JCTR

Promoting Faith and Justice

BULLETIN

**P.O BOX 37774,
Lusaka Zambia.**

**JCTR OFFICES, 3813,
Martin Mwamba Road,
Olympia - Lusaka.**

**Tel: +260-211-290410
Fax: +260-211-290759**

**Email:
jctr.faithandjustice@gmail.com and
jctr.info@gmail.com**

QUOTE

"By conquering anger, the soul acquires the quality of forgiveness. By conquering pride, the soul gains humility. By giving up deceit, the soul acquires simplicity and straightforwardness. By conquering greed, the soul attains contentment."

Content

LETTER *From the Editor*

Dear Readers

In this edition we have two lead articles on climate change. Fr. Michael J. Kelly shares his refection on the deterioration of our common home. This reflection is inspired by a recent landmark report entitled Nature's Dangerous Decline, coming from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which presents an ominous picture of the way the health of the natural systems on which we and all other species depend is rapidly deteriorating. The causes of this deterioration include increased population and global economies that are strongly focused on promoting consumption thereby driving up the demands for food, water, energy and materials, while at the same time generating a great increase in waste.

Fr. Michael's reflection points out that the world's poorest communities are the ones affected most by the damage done to the earth which is resulting in global changes in climate, biodiversity and the ecosystem. Climate change has devastating consequences for people in poverty who now face increased food insecurity, forced migration, disease and death. The reflection highlights the importance of promoting environmental sustainability by adopting the teaching of Pope Francis in Laudato Si and the recommendations of IPBES which exhort all of us to examine our lifestyles such as by lowering total consumption and waste, to promote visions of a good quality of life that do not entail ever-increasing material consumption, to promote education in environmental responsibility, and to institute a major transformative change – a fundamental, system-wide reorganization of the technological, economic, political and social features that govern the world today, including its ideals, goals and values.

In its report of June 2020 entitled "the State of the Planet" the Earth Institute of the University of Columbia noted that as a result of the lockdowns around the world to control COVID-19, huge decreases in transportation and industrial activity resulted in a drop in daily global carbon emissions in April. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, as something resembling normal life resumes, normal levels of pollution are returning, too (The Economist, September 5th 2020). While the impact of COVID-19 on the climate change is still not clear, a number of key international negotiations to help countries to adopt climate change strategies have been delayed. According to "the State of the Planet" report, these delays could allow some countries to shift their priorities away from implementing environmental and climate change policies, measures and regulations. For instance, the Paris climate accord of 2015, adopted by every country, all of which pledged to take action to keep global average temperatures from rising more than 2° C beyond preindustrial levels, was set to reconvene in November this year at COP26. The countries were to announce plans to ratchet up climate actions, since the plans they submitted in 2015 could still allow global temperatures to rise by a potentially catastrophic 3°C. Now COP26 has been delayed by a year. This delay could enable countries to enact stimulus plans that do not incorporate climate change strategies.

The message of Laudato Si and the IPBES report could not be clearer that in order to arrest the dangerous decline in nature a major transformative change at all levels of the society is required. We need a long-term conversion that must result in changes in individual behaviour and social attitudes, and in responses by governments that will have impacts on the environment and on our ability to combat climate change. One thing is certain: more large-scale actions will be essential to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Alex Muyebe, S.J.
Editor

THE DETERIORATING CONDITION OF OUR COMMON HOME

Introduction

"Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history – and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely." That is the sombre message from a recent voluminous landmark report entitled *Nature's Dangerous Decline,* coming from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). This report – the most comprehensive scientific report ever undertaken on the natural environment – presents an ominous picture of the way the health of the natural systems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than at any previous time in human history. While more food, energy and materials than ever are now being supplied to people in most places, this is increasingly at the expense of nature's ability to provide such contributions in the future and frequently undermines nature's many other contributions.

The Human Context

The human setting for the IPBES report is that, since 1970, the world's population has more than doubled, the global economy has grown nearly fourfold and global trade has increased tenfold. Increased population and global economies that are strongly focussed on promoting consumption are driving up the demands for food, water, energy and materials, while at the same time they are generating a great increase in waste. There is also the stark fact that there has been global failure to respond to basic human needs, with around 11% of the world's population remaining undernourished while 821 million people in Asia and Africa face food insecurity. In addition, more than 3 billion people – 40% of the global population – lack access to clean and safe drinking water, while approximately 2 billion rely on wood fuel to meet their primary energy needs. Compounding the survival problems that people face, there is the further very disturbing fact that currently more than 2,500 conflicts are occurring worldwide over fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, gas), water, food resources and land.

Ways in which Nature is being Abused

The IPBES report devotes considerable space to presenting key facts and statistics that outline the ways in which men and women have been

ruthlessly damaging the natural world, especially in the past 50 years. The distressing facts that these documents present illustrate very powerfully the truth of what Pope Francis said in *Laudato Si'* (LS): Mother Earth "now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her" (LS, §2). The following are some of the abuses to which the IPBES report draws attention, with reference in some cases to what Pope Francis says about the problem:

- **Global Change in Nature**: Across most of the globe nature has now been significantly altered by multiple human interventions, with the great majority of indicators of ecosystems and biodiversity declining at rates unprecedented in human history.

- **Loss of Biodiversity**: Around 1 million of the Earth's estimated total of 8 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades.

- **Global Warming**: The 2015 Paris Agreement aimed at keeping the global temperature increase this century to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing efforts to limit the increase to no more than 1.5°C. But with average temperatures over the past 30 years rising by 0.2°C per decade, human interventions had already led by 2017 to an observed global warming of approximately 1.0°C.

- **Climate Change**: In June 2019, Pope Francis declared that the world was experiencing a global "climate emergency", warned of the dangers of global warming and stated that failure to act urgently to reduce greenhouse gases would be "a brutal act of injustice toward the poor and future generations."

- **Use of Fossil Fuels**: Instead of deriving ever more energy from the sun and from wind and water movements, the world is proposing to increase its use of fossil fuels, with governments planning to produce about 50% more fossil fuels by 2030 than would be consistent with a 2°C global warming pathway and 120% more than would be consistent with a 1.5°C pathway.

- **Exploitation of the World's Resources**: Today, humans extract more from the earth and produce more waste than ever before. Globally, approximately 60 billion tons of renewable and non-renewable resources are extracted from the earth every year – nearly double what it had been in 1980.

- **Pollution and Waste**: Each year three to four hundred million tons of waste materials from industrial facilities are dumped into the world's rivers and oceans. Marine plastic pollution has increased tenfold since 1980. In 2014 it was estimated that more than 250,000 tons of micro-plastic particles were floating in five major plastic "garbage patches" that covered 40% of the world's oceans. Illness and mortality from air pollution also occur, caused by people inhaling or ingesting very small particles of toxic matter, coming either directly from fuel combustion or formed indirectly from atmospheric gases. Mining operations may also lead to harmful pollution in the air, soil, plants and water, leaving people exposed to long-lasting injurious effects. Following almost a century of lead and zinc mining, Kabwe has won for itself the unenviable reputation of being the most toxic city in the world.

- **Deforestation**: Tropical forests, the lungs of Mother Earth, continue to dwindle. The global forest area today is only about two-thirds of its estimated pre-industrial level.

- **Water Security**: The deplorable bottom-line figure is that today, well into the 21st century, 40% of the world's population still lacks access to clean and safe drinking water, while it is estimated that by 2030 demand for freshwater will exceed supply by 40%. But while there is not enough water in many places, the world is also facing the growing challenge that the warming global climate is leading to too much water in others, with 112 million people being affected by floods in the decade 2005-2015.

- **Land-Use Change**: Land-use change is driven primarily by agriculture, forestry and urbanization, all of which are associated with air, water and soil pollution. Agricultural expansion, alongside a doubling of the urban area since 1992 and an unprecedented expansion of infrastructure linked to growing population and consumption, has come mostly at the expense of forests (for the greater part, long-established tropical forests), wetlands and grasslands.

- **Infrastructure:** The development of roads, cities, hydroelectric dams, and oil and gas pipelines has come with high environmental and social costs, including deforestation, biodiversity loss, and social disruption.

- **Ocean Degradation**: Human activities have had a large and widespread negative impact on the world's oceans. Alarmingly, these are running out of oxygen at an unprecedented rate. In addition, coral reefs, being particularly vulnerable to global warming, are projected to decline to between 10 and 30% of their former cover at 1.5°C warming and to less than 1% at 2°C warming.

- **Rising Sea-Levels**: Over the past two decades, the global average sea-level, which has risen by 16 to 21 cm since 1900, continued to rise at a rate of more than 3 mm per year. This rise in sea-levels puts between 100 and 300 million people at increased risk of floods, hurricanes and the loss of coastal habitats and protection.

- **Sea-Fishing**: In 2015, 33% of sea-fish stocks were being harvested at unsustainable levels; 60% were being fished at their maximum sustainable levels, while only 7% were being harvested at levels lower than can be sustainably fished.

- **Pollinator Loss**: Up to US$577 billion in annual global crops are at risk from the loss of pollinators that are disappearing through the extinction of various species of insects and small animals.

Impacts on the Poor and Vulnerable

The areas of the world projected to experience significant negative effects from global changes in climate and declines in biodiversity, ecosystem functions and nature's contributions to people are also areas in which many of the world's poorest communities reside. "Damage done to the earth is also damage done to the most vulnerable, such as indigenous peoples, peasants forced to emigrate, and the inhabitants of urban peripheries. The environmental destruction being caused by the dominant economic system is also inflicting intergenerational damage: not only does it affect those now living on earth, particularly the very young, but it also conditions and jeopardizes the life of future generations".[1] Today we have come to realise that a true ecological approach must always become a social approach so that we "hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*" (LS §49; emphasis in the original). "Climate change will have devastating consequences for people in poverty. Even under the best-case scenario, hundreds of millions will face food insecurity, forced migration, disease, and death. Climate change threatens the future of human rights and risks undoing the last fifty years of progress in development, global health, and poverty reduction".

Public Policies

Around the globe, subsidies with harmful effects on nature have persisted. In 2015, OECD countries provided an estimated $100 billion in financial support to agriculture that was potentially harmful to the environment. In 2017, countries subsidized the fossil fuel industry by $5.2 trillion, or 6.5% of global GDP. Unfortunately, the Madrid Summit on climate change that ended in December 2019 brought fresh doubts about the world's collective resolve to slow the warming of the earth and put a halt to the harmful climate changes that this brings. This failure in political commitment means that the danger remains that global temperatures could rise by at least 3°C before the end of this century, something that would be a recipe for global disaster.

[1] *Universal Apostolic Preferences*. Letter of Father Arturo Sosa, Superior-General, to the Society of Jesus, 6th February 2019.

Achieving Environmental Sustainability

Laudato Si' speaks forthrightly about what we must do to "escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us": the environmental degradation we are experiencing challenges each one of us to examine our lifestyle (LS, §206). We must promote ways of conserving energy, modifying consumption, developing an economy of waste disposal and recycling, protecting certain species, and planning for diversified agriculture and the rotation of crops (LS, §180). Above all we must modify or reduce consumption; compulsive consumerism is one of the principal factors that has brought planet Earth to its present degraded state.

This is also echoed by the IPBES report which speaks of the importance of lowering total consumption and waste and the need to promote "visions of a good quality of life that do not entail ever-increasing material consumption". The IPBES report and the Pope's encyclical also speak of the need for an education that would encourage people to adopt new habits which would help them to establish harmony with nature and with other living creatures. "Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices" (LS, §211).

Laudato Si' and the IPBES report are fully in agreement that the time has come to draw the line and to institute a major 'transformative change' – a fundamental, system-wide reorganisation of the technological, economic, political and social features that govern the world today, including its ideals, goals and values. While massive global efforts must extend to the provision of food, water, energy, health and the achievement of human well-being for all, they must do so in ways that will conserve and use nature sustainably. Unless the world adopts sweeping alterations in its technological, economic, political and social features, the projected impacts of increasing land-use change, deforestation, ocean degradation, exploitation of organisms and climate change will ensure that the condition of our common home will continue to deteriorate throughout the years ahead.

It is only through urgent and concerted efforts, fostering radical, transformative change, that nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably. Arresting the dangerous decline in nature, hearing the cry of Mother Earth who cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her (LS, §2), demands radical global, national, local and personal action. This basic awareness of our mutual interdependency and belonging and of a future to be shared with everyone impels us to set out at once on the long path of renewal as we seek new convictions, attitudes and ways of living. "Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change" (LS, §202).

