



**What is  
The Church's  
Social  
Teaching  
Saying  
About**

**Gender Equality?**

**JESUIT CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**

*"Promoting Faith and Justice."*

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# WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL TEACHING SAYING ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

*"We pledge Church action to educate our members to a more correct view of women and to actively redress the injustices done to women in Church, State and family life." (Zambian Bishops, You Shall Be My Witnesses, July 1991, #42)*

This pamphlet has been prepared to assist Christian groups (e.g., Small Christian Communities, Youth groups, Justice and Peace groups, Bible Study groups, Fellowship groups, etc.) to learn more about the Church's Social Teaching (CST) – grounded in Scripture – on the issue of gender equality.

It is designed as a study guide consisting of four sessions. The four sessions follow the "Pastoral Circle" that encourages us to move from experience to action by asking questions of "what is happening? (experience), why is it happening? (social analysis), what does it mean to me? (theological reflection guided by Scripture and the CST), and what can we do as a Christian community in such a situation? (response)."

We encourage you to send in your comments and suggestions for improving our instructions about the CST. We are very interested to hear how you have used this pamphlet to move toward action for equity and a greater concern for the gender issues and the rights of women in Zambia today.

Dominic Liche

March 2008

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection  
Lusaka, Zambia

# INTRODUCTION

Each one of us is born and raised up in a family. Some of us have been raised up by both parents, some by a single parent, some by relatives, and some by guardians, while others have grown up in streets with fellow children. We all have been in some sort of community following some rules. In growing up, we are taught several things by our parents, guardians, elders, and even our peers which help us acquire skills to survive and fit well in a particular society. The wisdom taught to us largely depends on the ethnic group, religion, race and even the country we are born and grow up in. But a major influencing factor on what is taught to us is our gender.

From an early age, boys and girls are taught different things which determine the roles they assume in society. Our gender shapes the way society treats us and how we relate with others in society. For example, girls are taught to take care of the home, cook, play games that have to do with rearing children (to be feminine), while boys are taught to play games like football, go to gardens with their fathers, wait to be served food by females (but not cook), take care of domestic animals (to be masculine). The clear cut separation in what a girl or a boy can do determines what kind of adults one ends up being. These distinct roles assigned to men and women by the society one lives in are referred to as gender roles.

It is important to distinguish gender roles from sex roles. Man or woman can do any of the gender roles. For example, we are seeing men more and more being good cooks or good tenders of children, roles that have traditionally been associated with women. We are also seeing women more and more becoming very good doctors or lawyers or truck drivers, roles that have traditionally been associated with men.

Sex roles on the other hand are the biological and physiological roles of men and women. For example giving birth to a child is a role for a woman. Sex roles are biologically natural to women or men.

When we talk about gender equality, we are not talking about strict egalitarianism between male and females. We are talking about equality in terms of access to opportunities in all sectors of society and enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. It is about correcting and rejecting inequalities based on gender that disregard the dignity and rights of women or men. Talking about gender equality is not really being feminist. Feminism is the intellectual and political commitment to ensuring gender

equality. In terms of access to opportunities and equity in enjoyment of human rights and freedoms, gender should not be a relevant consideration. It should be about justice and fairness.

Why are we concerned about gender? First of all, of course, because we Christians believe what Scripture tells us in Genesis 1:27, that every human person, woman and man, is made in the image and likeness of God. Any gender distinction must respect that fundamental truth of basic equality of woman and man in God's sight.

Reflecting on gender is also important because one's gender and the roles associated with it do determine one's access to resources, such as education, employment, health and food. One's gender is also vital in commanding respect and assuming leadership positions. There is enough evidence now that gender inequalities exist and the victims are often females whose importance in contributing to integral development is often trivialized and sometimes even ignored. These inequalities are open to change. Although some sex roles can drive inequalities that affect women (for example single mothers stuck with their children since they are the ones who give birth, abortions, staying away from places of work because of pregnancy), these sex roles are somehow strongly related in ways gender roles have been assigned to men and women.

Abuse and violence based on gender seems to be on the increase and contributes to furthering the gap in access to goods and basic needs. Despite the fact that most of the gender roles, gender inequalities and gender-based violence are considered household issues, they have serious negative impacts on any country's social and economic development. Take for example, large numbers of youth not going to school, or very talented women not finding jobs, HIV and AIDS spreading because of gender-based abuse.

