

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection



Promoting Faith and Justice

# BULLETIN



## QUOTE

*"Have the courage to go against the tides of current values that do not conform to the path of Jesus." - Pope Francis*

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# LETTER

## *From the Editor*

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Dear Readers,

**A**t the Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework on Climate Change in November last year, COP27, the UN Secretary General did not mince his words. António Guterres said that “our planet is still in the emergency room,” and that “the world still needs a giant leap on climate ambition.” The reason he was using such strong language is that the world is at serious risk of not meeting the goal established at the Paris agreement in COP21 in 2015 – namely, of preventing global temperatures from rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels.

The reason why this goal is so important is that if the world does exceed the temperature increase of 1.5 degrees Celsius, then the impact of climate change will become increasingly harmful for human beings and for the planet. This edition of the JCTR Bulletin presents different ways that Zambia could meet the challenge of climate change. Readers will be interested to find an article which promotes the practice of agroecology for small-scale farmers, which practice has been hailed as an organic response to the climate crisis. In addition, one will be able to engage with an author who advocates for the increased efficiency of agricultural production in Zambia, through mechanisation and the implementation of the recommendations in the Maputo declaration of 2003.

Zambia’s response to climate change would not be complete without heeding the call of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si’*, which is his encyclical on the environment. Pope Francis invites us to evaluate whether the ways we are using our natural resources are really in service of the poor and the marginalised. The reader can explore the

implications of this invitation in this edition of the Bulletin. One article argues how the warning issued by Garrett Hardin in what he calls the ‘Tragedy of the Commons’ cautions us to use natural resources unselfishly and with the community in mind. This altruistic use of resources points to the responsibility to be generous in one’s decision-making. In this issue, the reader can critically assess the duty to be generous, with one author posing the question: is it sufficient to simply fulfil one’s moral duty in order to be regarded as a saint?

The current climate crisis has resulted from, amongst other things, development models that are unsustainable. Zambia cannot squander both its natural and financial resources in its quest for economic growth. But corruption continues to waste public resources that should benefit the people of this country. The need to tackle corruption in a way which transcends party politics is outlined well in this edition of the Bulletin. Furthermore, sustainable development highlights the necessity of debt restructuring, which is key to Zambia’s economic success. Readers will be able to explore in these pages how the inability of Zambia to restructure its debt is blocking foreign investment, devaluing the local currency and putting undue pressure on the public through raising the costs of living.

As Pope Francis emphasises in *Laudato Si’*, the people who are most impacted by climate change and by our inability to develop sustainably are the poor. As we consider how Zambia can best respond to the challenge posed by António Guterres at COP27 and the invitation to sustainable development, let us keep in mind the people who our economic and environmental policies need to serve.

**Grant Tungay, S.J.**  
*Assistant Editor*

# IS COST-REFLECTIVE PRICING A PANACEA TO PUBLIC ENTERPRISE INEFFICIENCIES? THE CASE OF ZESCO



## Introduction

**P**ublic Enterprises (PEs) or State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) remain a predominant feature in most developing countries, especially following the period after the Second World War. Faced with the responsibility of providing both social and economic development, most governments set up public enterprises. There is presently hardly any country anywhere in the world that is not involved in directly setting up and managing public enterprises. The rationale for setting up and managing PEs is that they provide a mechanism for government intervention in the economy. Mixed economies provide for competition between public and private enterprises, which is expected to translate into efficiency gains. While these are inherently in the private sector, the performance of PEs in most countries, especially in the developing world (including Zambia), has been characterized by inefficiencies. This article seeks to discuss the sources of these inefficiencies and provide critical analysis of whether introducing cost-reflective pricing for public enterprise services is a panacea to these inefficiencies.

## Sources of Inefficiency

Public enterprises are perceived to be inherently inefficient and less profitable, especially when compared to their private counterparts. According to some studies, PEs are associated with different types of market failure and most governments use them to attain non-economic goals focused on building and maintaining an egalitarian society through reduction of unemployment, control over natural resources, and political stability (Grout and Stevens, 2003). These objectives have been sources of inefficiency in the operations of these establishments, especially those in monopolistic utility sectors as the case in point for this discussion.

### 1. Size and Wage Bill

The shortcomings of public enterprises vary across countries. For example, in China, public enterprises are larger and more profitable than their private counterparts (Lardy, 2014, 2018) and employ more workers. This is a pattern which was observed recently, for example, in the period following the global financial crisis in 2008 (Yu, 2019).



Most governments use PEs in their quest to reduce unemployment. This has led to large-sized enterprises. This culminates in huge costs for PEs, who need to maintain the workforce and this is done sometimes at the expense of operational efficiency. The workforce in most PEs has been characterized by laxity. This is due to the implicit lifetime employment or stability of tenure and guarantee for workers, which are contributing factors to their reduced productivity (Lin, 2021; Singh, 2019).

The Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (ZESCO) is a utility company in Zambia's energy sector, established to provide electricity to citizens. The company has been characterized by a huge workforce, partly perhaps in the government's quest to reduce unemployment. Despite being a monopoly in the sector, the corporation has continued to grapple with operational inefficiencies which can, among other factors, be attributed to its size. The number of employees has implications - for instance, the huge and unsustainable wage bill which absorbs 65% of the corporation's revenue (African Energy, 2018). The size of the corporation has spurred public interest, with assertions of 'ghost' workers; that is, individuals who are not formally employed with the corporation but form part of its wage bill. This led to a country-wide human resource audit which ultimately invalidated the assertions (Priscilla, 2022).

## **2. Public-Enterprise Dichotomy (Policy Burden)**

PEs, as suggested in their nomenclature, have two dimensions: namely the 'public' dimension, which generally refers to public ownership or control for a public purpose; and the 'enterprise' dimension, which denotes a 'business' or 'firm' (Ramanadham, 1984). This dual dimension, therefore, means that PEs are expected to operate with a balance between them. As initially discussed, PEs are used by governments to achieve both social and economic development, thus the expectation for them is to balance between public ownership and profitability as businesses.

This expectation that PEs need to balance the public and enterprise dimensions has resulted in a less-than-optimal

performance, especially among monopolies in the utility sector. The 'public' dimension has led to public utility autonomy loss. This loss is premised on the need for PEs to help the government to achieve its social development goals. As has been noted, granting autonomy to firms in labor decisions and profit attainment results in higher efficiency gains compared to firms that have less autonomy in making these crucial decisions (Groves, Hong, Mcmillan, and Naughton, 1994).