Michael J. Kelly, S.J.
Jesuit Residence
Lusaka

....

"We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental."
- Pope Francis

....

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Introduction

Climate change has become a global climate crisis that is defining moral issues of the 21st century. The environmental and health consequences of climate change, which disproportionately affect low-income countries and poor people in high-income countries, have profound effects on human rights and social justice. Climate change consequences threaten rights that are embodied in the Universal declaration of Human Rights such as the right to security, standard of living adequate for health and well-being, right to food, housing, medical care and social services. Climate change effects are equally threatening civil and political rights, such as "the inherent right to life" and rights related to culture, religion, and language, as embodied in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In the past few years scientists have noted that climate (weather patterns) has been gradually changing.

On a global level, the temperature of the earth has been rising. The earth has become warmer hence the term global warming. Conversely, oceans have also become warmer, disturbing the species within the oceans and causing tropical storms as the air above them becomes warmer. The ocean levels have been rising causing floods and in some cases islands have been submerged. Water levels are rising for two apparent reasons; expansion as the temperature goes up and melting of ice which has been adding up to the volume of water in the ocean. Ice glaciers have been melting, further increasing the water levels in the oceans. Rainfall patterns in many areas have changed, which has made it difficult for many crops to grow. In many countries, Zambia inclusive, agriculture has become a game of chance. It is not easy for farmers, today, to know if they will get a harvest or not due to the unpredictability of the rains.

Effects of Climate Change

Adverse health consequences caused by climate change have been experienced that include; heat-related disorders, vector-borne diseases, waterborne and foodborne diseases, respiratory and allergic disorders, malnutrition, violence, and mental health problems. Policy analysis have asserted that human-rights considerations should guide the development, implementation, and monitoring of policies, institutions, and mechanisms related to climate. It is no doubt that adverse environmental effects caused by climate change have been seen in increase temperatures, increased frequency of heat waves, heavy precipitation events, intensity of droughts, intense tropical cyclone activity. Zambia being part of the global village has also been affected by climate change.

For instance, weather records indicate that Zambia's annual temperature has increased by 1.3^{o}C between 1960 and 2010 and this figure is expected to rise by 3.4^{o}C by 2040. These statistics entail a decrease in rainfall, lower water levels in rivers like Zambezi and Kafue and lakes like Kariba, Bangweulu. Lower water levels means that there would be reduced irrigation activities and lower electricity power generation. This however has been experienced in 2019 where load shedding hours have been at an average of 20 hours per day. With such load shedding, productivity reduces which entails lower economic activities and ultimately lower household incomes. The above statistics of increased temperature also mean that there is an expected extinction of flora and fauna, and microorganisms, especially those that live in the ground. Additionally, farmers in the eastern, western and southern parts of the country, which are the major contributors of Zambia's food basket have noted shortened rain seasons and growing seasons and the trend is constantly increasing.

If this situation goes beyond a certain threshold, most crops including maize will be failing to mature. Long periods of dry spells within rainy seasons have also been experienced resulting in stunting of crops and in some cases like in the 2018 and 2019 farming season, crops wilted in the field. Coupled with the long periods of droughts within a rainy season, there is seen heavy downpours after the drought, causing floods. For example, during the 2017 and 2018 farming season, Zambia experienced floods. However, such rainfall is of little use to farmers as the damage to crops (stunting or drying) would have already happened and most of this water just runs off into rivers without sinking to the ground and contributing to the underground water systems.

Causes of Climate Change

Scientists all over the world have reached an overwhelming consensus that climate change is real and caused primarily by human activity. Human action and the way we are managing the environment is the major cause of climate change. We are polluting the air, rivers, lakes and oceans. We are cutting down trees indiscriminately and we are disturbing both land and marine life. In some cases we are even interfering with wetlands and river systems.
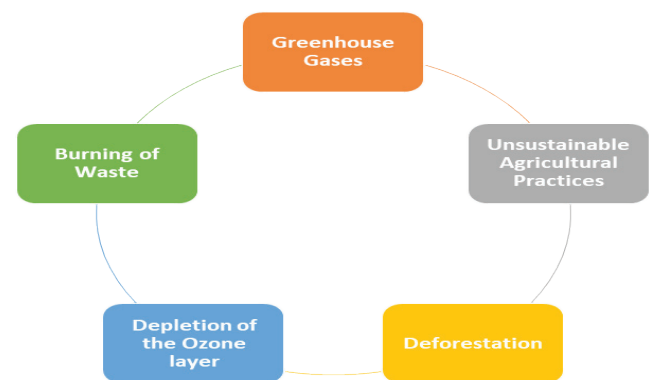
Disparities in the Impact of Climate Change on People and the Environment

There are large inequalities among countries in both the amounts of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and the magnitude and severity of adverse health consequences experienced as a result of climate change. In general, countries like Zambia that contribute the least to GHG emissions currently experience, and will likely continue to experience, the most adverse health consequences as a result of climate change. These Disparities have the economic implications on poor countries. For countries like Zambia, they are likely to suffer a greater adverse effect than rich countries from climate change due to the exposure to high temperatures.

Furthermore, poor countries' economies rely heavily on agriculture and mineral resource extraction. For things like air conditioning, insurance and risk management approaches, these are either not available or affordable. Adverse health effects caused by climate change will likely be heavily concentrated in low-income populations at low latitudes, places where important climate-sensitive health outcomes such as malnutrition, diarrhoea, and malaria are highly prevalent and where vulnerability to these outcomes is greatest. Other geographic risk factors include residing in areas with epidemic diseases associated with climate patterns, such as cholera and other water borne diseases. More importantly for poor and low-income households, they are likely to experience decreased access to safe water or food as a result of drought or other consequences of climate change.

The adverse human-rights consequences of climate change are likely to have the greatest impact on populations already suffering from human rights violations, such as residents of low-income countries and residents of low-income communities in high-income countries. Other groups likely to be affected are minority groups, unemployed people, individuals with chronic diseases and disabilities, and people living in unsafe or marginal environments. For women, there are many ways in which climate change disproportionately affect them. In low-income countries like Zambia, women generally assume primary responsibility for gathering water, food, and fuel for their households.

Climate Change to have Impact on Basic Needs

Climate change is likely to affect availability of food, water and fuel for household survival. Climate change adversely affects children in many ways with the World Health Organization (WHO) report indicating that 88% of the disease burden being attributed to climate change and affects children younger than 5 years of age. Shortages of water and food leads to increased occurrence of childhood malnutrition and make it less likely that children will receive adequate education.

There are also environmental and health consequences affecting vulnerable populations such as extreme weather events. It is a known fact that climate change has increased and is likely to produce more extreme weather events, such as cyclones or hurricanes, droughts and has increased precipitation and flooding in some areas. In addition, climate change in other areas like Zambia is increasing the number, intensity, and duration of droughts. Climate change and related environmental conditions, such as droughts and floods, are likely to adversely affect the ability to grow sufficient amount of food for rapidly increasing populations. As a result, food and nutrition security will likely worsen, especially for poor people living in low-income countries.

Addressing Climate Change while Protecting Human Rights

Mitigation of climate change is necessary to attain health-protective solutions that will last. Mitigation measures can be developed and implemented in a manner to both decrease GHG emissions and improve human health. Adaptation measures should also be designed and implemented to decrease the impact of climate change on public health and social systems.

Adaptation measures put in place should not create risks for other groups. There is also need for a change of mind-set towards caring for the earth. Pope Francis, in his encyclical letter called the Laudato-si urges people of God 'to become wise stewards of God's creation.' Change of mind-set entails avoiding the throwaway culture and a culture of consumerism which causes people to accumulate excess things which end up as rubbish and is thrown away.

Most of the harmful actions to the environment are done as a result of the ignorance of the damage being caused to the environment, especially when people cannot see how they are directly affected. This means that a lot of awareness on climate change, environmental degradation needs to be intensified. Additionally, legislation on managing the environment should be enacted and effectively implemented. People need to be made aware of their actions and the long term effects of their actions on the earth and it inhabitants. People

need to be aware of pieces of legislation that guide environmental management for them to know what is permitted and help them adopt practices aimed at sustainable management of the environment.

Trees and other vegetation play a big role in protecting our environment. Trees are an integral part of the ecosystem providing benefits to wildlife and biodiversity. Therefore, there is need to plant trees and vegetation. Trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. They reduce pollution by actively removing it from the atmosphere. The pores on the leaves known as stomata take in polluting gases which are then absorbed by water inside the leaves. They also improve air quality by acting as natural air filters removing dust, smoke and fumes from the atmosphere by trapping them on their leaves, branches and trunks. Developing and Implementing Policies aimed at Enhancing Environmental Management should be a top priority of every government.

As Pope Francis says "*there is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy*".

Besides urging governments to develop policies, it is the duty of every citizen to participate in the policy formulation process as well as monitoring the implementation of legislation and policies aimed at enhancing environmental management.

Conclusion

Climate change is no longer an environmental issue due to its many consequences that are social, economic, cultural and humanitarian. Even though the impact of climate change are felt by all, the most affected are the poor people who have little and often no access to resources. Those with

no access to resources have no means to mitigate and adapt to climate changes. Impacts of climate change include loss of lives, property, homes, rising costs of health care, decreased income that usually accompanies climate change-induced instability and disasters. Unfortunately, climate change consequences cut across age, gender, race, socio-economic class. However, women and children are likely to be the most affected by climate change effects. Addressing climate change is a health and human rights priority, and action cannot be delayed. Mitigation and adaptation measures must be equitable, and protect and promote human rights.

Dominica Kabale
Development Activist
Kabwe

....

"Pollution and climate change are closely related to the throwaway culture and hence the need for a change in mind-set towards reducing things to rubbish and preserving resources for present and future generations, as well as limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources."

Pope Francis.

....

THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING BILL (N.A.B NO.22 of 2019) - THE JCTR PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection, JCTR, has lobbied for the enactment of the Planning and Budgeting legislation for years. The process to enact this legislation has however dragged on. This state of affairs has not been consistent with Budget Statements/ Addresses (for example 2016, 2017 and 2018) that committed to table a Planning and Budgeting Bill before Parliament soonest. Fortunate though, Government in late 2019 brought before Parliament a proposed National Planning and Budgeting Bill.

The National Planning and Budgeting Bill of 2019 is a proposed piece of legislation which is meant to provide for an integrated national planning and budgeting process. The piece of legislation aims to strengthen accountability, oversight and participation mechanisms in the national planning and budgeting process. It lays down principles and modalities for formulation, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of long and medium term national, provincial and district development plans and budgets; coordination of National Development Plans with the National Planning Framework; a participatory and decentralised national planning and budgeting process which promotes the participation of state and non-state actors in the planning and budgeting process; evidence based decision making in national planning and budgeting; enhanced budget credibility; and matters connected with, or incidental to, the foregoing. (Parliament; National Planning & Budgeting).

Driven by the desire for a just Zambian society guided by faith, where everyone enjoys the fullness of life, JCTR has taken time to review the proposed bill. This article therefore will provide an analysis of the proposed Bill by highlighting notable positives and negatives.

Why National Planning Legislation is Vital for Zambia

Zambia is currently engulfed with many social and economic challenges. They include, high poverty and youth unemployment levels. National poverty stands at 54.4 percent whilst specifically rural poverty is estimated at 76.6 percent (CSO 2016). Youth unemployment stands at 17.6 percent (Labour Force Survey 2017). And sadly, the cost of living has in the past few years been on an upward trend. For example, the cost of living for Lusaka as measured by the JCTR Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket reflects an increase in the cost of essential basic foods and non – foods item from **K5, 395 in January 2019** to **K7, 060 in June 2020.** With incomes largely remaining stagnant and unemployment remaining high, the increased cost of living has posed a great challenge to most households in affording the cost of living.

Zambia's external debt stock stands at US$11.2 Billion. With repayments largely driven by foreign exchange rates, external debt remains stressful on Zambia's small economy (GDP of less than US$30 billion). Currently, the country is struggling to keep the economy growing and reduce poverty. As at June 2020, inflation stood at 15.7%. Indicatively, there is great need to harmonize national plans and budgets if Zambia is to witness an upward growth trajectory in light of Vision 2030 "attaining prosperous middle income status" and the nearing end of the 7th National Development Plan.

One area that would consolidate government response to the many social and economic challenges is having in place adequate and appropriate pieces of legislation. Annually, Government formulates national budgets that are a central policy document showing how objectives will be prioritized and achieved through resource allocation. History has however, shown that Zambia lacks adequate, comprehensive and coherent guidelines to anchor national planning that is firmly linked to the budget process. As a consequence, some development programmes and projects have not reflected elaborate appraisals and have shown slippages in the outputs and outcomes with minimal impacts for beneficiaries such as the vulnerable and poor.

