

**COPING STRATEGIES OF VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS FOR  
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: A CASE STUDY OF SINAZONGWE  
DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA**

by

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\_\_\_\_\_

14<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.

SIGNATURE

DATE

(Mr M M Sepiso)

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved children – Maurice, Joseph, Joshua and Mukela (junior) - for their unwavering support during my study, especially for the photocopying and binding errands they did so willingly.

## **SUMMARY**

This dissertation explores the plight of vulnerable poor households in Sinazongwe district of Zambia. It determines nature of their vulnerability and identifies commonly used coping strategies. It also identifies different types of livelihood strategies and assets available and accessed by vulnerable poor households to create sustainable livelihoods.

Study design used qualitative and participatory paradigms, involving variety of data collection techniques and tools such as key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

The study identified several factors impacting on vulnerable poor households, their response strategies and perceived potential sustainable livelihoods. Drought and flash floods destroyed livelihoods of poor households from which they often failed to recover. Vulnerable poor households possessed fewer assets and less diversified sources of income and often lacked back up resources in times of hardship. Livestock rearing, fishing and irrigation-supported gardening were identified as possible sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable poor households in Sinazongwe, to recover and become resilient.

## **KEY TERMS USED IN THE DISSERTATION**

The following terms are frequently used in this dissertation:-

Coping strategies; vulnerable poor households; sustainable livelihoods; vulnerability factors; assets; participatory approaches; study participants; case study; fieldwork; social maps.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ALIFOSEP	Alternative Livelihoods and Food Security
CDRCN	Citizens' Disaster Response Centre and Network
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CVA	Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis
DFID	Department for International Development
FGD	Focus group discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIPC	Highly Indebted poor countries
HIV	Human immune-deficiency virus
HLS	Household livelihood security framework
IFAD	International fund for agricultural development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JICA	Japan international cooperative agency
KDF	Kaluli Development Foundation
LCMS	Living conditions monitoring survey
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
MFI	Micro finance institutions
MOFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
MOH	Ministry of Health
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SLA	Sustainable livelihoods approach
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US\$	United States dollar
USAID	United States agency for international development
ZCSO	Zambia Central Statistical Office
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic Health Survey
ZDMMU	Zambia Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit
ZMK	Zambian Kwacha
ZRCS	Zambia Red Cross Society
ZVAC	Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee