOSOCC was fully supported by the vision and mission of the AU that reads “A Peaceful, Integrated and Prosperous Africa Driven by its People” and “A Dynamic Force in the Global Community”.

3.0 CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION VIS-À-VIS THE OAU AND AU FRAMEWORKS

The presenter pointed out the fact that ECOSOCC represented a major step forward in civil society participation in continental processes. The presentation indicated that, while the OAU had a restrictive mandate (hence limited opportunities for civil society participation), lacked an institutional set-up for structural civil society involvement and had an instrumental approach to civil society participation, the AU has a broader mandate requiring civil society participation for effective implementation, created ECOSOCC as an AU organ for civil society engagement and has allowed ECOSOCC to be in the driving seat.

4.0 ECOSOCC AND THE AU STRUCTURE

The presenter defined the place of ECOSOCC within the structure of the African Union. The presentation reiterated the facts that ECOSOCC was an organ of the AU; it was a major (yet not exclusive) institutional framework for civil society participation in AU processes and as a continental interface with the African peoples and civil society. The presentation summarily defined ECOSOCC as a bridge between organized civil society and the AU.

5.0 ACTORS, CONSTITUENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS OF ECOSOCC

Furthermore, the presenter defined the actors, constituencies and stakeholders of ECOSOCC. The presentation identified the two (2) elected members to the General Assembly as the major actors while various civil society organizations that elect and give mandate to the actors were identified as the constituencies. The presentation outlined the following as the major stakeholders:

- The People (s) of Africa.
- The African Union Commission (including in its role as the secretariat to ECOSOCC).

- Policy Organs of the African Union.
- Regional Economic Communities e.g. SADC
- Member States.
- Development and Cooperating Partners.

5.0 VISION OF ECOSOCC

The presentation described the vision of ECOSOCC as the attainment of a well-organized, transparent and accountable civil society at continental level that can contribute to:

- Harnessing of potential of the African People and civil society to raise voices and defend their interests within the AU process, programmes and projects.
- Building a people driven and responsive AU.
- Achievement of the mission of the AU through dialogue and partnerships.
- Promotion of a culture of good governance, democratic principles and institutions, human rights as well as social justice.
- Charting Africa future in a perspective of continental integration.

6.0 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF ECOSOCC

The presentation divided the strategic objectives in three broad categories i.e. short- term strategic objective 2005-2007 (hereby represented by the institutionalization and building of the foundations for a legitimate, effective and accountable ECOSOCC); medium-term strategic objective 2008-2015 (hereby represented by the consolidation of ECOSOCC and achievement of measurable impact on policies and programmes) and long- term strategic objective (hereby represented by the attainment of good governance through effective state- civil society partnerships)

7.0 VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF ECOSOCC

The presentation alluded to the following key values and principles:

Values

- Good governance, accountability, transparency, shared responsibility, unity in diversity, gender equality and tolerance.

Principles

- Inclusiveness, Interaction with the Constituencies, Result- Oriented Approaches, Systematic Linkages i.e. AU Strategic Plan and Programmes and Subsidiarity.

8.0 KEY ROLES OF THE ECOSOCC

The presentation outlined the following as the key roles of ECOSOCC:

- Building a democratic AU by mainstreaming peoples participation.
- Policy advice and advocacy through the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the AU mission.
- Enabling civil society participation for purposes of enhancing legitimacy and organizational capacity of the AU.

- Interface or broker between Africa civil society and the AU.

9.0 ADDED VALUE OF ECOSOCC

The presentation gave a number of benefits that would accrue due to the existence of ECOSOCC as follows:

- Creation of linkages between the peoples of Africa and their continental body.
- Provision of a democratic foundation and legitimacy to the AU and its member states.
- Broadening the space for ordinary peoples participation at all levels of governance in Africa.
- Injection of the values, knowledge and ideas of the African civil society into AU policy processes.
- Monitoring, evaluation and democratic feedback on the results achieved by the AU.

11.0 ECOSOCC OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The presentation contended that a number of factors including political, social and cultural realities in the African continent, nature and roles of ECOSOCC as an advisory body of the AU and available opportunities influenced the operating environment for ECOSOCC. The presenter indicated that the operating environment was characterized by fragile political, social and cultural systems; fragile democratic culture; high level of mistrust between states and civil society and a rapidly growing civil society that is not always legitimate (therefore not ready to assume its role and responsibilities).