Positive Provisions in the Bill

One of the outcries for citizens over the years has been that there has been no formal structures for participation in the national budget process especially at the local level. Hence, very few citizens have participated in the process over the years. This has made it difficult to capture citizens' aspirations and needs in national budgets and to attain people-centred development. However, comforting now is the fact

that the bill includes legal provisions that will increase citizens' participation at various levels.

In Part I Clause 3 (1) through to (1) k, the Bill promotes and provides for a platform to be put in place for citizens to actively participate in the budget process. The Bill also formalises the Provincial Development Coordinating Committees (PDCC) and the District Development Coordinating Committees (DDCC) in **Part II Clause 7 (2) and Clause 10 (2)** and stipulates other relevant participants in these structures. The inclusion of the Civil Society and Private Sector in the PDCC and DDCC is highly commendable, as it will increase coming together of experts from both State and non-State segment of our society. Further formalising the DDCC will be part of actualising implementation of decentralisation. The provision for the National Development Coordinating Committee (NDCC) under **Part II Clause 4 (2) g** as a national level structure is also welcome and provides for inclusivity as it will incorporate participation from the Civil Society, Faith Based Organisations, the Parastatal and the Private sector.

The Bill further sets timeline for dissemination of the national, provincial and district development plans to the general public in **Part II Clause 11 (d).** Within the district, not later than three months after the coming into effect of the National Development Plan. This is realistic and supports citizens' participation.

There has been reservations over time as to what extent citizens' submissions are considered. **Part III Clause 22 (3) b of the Bill** requires the Minister of Finance to take into account the submissions of stakeholders "the Minister shall take into account the submissions of stakeholders" and call for a stakeholder meeting to validate the submissions made. The proposed piece of legislation further proposes for national plans to be approved by the National Assembly under **Part III Clauses 23 (1) and 23(2).** This will facilitate creating a linkage with annual budgets and activities from which they are supposed to be drawn and ensuring accountability in commitment to implement the national plans and vision. Further, it will be befitting that plans, programmes and projects of national character are binding to successive Governments.

This will ensure continuity, sustainability and effective implementation of plans. The Office of Permanent Secretaries and various heads of lead Ministries whose appointments are not of a political nature can effectively continue to carry out their mandate even when changes have occurred with ruling and successive governments. This will be a cost saving venture that will uphold national interest above political affiliations. Project's success is enhanced when a clear and satisfactory framework for monitoring and evaluation is implemented projects is provided. **Part III Clause 29** for the development and implementation of various monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the bill. This will be good for accountability on the part of government and respective Ministries. For instance under Clause 29 (1), it states that "The Minister, in consultation with the Minister responsible for finance and the Secretary to the Treasury shall, on or before the last Friday of May of each year, table before the National Assembly the annual review of the National Development Plan". This will among responsible personnel compel those tasked with the responsibility to track progress annually to assess, re-evaluate and adjust programmes if need be with regards to activity implementation.

Negative Provisions in the Bill

It would be more judicious for the Town Clerk or the Council Secretary to head the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC) if the platform was to be non-partisan. Town Clerks or Council Secretaries (head of Local Authorities) would alternatively be more likely impartial and inclusive in discharging their duties. Unfortunately, **Part II Clause 10 (2)** maintains District Commissioners as Chairpersons who are viewed to incline towards partisan lines in delivering their duties.

Part II Clause 13 (1) provides for Cluster Advisory Groups (CAGS) to be legalised. However, the use of "May" in the provision of Cluster Advisory Groups expresses possibility and does not guarantee that CAGs shall be operational in all financial years. The CAGS are meant to facilitate participation of non-state actors in the national planning and budgeting processes. It would have been also useful for the proposed legislation to clearly state when within a financial year the advisory groups would convene and deliberate as the budget cycle itself already has set timelines within which various activities take place. Unfortunately, that aspect is missing and might weaken effectiveness of the CAGS.

One other major bottleneck is that the proposed piece of legislation is not entirely clear at which levels of society ordinary citizens would easily participate in the budget process. Only provincial and district level structures have been provided for. It would be more appropriate to include a platform closer to the communities if majority ordinary citizens can be

guaranteed participation. The structures at chiefdoms or village levels as provided for in the Republican Constitution in Article 205 Part d). Solidifying fiscal consolidation measures through the Planning and budgeting Bill would go a long way in minimising unnecessary expenditure: One of the highlights was to strengthen oversight where public resources are concerned. The role of Parliament offering constructive criticism enhances transparency and accountability in the planning and budgeting process.

Conclusion

Enhancing citizens' participation in the planning, budgeting and implementation of national budgets would foster ownership of development programmes by citizens and will likely lead to people centred development being realised at both community and national levels. The need for a progressive Planning and Budgeting Act is therefore significant. However, generally the amendments being proposed are progressive. And if even comments and observations that various stakeholders have made on the proposed legislation are considered and incorporated, Zambia stands to adequately respond to the many social and economic challenges including high public debt, unemployment and high poverty levels. The Zambian government must further ensure stronger frameworks are provided for in the management of public funds for meaningful impact on developmental programmes to be realised.

Recommendations

The parliamentary oversight function remains one of the cornerstones of development and must be fostered to ensure accountability and transparency. Therefore, enhanced parliamentary oversight by the Zambian Parliament needs to be considered in line with the National Planning and Budgeting policy that was developed in 2014.

1. Representation of members that are stipulated to form the National Development Coordinating Committee provided for in Part II section 4 (2) g should be enhanced further by inclusion of at least two representatives from all the listed stakeholders (i) Civil Society; (ii) a Faith Based Organisation; (iii) a Parastatal; and (iv) the private sector.

2. There is a need for the Zambian government to consider including in the proposed piece of legislation a provision for a legal platform/structure to be established that would be closer in communities to enhance citizens' participation in the budget process. The National Planning and Budgeting act remains key for the operationalization

of the Constitutional Provisions relating to Citizens' participation in national planning.

3. Further, there is need to legally guarantee establishment and existence of Cluster Advisory Groups (CAGs) by using the word "Shall" in Part II section 13 (1) as opposed to "may" which only express possibility.

4. There is a need to state clearly in the proposed bill when within a financial year the CAGs will convene. That way, responsible parties remain obligated to the stipulated time frames to ensure meaningful contributions by all stakeholders.

References:

CSO (2016). 2015: Living Conditions Monitoring Survey. Lusaka. Zambia

CSO (2018). 2017: Zambia Labour Force Survey. Lusaka. Zambia

JCTR Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket

Lusaka Times: *"Zambia's external debt increases to US$11.2 billion."* February 12, 2020. https://www.lusakatimes.com/2020/02/12/263055/

MoF (2019). 2020 Budget Address

National Planning and Budgeting Policy 2014

The National Planning and Budgeting Bill 2019

Understanding the Impact of Zambia's Growing Debt on Different Stakeholders

Bernard Mwaba
JCTR Media and Information Intern
Lusaka

....

"The Minister, in consultation with the Minister responsible for finance and the Secretary to the Treasury shall, on or before the last Friday of May of each year, table before the National Assembly the annual review of the National Development Plan".

....

COMMENTARY ON THE ARTICLE "MINING FOR ZAMBIA"

Introduction

In the third quarter 2019 JCTR Bulletin NO.117, there is an enlightening article by Alice Mapulanga and Micomyiza Dieudonnè titled "mining for Zambia." The article is insightful and enlightening on the Zambian mining industry. It brings out the tension between a country endowed with natural resources and the high levels of poverty in it. This is an irony of "Poor citizens, rich country." Mining in the geographical space now called Zambia has been going on from around 1908. Hence, Zambia is only around a century old in commercial mining as a geographical space and past golden jubilee of commercial mining under the Republic of Zambia.

The thesis of the article if well captured would succinctly be *"the mining industry project in Zambia, measured through the living standards, environmental protection, inclusion of children and women, sustainable development, promotion of economic link between sectors and economic development is a failed project. However, there is hope if Zambians together with its government can rethink about the role and model of mining sector in Zambia`s economy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".* The article highlights several dimensions of the achievements, failures and hopes of the mining sector, technically termed as an "extractive sector." I re-echo Fr. Terry Mutesha`s question, "natural resources - a curse or a blessing?" (JCTR Bulletin no.89, 3rd Quarter, 2011, pg 11-13).

Achievements of the Extractive Sector

The mining sector is helping the Zambian economy. The industry contributes substantially to the economy of Zambia, to the extent that the country`s economy depends largely on the mining industry (Alice Mapulanga, Micomyiza Dieudonnè 11). The dependency aspect can be debated; however, it is an achievement to see that a sector contributes to the economy of a country. The availability of natural resources in Zambia has attracted global attention. This has brought in investors, and these investors have brought technological and infrastructural advancements in the country. In this regard, such activities put Zambia on the global pedestal in terms of economic gains. The extractive sector has brought in some notion of development, though anchored

on industrialization. Nonetheless, presumably Zambian citizens through employment have humanly as well as socially developed themselves. Hence, it is an achievement noting that the extractive sector contributes to the cause of developments.

Failures of Extractive Sector

The article brings out concerns on the failures of the extractive sector in Zambia. The following are the explicitly lined failures or challenges in the face of mining in Zambia:

1. None locally defined social, environmental and economic goals over the long term; as the mining project continues, it leaves much to be desired for Zambia does not locally define the social, environmental and economic goals. This raises the question "what does Zambia want to do with its mining sector?" If the country wants to use the mining sector in improving the livelihoods of its citizens, then, it ought to locally define the role of mining in the social setup, the effects and response to environmental challenges and finally address whose economy it will develop and sustain.

2. The failure to include women, youths and children in the mining strategies; The article points out that the extractive sector has failed to include women, youths and children in the discourse on mining strategies (11). Implied is the question "can the mining industry in Zambia, and largely Africa, facilitate the economic emancipation of women, children and youths?" Perhaps, the economic emancipation of women, children and youths has failed or unconsidered projected to the extractive sector. Maybe that is why it is the case in many mining towns that someone over 30 years of age is still dependent on the parents` income and other facilities like health who work for the mines.

3. The contradiction between extractive sector and SDGs; the article rightly puts before us that the extractive sector challenges the goals the country desires to achieve. For instance, the sector challenges the efforts on protecting the environment based on the amount of pollution (check in Mufulira, Kankoyo), population and animal displacement, social inequality, tax evasion. Hence, the authors ask the Zambian community to rethink about the contradiction between extractive sector and the SDGs. If the extractive sector is not acting as a blessing in responding to poverty alleviation, but rather, increases corruption, environmental degradation, violence etc., is the blessing becoming a curse?

4. The presumed benefits of indigenous Zambians from the extractive sector; since the introduction of privatized mining companies, have the poverty levels reduced or they continue rising? What would one use as indicators showing the poverty alleviation or growth? The easiest indicator is the level of social pathologies like prostitution, crime rate, murder cases, theft, literacy, education levels etc. These pathologies grow or reduce based on the poverty levels. Hence, analysing the current situations, it suffices that the indigenous Zambian, especially those located in mining areas are not benefiting either socially, environmentally or economically. On the other hand, there is growth in white collar and organised crime around mining, where cartels steal minerals from either plants or from trucks in transit.

Recommendations to the Zambian Government

The authors recommend that the government should address the need for structural transformation of the Zambian economy by including women, youths and children in the agenda, without falling into the trap of sexism, cheap and child labour (11). Secondly, the authors recommend that the government transforms the extractive sector by taking cognizant that "natural resources are finite in nature", hence the need to evaluate mining policies. Thirdly, the authors recommend that the government creates stable tax regimes surrounding the extractive sector. Further on tax regime, the authors recommend that policy makers take note of situations, opportunities, contexts and nature as applicable to circumstance and not just umbrella tax decisions (12). Fourthly, the authors ask for the Zambian community to create a model of "responsible mining" which takes note of sustainable human development and care for our common home. Finally, the authors question the over dependency of the Zambian economy on the extractive sector; the authors implicitly recommend that Zambia (leaders and Citizens) should start thinking of wider economic model, such that other sectors can play a critical role in the economic development (e.g. agriculture, tourism etc).