## SESSION ONE: EXPERIENCE

Having grown up in families and in communities, we have several experiences as males or females. Most of these experiences are generally happy ones, especially in stable families where both father and mother are present. But in some cases our experiences have been sad ones. These experiences, left without reflection, can leave us hopeless and helpless and even susceptible to further abuse and also force us to enter into the dynamic of abuse. To help reflect on our day to day experience on gender, let's share some stories related to most people's experiences.

- I grew up next to Mr Mkandawire's home. Mr Mkandawire had a pretty young wife and three children. Every Sunday, they would go to Church. Despite coming to Church as a family, in Church men would sit in one pew while women and children would sit in another separate pew. Most women would be involved in singing whilst most men would sit or stand silently in Church until mass ended. I got to personally know the family and occasionally I would play with Mr Mkandawire's children. One Saturday afternoon, we heard loud cries for help from our neighbour's yard. Of course as kids we rushed there first. Mr Mkandawire's wife was screaming for help with blood streaming down her nose and mouth. She was carrying a pounding stick in her hands shouting, "I will kill you, you will see, you foolish man, you are used to mistreating me!" Mr Mkandawire was there trying to shield himself with his hands against the pounding stick. Having heard the screams and cries, a group of neighbours consisting of children and adults had gathered and were watching and chatting away – "It's sad that they have to fight in daylight ... it would be better to fight in the house at night." Next Mr Mkandawire grabbed the stick from his wife and threw it away, he started punching his wife in the face, in the stomach ... we watched despairingly. No one moved to do anything. After all, such issues are domestic issues resolved by the two partners involved. The loud screams and curses of Mrs Mkandawire kept on as Mr Mkandawire kept punching her again and again and again...
- Cholwe, a young woman, had always thought of becoming a priest in her Church, the Roman Catholic Church. She was prayerful and had been a "Stella girl" as a young girl. She was an active youth and a choir member in her parish. Finding out after secondary school that she could not be a priest or even a deacon; she thought of joining sisterhood. Although she is now a sister, she is still

confused, angered, and dissatisfied that the simple fact that she is a woman has made her dreams not come true.

- A 34 year old woman in Lusaka was severely battered by her husband for refusing to give him the security code for her mobile phone after demanding the code in order to read her text messages. The woman who has been married for six years and has two children said the husband used to beat her in the past too but she never reported the matter to the police. Despite pleading with people around her for help, many just watched her and some joined in the beating after the husband said she was a prostitute.

There are many experiences that we go through. Although more women are victims of inequality and have more excruciating experiences, men too are victims of inequality. Whatever our gender, we have experiences and heard stories that have made us sit down and think seriously whether the inequalities and abuse based on gender really do make sense.

### **Suggested Questions for Reflection**

1. Do you know similar stories about gender?
2. What is your experience as a man or a woman in terms of the roles assigned to you?
3. Have you or a close person to you been victim of inequality based on gender?
4. Have you ever thought abuse and violence based on gender is only a domestic issue and that it should never be your concern?
5. What is your understanding of gender and gender-based violence?
6. What do you think of the situation of the people in the stories?
7. What should these people really do as a way forward?

### **Concluding Prayer**

One member of the group should give a concluding prayer to close the discussion.

## SESSION TWO: SOCIAL ANALYSIS

Our own experiences and those of other people about gender inequalities like those of Mkandawire and Choolwe make us ask WHY such experiences? Can there really be any justification for such? We are pushed to question the deep structures in our society in relation to gender.

These experiences show that gender disparities and abuse are against basic human rights and impact very negatively on personal human development and the development of a country. Inequality in the form of gender contributes to increase in poverty and inaccessibility of basic needs.

Current statistics show that half of Zambia's population is female. Yet more than three quarters of the 68% poor Zambians are females. Female-headed households are much poorer than male-headed households, maternal mortality (729 deaths per 100,000 births) and infant mortality rates (100.71 deaths/1,000 live births) are very high, much more than half (about 18%) of the HIV infected are females compared to the 13% for men, more women (25.2%) than men (13.3%) are illiterate, very few women are in leadership positions, even fewer in political positions, gender based violence is on the increase.