Government ownership of PEs causes priority challenges mostly compromising profit motive, in favor of social development. The presence of government in PE operations has led to other complexities, due to its conflicting roles as a regulator and shareholder. As a regulator, the government's focus is to fulfill the social contract it has with the public. On the other hand, as a shareholder, the government's focus is shifted toward increasing the value of its investment (Chen, 2016).

The multiple and conflicting objectives of PEs between profit and non-financial objectives make it difficult to measure their performance. Unlike their private counterparts, there is no direct link between the incentives of PE management and company performance (Putnis, 2015). This is common practice in PE operations worldwide, predominantly in countries focused on social goals, such as: reducing unemployment levels, providing a satisfying level of employee benefits, and, selling products at a lower price to the government.

The Zambian case is no different. It is perhaps even worse, because expectations of reduced pricing are from both government and the public. The corporation (ZESCO) has made several calls on the need to have cost-reflective pricing in its service delivery, being outside its jurisdiction, the corporation depends on the approval of the proposal from its regulator the Energy Regulation Board (ERB). This policy burden on PEs has given rise to soft-budget constraint problems (Jakob, 2017). This describes situations where the government is expected to assist PEs in times of market failure, as long as they have remained helpful in executing policy burdens.

### 3. Political and Legal Environment

Unlike their private counterparts, PEs operate in a different environment. They are subject to both political and legal conditions, which in most cases do not apply to the private sector. Politically, PEs are subject to political direction and ministerial responsibility in their operations. Legally, PEs are created under specific legal provisions, with their mandates provided for in the law that establishes them, and this has implications for their operational efficiency. ZESCO is under the Ministry of Energy. As such, it is the minister who lays down broad policy outlines, under which the bureaucrats implement policy. This is despite the autonomy granted to the professionals who are responsible for their actions to the legislature. It is still the minister who represents his departments in the legislature and is held to account for all acts of omission and commission for his administrative juniors to parliament.

The political dimensions can be noted even in certain legal provisions. For instance, the Energy Regulation Act, No. 12 of 2019 empowers the minister to appoint and dissolve the board of directors. Such provisions have a direct effect on the corporation's operational efficiency, as the board of directors provides oversight on the corporation's operations, hence the need to have its composition arrived at on merit. Legally, PEs as creatures of law can only operate within the confines of their legal power; anything done to the contrary can be declared invalid or *ultra vires* by the courts. This legal aspect presents a limitation to the efficiency gains that can be made by PEs. The legal limitations on PEs can sometimes hinder their ability to be innovative and creative, which is a hallmark of business growth.

As has been noted, the managers of PEs are determined by political authorities (Belloc, 2014). This is also the case in Zambia where the ZESCO Managing Director is recruited and supervised by the board of directors, whose composition is determined by the political authority of the Minister. This not only discourages incentives for creativity and innovation but also hampers the spread of knowledge and experience.

### 4. Economic Environment

Like the political and legal environments, the operations of PEs are greatly affected by the economic environment. Despite its effect on both the private and public sectors, the latter is arguably more affected by prevailing economic conditions than the former, perhaps due to their inhibited responsiveness to rapidly changing economic conditions. Economic performance influences the functioning of PEs, not only because they don't operate in a vacuum, but also due to certain aspects of their operations that are tied to certain economic fundamentals, such as the exchange rate and inflation. In the light of this, ZESCO's operations as a PE are affected by the performance of Zambia's economy.

For instance, the purchasing power of the country's currency against major convertibles like the US dollar has lasting effects on the corporation's efficiency. Particularly, the operations of the corporation are negatively affected by the depreciation of the Zambian kwacha. The corporation imports some of the materials needed to service its customers; this means it transacts using foreign currency, hence greatly affected by the prevailing exchange rate which directly impacts procurement costs. That is, due to a loss in value of the Zambian kwacha, imports become expensive, which in turn increases procurement costs for materials/inputs sourced abroad.

#### The Need for Cost Reflective Pricing in PEs.

Cost reflective pricing is critical in handling the policy burden vested in the operations of PEs. This will not only make PEs more efficient, but will also enable them to operate as enterprises focused on the profit motive. The introduction of cost-reflective pricing will lead to increased accountability between the service provider and the consumer. Furthermore, the implementation of cost-reflective pricing will enable PEs to operate without the dual public-enterprise dimensions. Cost reflective pricing will increase the corporation's autonomy due to its ability to operate without soft-budget constraints.



The volatility of a country's economic performance (national output/income) presents a solid ground for the introduction of cost-reflective pricing. Whereas it is possible to predict an expected economic outlook, the actual performance of economies is affected by external and internal factors with little control over the former. For instance, occurrences of force majeure (that is, occurrences beyond the control of countries). Therefore, the introduction of cost-reflective pricing though not a panacea to the inefficiencies caused by poor economic performance would certainly translate to efficiency gains in PE operations.