The Myth of the Given

To address the question of availability of natural resources in a geographical space and in relation to poverty levels, one ought to get to the root causes and key/fundamental issues. Perhaps, in order to use the notion of poverty alleviation through availability of natural resources, it is critical to ask "is Zambia a producer of copper or Zambia as a geographical space is gifted with copper ores but not the country?" I raise this question because there is a myth that Zambia is a producer of copper and other minerals. My starting point is first to demystify that Zambia is a producer of copper and other minerals, further include it on world`s producers of copper.

Zambia is not a producer of copper. To be a producer is a technical term in a capitalistic and commercial society. In capitalism, one is a producer if they combine the knowledge, capital, natural resources and labour. Therefore, a producer owns the means of production. In the case of Zambia, the country does not have a mine with 100% ownership, the labour is not Zambian because investors buy labour (knowledge and skills) from Zambians. Note should be taken, in a capitalistic society, I can buy one`s knowledge or skill as a labour in my means of production. That is why it is not important to the employee about emotional struggles, but it matters most if I am not able to deliver according to the cost of my knowledge or skill.

Response to Poverty Alleviation

Perhaps the question is, how can as a Country, through the extractive sector, be able to respond to the question of poverty alleviation? Analysing the situation and the failures raised in the article, it demands that Zambians, both leaders and citizens, take an active role. One thing is established, the current model of the extractive sector is a failed project because Zambians have not taken the centre stage. Zambia needs a strategic position in owning the means of production. Hence, to what extent is Zambia itself willing to invest in the mining project, such that it will make profit and also compete in the global commercial society? My recommendation is that Zambia should start re-thinking of the capital to invest in mining and begin projecting profits, policies etc. The capital should include the financial, human and technological resources. If Zambia is just thinking and planning to milk money out of the project than invest in it, then it will be a double jeopardy curse. Secondly, Zambia needs to start training its indigenous people in running mines, that is, at technical and administrative levels. Finally, Zambia should go beyond the notion of being a copper producer to value addition to the produced copper. In a capitalistic society, raw materials have less value. Zambia needs a strategic plan of how to grow from a mere extractive sector to multiple industries producing various copper dependent end products like gargets, electrical and mechanical goods, electronic components and further exchange market policies.

Conclusion

The authors set the conversation on Zambia`s extractive sector in the context of poverty alleviation. In my commentary on the article "mining for Zambia," I amplify the thesis by adding that Zambia needs active leadership and citizenry by owning the means of production and further developing economic industries that specialize in value addition. Hence, I do not agree that Zambia is a producer of copper, because Zambia does not own any mine 100% ownership, but only geographically gifted with natural resources. This is a pseudo notion from which Zambians should be liberated if they are to put the extractive sector at the proper disposal of the nation and alleviate poverty. The ZCCM-IH as a shareholder is on the minority side. Hence, to enter into an economic and commercial discourse in a capitalistic global society, Zambia needs to be a producer in a capitalistic and economic sense and not just a mere consumer under the pseudo notion of a producer.

References:

Alice Mapulanga, Micomyiza Dieudonnè. "Mining for Zambia." JCTR Bulletin No. 117 Third Quarter 2019: 11-12.
Mutesha, Fr Terry. "Natural Resources- a Curse or a Blessing?" JCTR Bulletin no.89 Third Quarter 2011: 11-13.

John Kunda Sauti
JCTR Programme Officer
Lusaka

COVID-19 AND THE FORCED JOURNEY OF INTERNAL MIGRANTS IN INDIA: A PHOTOCOPY OF THE BIBLICAL EXODUS
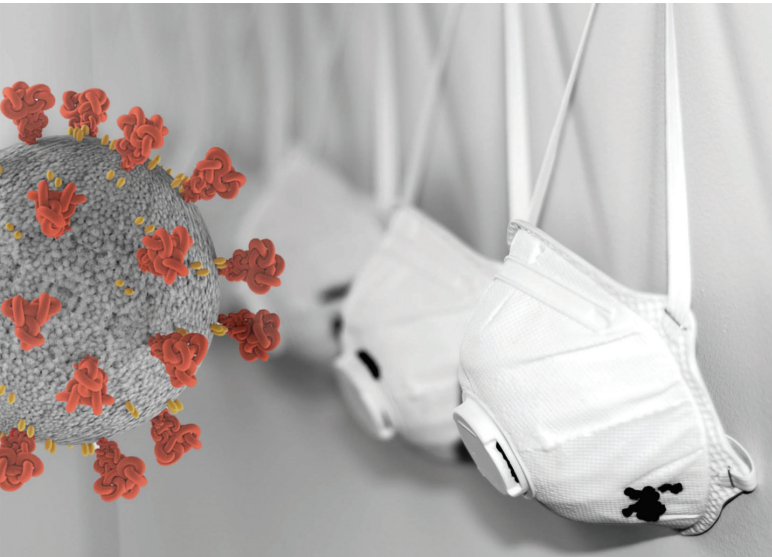
Introduction

Migration is nothing new to human experience, and this migration takes place at different levels- internal migration and international migration. And in the context of India, internal migration is imbedded in the Indian culture historically, as people move from place to place to conduct their lives, more specifically, when a natural calamity; droughts, floods, cyclones and earthquakes hit one part of the country, for instance Karnataka- a state in the Southern part India people migrate to the other sate like Maharashtra in the Northern India and sustain their life. In an African context, a Kenyan from Kakamega county moving to Nairobi County to find a job that would lay a foundation to improve his/her living standard. Therefore, the ultimate motive of the migration either internal or international is to find a place of opportunities, and to improve one's livelihood.

Understanding the Shift of Internal Migration

India with its population of 1.3 billion people and the majority being youth, the general trend of internal migration reflects that migrants are mostly young people, indicating the role of demographic dividend in accelerating the patterns of migration in India (*Handbook of Internal Migration, p3*). In the first place, migration is defined as a form of mobility in which people change their residential location across defined administrative boundaries for a variety of reasons, which may be involuntary or voluntary,

or a mixture of both (*National Workshop p2*). And today, the notion of internal migration drastically changed with the interest of the nation- to develop smart and boost its economic status, and with this focus the trajectory of the internal migration had a shift of the migrant's flow to cities - Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, and Kolkata People to find a living and earning viability to promote the nation interest to develop the same cities to boost the economy and improved urbanization to attract international investors. Thereby, internal migration today is often associated with the urbanisation, modernisation and industrialisation debate in India (*HB IM p3*). The forms of the urbanisation, modernisation, and industrialisation demanded a huge infrastructure to begin with, and unfortunately, failure of the income opportunities in the rural sector had to bow down before the work opportunity in the urban zones. Hence, there is a complete shift over the years, about how to understand the internal migration in India.

Covid-19 and Internal Migrants' Crisis

With the announcement of the first Covid-19 case in India on 30th of January 2020 involving a student, who had travelled from Wuhan - China to Kerala - India and the rampant increase of the cases in the course of time, the Indian government locked down the nation on 25th March 2020, with barely four hours' notice to the 1.3 billion population. And, it might surprise any of its citizens as India had 37% of its citizens across the nation as internal migrants 450.36 million (*Indian Express*), involved in the boosting of cities at various levels of building the urbanisation such as domestic helpers, truck drivers, gardeners, daily wage workers on construction sites, building malls, flyovers and homes, or as street vendors, etc. Which means, internal migrants do not have any agreement of work or security. To all of these migrants, the lock down came as a bolt from the blue leaving them jobless with the net result of no income. And the retrospective question of 450.36 million migrant workers; what should I do now to support my immediate family in the city of migration and the family back in the village? And the response was obvious, eventually the circumstances caused by the effects of Covid-19 lockdown gave birth to the forced journey back to the villages.

The Forced Journey: Photocopy of the Exodus Experience

Has someone really forced these internal migrants to

leave the cities and go back to their homes? The response is a definite no. In that case, who forced them to take such a difficult decision? The response is the result of number of painful stories. To begin with, we reflect the experience of Israelites, during the historical journey to the Promised Land. It is mentioned that these Israelites had a God -Yahweh who promised to them that he will be their God and they shall be his people, a leader - Moses who set out on foot with the 600,000 men (*Exodus 21:37*) and the crowd and indeed performed miracles at times of great difficulty- paving the way in the Red Sea to escape from the enemies, and the Promised Land- Canaan when at the end of the journey they were going to possess a land full of prosperity. However, this long journey of the Israelites remains as one of the greatest migrations historically. Therefore, though the journey was full of despair and of uncertainties, the Israelites in all observations were protected by the hand of God.

But the Covid-19 forced journey of the 450.36 million internal migrants in India, is the result of the helplessness, hopelessness, and feeling of refusal by the mega cities they were once building. Because, when the lockdown was announced, the Indian Government brought into force the entire shutdown of the nation, with the exception of the essential services. Like any country, the government and the citizens were not sure how long this would continue- hoping this would last a couple of weeks, but then it lasted from March 24th, 2020 to May 31st, 2020. But then by the time the partial lifting of the lockdown was announced, the numbers of Covid-19 cases increased.

Government Rescue of Migrants

Eventually, the migrants were stranded in their work places during this period. Now, since there have been no earnings, let alone supporting the family back in village, the basic needs of these migrants themselves were at stake; shelter, food, water, health care and clothing. Didn't the government come to rescue them? Yes, they did by announcing a package of $260 billion (*New York Times, May 12*) towards the corona virus rescue. But then, the package has a specific focus on land, labour, liquidity and laws. It will cater to various sections, including cottage industry, labourers, middle class, and industries.

To be plain, it actually covers the entire major economic boost of the nation. Hence, there is a meagre allotment of the funds towards the needs of these migrants' welfare. On the other hand, during the course of lockdown and keeping the cities disinfected they were treated in an inhumane manner (washed with the disinfection spirit like animals, treated like stray dogs- *National Geographic, May 5*). Then day by day life became pathetic in the cities, and these migrants could not see any hope in the cities, then decided to take up the journey to their native places, these places are as far as 32 kilometres to 1200 kilometres, and even more.

At this point, what these migrants absolutely desired was to reach home, union with their families, and even if it matters to suffer with hunger and poverty. But they were determined to escape from the feeling of rejection by these unfriendly cities. They were committed to run away from the inhuman treatment and the disrespect to which they were subjected by the rules and regulations put in place to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. On the contrary, they want to reclaim the original identity as in the Aadhar card (national identity card), the village, and not to these urban or city- citizenships.

Listening to Migrants' Voices

Sonu Yadav, a 25-ywear-old home painter in Delhi, who left for Uttar Pradesh on 22 April on a bicycle along with six others says "Won't lie about food; we haven't got a morsel since we left. We've been feeding ourselves on biscuits and water for four days now. It has rained today and now we are drenched and feeling cold." (*The Print, April 29*) Jyoti Kumari, a 15-year-old girl who cycled 1198 kilometres to reach home with her disabled father, says "I had no other option, we wouldn't have survived if I hadn't cycled to my village." (*The Guardian, May 24*)

Conclusion

From a responsible reading and reflection on these two journeys- Exodus from the Bible, and the internal migrants in India- one might clearly understand that in the case of the Exodus, they had with them a definite hope (God, Moses and Promised Land) but in the case of migrants they were left alone to make the journey and had no definite hope neither from the government nor anyone else on how to keep up their families on reaching back home. Hence, all of us (as a nation) need to seek genuine sorry from them. I feel not enough, we all so need to seek a collective forgiveness from each of those internal migrants who keep our mega cities growing day by day. The job security and formal agreements should be guaranteed by the government, and the violence against migrants strictly prohibited. And, my final words are, we should need to give a convincing promise to them not to repeat the mistake, but give us an opportunity to rectify the former.

References

S. Irudaya Rajan and Sumeetha M. Handbook of the Internal Migration in India. New Delhi: Sage, 2020.
Internal Migration in India Initiative: National Workshop on Internal Migration and Human Development in India, October 2012. Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, India.