These things that make women disadvantaged make them have little negotiating power in household issues and in sexual and maternal health issues. These general gender indicators show that there is something very wrong with the way we have understood and dealt with gender issues, namely that the female gender is considered inferior and of less importance than the male gender.

These experiences and indicators about gender should lead us to reflect on the deep-rooted causes of inequalities based on gender. Because it is only after knowing and understanding what is wrong that we can move to positive action.

### **Causes of Gender Inequality**

**History, Culture, and Social Norms.** We come from a long history of inequalities of all sorts which include those of wealth, race, religion and gender. Until very recently in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, women have been considered of lower quality and of lower nature than men. This can be seen in ways women were treated as regards to involvement in industry, science, voting, dress, driving and in family life.

Culture that has evolved from this history has stressed the importance of man as the head of women and children, making him king and decision

maker for women and children. This socializing of roles has made most Zambian cultures have cultural norms that favour men and disadvantage women. These norms include paying of lobola (bride price), polygamy, property ownership, inheritance of women, sexual cleansing, and the belief that women are there to satisfy the sexual needs of man.

**Religion.** In most religions, especially in the Catholic Church, it is men who take positions of leadership. Women are more of followers than leaders. In some religions, church teachings seem to favour men than women. One wonders for example, why God, Jesus, most great prophets, apostles of Jesus, Popes, Bishops, and Patriarchs are all male figures. It is interesting, though, that it is women who are active in Prayer groups, Small Christian Communities, Choir and Youth groups and in many other communal activities. Such deep religious beliefs and experiences contribute to the thought that women are mere servants and helpers of men.

**Economics.** Modern economic development theories and practices that have deep roots in industrialization, globalization and capitalism seem to make men the suitable workers whilst women are left at home to take care of the family. Men seem suitable to work in mines, in commercial farms, in industrial companies. Such systems normally see men leaving their families in villages to fend for themselves while men go out to look for money in towns and mines. The "left-behind" families put a lot of pressure on women to survive when they have little skill and supporting structures to earn money. This may force women to engage in subsistence farming and other burdensome work to feed their families.

**Education.** Education opens up many opportunities for people to take care of themselves and their families. But for a long time, going to school has been a boy's activity. Girls stayed at home to learn household chores, for after all, they would end up married off to some man. Despite the introduction of free primary education in Zambia and the current high enrolment rates of girls into primary school, more boys go to secondary and tertiary levels. Even with affirmative policies encouraging girls in secondary schools (lower entrance cut-off points for girls) and in most institutions of high learning (30% places reserved for girls), still much fewer girls are in these high learning institutions.

Less education levels on the part of females make them be left out in positions of leadership where they could be vital in making changes that will ensure equality. Managerial positions, ministerial positions and other high positions need a certain academic competence. Therefore, the more educated women become, the more involved they will be. Cultural views about marriage and the respect connected to it, sometimes, make it difficult for some women to advance in education.



## **Suggested Questions for Reflection**

1. Do the reasons given here agree with your own experiences of why there are inequalities?
2. What other reasons do you have that contribute to gender inequalities?
3. Are these reasons so deeply rooted in our society and minds that change is impossible?
4. What about religion and its role on inequality? (both positive and negative)
5. Do you think issues of lobola (bride price) perpetuate gender inequalities especially in perceptions that man has bought the woman? How?

## **Concluding Prayer**

One member of the group should give a concluding prayer to close the discussion.

## SESSION THREE: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Since experiences and analysis of situations in our lives is useless without good reflection, a reflection on gender inequalities is important. The Church's Social Teaching on gender is rooted in its teaching that man and woman are created in God's image, their dignity as human beings, and the respect of human rights based on the common good.

It is true that certain parts in the Church's Social Teaching have favoured man over woman in assignment of leadership roles to men, referring to men and women as "man," and lack of comprehensive pastoral letters and encyclicals to address gender. Such teaching lacked wider understanding and deep rooted teaching that stress that man and woman equal in dignity. There have also been gender insensitive beliefs and teachings in the past highlighted in the bible and the writings of the Church.

However, as Christians today in Zambia, we should focus on deep rooted positive theological reflection and basic human dignity as guide. Below are some of the reflections based on the Church's Social Teaching.