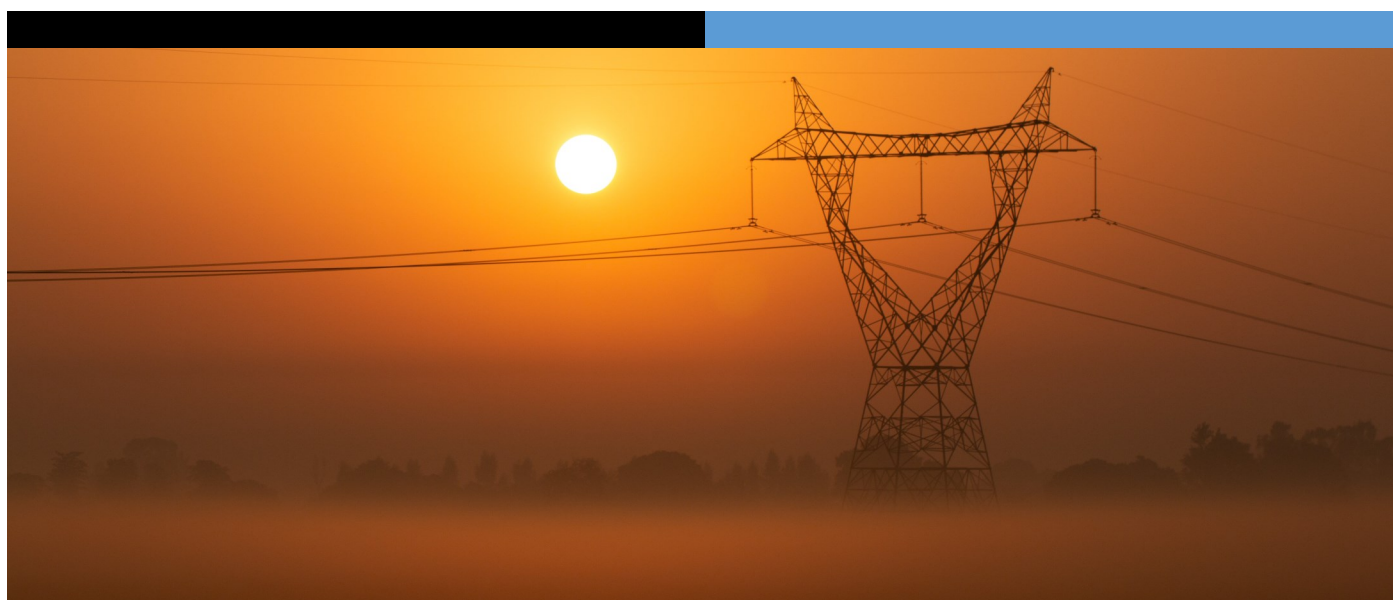
### Conclusion

Public Enterprises (PEs) are a common feature in any economy today. Their existence is mainly premised on the efficient provision of public goods and services. As evidenced by this article, PE operations are characterized by inefficiencies, whose sources have been analysed. Cost-reflective pricing is desirable, especially when operating in a free market skewed economy. Thus, though not a panacea, the introduction of cost-reflective pricing may translate to efficiency gains in PE operations. Having established that pricing is not the sole source of PE inefficiency, it is recommended that holistic remedies aimed at eliminating or reducing inefficiencies be formulated and implemented.

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# ATTAINING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA THROUGH AGRARIAN TRANSITION



## Introduction

**T**he future of food in the world will depend on what Africa does with agriculture. Africa holds 65% of the uncultivated arable land that has the potential to feed 9 billion people by 2050. Its vast savannas are the world's largest agriculture frontier, estimated at 400 million hectares. But only 10% of this is cultivated. That's a mere 40 million hectares. Africa accounts for 75% of the world's cocoa production, with 65% of this being produced in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, but the continent is a price taker and receives only 2% of the \$100 billion annual revenues from chocolates globally. The reason is that Africa only exports raw cocoa beans. This pattern is the same for other commodities in which Africa is a major producer.

But producing raw materials is not enough. It is time for Africa to move to the top of the global food value chains, through agro-industrialization and adding value to all of what it produces. While demand for raw commodities is elastic, demand for processed and value-added commodities is relatively inelastic. The price of cotton may decline, but never the price of textile and garments. The price of cocoa may decline, but never the price of chocolates. The price of coffee beans may decline but never the price of brewed specialty coffee at

Starbucks. Zambia needs to begin to take advantage of its resources – to add value to its production and to reap the benefits.

## The Challenges of the Agrarian Sector

Zambia has been heavily dependent on copper for its survival as a nation, and over a period of time, various stakeholders have been talking about diversification into agriculture. In order for Zambia to attain its full potential, there is a need to invest more in the agrarian sector and this requires modernization of the mechanism which we could use so as to maximize production. Over 60% of the Zambia population derives its livelihood from agriculture. However, the sector has not been fully developed due to the fact that the majority of the rural farmers are still practicing subsistence farming and are not able to generate any income. Furthermore, the sector has faced a number of constraints such as inconsistencies in policies that have not addressed the plight of rural farmers; an insufficient national budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector; a lack of access to markets by rural farmers; poor road infrastructure in many rural areas; an inadequate delivery of extension services (for instance, an absence of extension officers); as well as a lack of value addition capacities on the agricultural produces, due to a lack of fully developed agro-industries which results in the selling of raw materials by rural



farmers. Additionally, Zambian rural farmers have continued mono-cropping, specifically growing maize, which has expedited the poverty levels in rural areas.

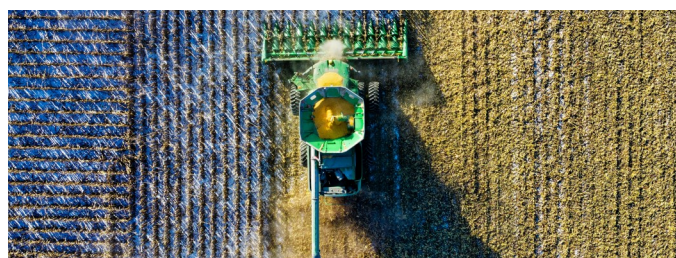
### **The Potential of the Agrarian Sector**

Zambia, being a land-locked country, provides a strategic market for agricultural products for its neighboring countries and beyond. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo provides a huge market for agriculture products from Zambia through its Kasumbalesa boarder on the Copperbelt. In order to be able to harness this potential, Zambia has to transform its system of agriculture by using advanced science and technology to improve the efficiency of agricultural production so as to exploit the local market as well as the international market by using advanced science and technology to improve the efficiency of agricultural production so as to exploit the local market as well as the international market.

In order to be able to harness agricultural potential and to transform rural communities, the government of Zambia must put in place policies aimed at transforming rural areas into mechanized agrarian societies. Agrarian change is the transitioning, improving or changing agricultural practices so that they become mechanized and run as a business to ensure rural farmers are generating income from agricultural activities. Most rural famers use a traditional mode of production which does not provide sufficient production from the agricultural sector. In order to achieve this transformation, the government of Zambia needs to spark a new agricultural revolution where Zambians will own the means of production and will directly benefit from agriculture. In order for Zambia to spark a new wave of agricultural revolution, the government needs to tap into resources like rains, improve the agriculture sector and create industries for value addition of agricultural products, as well as manufacturing of agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizer and other chemicals. The following will be key in agrarian transition:

### **Industrialization**

Industrialization has a huge potential to contribute to the development of the Zambia agricultural sector and development in rural areas. Industrialization will enable value addition to the agriculture products in Zambia. Zambia has huge potential to use its comparative advantage in the agricultural sector based on various agricultural products grown and responding to different soil conditions across the country. The lack of industrialization to enable value addition to the agricultural products in Zambia has been a huge challenge as agricultural products are still traded as raw materials, hence robbing the country of the much-needed forex revenue.



Based on the comparative advantage alluded to earlier, Zambia has huge potential for groundnut production in Eastern Province, while Northern Province is the best producer of coffee and Mwinilunga in North-Western Province has been into pineapple production. There is also tea in Kawambwa, bananas in Mwenze, and sugar in Mazabuka and Mansa. In order to harness the potential in agriculture, Zambia has to revert to a policy of the First Republic, that of industrializing provinces. To ensure the sustainability of these agricultural industries such as Mwinilunga Cannery, Kawambwa Tea, Munushi bananas and Kateshi coffee, they should be run as public-private partnerships so that they are not run down by government bureaucracies.