11.0 NATURE AND ROLE OF ECOSOCC AS AN ADVISORY ORGAN OF THE AU

The presentation defined the advisory nature and role of ECOSOCC as follows:

- ECOSOCC has an advisory role to play, NOT a decision-making role in AU policy processes.
- ECOSOCC is an organ of the AU, so all its activities need to be framed and integrated into overall AU system.
- ECOSOCC faces a number of **short and medium term limitations** as an organisation at the inception phase of institution building (e.g. absence of predictable and sustainable **financial resources** and **capacity constraints** at all levels).
- Yet an advisory body like ECOSOCC can make a difference if it can deliver high quality products and services to its constituents.

12.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECOSOCC

The presentation alluded to a number of opportunities that could enhance the performance of ECOSOCC as follows:

- Global advance of participatory development and rights-based approaches
- Strong demands for democracy and good governance across Africa
- Growing recognition of need for public-private partnerships (e.g. in PRSPs, MDGs)
- The governance imperative in building new partnerships with donor community

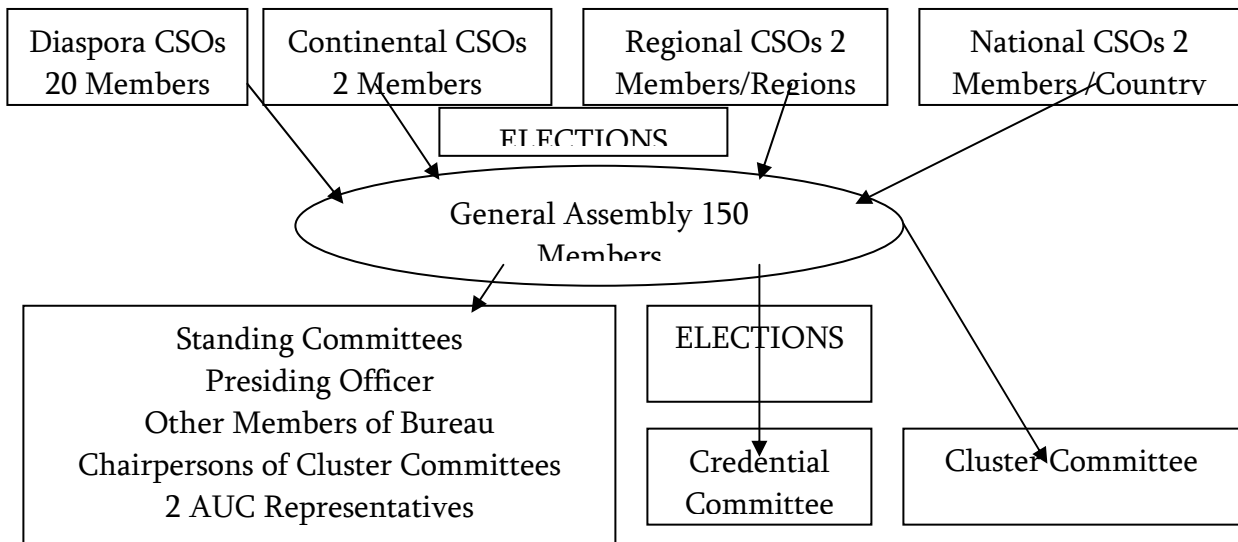
13.0 GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The presentation gave an overview of strategies, risks and challenges involved in the attainment of the above-mentioned tenets. The presentation proposed the preaching of good governance within the AU and expectation of good governance from national political parties organs e.g. governments, parliaments etc as some of the strategies that could be used to entrench basic tenets of democracy. The presenter identified issues of top- down, ECOSOCC members' personal agendas and the defence of national interest as some of the critical risks that faces the operation of ECOSOCC. The presentation also alluded to a number of challenges including the defining and acceptance of rules of engagement, eligibility requirement clarified in the statutes and CSOs defending collective interest.

Furthermore, the presentation contended that transparent consultations would ensure the legitimacy of ECOSOCC members. The presenter emphasised on the need for consultations to be as wide as possible through the involvement of consensual and neutral players within the region; credential committee, bureau members, AUC, etc; establishment of a common methodology allowing for quality control and a clear definition of the roles and responsibility of every actor in the process.

14.0 ECOSOCC INTERNAL ORGANS

The presenter gave an overview of the organic structure of ECOSOCC as follows:



15.0 ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF ECOSOCC ORGANS

The presentation defined the functions and roles of the organs as follows:

General Assembly

- Prepares and submits reports and opinion. Does also submit proposal on he budget and unit activities.

Cluster Committees

- Prepares advisory reports and opinion.

Credentials Committee

- Prepares and examines credentials of ECOSOCC member.

Standing Committee

- Coordination of the preparation of annual reports/ annual meetings and following upon the implementation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

16.0 BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A TRANSPARENT MANAGEMENT OF ECOSOCC ACTIVITIES

The presenter allude to the existing mechanisms foreseen in the statutes on roles of ECOSOCC and organs defined in Statues the presenter indicated that following constituted critical factor for organisational transparency:

- Publication of all programmes, decisions, minutes, list of members, reports on selection process and activities.
- Definition of a Code of Ethics and Conducts.
- Governance issues to be clarified by ECOSOCC.
- Possibility of having observers, public hearings,
- Reflection on the mandate of ECOSOCC members on the statutes in view of ECOSOCC values,
- Clarification on identity of ECOSOCC decision-making body.
- Limitation to the number of mandates than can be held by the same CSO.

17.0 Sectoral Cluster Committees

The presentation gave an overview of the various existing sub- committees of ECOSOCC including the following:

17.1 Peace and Security

- Deals with conflict anticipation; prevention; management and resolution; post conflict reconstruction and peace building; prevention and combating of terrorism; use of child soldiers; drug trafficking; illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and security reforms.

17.2 Political Affairs

- Deals with Human rights; rule of law; democratic and constitutional rule; good governance; power sharing, electoral institutions; humanitarian affairs and assistance etc.

17.3 Infrastructure and Energy

17.4 Social Affairs and Health

- Health, children; drug control; population; migration; labour and employment; family; aging; the physically challenged; sports; culture; youth and protection and Social integration etc.

17.5 Human Resources, Science and Technology

- Education; illiteracy; information technology; communication; human resources; science and technology etc.

17.6 Trade and Industry

- Trade; industry; handicrafts; customs and immigration matters etc.

17.7 Rural Economy and Agriculture

- Rural economy; agriculture and food security; livestock; environment; water and natural resources and desertification etc.

17.8 Economic Affairs

- Economic integration; monetary and financial affairs; private sector development including the informal sector and resource mobilization etc).

17.9 Women and Gender

- Women; gender and development as a crosscutting issue etc) Cross-Cutting Programmes (all other cross-cutting issues that are not covered in above clusters including HIV/AIDS, international cooperation, coordination with institutions and organs of the Union)

18.0 ADOPTED WAY FORWARD FROM INTERIM ECOSOCC

The presenter indicated that the Interim General Assembly Members, together with other competent, Civil Society Organizations in their respective countries, should strive to undertake the following:

- Establish consensual and functional national coordinating mechanism for the ECOSOCC process as soon as possible. It must be noted that the mandate of the Interim General Assembly for ECOSOCC will expire in 2007.
- All stakeholders must therefore make commitments to this process and follow through with them.
- The African Civil Society must recognize that they must be change they want to see in Africa. It is the African people who must live the dream of a United Africa in their every day lives.
- And with increasing international attention being directed to Africa, this may be an ideal time to draw on an African example as a motivational force; ECOSOCC provides this opportunity

19.0 MAIN OBJECTIVES ADOPTED FOR FOLLOW UP

The presenter outlined the following as major follow- up issues:

- The establishment of national coordination mechanisms for purposes of popularising ECOSOCC and election of two CSOs to the substantive ECOSOCC General Assembly;
- Operationalization of cluster committees.

- Development of strategies and mechanisms for resource mobilization;
- Participation and provision of input to the AU through cluster committees.

20.0 CHALLENGES FOR ZAMBIAN CSO'S

The presenter outlined a number of challenges that the Zambian CSOs would face as they embraced and pushed forward the agenda of ECOSOCC as follows:

- Ensuring the inclusion of all interested parties in the process at the national level;
- Take their concerns to the ECOSOCC and bring back the results of its participation to the Zambian Civil Society;
- Start an internal process of consultation so that at the end of the Interim period of the ECOSOCC General Assembly there could be indicated consensually the organizations that will represent Zambia in the ECOSOCC;

21.0 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

Question: *What framework is used to make decisions pertaining to this process? Are there any specific bodies that make decisions?*

Answer: *In the interim period, there exists a tentative ECOSOCC main committee and a number of standing committees that make decisions. The mandate of these policy frameworks arises from the provision of constitutive act of the AU under article 2. Furthermore, the Heads of State summit in Maputo approved and accepted the 2005-2007 strategic plans as the guiding principle.*

Question: *Firstly, I wish to congratulate the speaker for his elaborate presentation. I wish to observe that there has been a tendency for national and sub- regional organizations not to take seriously any contributions made by the CSOs. Therefore, the question is how much influence does ECOSOCC have on the AU, especially when one looks at issues such as the Zimbabwean issue?*

Answer: *Given the fact that the institutional arrangement of ECOSOCC within the AU is such that it affords CSOs space and freedom to interact at regional level is enough assurance of the kind of influence the latter has.*

Further, since ECOSOCC is still in the interim mode, it can safely be assumed that it have great influence once formally launched i.e. mechanisms will be worked to ensure that civil society is given sufficient space to operate and lobby.