### Scripture

It is interesting to look into scripture and see how the question of gender is treated. In the Old Testament at the very beginning of the creation stories, "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:26-27). From the greatest figures like Sarah, Ruth, Deborah who was ruler and judge (Judges 4 & 5), Abigail (1 Samuel 25), Esther, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha friends of Jesus, to the women who were there in his suffering, death and resurrection, Scripture shows the significance of women in human history. Jesus related to women well and challenged the culture of his time where women had a very low religious and social status:

- Jesus and the woman with haemorrhage (Mark 5:25-34),
- Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4-42),
- Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11),
- Jesus and the women who were lamenting for him on the way to be hanged on the cross (Luke 23:27-28),
- Jesus appearing to women first after resurrection (Luke 24: 1-12).

St. Paul in his letters to the early Church made it clear that women and men were equal in dignity and importance: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

Despite these references in Scripture that rightly show equality and dignity of male and female, there are other passages that might be misunderstood as demanding total submission of women to men: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband has authority over his wife just as Christ has authority over the church; ... and so wives must submit completely to their husbands just as the church submits itself to Christ ... In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself" (Ephesians 5:21-24, 28).

Scripture shows acceptance of gender insensitive structures like Abraham taking on a second wife (Genesis 16:1-21), polygamy, and generally the inferior status of women. But even when we find many Scriptural passages that support the inferior nature of women, can we really support the denial of justice and women's access to basic needs and human rights simply because it is written in the Bible? Good Scriptural scholars say that such passages that seem to support oppressive structures (e.g., slavery) should be understood in the cultural context within which the Bible was written. The basic message is one that Jesus proclaimed, the dignity of women.

### **Papal Teachings**

The Church's Social Teaching has challenged Christians to read the "signs of the times," not to get stagnated into the past but to move with change by finding new meaning in old structures. Pope John XXIII in his 1963 encyclical, *Peace on Earth*, recognized that "Women are gaining an increasing awareness of their natural dignity. Far from being content with a purely passive role or allowing themselves to be regarded as a kind of instrument, they are demanding both in domestic and in public life the rights and duties which belong to them as human persons."

The natural dignity of both men and women is specifically treated in a letter written by Pope John Paul II on 15 August 1988, *Dignity and Vocation of Women*, where he stresses that being created in God's image, both man and woman are equal. This image and likeness of God, which is essential for the human being, is passed on by the man and woman, as spouses and parents, to their descendants. Man and woman relate to each other and their duality of being male and female is what makes them fully human. Man is a helper of woman just as woman is man's helper. This basic equality of the genders and their partnership on this earth is further highlighted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "Man and woman have the same dignity and are of equal value, not only because they are both, in their differences, created in the image of God, but even more profoundly because the dynamic of reciprocity that gives life to the 'we' in the human couple, is an image of God" (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, #111).

## **The Teachings of the Zambian Catholic Bishops**

The Church in Zambia has recognized the inequalities of gender and the suffering that women go through at the hands of men, women, culture, and religion. In their March 1997 pastoral letter *The Church as a Caring Family*, the Zambian bishops clearly assert that "women suffer much more than men in great poverty, ... have increased working hours in order to feed [and care] for their families with scarce resources, face the prospect of widowhood aggravated by the cruel injustice of property grabbing" (#8). They further recognize that despite the difficulties that women face, the Church in Zambia is a sign of hope by denouncing these abuses and actively promoting equality and justice of all Zambians (#18). "We [the church] recognize that the situation of women and girls will always remain a sad one unless radical and deliberate measures are taken to improve the situation. The high rate of school dropouts, for instance, affects girls and subsequently women even more. We call for the true empowering of women to enable them to participate in decision making processes in our Church and in wider society. We encourage the responsible programs supported by the international community, our Government and NGOs to promote the dignity, equality and development of women" (#29d). The Zambian Church has been clear in declaring that "all human beings are created in God's divine image, all equal in dignity, all equally loved.... All destined to be God's children, and this is what challenges us to fight all divisions according to class, race, tribe, gender or other interest groups" (*The Missionary Family, March 1999, #12*).

From scripture through Papal teaching to the teachings of Zambian Bishops, it is clear that man and woman are equal in dignity and importance. Looking at the Church as the family of God, values of love, justice, peace, unity, communion in diversity, selflessness, equal dignity and care for the suffering are important values that, if seriously taken into families, can help deal with inequalities based on gender. The Zambian Bishops in their July 1991 letter *You Shall Be My Witnesses*, pledged the Church to take action to educate her members to a more correct view of women and to actively redress the injustices done to women in Church, State and family life (#42).