### **Agricultural Intensification and Expansion**

Zambia is highly endowed with various natural resources that are vital to the enhancement of agricultural and rural development, as well as to poverty reduction, if they are well managed and utilized. Close to 35% of water resources of Southern Africa are in Zambia. The country has a landmass area of approximately 752,000 square kilometers, of which 12% is suitable for arable use. Unfortunately, an approximation shows 14% of the arable land is actively cultivated. Zambia has

suitable climatic conditions that are favorable for all year round agriculture activities of different crops. Furthermore, the country is equipped with fertile and arable land in most parts of the country, as well as an availability of water resources across the county.

However, agricultural intensification requires increased inputs, such as labour, and capital, such as a smallholding of farmland. The government of Zambia has to be cognizant of the importance of agricultural intensification in order to lift the majority of local poor farmers out of poverty. In order to achieve this, the Zambian government should be in a position to ensure that farmers have access to agricultural inputs, so as to enable the farmers to increase their agricultural output. This will be achieved by enhancing the existing policies, such as the Farmer Input Subsidy Programme (FISP).

### **Market Integration**

Most of the Zambia substance farmers are based in rural areas. These rural areas are characterized by poor road infrastructure. As such farmers are heavily constrained by limited access to markets. In the same vein, an inadequate availability and supply of agricultural information, as well as insufficient access to financing, have hindered farmers' access to markets. The government of Zambia must focus on connecting the rural farmers to upstream domestic and international markets so as to increase the share of farmers in final products. To facilitate market access, the government should prioritize grading and upgrading of rural roads to a bituminous standard to open up rural areas for enhanced agricultural production. This will enable farmers to easily transport their products at lower prices as well as being able to receive agricultural inputs at a lower cost. In the long run this will enable farmers to save more money and to be able to increase their productivity.

Furthermore, the government should explore offering agricultural finance through the establishment of an agrarian financing bank. This institution would target only agricultural related business and farming in rural areas as most banks and micro finance institutions focus on urban areas and commercial farmers. Moreover, the

interest rates of commercial banks and micro finance institutions are usually high for the rural farmers and in most cases do not meet the requirements as such are unable to access any finance support to enhance their agricultural activities.

### **Mechanization**

Agricultural productivity in Zambia largely falls short of the required bare minimum to be able to effectively and efficiently deliver profits for farmers, enhance food security, and to meet the nation's nutritional needs. Furthermore, it fails to create jobs and reduce poverty levels, especially in rural areas. This low productivity can be mainly attributed to the use of traditional production techniques and poor irrigation methods. It is also attributable to an inadequate access to agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, as well as to a lack of access to responsible agricultural practices. There is also a need to use improved irrigation methods that will increase agricultural productivity, in the sense that both seasonal and non-seasonal crops will be grown throughout the year. These irrigation methods would also help local farming communities to cope with climate change, in that they help to improve crop yield in the event of droughts and this increases agriculture productivity which in turn reduces hunger and poverty.

What this discussion shows is that, in order for Zambia to make a transition from the current agrarian level of development, the country must stop relying on agriculture and primary industries as a source of livelihood or existence. The kind of labour employed in the production at all levels of development is highly intensive, due to the fact that we lack the availability of advanced technology. The impact of this lack of advanced technology can be seen, for instance where farmers produce groundnuts but cannot add value by producing peanut butter, or cooking oil, or animal feed. Instead of realizing good income, farmers continue to sell raw materials at very cheap prices and continue to sell produce which is eaten mostly at household level. Increased household revenue will subsequently lead to reduced household poverty in rural areas.



## Poor Policy Implementation

Over the years, the biggest challenge in the attainment of sustainable development and an improved agricultural sector in Zambia has not been a lack of policies. Rather, it has been lack of implementation of existing policies and legal frameworks effectively. The Zambia government, for example, is a signatory to the Maputo declaration of 2003. The declaration aims to revitalize the agricultural sector by including livestock, forestry and fisheries in special policies and strategies targeted at small scale and traditional farmers in rural areas. Furthermore, it creates enabling conditions for private sector participation, with an emphasis on human capacity development and the removal of constraints to agricultural production and marketing, including soil fertility, poor water management, inadequate infrastructure, pests and diseases (Maputo declaration, 2003). To attain this, African states have committed to adopt sound policies for agricultural and rural development by allocating at least 10% of the resources of their national budgets to the agricultural sector. For the past 19 years, the government of Zambia has not implemented this policy through consecutive national budget allocation to the agricultural sector.

## Ownership of Land

Inequality and insecurity of access to land is a major challenge, especially for women who form the majority of the farming population. It goes without saying that security of land ownership has to potential to expand the investments in land and farm improvements, as well as to provide access to finance through the use of land as collateral. The challenge of access to land for women is

not a technical issue; it is a political issue. The Zambian government should promote, secure and expand ownership of land by women. Ownership of land by women should not be considered a favor - it must be recognized as a fundamental right. For no bird can fly with one wing.

Zambia's economy will progress faster with a greater equality between men and women.

## Conclusion

In Zambia, agriculture still remains a key priority sector for job creation, poverty reduction and a promoter of economic growth. In an effort to maximize the development of Zambia, there is a need to accept the benefits of the modernization theory as a country. By adopting new technological advancements and industrialization, Zambia has the potential to attain the much-needed transformation of the agrarian and rural societies, which is envisaged by the modernization theory. Should this transformation occur, the modernization theory would have resulted in a huge production for Zambia, which in turn would stimulate demand on international markets; enabling Zambia to get more revenue over and above, it is important to keep in mind that in as much as modernization theory has many challenges, it is still the best model for Zambia to adopt.

**Micomyiza Dieudonné**  
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*"Investments in agriculture are the best weapons against hunger and poverty, and they have made life better for billions of people"*

**Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**



# MAKING MINING STUDIES COMPULSORY AT ALL LEVELS IN ZAMBIA



**Z**ambia is richly blessed with different minerals that are being mined, or are yet to be mined. Despite this, we have little or nothing on our curriculum on minerals in our education system. It is not a secret that the Zambian economy basically depends on the mining of copper and related precious minerals. As at 2019, this accounted for 71% of exports (UNCTD, 2022). This means that Zambia is nothing without the mining sector.

## Other Countries Tailor their Education Systems

China is the largest manufacturing economy in the world, constituting 32.6% of its GDP, and the national curriculum embraces this from the early days of a child being at school. A child even as young as 2 years old will begin to learn manufacturing technology. The economy of the United States of America is driven by several factors; technology, health, and construction. These important aspects of the US economy are dependent on their education system, which is tailored in those areas. The economy in India is anchored on agriculture, health and entrepreneurship. The Indian education system is geared towards these fields from as early as preschool. In the United Kingdom, the economy is dependent on services, manufacturing, construction, and tourism. All these important areas are embedded into the national curriculum, and students learn them at preschool and continue their studies until a tertiary level. The curricu-

lum in Sudan and in the Democratic Republic of Congo incorporates training on war. Children in these countries learn how to use weapons as early as five years in readiness for war in the future. The Japanese economy is based on the manufacture of electronics and on agriculture - being the biggest producers of rice world-wide. These industries have been supported through their education system.

## Zambian Education Needs a Focus

Taking into account the experience of education in other countries, the Zambian education system leaves much to be desired. Our education system relies too heavily on memorization, which amounts to a very painful system. To achieve all the progress that we admire, our colleagues in other countries worked on their education system first before anything. Zambia shouldn't have just a few people learning about mining at tertiary level when it is our major source of national income. Therefore, we need to rethink our education system and structure it correctly. Without redesigning our education system, we shall continue to suffer abject poverty in our country, allowing as we do people from outside of Zambia to come in and employ local labour, mostly unskilled, to mine our minerals.



## Foreign Ownership

Many big mines in Zambia are owned by foreigner s stakeholders: Barrick Gold Corp, Konkola Copper Mines Plc, Lubambe Copper Mine Limited, China Nonferrous Metals Corporation and First Quantum Minerals. Even the embattled ZCCM is owned by government, but still managed by foreign investors, with a lot of fights among Zambians. If any Zambian ventured into this industry, they would face significant hurdles both from government and fellow Zambians; hurdles that would prevent them from being big owners of mines. It is the advantage that foreigners obtain from their education system in their countries that puts them ahead, and they do very well when they come to Zambia to put into practice what they have learnt – enabling them to manage our economy. Moreover, they teach their children about mining in Zambia and they come into our economy to exploit their advantage. Yet, our local curriculum is talking about David Livingstone being the first European to discover Victoria Falls. Our curriculum is purely enslaved and because of this, we submit ourselves and the younger generation to economic slavery.

## Education in Zambia Needs an Overhaul

As one drives around the country, especially in Kabwe and Copperbelt, it is a common scenario to see man-made mountains. We do not understand how these fruits of the mining process came to be there. We should have been learning about them at school. But as ignorant as we are, we want to fight to take advantage of such mountains, scrambling for what amounts to clumps dropping from the main table of foreign investors. In our education curriculum, mining is only mentioned in some portions of grade seven books, and then only as an aside to a discussion about something else. As a country we would do well to overhaul the education curriculum so that we can include serious discussions about issues that are pertinent to the livelihood of our people. There is need to learn mining from as early as grade one, just like we learn about the environment around us. We want to see these lessons that are to do with minerals making an impact on all our young minds, so that they can begin to prepare themselves to venture into mining as owners.

We need to teach them not to be content simply to remain as employees in the mining industry.

## How to Overhaul the System

The question that we need to ask is: how can Zambia overhaul its education system? At pre-school, we need to discuss with our children how we make money as a country. At lower primary school, we need to seriously introduce the topic of precious minerals in Zambia. This will help the children to begin thinking about mining while they are still young. From upper primary school level, children should be educated about specific precious minerals, with copper being one of them, and these subjects have to be studied in detail. Various teaching and learning aids should be employed to enable pupils to see and appreciate the value of mining and various specific minerals. By the time one goes to junior secondary school, students should be learning details of every mineral and how it can be extracted.

At senior secondary school, practices and projects about these minerals should be given to pupils, with a particular focus on explorations and mining, such that a grade twelve school leaver should have full knowledge about mining. But this means that the teachers in all colleagues and universities need first to learn about mining and all that pertains to it, just like they learn about mathematics as a compulsory course.

## Getting the Technocrats Involved

We have enough technocrats who are able to design our own curriculum. Yes, the technocrats need to be engaged to do this. This overhaul of the education system doesn't require foreign experts to come and tell us how it should be done, but we can do it at a local level. The only serious ingredient lacking here is the political will and the people power to make this happen. I have no doubt, with the current government's involvement and support, this overhaul can be done and done in the right way. It is no laughing matter to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a 20<sup>th</sup> century mindset. Therefore, let us introduce mining studies in our schools and make it compulsory for all from pre-school to secondary school.

*Prof. Edgar Nyanga*

*Assistant Professor, Supershine University*

# SUPEREROGATORY ACTS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

## The Supererogatory Acts of Fernando Richie

**F**ernando Richie was a Filipino Jesuit Scholastic doing missionary work in Cambodia. He worked with landmine victims, polio patients and people with learning disabilities at Banteay Prieb (Dulle).

On 17 October 1996, the staff at Banteay Prieb held a meeting with Sarom, one of the students with disabilities. Sarom was an emotionally distraught student (Dulle). The aim of the meeting was to dismiss Sarom from the center due to his unbecoming behavior. Sarom was told to go out and begin a trade and come back on graduation day (Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific). Sarom seemed to agree with the decision. However, Sarom pulled out a grenade and made for a classroom full of students. Fernando Richie followed Sarom and grabbed Sarom's hands but the grenade fell out of Sarom's hands. Fernando threw himself over the grenade shielding Sarom and the other students and died immediately from the blast (Dulle).

## What was Fernando Richie's Moral Obligation?

Since the cause of his canonization was opened in 2019, perhaps, one day he will become a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. For now his actions pose some interesting questions in moral philosophy: did Fernando Richie have an obligation to throw himself in front of a

mon good? In this paper, I argue that though there is no moral duty to be saintly, or to perform supererogatory acts, there is a need for more saintly or supererogatory acts as one of the strategies in the creation of the common good in general and in Zambia in particular. I shall begin by describing what supererogatory acts are. Then I shall argue for the position that though morally praiseworthy, there is no moral obligation to be saintly or to perform supererogatory acts. I shall conclude by making a case for more supererogatory acts in the bid to create the common good in general and in Zambia in particular, though they are not demanded by any moral duty.

## The Four-fold Paradox in Moral Philosophy

For a long time, moral philosophy proceeded with a trichotomy in classifying moral actions. Under this classification, an action could either be: 1) moral and obligatory, that is, performed in response to duty, or 2) moral and permissible, or 3) immoral and not permissible (J.O. Urmson, 699). James Urmson became the first to challenge this orthodox tripartite classification of moral actions (Heyd). According to Urmson, this trichotomy is totally inadequate to the facts of morality (700). He made a claim that ethics should recognise a category of actions that are not required by duty, but transcend it (J.O. Urmson" 699). Such actions are saintly or supererogatory.