Question: *What will be the channels of communication between CSOs and ECOSOCC?*

Answer: *It is envisaged that the two representatives selected at national level will receive and submit matters of interest to the **Standing Committee** i.e. Thematic Group, which in turn will submit the said issues to the **General Assembly** of ECOSOCC and finally the AU summit.*

Likewise, the Zimbabwe issue would be handled according to the above- mentioned procedure. The two representatives would or will draw to the attention of standing committee facts of the matter, which in turn will present the same to the General Assembly. The next and final level is the submission and discussion of the same issue by the Heads of States at AU level.

Question: *What is the national contact institution for ECOSOCC?*

Answer: *The Non- Governmental Organizations Coordinating Council was appointed to spearhead the process of institutionalizing ECOSOCC at national level. The meeting in question was the beginning of the constructive engagement and consultation among CSOs in Zambia.*

Question: *Why is education, critical as it may be, covered in broader cluster committees?*

Answer: *The categorization of cluster committees is an interim arrangement. Education falls under Human Resource Development, Science and Technology Cluster Committee*

Question: *What role can the media play in ECOSOCC?*

Answer: *The media is not covered in any committee; henceforth it could come under cross- cutting issues. The media is critical to the realization of the vision and mandate of ECOSOCC; hence their role in informing and guidance in influencing changes cannot be overemphasized.*

Question: *Who will ensure the sustainability of national processes especially in relation to the financing of the entire national process?*

Answer: *In the interim period, one of the major objectives of ECOSOCC is to fundraise. To this effect, individual members countries were requested to write strategic plans for resource mobilization. But in the long run, ECOSOCC as an AU organ, e.g. African parliament, will have a budget line from the AU. Equally important is the fact national contact NGOs must fundraise with various cooperating partners, CSO must define how they can benefit/ participate financially from AU systems*

Question: *Where are the Governance, Democracy and Regulatory etc issues?*

Answer: *Issues of Governance, Democracy and the Regulatory Framework Social were covered in cluster 10.*

Question: *Are there any other organs in the AU other than ECOSOCC that allows for CSOs participation?*

Answer: *Yes, a number of AU organs do exist including the Executive Council, the AU Commission, the Pan-African Parliament and regional economic bodies such as SADC.*

PRESENTATION ON AN OVERVIEW OF NGOs IN ZAMBIA, GOVERNMENT AND INTERSTATE BODIES - REV MALAWO MATYOLA

1.0 An Overview of the Zambian NGO and the Government

The speaker began his presentation by contending that; historically- governmental originations (NGOs) sector in Zambia had been experiencing questions of transparency, accountability and legitimacy. The presentation further indicated that the governance structures and legitimacy of NGO work had been a contentious basis for alleged abuse of resources, bad practices and procedures. The presentation further pointed out that, given the questions alluded to above; the Government of the Republic of Zambia drafted an NGO Policy and Draft Bill due to a number of reasons.

The paper also indicated that NGOs have raised serious concern with the government initiated policy framework, parliamentary bill and the code of conduct, given the in- built risk of government imposition. The paper further said that, in view of the afore- mentioned, a number of NGOs came together and formed a technical working committee comprising Programme Against Malnutrition, Buteko Agriculture Cooperative, Christian Children Fund, Citizens Forum, National Association for Peasant and Small- Scale Farmers, Women in Law and Development in Africa, Zambia Alliance for Women, National Council of Catholic Women, Young Men Christian Association, CSPR, FODEP, JCTR and NGOCC.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

The presentation alluded to the lack of an appropriate and comprehensive governance framework for NGOs that contributed to poor corporate governance practices. To this effect, the presentation identified the establishment of governance policies and practices in NGOs on a self- regulatory basis as a major challenge.

3.0 Key Continental and Southern Africa Inter- State Institutions

The presentation mentioned the following as the key continental institutional arrangements for Zambia: COMESA, the AU, the UN, and the SADC. The paper laid emphasis on two major institutional arrangements i.e. the AU and SADC.