### **Suggested Questions for Reflection**

1. How can Scripture and the Church's Social Teaching be important ways of understanding gender?
2. How would you reconcile the teaching on equality by the Church and the fact that leadership is reserved for men?
3. Are Inequalities that benefit men only in Churches and communities acceptable because some sections of Scripture say so?
4. How can the more positive view of women enter into our catechesis?

### **Concluding Prayer**

One member of the group should give a concluding prayer to close the discussion.

## SESSION FOUR: CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

The earlier discussions have to culminate in a response. Not only is challenging our cultural, spiritual, economic values important, but also reform in policy and commitment to making sure equality is achieved. Our response should be based on Church's Social Teaching and equal human dignity of all. Below are some possible responses to inequalities:

**Law and Policy** – Gender issues and equality as treated in the current Zambian Constitution are inadequate. Although it is stated that man and woman are essentially the same despite their different complementary roles, the respect of customary law and norms in the Constitution has made some inequalities connected to gender to be perpetuated. The National Gender Policy, launched in March 2000, clearly states that man and woman are equal partners in development and that discrimination based on gender is unacceptable and intolerable. There are other policy documents (e.g. Penal Code, Sexual Offences Act) that specifically protect the rights and dignity of women.

However, such documents have lacked effective implementation. Information about these important policy measures in the general populace is lacking and sometimes partial. Documents that are not in local languages lack the understanding of the poor and the inadequately educated. The mentality by most Zambians that policy issues are a reserve for the school curricula has made important policy documents remain with policy makers in government, colleges and universities without implementation and reaching the intended people. For example, most Zambians have not even heard about the National Gender Policy.

As a part of our response, we should be interested in learning and understanding more about policy measures and adequately disseminate this information to communities. We could lobby government and NGOs to sensitise communities on a more correct view of the genders. Having policies that are not widely known by the general population or policies that are not implemented will not change the inequalities associated with gender.

**Culture and Tradition** – Despite the very important role that culture and tradition play in our lives, cultural values that have perpetuated abuse and discrimination should be discouraged and reformed. Respect for customary law that is sometimes in conflict with modern law and disadvantages women should be re-evaluated and changed. Government and policy makers should check most of these cultural and traditional arrangements to ensure that man and woman are equally treated in a just manner. We should lobby for greater involvement of women in leadership positions, be it as political leaders, business executives, in church groups, and in community groups.

**Economics and Globalisation** – Economic development that just looks at profits and survival of the fittest will continue to disadvantage women. Free movements between countries have often resulted in the trafficking of women from Zambia to other countries where they are used as sexual workers or work in dehumanizing conditions. Free trade has made our women who have to survive on their own in these hard economic situations, trade on their own through cross-border trade and illegal trade. This puts women at risk of being abused through bribes, sexual favours and exposure to inhuman conditions. Even in trade and economics, we should lobby for values that serve the well being of human beings and not solely for profits.

Finally the following considerations should be strengthened in law, policy, religion and culture:

1. Elimination of gaps in education and empowerment of women at all levels
2. Better maternal health services especially in rural areas
3. Strengthening women's bargaining power in households, places of work, in sexual relations and social relations
4. Elimination of association of decision making, property and land ownership, and leadership only to men
5. Strengthening the rights of women through legal and institutional changes.

Although these policy measures are important, personal and communal commitment to eliminating gender imbalances and violence is key to change. Without this commitment, there will continue to be a gap between positive policy measures and implementation of the policies because of lack of commitment and conviction.

### **Suggested Questions for Reflection**

1. Have you heard about the National Gender Policy and other policy measures to ensure gender equality? Do you think these are efficient? (Some of the policy measures can be found in the Annex.)
2. Are there other ways that you think could strengthen these policy measures?
3. Do you agree that cultural norms and religious beliefs often perpetuate gender inequalities? How?
4. As an individual and as a community, what do you think we can do together to improve the situation to ensure gender inequalities?

### **Concluding Prayer**

One member of the group gives a concluding prayer to close the discussion.