## What is a Saint?

Susan Wolf attempted to define who a moral saint is. According to her, a moral saint is someone who is as morally good as possible (Susan Wolf: Moral Saints, 710). She laid down some qualities to be expected from a saint such as: someone with qualities which enable him to treat others with justice and kindness; someone with moral virtues (from standard to non-standard level); patient, considerate welcoming, moderate tempered, charitable; not in a hurry to pass harsh judgments and careful not to practice favoritism (Susan Wolf: Moral Saints, 710).

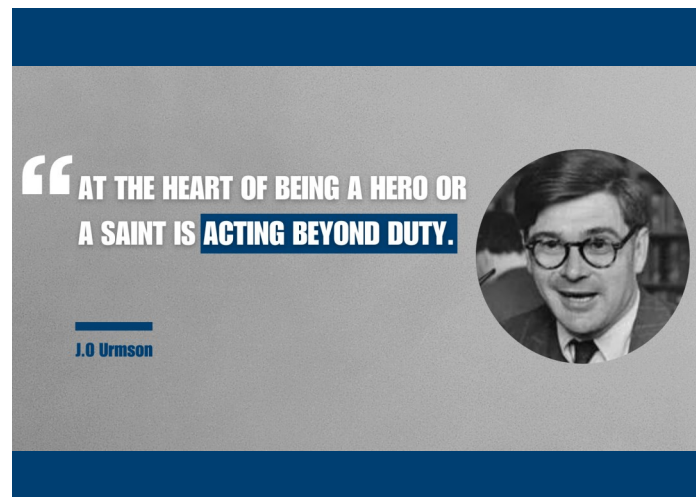


“  
*I know where my  
heart is. It is with  
Jesus Christ.*  
”

grenade as he did? If he did not do it, would he be in breach of some moral duty?

What is the role of such acts in the creation of the com-

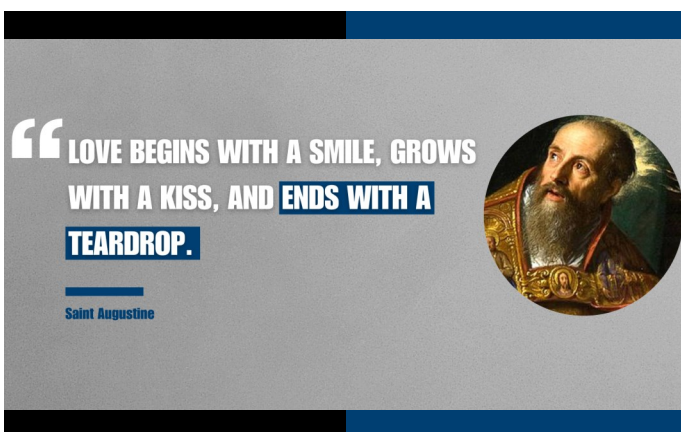
I am not satisfied by this prescriptive and seemingly epistemic description on who a saint is. Being a moral saint has to do with a response to a particular situation, or an occasion. Most people regarded as moral saints never set out to be saints. For some it was a spontaneous response, while for others it was deliberate. Some never sat down deliberately to become saints and it never occurred to them that they are moral saints, or that what they are doing would lead them to become moral saints. Therefore Wolf's list is too universalistic in application. I am of the view that every response is individual and therefore unique. Fernando Richie did not plan to become a moral saint, or to perform a saintly act on the day that he died. His was a spontaneous response to the situation. He was described as an ordinary man, a handy man and intelligent, and that he liked playing basketball, to swim and to run - he was also a jokester (Dulle). No part of this description comes close to the description that Wolf presents.



Put simply, supererogatory acts go beyond duty; they are morally good though they are not required (Heyd). These acts are: neither required out of duty nor are they impermissible; morally neutral when they are omitted and do not require punishment or criticism of whatever nature; morally good through their consequences and their intrinsic value; voluntary and are done for someone's sake (Heyd). These acts, therefore, have a moral value. In fact, they have the highest possible moral evaluation, but their performance is not an obligation.

### The Need to go Beyond the Minimum

Duty is the minimum, but not the all. Acting out of duty means that we have not done all (McGoldrick 527). There are more moral actions to perform, but they are not obligatory, though they fit the highest possible moral ideal (McGoldrick, 527). In Christian parlance, this is the way of perfection that Jesus asked from the rich young man, to go beyond the minimum and become perfect. For one to be perfect, one needs a radical departure from the minimum, to go beyond what duty demands. This is what is called the '*Magis*' in Ignatian spirituality, which is an aspiring for the more, though this is not obligatory. This is what will lead to the creation of better societies. The world is such a better place because of the heroic acts of a few men and women, like Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King Jr, just to mention a few. These are men and women who went beyond duty, who did not see duty as a limit but rather the starting who did not see duty as a limit but rather the starting point to greatness in working for the common good.



### Acting Beyond Duty

I prefer Urmson's take on moral actions. At the heart of being a hero or a saint is acting beyond duty. One does this through control of one's opposite inclinations and interests, or effortlessly in the case of a saint, and through control of natural fear, or effortlessly in the case of a hero ("J.O. Urmson" 701). This is the epitome or the ideal. Thus, ethics has to come to terms with the fact that certain acts of heroism and saintliness cannot be adequately contained in the concept of duty. Ethics need not be restricted to some trichotomy of duties. There is a whole purview of actions, supererogatory ones, which cannot be contained in that duty-based classification. These saintly acts go beyond the bare minimum by going the extra mile over what is asked.



## Conclusion

The common good will be created by parents who go beyond duty in raising their children, spouses who go beyond duty towards each other, citizens who go beyond duty towards their country, public servants who go beyond duty in carrying out their public functions. The challenge is that, we cannot even discharge our minimum duties. We still have parents who cannot discharge their duties to their children, spouses who cannot perform their duties to each other, citizens who do not honor their civic duties, and public servants who do not discharge their minimum duties. But the case to go beyond duty is not utopic. It is more than relevant, and it is a critical element in the promotion of the common good in general and in Zambia in particular.

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**Pope Francis**

“

**Faith has untold power to inspire and sustain our respect for others, for believers come to know that God loves every man and woman with infinite love.”**

# RETHINKING THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION



## An Ideal Way to Fight Corruption?

**T**he idea of fighting corruption is a noble one. No sane person can oppose a moral crusade such as fighting corruption. However, if there appears to be a clear gap between the moral high ground of *intent* and the *modus operandi*, then that sets off alarm bells that the whole exercise must be reviewed. In other words, the way the fight against corruption is conducted matters, regarding the justification of the so-called fight against corruption.

This is the criticism, or rather the question, that one can pose to the current government led by the United Party for National Development (UPND). The way they have started their fight against corruption raises troubling questions. It seems “the fight” is limited to targeting former Patriotic Front (PF) government officials and their associates.