Panithi Naresh, S.J.
Telangana - India
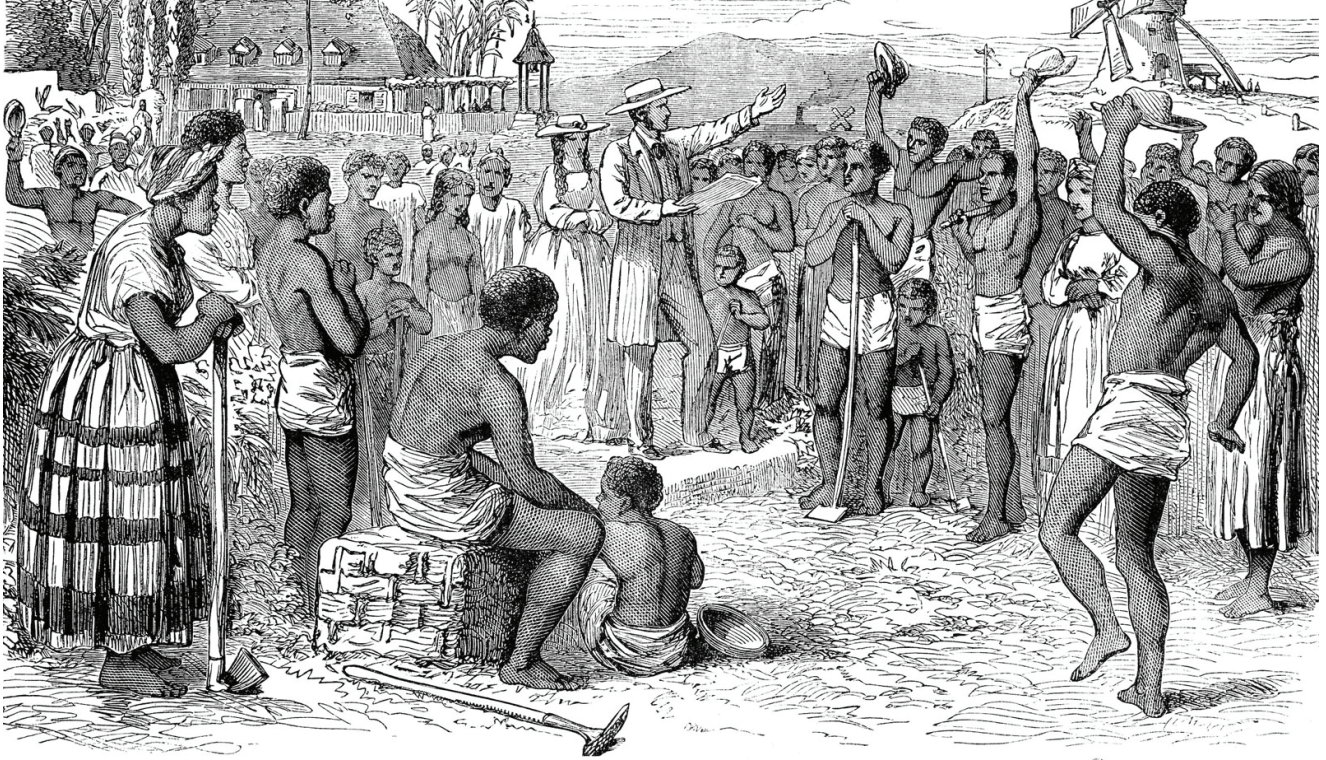
THE AGE-OLD SLAVERY OF WAR

Introduction

War, violent conflicts and bloodshed seem to be as old as the human race. Our history books seem to move just from one war to the next. One fire kindles another fire. At the end of World War I the victorious allied powers forced the defeated German Empire through the treaty of Versailles to make huge payments in compensation. This in turn caused World War II (1939 – 1945). One war triggers off another war. It is a vicious circle and a never-ending chain reaction. For most of history wars were taken for granted, they were just part of life and death, few nations or countries called the regular occurrence of wars into question. Wars were just the way power politics were conducted.

Pope Benedict XV was absolutely appalled by the slaughter of whole armies and populations in World War I (1914 – 18). He tried to intervene and stop the barbarism of this war on the battlefields of Belgium and France, but even mostly Catholic countries and bishops did not respond to his appeals for peace. Pope Pius XI "lamented that so much money was spent on increased armaments that should be spent on the poor" (Dorothy Day, House of Hospitality, p 268). Dorothy Day and Fr. Daniel Berrigan SJ became leading pacifists protesting against the war of the US against Vietnam, and went to prison for their courage. The American social activist and her women companions lobbied the Bishops assembled in Rome for Vatican Council II (1962 – 1965) to condemn war once and for all. "Gaudium et Spes" (Church in the Modern World) said, "Providence urgently demands of us that we free ourselves from the age-old slavery of war." The Council stated that "rather than eliminate the causes of war, the arms race serves only to aggravate the position." It is a "contagion [that] is spreading to other parts of the world" (Gaudium et Spes, n. 81, p. 870). "Pax Christi" tried to put an end to wars and make peace once and for all. The "Cold War" (1945 – 2089) prevented another international" hot" war by "mutual nuclear deterrence." The Union of European countries bound former enemies together to stop wars among themselves.

The Early Church and Military Service

The early Church had been aware that Jesus was "nonviolent." He had proclaimed, "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you." (Mt 5: 44) During the first centuries Christians refused to do military service in the Roman Imperial forces. Only when the Church was accepted by the Roman Empire in 312 (Emperor Constantine), did Christians begin to serve as soldiers.

St Augustine of Hippo (+ 430), a great theologian of the first millennium, declared that there could be a "just war" if it was for purely defensive purposes. Heresies (Arians, Donatists, etc.) split the Church, resulting in a host of sects and heterodox churches, no longer united with the Bishop of Rome (Pope). For the first time baptized Christians fought each other. Bishops, including the Bishop of Rome, became secular rulers, had armies and fought wars. When Islam conquered Christian countries and forced Christians to become Muslims, the Church made use of the military class of Knights to defend Christendom. Kings and Princes led huge armies to the land of Jesus. The crusades by Christian Knights and the massacres of Muslims in Jerusalem are very traumatic events in the history of the Near and Middle East. The memory of these wars is still a deep wound of resentment which Muslims cannot forget. Knights who had fought in the crusades against Muslim conquerors created a new form of religious order, e.g. the Knights of Malta, the Teutonic Knights, the Knights Templar, Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. They were "soldier monks" who regarded themselves as knights fighting for Christ (while caring for the sick in hospitals). Maybe they followed the people of Israel who fought many wars among themselves and with their neighbours (see "Hebrew Bible).

The New Testament did not condone armed violence and wars. Jesus was nonviolent, though one of the apostles was a "freedom fighter" (zealot called Simon, Lk 6: 15). Zealots were committed to the violent overthrow of the Roman rulers of Palestine. Jesus did not support "freedom fighters and their violent revolution" (which took place much later, in the years 66 – 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple razed to the ground). The Popes often called for crusades. A famous preacher calling knights to fight for the Holy Land was St Bernard of Clairvaux. Saint Pope Pius V, originally a Dominican friar, called Christian forces together to stop the fleet of the Ottoman Empire from invading Europe and subjugating Christendom to the Turks.

The Battle of Lepanto

There was a naval engagement near the Gulf of Patras (Greece) in 1571. The faithful were asked to pray the Rosary for the victory of the Christian forces. This battle of Lepanto stopped Islam from conquering Christian Europe. Christian knights made fighting for Christ and the Church a service of charity and Christian virtue. Military service became acceptable to Christians even though it involved the shedding of blood and mass killings, not only of combatants, but even of civilians in major cities like Jerusalem and Constantinople.

The Reformation of the 16th century led to many wars between Protestant reformers and Catholic kings and princes. It caused Wars of Religion especially in the 17th century on the European continent (involving the Emperor, France, Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, Papal States etc.). When the European naval powers opened up the "New World" (America), Africa, India, East Asia (China, Japan), colonial wars subjected the indigenous peoples of these countries to European hegemony. The Portuguese conquered Mozambique, Angola and Sao Tome e Principe (Atlantic islands), Goa (in India), Brazil. Naval powers equipped with new weapons (artillery, guns) created world empires under colonial rule. Especially in Latin America heavily armed fleets (Spain, Portugal, France, Britain, and the Netherlands) decimated the indigenous population. At the same time missionaries went out to the "New World" to win these new peoples for Christ and the Church while guns conquered them for "Christian civilization."

Wars Against the Defenceless

The Church found reasons to tolerate colonial expansion by armed force. These were of course anything but "just wars." They were wars of aggression against peoples who could not defend themselves against this vastly superior military power[1]. The success of these wars in conquering the rest of the world for global dominance and exploitation seemed to justify warfare and violence everywhere. Missionaries tried not to identify with colonial masters. But they tended to rely on the military protection by colonial troops of their presence in Africa and elsewhere. Many believed that their missionary work would only flourish under the umbrella of colonialism.

This naval military power made the transatlantic slave trade between Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas possible. Just as wars, slave-taking and conquests of foreign lands were still taking place, philosophers and theologians began to work on the value of the human person, "human dignity", human rights in the Church and society at large. The equality of all human beings of whatever gender or race was universally accepted in theory and as a political ideology. Human rights and freedoms are now forming the constitutional "Bills of Rights". Human rights are now justiciable.[2] The "just war" theory makes sense in terms of philosophical ethics, but it does not work in practice. Wars are often called "just" because they are claimed to be defensive. But closer scrutiny shows that they are really wars of aggression and conquest. Too easily militarist states defend their wars of aggression with arguments taken from "just war" thinking.

Often wars called "merely defensive and therefore just" are not really just or justifiable. Two World Wars in the 20th century killed millions and billions of people, both combatants and civilians. In the aftermath of WW II the peoples of Europe, America and Asia agreed, "War? Never again!" But very soon new wars brought destruction and enormous loss of life into a world not yet recovered from "total war." Fear of nuclear self-annihilation prevented another "world war."

Liberation Wars

"The Cold War" of 1945 – 1989 produced the "arms race." This swallowed up huge funds which should have been spent on education, health care, economic development and fighting infectious childhood diseases. Especially in Latin America revolutionaries fought guerrilla wars against capitalist regimes and justified them as "self-defence" of the poor against exploitative economic and military systems. Some churchmen called them "wars of liberation," arguing from a perspective of "liberation theology."

The use of armed violence in "wars of liberation" was a controversial issue among the Christian Churches in Southern Africa (SA, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe). In Zimbabwe the "war of liberation" was seen as a defence against an aggressively racist, oppressive regime. The huge price in terms of blood this war would cost was not considered. Even though war had been denounced as a "crime against humanity," here were new wars as harmful and inhumane as the previous "world wars." Even the Islamic warfare in the Near- Middle East is being justified with

---

[2] An exception, up to a point, was South Africa. There was a long drawn out war between the British colonial army and the Zulu nation in the 19th century. The Zulu under Emperor Chaka might have defeated the British and saved their country from colonial occupation, had it not been for the superior weaponry of the British Empire (in the form of automatic machine guns).

[3] A person who was tortured, kidnapped or raped can now sue in court for compensation since his/her human dignity was not respected.

similar reasoning. Wars that cost so many lives of women and children are continued while the rest of humanity is fighting the COVID – 19 pandemic. This shows the irrationality of greed for wealth and power.

In former times, wars only involved knights (a social class) and mercenaries (hired professional soldiers). They were limited. The rapid development of military technology since the 19th century has transformed warfare into "total war" which spares no one. Soldiering is no longer reserved to professional volunteers, but is now a duty for all (male) citizens. This has been a challenge to the Christian conscience. Committed Christians began to remember that Jesus had been nonviolent. His first followers in the Church of the early centuries refused military service. Such members of the Church "objected" to being conscripted into armed forces to be fighting soldiers. "Conscientious objectors" demanded that their refusal to take up arms be respected; they offered to do some community service instead as non-combatants.

War and Women

While one might argue that gender equality is disregarded if conscription is reserved to men, while excluding women, there are good reasons why women should not be armed soldiers and combatants in war. Men and women are equal in human dignity, but they are not the same in the family, community and society in general. They have different callings as mothers and fathers. Women should be glad that they are not obliged to don military uniforms and bear arms for violent conflicts. The American social activist Dorothy Day (1897 – 1980), pacifist and champion of the poor, destitute, unemployed and homeless, very much encouraged "conscientious objectors" and wanted them accepted and recognised by the Catholic Church, against much opposition from nationalists and patriotic militarists from within and outside the Church. Conscience was recognised as a "force to be reckoned with" in the liberal spirit of the time. Within the Church John Henry Cardinal Newman, preacher, theologian and spiritual writer (recently canonized), emphasized conscience as an authority to be obeyed.