3.1 AU and Civil Society Organizations in Africa

The presentation indicated that the AU was an interstate avenue for African integration. The paper further contended that the AU inherited a weak organizational apparatus. Furthermore, it was the view of the speaker that the AU risked becoming a thicket of constitutional and legal provisions, declarations and protocols, lacking in the necessary implementation capacity.

The presenter pointed out that, as far as political issues of governance, democratization, the rule of law and good governance, were concerned, the AU sought to ensure greater political participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability and freedoms for citizens.

3.2 SADC and CSO in Southern Africa

The presentation alluded to the operational structure of the SADC including the policy -making institutional arrangement i.e. the Heads of State Summit. The presentation further alluded to the various sub- committees of the SADC including the organ for Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation.

The presenter also indicated that the SADC treaty in Chapter Seven, Article 23 provided for partnership with the civil society, which was reinforced by the MOU entered into by the SADC council of NGOs. The presenter indicated that this partnership involved a broad range of issues such as the following: - Democracy, Peace and Security; Economic Integration; Gender Equality; HIV/AIDS; Human Rights and Access to Justice

4.0 Workshop Recommendations

Arising from the proceedings of the workshop, the following recommendations were made:

- Immediate establishment of national coordination mechanisms for purposes of popularizing ECOSOCC;
- Election of two (2) national representatives to sit on the general assembly of ECOSOCC;
- Operationalization of the cluster or thematic committees;
- Development of strategies and mechanisms for resource mobilization;
- Full implementation of the values, norms and standards embodied in the SADC and AU protocols on civil society.
- Initiation of a broad- based internal process of consultations among all national stakeholders for purposes of inclusiveness

5.0 Conclusion

The presentation concluded by making reference to an imposing gap that existed between the making and adoption of norms, values and institutions in the SADC on one hand and their full implementation on the other. The paper contended that there was an implementation crisis in respect of all regional and sub- regional institutional frameworks.

ATTENDANCE LIST

Title: ECOSOCC WORSHOP

Date: 14:09:2006

No.	Name	Position	Organization and Address	Sex
1	Lucy Muyoyeta	NGOCC Chairperson	NGOCC Board	F
2	Nyonde Ntswana	Programme Assistant	Action Aid Zambia	F
3	Isabel Sibongo	Chairperson	SCAZ	F
4	Kale Kaumba	Executive Director	YWCA	F
5	Simson Mwale	Coordinator	JCTR	M
6	Dorica Nkhoma	Programmes Assistant	SACCORD	F
7	Jane Chirwa	RCA	MISA- ZAMBIA	F
8	Mwansa Pintu	Information Officer	Zambia Civic Education Ass.	M
9	Iness Mukangwa	Board Member	ZNADWO-LSK	F
10	Mukela Mundale	Programme Officer	AFRODAD	F
11	Dorothy Kasanda	A/ National Coord.	FAWEZA	F
12	Mirrium Kondowe	V/Chairperson	Lusaka Muslim Women Trust	F
13	Rev Aaron Chilunjika	Committee Member	CHIN	M
14	Masuzyo Chakwe	Journalist	POST NEWSPAPER	F
15	Rhoda Bwalya	Lawyer	NLACW	F
16	Rev M Matyola	ZCSD	Executive Secretary	M
17	Obert Simwanza	Journalist	TIMES OF ZAMBIA	M
18	Nothemba Siwale	Treasurer	Snr. Citizens Ass. Of Zambia	-
19	Mekia M Redi	UNV	WILSA	F
20	M K Akapelwa	Programme Manager	CCJDP	F
21	Matongo Mundia	Programme Officer	ZAW	-
22	Robby Shabunga	Programme Officer	LRF	M
23	Juliet Chibuta	Regional Coordinator	SALAN	F
24	Millicent Perry	A/Programme Officer	LRF	F
25	Florence Shakafuswa	Project Manager	Justice for Widows & Orphans	F
26	Nelson Banda	Information Officer	ZNWL	M
27	Getrude Kasankha	Advocacy Officer	WILDAF	F
28	Kennedy Phiri	Reporter	MUVI TV	M
29	Shalala Oliver	Director	Rescue Mission Zambia	M
30	Victor Chikalanga	Gndr & Policy Analyst	NGOCC Secretariat	M
31	Precious Chisebuka	M & E Officer	NGOCC/GMU	F
32	Engwase B Mwale	Executive Director	NGOCC	F
33	Pamela Nyirenda	Trainer	ZNEC	F