## Transcending the Generations when Fighting Corruption

If the fight against corruption is an open one, why limit it to the last 10-15 years only? Is that the only period in which Zambia experienced corruption? What about the period before that? Was there no corruption then? What about the current period? Has corruption ended with the

change of government? What is the grand plan for fighting corruption in the coming years? What tangible measures, like new laws and regulations are being put in place to put an end to this perennial vice in Zambia? It would leave a sour taste in the mouth if these questions lack convincing answers. If anything, it plays into the hands of those who may argue that the current fight against corruption is just a case of retribution against political opponents.

While it is hard to argue against certain excesses that the country lived through during the PF regime, it is not sufficient to deal with those excesses just by going after a clique of PF characters. Yes, the law should strictly apply to those who would be found wanting for corrupt practices during this exercise. But cynics may ask: What next?

## Finding a Just Way to Fight Corruption

It is important for Zambia to resist being only driven by the popular disenchantment with the PF, that the PF regime took this country to hitherto unheard-of levels of corruption, misrule, criminality, and cadre-mayhem. If that is the only motivation, then cynics will simply say, “we have seen it all before”, and they will be right. It would be wise to move on from the disillusionment and anger at the said excesses of the PF regime. After all, it

resulted into a resounding “NO” to the PF, when all votes were counted following the August 12, 2021, polls.

The UPND rode to power, on the back of this deep-felt disillusionment. Like the proverbial “knight in shining armour”, they embraced the spoils of their electoral victory, promising heaven and earth, especially repeating the mantra of giddy promises like zero tolerance to corruption, strict adherence to the rule of law, and professional management of national affairs such as the economy. It would be refreshing for the UPND regime to chart a novel way forward that is not just a rehash of what usually happens after a change of regimes in Zambia. This would be moving towards a fight against corruption that seeks to uproot the root causes of the endemic corruption we see all around us.

### Rehashing the Old Fight Against Corruption

Unfortunately, alarm bells have not taken long to go off, given the approach taken in the “corruption fight”. A related worry is the current general discourse in the nation regarding corruption and the rule of law. One may not be wrong to think that the nation believes that corruption, criminality, public theft, bad governance, and the disregard for the rule of law, only started, and probably ended with the PF regime? This is what one sees as the general mood in our beloved country. We seem to be happy and satisfied with the exclusive focus on PF bigwigs. There seems to be no urgency to address the root causes of why the PF ended up where they did.

The big worry is that such a noble cause may be doomed to failure, due to this obsession with the PF regime. Indeed, as stated above, clear cases of corruption in the last 10 years should be vigorously investigated. Why should one be concerned only with the last 10 years? What about the grand corruption the nation witnessed during the era of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), and the time towards the end of the era of the United National Independence Party (UNIP)? Furthermore, are we not already hearing of corrupt tendencies in the current regime?

### Addressing the Root Causes

How are we going to successfully end corruption if we limit the corruption fight to only arresting the PF bigwigs and leave the corruption that goes on daily in public offices, in our schools, and hospitals intact? That would be only dealing with the symptoms of corruption and not addressing the root causes.

Senior citizen among us, who have lived through every



regime since independence would recall that when UNIP was defeated, all efforts of correcting bad governance hardly went beyond dealing with UNIP and its leaders. The “cleansing” of State House and looking for the billions of kwacha that President Kaunda had apparently stashed away was the flavour of the moment. The same happened when President Chiluba, and eventually the MMD, lost power. There was the ZAMTROP frenzy and the digging out of money buried at the farm premises of a prominent MMD leader. Needless to say that after President Chiluba and the people around him were hounded for a period, all the effort directed to righting the wrongs fizzled out.

Throughout all these quasi fights against corruption, no tonic was sufficiently applied to rid the country of the root causes of bad governance. For instance, the spectre of cadres remained virtually the same from the UNIP days, through the MMD period and the immediate past of PF regime. The UNIP cadres took you “by air” if you were deemed inimical to UNIP’s interests. We had the diehard MMD cadres, not to mention the dare devil mentality of the PF cadres. Throughout these regimes, the extortionist character of the cadres at bus stops and markets remained the same and became entrenched. Whether this has now been addressed remains to be seen



this early in the UPND regime. Banning cadres from wearing party regalia and camouflaging them under “cooperative associations” does not solve the cadre problem.

### On a Slippery Slope

Regarding the rule of law and the extensive powers of the executive in Zambia, one recalls the hilarious case of a High Court Judge who suddenly claimed to have been suffering from a bout malaria when President Mwanawasa called him out for ruling against a decision the President had made. The poor Judge shamelessly reversed his own ruling.

This is demonstrate that Zambia has been on a slippery slope since independence by consistently refusing to deal with the fundamental underlying causes of corruption and misrule. Spectacular arrests of former leaders might be a necessary, but they are not a sufficient condition to rid the country of entrenched corrupt tendencies.

Part of this slippery slope is our failure to decisively come up with a durable national constitution.

The PF is the bogeyman of the moment. They have even earned themselves the collective names of “thieves” and “criminals”. Unfortunately, the country risks losing the war against corruption by the obsession of winning the battle with the leaders of the PF regime.

### We Have to Fight Corruption Together

Let us take a collective look at the situation and let us reconsider how we should really be fighting corruption, especially given the fact that there is a corrupt mentality has been normalised and has become deeply rooted in our collective psyche as Zambians. We may not realise

that, without compunction, we find it okay to give a policeman a K50 note to avoid paying a K400 speeding fine on our roads. We feel it is okay to ‘oil’ the hands of a passport officer to fast track the passport process. We feel no alarm when sexual favours are demanded and given in return for a job or good grades at school. One remembers the time when people would go door to door selling leaked exam questions and parents buying them for our children in place of hard work. This does not include everything that goes with winning Government tenders. The list goes on.

A true fight against corruption needs to be one that address all these ills and not just retribution against certain individuals. If we choose retribution as the *modus operandi* of fighting corruption, I am afraid we shall soon find ourselves in the same place a few years from now.

This is the slippery slope that gave us the PF regime. The PF regime did not just arrive on the scene from nowhere – falling on our country from Planet X, so to speak. The corruption from the PF regime was nurtured by the failure of previous regimes to fight a real fight against corruption, and against bad governance in general.