He considered the voice of conscience as proof for the presence of God in this world. Dorothy Day, controversial as a pacifist, felt confirmed and encouraged by Newman's teaching on Conscience. She became an ally of pacifists like Fr. Daniel Berrigan SJ. Dorothy Day, apart from stressing the importance of listening to the voice of conscience, also worked hard to instil a sense of personal responsibility in her Catholic Worker movement. For her it was not good enough just to accept the leadership of the government and obey the State, never mind the morality of it. She supported the workers' struggle for social justice, but rejected the concept of "class war." "It is like having one more war to end all wars" (Doris Day, 176). "We oppose all use of violence as un-Christian". Violence against persons is a denial of their humanity. "We join with the worker in his struggle for recognition as a man and not as a chattel." (177)

Opposing War Can Lead to Death

Another "conscientious objector" who eventually had a great impact on the Church was the Austrian Franz Jaegerstaetter, who refused to fight in Hitler's war, was sentenced to death and executed (now Blessed Franz, martyr). 1964 was the year when Franz first became widely known through the book by Gordon Zahn, *Solitary Witness*. It was also the time of Vatican Council II when the Bishops spoke on war in the Pastoral Constitution "Gaudium et Spes." As "conscientious objector," Franz had found little support in the Church, even among Bishops and Priests. But his martyr's death as witness to conscience changed all that. Franz' story of life and death circulated at Vatican Council II and influenced what it taught about "war, peace, conscience, and individual responsibility" which was in stark contrast to what people at the time believed: "Trust your rulers and do as you're told; it is no sin to obey (XXVI, Introduction)."

Both Dorothy and Franz never stopped stressing the responsibility of every individual. "We are not denying the obligations of the State. But we do claim that we must never cease to emphasize personal responsibility." This, in their shared view, applied to both the struggle against war and for peace, as well as for social justice and human dignity (D Day, p. 269). Franz wrote that "no earthly authority has the right to enslave a person's conscience. God's rights surpass the rights of human beings" (No. 76, p. 220). He was convinced that Hitler's war was definitely not a "just war" of defence. He felt in conscience he had to make this point publicly, like a prophet. I lived as a young child in a bombed out city, the outcome of "total war." Military aircraft in modern warfare are bombing densely populated urban areas, killing huge numbers of civilians, especially women and children. Nuclear war (e.g. Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 1945) no longer distinguishes between combatants and unarmed civilians. "The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured." (Gaudium et Spes, no. 81)

The "military-industrial complex" keeps developing and producing new and ever more lethal weapons systems at great profit, e.g. unmanned fighter planes ("drones"). Both the "allied powers" of World War Two and defeated Germany are today producers and exporters of arms, even to countries that are currently involved in armed conflicts. So-called "light weapons" are also lethal and are easily available in very unstable regions, like Africa. The "right to bear arms" (US) is causing random killings at home and civil wars elsewhere. The very profitable arms trade is a crime against humanity. We have to act on Jesus' warning, "All who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matthew 26: 52). There is no "just war." War is obsolete.

Fr. Oskar Wermter S.J.
Richartz House
Harare - Zimbabwe

JCTR COMMUNITY OUTREACH - ACCESS TO ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS IN ZAMBIA

Introduction

With almost 56 years from the time Zambia got her independence, it is disheartening that, over 50% of its population still live in poverty. This entails that most people lack access to essential basic needs including clean and safe water and sanitation, quality health care, decent education and decent housing (LCMS, 2015). Many questions would arise then including, could it be as a result of unequal distribution of national resources, etc.?

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection, JCTR, a faith based Civil Society Organisation works to translate and promote Christian principles and values relating to social justice in Zambia. In the recent past, the Centre has worked in select communities including Simoonga in Livingstone District in Southern Province, Chamboli in Kitwe District on the Copperbelt Province and Chishipula in Kasama district in the Northern Province. These are largely highly impoverished communities. While the provision of sufficient, affordable and quality basic services is considered a foremost function of government, the on-field sites tell different stories. In many communities JCTR has worked, there has been poor delivery of social services ranging between deprived access to health, education, and water and sanitation.

Promoting Human Dignity

JCTR interventions in these communities that include: training of community members in social accountability, conducting social audits of government projects and training and sensitizing of commentaries on basic human rights have aimed to promote enhanced communities' access to education, health and water and sanitation. These services are key to promoting and preserving dignified lives which every human being aspires to lead. These services are part of second-generation rights referred to as economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), which are significant to promote and preserve human dignity.

ESCR are those human rights relating to many aspects of our daily lives including the workplace, social security, family life, participation in cultural life, and access to housing, food, water and sanitation, health care and education. And Zambia as a constitutional democratic State and signatory to numerous international conventions, is obliged to promote, protect and respect all fundamental human rights and freedoms of its citizenry. Some of the international Conventions that Zambia has assented to include, The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1984.

Promotion of ESCR in Select JCTR Operational Areas

In Simoonga, in Livingstone District in Southern Province, the community lacked maternity services. This forced expectant mothers delivering through unsafe traditional methods from their homes. After intervention from JCTR through lobbying, a maternity ward has been constructed. This has resulted in reduced mortality rates and less health risks to mothers. The facility will benefit a population of 6,027.

Figure 1: Newly built maternity ward at Simoonga Clinic Access to Safe and Clean Water

Access to safe and clean water has been another challenge in Simoonga. Following the capacity built in community members on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs) and their significance to fostering human dignity, community members

have been able to lobby improved water supply. Caroline Semu, a community member says: "I didn't know what lobbying was and how to do it, there were a number of challenges that the community was facing in accessing water. After the training by JCTR which taught us our rights and how to advocate and lobby for social services, as a Ward Development Committee (WDC), we engaged the River Club director and lobbied for the installation of a water tank, to benefit the community. Within a month a water tank was put up and now we have access to safe and clean water."

Figure 2: Installed water tanks

Figure3: A community member drawing water from one of the installed points

The Need for a Clinic

And in Kitwe on the Copperbelt Province, following JCTR's training for community members and other stakeholders in social accountability, the community in Wusakile, one of the communities in the area felt the need to re-construct a vandalized clinic that had been unutilized for some time. A community action group was constituted that undertook a social audit on the clinic and the report was presented to a stakeholder meeting.

As a result of the training and the consequent meeting facilitated by JCTR, Constituency Development Funds, CDF were released to rehabilitate the facility. The community has since been able to easily access medical care and health services within their area. The facility is benefiting a population of 25,526. Whilst in Ndeke within the same district, following a social audit on the local clinic by the community action group after training on ESCR and in social accountability, the community members mobilised resources from CDF which were used to upgrade a local clinic to a mini hospital and is benefiting a population of 50,300.

Chisenga Rose Kapilya
JCTR Programme Officer
Livingstone

. . . .

"Access to safe and clean water has been another challenge in Simoonga. Following the capacity built in community members on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs) and their significance to fostering human dignity, community members have been able to lobby improved water supply"

. . . .

NO! ZAMBIA IS NOT A"PEACEFUL" BUT IS A "STABLE" COUNTRY!

Introduction

The latest Global Peace Index (GPI) Report has revealed that Zambia is one of the most "peaceful" Countries regionally and globally – ranking it on the fourth (4th) and forty-fourth (44th) respectively. However, there is need to be very cautious with such assertions. First and foremost, it is important to make a clear distinction between "peace" and "stability." The concept of "peace" has a deeper and stronger standing in terms of understanding the living conditions of people in a society while stability, although a necessary condition in all this, is not an end in itself.

In contrast, peace deals and addresses wider and deeper imperatives of human life such as the state of human dignity, prospects for human development, equity, equality and economic and political empowerment of people in a society. It is important to note that it is possible to experience stability under very negative conditions. For example, the apartheid system prevailed under conditions of "stability" in South Africa for several decades because it was entertained and safeguarded by policy, the political system and the legal context. During this period, South Africa was largely stable but not peaceful!

Peace a Far Cry

So where does Zambia stand in all this? Four (4) questions would be helpful in this regard. First, go and ask the millions of Zambians wallowing in poverty if they are in "peace." Second, go and find out whether the thousands of Zambians waffling with joblessness, particularly the socially low and young people, are feeling "peaceful." Third, run and ask the hundreds of Zambians who are failing to access justice just because they are financially incapacitated or not "connected" about "peace in Zambia." Fourth, turn around and ask civic and political actors who cannot express or associate freely if they are at peace. With unshakable surety – the answer to all these questions would be a big NO! Here, the key point is that we must not equate "peace' to mean the "absence" of violence or intense conflict. This is simply a shallow and erroneous manner of understanding peace especially in fragile democracies such as Zambia.

In straightforward terms, peace cannot survive or be sustained in an environment characterized by high inequalities, deepening poverty levels, mass unemployment, weak socio-economic justice and vast economic and political deprivation. It is "mechanisms" of stability that keep society intact and functioning in such cases. These mechanisms may include, among others, harsh political, social and civic regulatory systems and other reforms of citizen disempowerment such as economic, income, and social poverty – "permanent development crisis."

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to use this opportunity to emulate the stance taken by some of our "able leadership" – who have consistently advised us to deny, refuse and rebuke internationally recognized rankings of corruption in Zambia. These leaders have always vehemently urged us to take these rankings as "mere perceptions." So, in the same vein, the assertion contained in the latest GPI Report that "Zambia is one of most peaceful Countries in the region and globally," is not a "reality" but a mere "perception."

Dr. Charity Musamba
JCTR Principal Researcher
Lusaka

SILENCING GUNS IN AFRICA
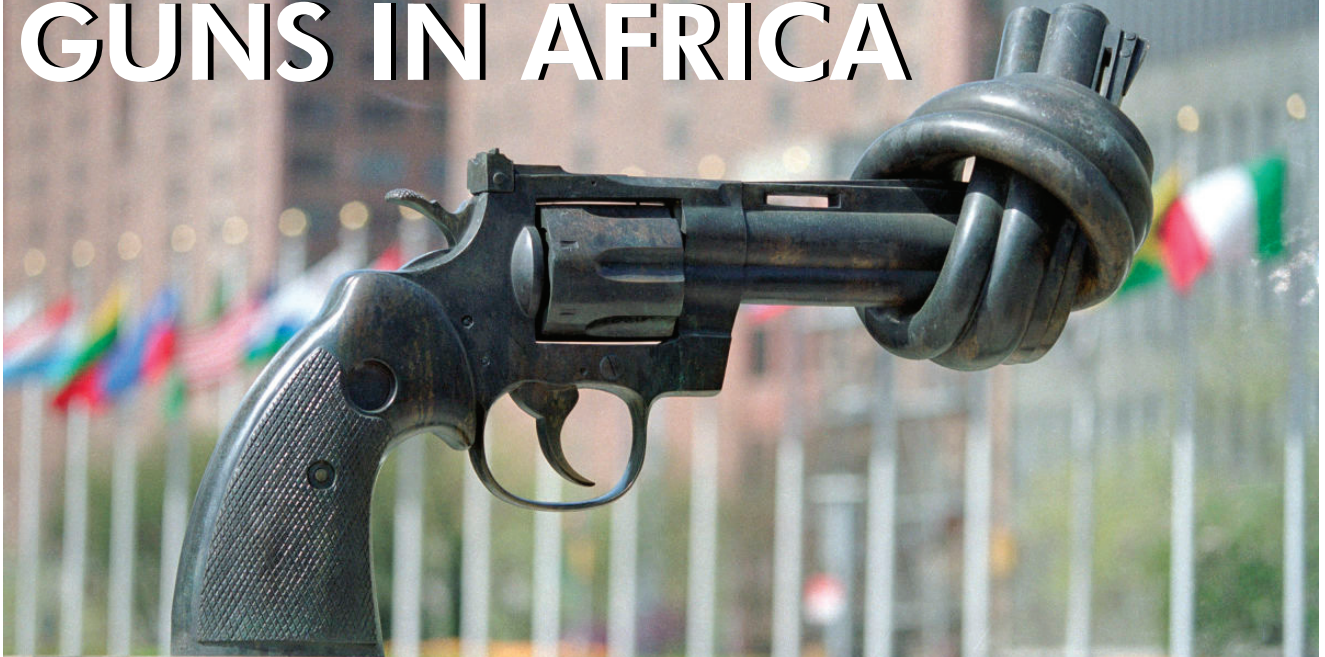
Introduction

A dream of a conflict-free continent was recently reinforced at the 32nd African Union (AU) Summit – "Silencing the Guns: Creating conducive conditions for Africa's development". 'Silencing the guns' is a slogan of AU Agenda 2063 flagship project that targets silencing all illegal weapons in Africa. As part of its Solemn Declaration at the 50th Anniversary of OAU/AU in 2013, the Heads of State committed themselves "to rid the continent of wars, civil conflicts, human rights violations, humanitarian disasters and violent conflict and to prevent genocide" and pledged to "end all wars by 2020". September is earmarked as an amnesty month when those with illegally-acquired guns can hand them to authorities without penalty. Although, this seven-year target was quite ambitious, it's worth pursuing to overcome the plethora of peace and security challenges in Africa. This article contends that the rationale for silencing guns is only useful if it is linked to broader peace and security, governance and development issues.