# ANNEX: SOME QUOTATIONS ON GENDER

## 1991 Constitution of Zambia

**Part III Article #11.** It is recognized and declared that every person in Zambia has been and shall continue to be entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right, whatever his [or her] race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed, sex or marital status, but subject to the limitations contained in this Part, to each and all of the following, namely:

- life, liberty, security of the person and the protection of the law;
- freedom of conscience, expression, assembly, movement and association;
- protection of young persons from exploitation;
- protection for the privacy of his [and her] and other property of his [and her] home and other property and from deprivation of property without compensation.

## Zambia National Gender Policy

### **4.2 Culture, Family and Socialisation**

In order to address the issues and concerns raised on culture, family and socialization, Government will:

- promote and carry out gender sensitization campaigns on the dangers of certain cultural and religious practices as well as attitudinal barriers which perpetuate gender imbalances;
- facilitate research to identify and correct negative and harmful cultural practices so as to put in place measures to correct them and promote positive cultural practices; and
- create a core team of gender trainers in both formal and informal socialization institutions

### **4.3 Education and Training**

In order to redress the gender imbalances and inadequacies in the provision of education which include the curriculum, production of education materials, teachers' attitudes and classroom interaction, Government will:

- create, promote and support the conditions within which education can realize its potential in contributing to the realization of the goals;
- place priority on promoting equality, equity, efficiency, partnership, pluralism, transparency and accountability;

- promote equality of access at all levels to both formal and non formal education and training;
- harness the types of knowledge, skills, values and competencies that are necessary for economic development;
- enforce a 50:50 enrolment policy at basic, high school and Teacher Training College levels for females and males;
- continue to exercise positive discrimination with regard to the percentage marks for admission of girls to Grades 8 and 10;
- integrate health education in the curriculum to prevent amongst other things early pregnancy as well as HIV and AIDS;
- employ affirmative action in the appointment of deserving female managers to vacant management positions;
- ensure that teacher development, deployment and upward mobility takes into account the gender concerns in the system.

#### **4.6 Labour, Employment and Social Security**

In order to reverse the gender imbalances in labour, employment and social security, Government will:

- establish mechanisms to remove barriers which prevent women's effective participation in both formal and informal employment;
- encourage implementation of programmes that ensure equal employment opportunities in all sectors of the economy;
- facilitate the provision of crèches at places of work and create an enabling environment for taking care of children up to 6 years when mothers are at work;
- ensure gender balancing in the appointments of representatives to international or regional institutions and mission abroad.

#### **Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010 (FNDP)**

In the Fifth National Development Plan, a whole chapter (Chapter 34) is dedicated to reviewing previous strategies on gender equalities and to propose place strategies to fill the gaps in equality. Some of these strategies highlighted in the FNDP are:

- Identify and lobby for the implementation of measures to correct gender imbalances.
- Facilitate integration of gender into the existing curricula in training institutions.
- Strengthen the Penal Code on gender based violence.
- Strengthen the Bill of Rights for women in the Constitution.



## **JCTR VISION**

A society where faith promotes justice for all in all spheres of life, especially for the poor.

## **JCTR MISSION**

The mission of the JCTR, a project of the Zambia-Malawi Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuit Order), is to foster from a faith-inspired perspective a critical understanding of current issues. Guided by the Church's Social Teaching that emphasises human dignity in community, our mission is to generate activities for the promotion of the fullness of human life through research, education, advocacy and consultation. Cooperating widely with other groups, our Jesuit sponsorship directs us to a special concern for the poor and assures an international linkage to our efforts. We aim to promote an inculturated faith, gender equality, and empowerment of local communities in the work of justice and peace and the integrity of creation.

**Values** guiding us and our actions:

- Human dignity
- Option for the poor
- Social justice
- Gender sensitivity
- Critical analysis
- Discernment
- Rootedness
- Collaboration and participation
- Simplicity
- Transparency

*[For more information about us and our works, visit our website:*

**[www.jctr.org.zm/](http://www.jctr.org.zm/)**

This pamphlet is part of our JCTR Church Social Teaching (CST) Programme, which is designed to inform Christians in Zambia and Malawi about the CST on various social, economical, cultural and political issues. It is intended to assist Christians to confront injustices from their everyday experiences in order to live more fully the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Other CST publications following the "pastoral circle" methodology have examined topics of *poverty*, *property grabbing* and *traditional healing*. All these and many more helpful educational materials are available from the JCTR Office or through a visit to our website: [www.jctr.org.zm](http://www.jctr.org.zm)



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