A Continent at War

Africa continues to experience worst conflicts and violence. Over the years, a vicious circle of violence has erupted from tribal wars, colonial battles for political independence, recurrence of civil and/or ethnic hostilities, genocide, military *coup d'état*, electoral and political violence, insurgency, and attacks from *Boko Haram* and *Al-Shabaab*.

Across the continent, insecurity threatens development. Recent conflicts have resulted from structural vulnerabilities such as competition over access, use and illegal extraction of natural resources; prevalence of illicit small arms and light weapons; social inequalities; growing youth unemployment, and religious radicalisation. Worse still, politics, resource scrambles and religious extremism seem to lie at the core of most conflicts. Therefore, unless governments pay attention to these and many other structural factors, silencing guns will be a futile exercise.

Global Control of Arms

It is indisputable that governments have sovereign rights and responsibilities, performed in conformity with the rule of law, to effectively provide security to their citizenry, through their armed and security forces who legitimately employ a range of weaponry, acquired either through national production or imports. However, exporters and importers need to ensure that weapons are transferred and stored safely, and not end up in wrong hands.

Unfortunately, ensuring that arms in private ownership do no enter illicit circuits has been a major challenge

for the international community, particularly in Africa. More than 40 million – or almost 80 percent – of all small arms on the continent are in civilian hands, that is, private individuals, registered businesses particularly private security companies, non-state actors and armed groups.[1] Of these 40 million civilian-held firearms, only 5.84 million are officially registered with millions still unrecorded, and probably in wrong hands. It's this state of affairs that certainly possess great concern for the continent. As long as weapons are easily available, violations of international humanitarian and human rights law would more likely occur. Hence, the need to situate silencing guns in Africa within global systems meant to control the import and export of arms. In spite of lacking an effective enforcement mechanism regulating civilian possession of small arms and light weapons, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) of 2013 remains a significant common standard for international transfer of conventional weapons, seeking to reduce illicit transfer of arms as well as promoting accountability and transparency of states parties concerning arms.

As a product of protracted struggle with origins in the League of Nations draft convention on arms that was never adopted, ATT is part of international law developed to prohibit transfer of chemical weapons, biological and nuclear weapons. However, ATT neither places restrictions on types or quantities of arms that may be bought, sold, or possessed by states nor does it impact on states' domestic gun control laws or foreign ownership policies. There is no guarantee that arms to Africa from major exporters like Russia, China, Germany, France and USA (which withdrew from ATT in April 2019), cannot spill out to criminal gangs or terrorists.

And therefore, illegal trading in small arms, light weapons, and ammunition remain a worldwide scourge. Arguably, the proliferation of arms and their uncontrolled circulation can lead to a more rapid spread of violence, and has the potential to directly or indirectly undermining sustainable development for millions of Africans.

Conditions for Silencing Guns

Merely silencing guns will not achieve a conflict-free Africa. Attainment of a peaceful and prosperous Africa also demands that governance issues particularly those identified in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), that is, democratic, political, economic and corporate governance are addressed. Given that 22 countries have been peer-reviewed, an incomparable repository of data meant to expand the capacity of Africa to rely on home-grown knowledge exist that

is critical to crafting African solutions to African problems more resolutely. APRM country reports reveal the fragility of participating countries with a great level of accuracy, and demonstrate that successful prevention of conflicts including silencing guns should take into consideration deeper societal conditions.

African governments, should seriously pay attention to violent extremists and other insurgent groups; violence related to political transitions; and the unprecedented level of climate change and natural disaster-induced displacements that pose threats to states' abilities to keep their citizens safe; and prevent relapses to violent conflicts largely due to weak state institutions and/ or lack of sustainable political settlements. Moreover, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) requires capacitation and operationalisation of its main components like the African Standby Force and Panel of the Wise. The master roadmap developed by the AU Peace and Security Council detailing practical steps to silence the guns should be revised to include actionable steps that goes beyond 2020 taking into account individual country APRM recommendations. Reforms to merge AU Peace and Security and Political Affairs departments to enhance synergy between APSA and the Africa Governance Architecture is indeed a welcome move.

The AU should further invest in efforts that goes beyond 'reactive' conflict resolution approaches, primarily concentrated on peace-making (e.g., arbitration, negotiation and mediation) and peacekeeping to peacebuilding efforts (e.g., reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction) which are more likely to promote a 'culture of peace'.

AU should systematically engage in structural conflict prevention that involves addressing "root causes of conflicts including economic and social disparities" as rightly observed in the Solemn Declaration cited above. Such an approach will assist fragile countries already characterised by scarcity of resources and/or 'resource-curse'; demand for urgent delivery of public services; and managing expectations to prevent any chance of slipping back to conflict. There is also need to look at institutions responsible for delivering justice and security that in fragile and conflict-prone states are usually weak or dysfunctional. Due to the continent's fragility in relation to the rest of the world, eight of fifteen United Nations peacekeeping missions are deployed in Africa. State building and democratisation processes in post-conflict and fragile states are thus critical.

African governments should respond to governance-related conflicts, which often involves disputes over political succession to a country's high office; succession disputes within political parties that spill over into society; the quantity, quality and outcome of elections; inclusion, participation and diversity *vis-à-vis* access to the state and its resources; the term of office of incumbents; and peaceful transfer of power to an opponent after elections. Hence, AU must strengthen its prevention and early-warning measures beyond solely dispatching election observer missions.

Silencing Guns or Seeking Peace?

More importantly, AU should invest in efforts that seek for peace rather than simply aiming at silencing guns. For authentic and sustainable peace can't be achieved through human efforts alone, but with divine intervention, as succinctly put in a statement on silencing the guns[2] by the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) of February 2020.

In reference to their earlier Pastoral Letter titled *Christ Our Peace* (Eph 2:14) of October 2001, the Catholic Bishops of the continent and surrounding islands reiterated their call "on warring parties to lay down their arms (nos. 33-40), and on all peoples of the continent to seek for true peace, which only Christ can give (Jn 14:27). And Christ's peace, 'goes beyond the silencing of arms, political compromises, even social justice, for it is linked to his redeeming work' (no. 44). The peace of Christ touches and illuminates every person afflicted by suffering and violence."

The Catholic Bishops of Africa further exhort that: "Peace, which humankind throughout the ages so much desire and sought after cannot be established or guaranteed, except through diligent observance of divinely established order[3]. Peace is founded on the relationship that exists between every human being and God himself, a relationship marked by compassion and righteousness[4]. To live in, and experience true peace in Africa, therefore, all of us without exception must not only turn to Christ the architect of peace but [become] agents of peace, reconciliation and justice everywhere on the continent[5]. That is, building bridges of fraternity[6]".

Conclusion

Since African countries do not manufacture weapons, there is need to deal with guns that come illegally through traffickers, terrorists and other private actors. Disarming various armed groups is imperative for all governments in order to create a peaceful and stable continent. African governments should seriously pay due attention to root causes of violent conflicts including socioeconomic inequalities, and exploitation of vulnerable groups especially the youth. We should always remember "that any form of violence perpetuated against a fellow human being is an offence against God, and a violation of the person's dignity. For each human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Gn 1:26-27)."

Endnotes

(Endnotes)

1   Silencing the guns by 2020 not likely, extend the deadline". Available on: https://www.newtimes.co.rw/opinions/silencing-guns-2020-not-likely-extend-deadline

2   Philippe Cardinal Ouedraogo, SECAM Statement on Silencing the Guns by 2020, 9 Feb. 2020. Available on: www.secam.org

3   John XXII, *Pacem in Terris*, 11 April 1963, #1

4   Compendium of Social Doctrine, 2004, #488

5   Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, 19 Nov. 2011, #31-68

6   Letter of Pope Francis to theological ethicists in Sarajevo, 11th July, 2018.

Simson Mwale
Symposium of Episcopal Conferences
of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM)
Accra-Ghana

....

"African governments should respond to governance-related conflicts, which often involves disputes over political succession to a country's high office; succession disputes within political parties that spill over into society; the quantity, quality and outcome of elections; inclusion, participation and diversity vis-à-vis access to the state and its resources"

....

Introduction

Africa is a battlefield of the giants (economic and political giants). As a result, its progress will neither be Western (from the West) nor Chinese (from China). [Assuming that this is the case], how can Africa, given its territorial immensity and cultural diversity, progress? What will the slogan "building the Africa we want" consist in? Is there any clear political orientation that Africa, and probably with a focus on countries and regional blocs, has to take? What Africa do you want, as your group, as a younger generation?

Africa currently experiences a wave of economic and political challenges which greatly undermine her growth and progress. The aim of this essay is to paint a picture of a better Africa and suggest possible ways in which this ideal picture can be attained. The essay is structured into four parts. The first analyses the Africa we have. It discusses the present state of the African continent and pinpoints the major challenges to African societies. The second part discusses the Africa we want. It dares to dream about a better future for Africa and highlights some basic characteristics of such an ideal future. The third part discusses the walls which stand between the Africa we have and the Africa we want. It analyses the various factors and institutions which prevent the African dream from becoming a reality. The fourth part discusses the ways in which a bridge can be built between the African reality and the African dream or between the Africa we have and the Africa we want.

The Africa We Have

The major challenges facing Africa can be broadly classified into two categories: Economic Instability and Political Imbalances. These two areas are discussed below:

Economic Instability

Despite numerous efforts at economic stimulation, most of the African continent remains poor and underdeveloped. The pertinent characteristics of the economic instability which plagues the African continent are Neo-colonialism, poverty, increase in debt levels, exploitation by foreign nationals and a widening gap between the rich and poor.

Political Imbalance

Most of African politics since the independence of its various countries have failed to get it right. Civil wars, coups and counter coups, religious and ethnic conflicts, inability to exploit and utilize abundant natural resources, corruption, manipulation of the democratic process, oppression of women and mass migration of Africans across the Atlantic, are some of the obvious signs of this political failure.

The Africa We Want

Can we dare to dream of a better Africa? What would such a dream consist in? It could probably be categorized into its political and economic elements. Some of the economic elements would include:

- Economic independence
- Ability to own and manage our natural resources.
- Provision of economic opportunities for all.
- Poverty alleviation and a rise in overall standards of living.

Its political elements would include:

- Strong Political Institutions which ensure proper separation of powers, accountability of political leaders and a strong check against the monopoly of government by any single individual.

- Peaceful and Relatively conflict free Africa.
- An Africa where women are respected and accorded equal opportunities with men.

Are these goals achievable? Yes. It is evident that they have been achieved in some other parts of the world. So, what prevents us from attaining the Africa we want? These walls which stand in the way of our progress as a continent are discussed in the subsequent section.

The Walls

1. **Lack of Political Will:** A prevalence of corruption, selfishness and impunity amongst political leaders betrays the fact that some of these leaders may not have their country's best interests at heart.

2. **Monuments of Oppression:** In an open discussion about 'the Africa we want' hosted by the Rwandan government, one of the comments raised alluded to the presence of certain 'monuments of oppression': factors which continue to enslave the African mind and prevent progress and development. These monuments of oppression include: Religion, History, Culture and Indoctrination. Religion and culture in many areas re-enforce the subjugation of women, history fuels ethnic hate and creates burdensome precedents, whilst the indoctrination of many African minds have led to the belief that things African are in all ways inferior to things Western or Eastern.

3. **Global Economics and Politics:** On the world scene, the tussle between the super powers and competing ideologies have not been favourable to the African continent. The move towards socialism in the 60's after several African countries attained independence was frustrated by global politics. Even till today, French Africa remains tethered to France, her former colonial power. China continues to use the African continent to expand her influence in the global stage. Hence, the progress of the African continent depends in most part on the state of the global politics and economy. Thus far, the existing global paradigm has not proven favourable to the African continent.

Are there ways to break down these walls and build a sustainable bridge between the Africa we have and the Africa we want? Responding to this question is the concern of the subsequent section.

The Bridges

Pan Africanism
A united Africa is the best chance of African development. This fact was recognized by the founding fathers of many African countries who attempted to promote African unity. The African Union also seems to recognize the potential of a united Africa. There is indeed a move to create a borderless Africa where free movement and trade is encouraged. Several countries such as Seychelles, Rwanda, Ghana, Namibia, Mauritus, Benin, and Kenya have already lessened travel restrictions for other African nationals. Furthermore, 44 of the 55-member states of the African Union signed an African Continental Free Trade Area agreement on the 21st of March 2018. This agreement seeks to promote free trade across Africa.

There are however, several fears with regards to the talk of a borderless Africa. From the persistence of several xenophobic attacks in South Africa, one can see that foreign nationals can sometimes be perceived as a threat to the indigenous peoples. There is also the issue of health and security, as the lessening of travel restrictions may also facilitate the movement of terrorist cells or deadly diseases. However, though these dangers exist, there could always be counter measures to tackle or control them. The borderline here is that Africa needs to unite. The ways in which this unity can be achieved remains open to the ingenuity of Africans themselves.

Civil Society
To keep the political actors reminded of their duties towards the people, there is a need for the strengthening of civil society. Non-governmental organizations, trade and labour unions and solidarity movements need to be empowered with the voice to speak out and challenge the existing status quo. The youth should be active in this movement. These groups should ensure that people are sensitized and made aware of their rights and responsibilities. The media also has an important role to play. Investigative journalism can go a long way in putting pressure on political leaders to do their job. The rise and influence of such civil groups can be a strong rallying point for attaining the Africa we want.

Education
Breaking the monuments of oppression and building a better Africa depends largely on the

efficiency of the Educational system. This system includes both the formal, as in the case of schools and the informal as in families, churches and peer groups. There is need to redesign our educational structures and content so as to give the next generation the exposure, skill and virtues they need in order to move the continent towards the Africa we want. In addition, this education should break the cultural systems of oppression already present in our systems. Boys should not be taught that they are superior to girls and girls should not be brought up to believe that certain roles and careers are anathema to them. Children should be brought up to recognize their similarities rather than their differences with the other. Such adjustments to our educational system would attack the growth of systems of conflict from its very roots.

Dialogue

Inter-ethnic, inter-religious and inter-racial conflicts have been the bane of African societies for so long. It has to be admitted that the present generation inherited most of these tensions from the past generations and seem to be transmitting these biases, prejudices and intolerant attitudes to the future generations. Here, education would once more play an important role, but dialogue is also another key strategy for dealing with these issues. Warring parties should be brought to the table and should be made to state clearly what it is that they want. The results of these dialogues should be highly publicized so that there is no ambiguity in the motives of conflicting parties. Part of dialogue should also include systems that expose individuals to other cultures and religions. The aim of this is to help individuals appreciate the richness of African diversity.

Peer Criticism

This point was forcefully made by former South African president, Thabo Mbeki at a conference on leadership in Africa held in Kigali, Rwanda. Peer criticism is the view that African leaders have the responsibility to challenge one another. The African Union should be more active in pressuring recalcitrant leaders to fulfil their duties to their citizens. The culture of silence which keeps member states from showing concern about the welfare of distressed regions should be challenged. Progress has been made in this regard in certain regional blocs such as the ECOWAS which has worked to eliminate conflicts in countries such as Liberia, Gambia and Ivory Coast. This success should be replicated at a continental level.

Conclusion

This essay has dared to dream about a better future for African societies. This dream has been evaluated in the backdrop of the current economic and political challenges on the continent. The various factors which may be considered as stumbling blocks to the attainment of this dream have been analysed and some suggestions have been made as to how we as Africans can overcome these obstacles and progress towards the Africa we want.

References

AfDB Group. "High Level Event II - Leadership for the Africa we want." Kigali, 22 May 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbGZaykJ5iU. Accessed 13th November 2018.

The Government of Rwanda. "AU Summit 2016: Conversation on the Africa we want with Dr. Zuma." Kigali, 16 June 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NutzVOLGz-o. Accessed 13th November 2018.

Reagan MacDavid Chengamali
Development Activist
Lusaka

"AU should invest in efforts that seek for peace rather than simply aiming at silencing guns. For authentic and sustainable peace can't be achieved through human efforts alone, but with divine intervention"

JCTR LUSAKA AUGUST 2020 Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket

(A) COST OF BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR A FAMILY OF FIVE

Commodity	Price (ZMW) / Unit		Quantity / Month	Total (ZMW)
Mealie Meal (Roller)	80.50	25 kg bag	2 x 25Kg	161.00
Rice	124.99	5kg	4kg	99.99
Cassava Flour	16.70	1kg	6kg	100.19
(Sweet) Potatoes	9.93	1 Kg	4 Kg	39.73
Beans	34.95	1kg	3kg	104.84
Pounded Groundnut	80.20	1kg	1kg	80.20
Soya Pieces	52.46	1 kg	2kg	104.91
Beef	47.57	1kg	2kg	95.14
Chicken	72.88	2kg	5kg	182.19
Kapenta	301.21	1kg	1kg	301.21
Eggs	13.43	1 unit (10 eggs)	3 Trays (90 eggs)	120.85
Milk (Fresh)	8.71	500 ml	10 liters	174.26
Vegetables	493.39	40 Kg	40kg	493.39
Onion	12.85	1 Kg	4 Kg	51.42
Tomatoes	10.36	1 kg	6 kg	62.19
Banana	8.89	1 Kg	16 Kg	142.17
Other Fruits	17.45	1 kg	14 Kg	244.33
Cooking oil (2.5lts)	78.86	2.5lt	3.6lt	113.55
Salt	7.28	1 Kg	1 Kg	7.28
Tea	29.66	250g	250g	29.66

SubTotal   **ZMW 2,708.52**

(B) COST OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD ITEMS

Commodity	Price(ZMW) / Unit		Quantity / Month		Total (ZMW)
Charcoal	136.00	90kg bag(s)	2	90kg bag(s)	272.00
Soap (Lifebuoy/Champion)	10.07	Tablet(s)	3	Tablet(s)	30.21
Wash soap (BOOM)	13.78	400g	4	400g	55.14
Jelly (Vaseline)	31.17	500ml	1	500ml	31.17
Electricity (medium density)	500.00	Month(s)	1	Month(s)	500.00
Water & Sanitation (med - fixed)	197.00	Month(s)	1	Month(s)	197.00
Housing (3 bedroom)	3,300.00	Month(s)	1	Month(s)	3,300.00
Sanitary towels	16.86	Pack of 10	2	Pack of 10	33.71
Toilet Paper (2ply)	8.00	Tissue(s)	6	Tissue(s)	33.71
Lotion (Dawn)	16.77	250ml	1	250ml	16.77

Subtotal   **ZMW 4,469.70**

Total for Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket   **ZMW 7,178.22**

(C) SOME OTHER ADDITIONAL COSTS

Education

Item	Amount (ZMW)
Grades 1-7 (User + PTA/year)	310.00
Grades 8-9 (User + PTA/year)	600.00
Grades 10-12 (User + PTA/year)	600.00

Transport (bus fare round)

Item	Amount (ZMW)
Chilenje - Town	24.00
Chelston - town	23.00
Matero - Town	20.00

Health

Item	Amount (ZMW)
Registration (book)	2.00
Self-referral (Emergency Fee)	80.00
Malaria test	20.00

Fuel (cost at the pump)

Item	Amount(ZMW)
Petrol (per litre)	17.62
Diesel (per litre)	15.59
Paraffin (per litre)	15.39

(D) A COMPARISON OF COSTS (IN KWACHA) OF BASIC NEEDS ACROSS ZAMBIA

Lusaka	Kasama	Mansa	Mongu	Ndola	Solwezi	Monze	Chipata	Mpika	Luanshya	Kitwe	Kabwe	Livingstone	Choma	Chinsali	Mazabuka
7,17822	3,925.74	4,132.91	3,997.46	5,863.97	**6,744.04**	5,213.87	6,170.87	4,111.28	5,511.70	6,365.25	6,429.82	5,573.92	4,709.50	4,709.50	5,261.18

Compositions of vegetables and fruits

Computation of vegetables consists of: Pumpkin leaves (9.8kg), Bondwe (2.8kg), Cabbage (18.5kg) and Rape (8.9kg).

Computation of fruits is from these varieties: Bananas, Mangos, Apples, Guavas and Oranges.

This survey was conducted on 27th August, 2020 by the Social and Economic Development Programme of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection. Average Prices were calculated on the basis of prices gathered from retail outlets at North mead, Shoprite (Cairo Road), City Market, Chawama, Chainda, Kabwata, Matero and Schools, clinics/hospitals, and filling stations around Lusaka. The August Basic Needs Basket is approximately US$370.447 based upon the exchange rate Of K19.3772.

Other costs would include personal care, clothing, recreation, etc.

A CALL FOR THE PRO-POOR BUDGET TO ADDRESS THE RISING COST OF LIVING

The COVID-19 pandemic erupted when most countries had just begun to implement their 2020 national budgets. Zambia in particular recorded its 1st two cases in March 2020 with the dynamic having changed significantly since then. In the months following, the short-term priority has really been to redesign and implement responses to the crisis primarily through emergency budget instruments such as supplementary budgets, contingency funding and policy pronouncements. One such example has been the recent decision by Government through the Bank of Zambia to lower the monetary policy rate to 8.0% from the previous 9.25% in order to improve stability in the financial economy. As the country prepares the 2021 National Budget, there is a need to take stock of the still uncertain impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the context of a number of macroeconomic factors such as the fragile state of economy characterised by negative growth rates of about 4%, the weakening of the local currency and the high annual inflation, although having dropped to 15.5% for the month of August according to the Zambia Statistics Agency still remains an undesirable macroeconomic indicator as a double digit figure.

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket (BNNB) for the month of August 2020 stood at K7, 178.22. Reflecting a reduction of K26.02 from the month of July 2020 that stood at K7, 204.24. Reductions in the basket were noted in prices of the following food items; other fruits such as oranges and apples moved from K283.33 to K244.33; cassava flour moved from K135.50 to K100.91 for 6Kg; roller mealie meal moved from K175.71 to K 161.00 for two 25kg bags; pounded groundnuts (1kg) fell from K102.16 to K80.20; and beans moved from K121.52 to K104.84 for 3Kg. Increases were however recorded in the prices of kapenta that rose sharply from K188.19 to K301.21; and vegetables that increased from K442.93 to K493.39 for 40Kg. From the non-food but essential items the price of charcoal increased from K266.67 to K272.00 for two 90kg bags from the preceding month. Other items specifically washing soap, vaseline and tissue recorded minimal increases of between K1 and K6.

JCTR remains concerned with the sustained high living cost that has averaged over K7000 over the past 7 months. The basket is high given that most commodities cannot be accessed by poorest and vulnerable households who have low incomes to afford basic necessities. From the August basket particular attention is placed on the sharp increase in the price of kapenta, a nutritious food item which is a source of protein, omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids due to reduced supply. This entails that consumers will have to spend more to access this food item. This becomes a challenge at household level due to constrained income levels that have been threatened by the pandemic. Vegetables is another case in point which during the dry season tend to increase in cost due to scarcity. In spite of this, JCTR is pleased that roller mealie meal, cassava, pounded groundnuts and fruits have continued to record a price-decline. JCTR therefore calls on households to deliberately incorporate roller mealie meal, pounded groundnuts and vegetables in their daily diets in order to improve nutritional outcomes especially during this time of the pandemic.

As attention shifts to the 2021 national budget, JCTR urges government to continue prioritising social protection programmes, especially social cash transfer, as a way of addressing the rising of cost of living in the poor and vulnerable households. Minister of Finance recently indicated that government intend to scale-up social cash transfer payments in the coming year to provide some additional support to the social cash transfer component of the budget. JCTR would like to see social cash transfer benefiting many more poor households than is the case at the moment. The importance of attending to the needs of the most vulnerable people in our society cannot be overemphasized.

PHOTO FOCUS

2020 Northwestern Province Chief's Mining Indaba

A Media Briefing on the BNNB at National Office

What about a snack after the press briefing

Advocacy of children's Rights continue to be key to The JCTR

Discussion on Children Sensitive Social Protection with DWAC in Lufwanyama

Launch of Report - Effects of Emmerging Economic Trends on Children's Rights

Diakonia monitoring visit

Information is Power - Sensitising the Public on the COVID-19 Disease

Discussing Zambia's Social Sector Spending with Mr. James Kafupi Banda on JCTR Corner - Loyola TV

Engaging Children on 2021 Budget Expectations

ARTICLES AND LETTERS

We would like encourage you to contribute articles to the JCTR bulletin. These articles can be on any social, economic, political or educational, cultural, pastoral, theological and spiritual theme. A good issue of the bulletin really depends on your lively analytical exchange of views. The length of your article should be between 1000 and 1500 words. We also encourage comments on the articles in this or previous bulletin issues. Views for the improvement of the bulletin are also welcome.

So to contribute, please write articles or letters to the Editor- JCTR Bulletin by E-mail to jctr.faithandjustice@gmail.com and jctr.info@gmail.com