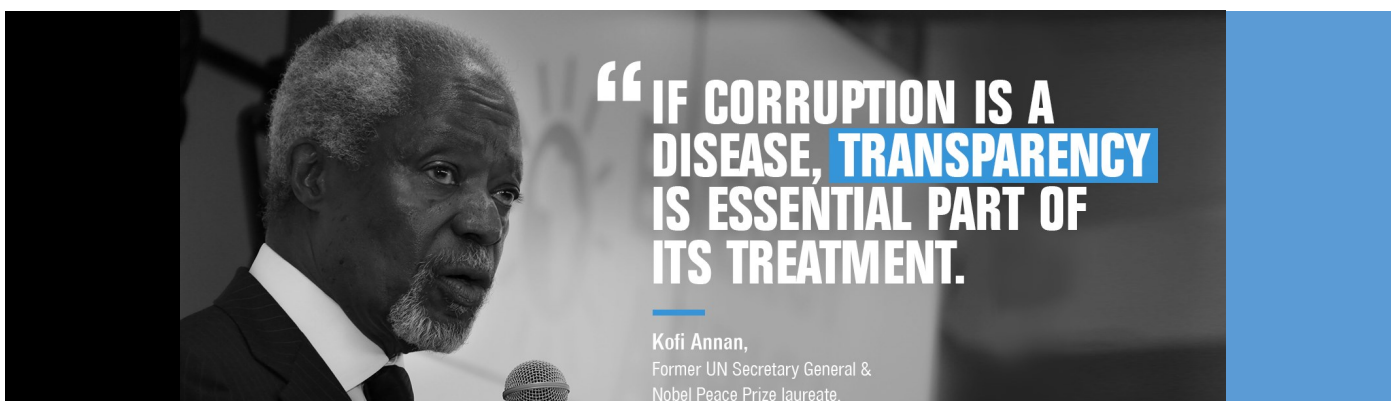
The ball is now squarely in the hands of the UPND regime.

### Forewarned is forearmed!

*Fr. Joseph Komakoma*

*Chaplain*

*Catholic University, Kalulushi*



# ZAMBIA AND THE TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS



## Introduction

According to the 8<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan for Zambia (2022 – 2026), the goal is to achieve an annual real GDP growth rate of at least 4.5% by 2026. How does the government wish to do this? It wants to initiate strategic interventions in such key industries as agriculture, tourism, mining and manufacturing to enhance production and productivity. A cursory glance at this list will tell us that, with the mention of agriculture and mining, the use of resources from the environment constitutes a key part to the Zambian medium term economic plan.

From a Catholic point of view, this is a sound plan. Every country can and should utilize its natural resources for the common good, and for the benefit of all. The challenge is to utilize natural resources in a way that respects the environment, and that is sustainable, preserving the environment for future generations. As the UPND government stimulates production in mining and agriculture, can it do this while valuing the environment and preserving it for future generations?

## Tragedy of the Commons

If one considers the example given by Garrett Hardin in 1968, one might well answer that it is not possible for Zambia to use its natural resources in a way that preserves them for future generations. Hardin, an American ecologist, wrote a paper in 1968 for the magazine, *Science*. In the paper, entitled ‘the *Tragedy of the Commons*’, Hardin argued that every person makes decisions based on their personal needs, and that this is the case even if this decision will have negative consequences for others.

Exploring this hypothesis, Hardin suggested an example of a group of people who are all using a common plot of land to graze their animals. He argues that if it is true that people always make decisions based on their own interests, even to the detriment of others, then everyone using this common field will want to increase their stock of animals until the grazing in the common plot is completely exhausted. The result is tragic, because every person – by following their self-interest to the detriment of others – will no longer be able to benefit from the common field in the future for grazing. The resources are used up by too many animals using a single piece of land.



## Zambia and the Commons

If Hardin is right, how would this apply in a Zambian context? Given that Zambia wants to increase production in mining and agricultural produce, maybe this increase in production could happen for selfish reasons and without any consideration for the negative effects to the nation. Is this feasible?

One might point out that, since corporations and individuals would be benefitting the entire nation through enhanced usage of agriculture and mining, Hardin's example doesn't seem to fit neatly into a Zambian context. If GDP really does rise to 4.5% by 2026, surely this is a good thing for the country?

Where Hardin's example might be accurate is if mining corporations conduct their operations in ways that permanently damage the environment (or the commons) for future generations in Zambia. If corporations and other stakeholders are driven purely by a desire for profit, and exhibit no interest in corporate responsibility to the community and in the preservation of Zambia's natural heritage, then Hardin's example might offer a warning for us. Copper is a common resource to be used for the nation, but not to the detriment of the population and to future populations.

What about agriculture? The same questions could be asked about the agricultural industry in Zambia. If Hardin's argument is correct, then corporations and individuals would want to use the nation's land in a way that is purely self-interested, regardless of the negative consequences for neighbours and for future generations. One could ask whether agricultural practices are sustainable and are conducted in such a way as to minimize the risk of harm to neighbours and to the Zambians of tomorrow.

## The Throwaway Culture

These questions are not academic. Pope Francis, in his landmark environmental encyclical *Laudato Si*, bemoans what he calls a 'throwaway culture'. He argues that,

*"We have not yet managed to adopt a circular mod-*

*el of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations, while limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources, moderating their consumption, maximizing their efficient use, reusing and recycling them. A serious consideration of this issue would be one way of counteracting the throwaway culture which affects the entire planet."* (LS, §22)

From the Pope's point of view, we have not yet managed to think about how to use our natural resources in a sustainable way. We tend to consume our resources, without consideration for the poor, or for populations in the future who might need them. This is very similar to the argument of Hardin in the Tragedy of the Commons. Our usage of nature is too selfish to take into account the needs of others.

## Is Zambia Conserving or Destroying the Commons?

Zambia has come a long way from its earliest commercial copper mining practices of the early 1900's. The nation has made some progress in its environmental management systems, with the establishment of the Environmental Council of Zambia in 1990. The Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Act, which established the Council, was the first in a series of laws and regulations designed manage the usage of natural resources in a sustainable way. Having a look at these positive steps, one might say that Zambia is doing what it can to conserve the environment (or the commons), and not to consume natural resources in a self-referential way. However, poor implementation of existing legislation and regulations has sometimes resulted in dire consequences for local populations.

One example is the Nchanga copper mine in Zambia's Chingola district. This mine is under the administration of Konkola Copper mines, a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources, which is a UK-based company. In 2021, it was reported that local villagers successfully took Vedanta Resources to court in the UK. They were seeking damages for negative environmental impacts of the mining operations of the Nchanga mine.



These villagers (some 2500) were given compensation for these negative impacts. They were victims of the kind of dynamic Hardin and Pope Francis have been talking about: a self-centered usage of our natural resources. This usage has to change.

### The Need for Conversion

The Nchanga mine is not an isolated example. In a study conducted in 2018 on the environmental impact of mining on the communities in Kitwe and Mufulira, individuals were asked for their feedback. The main negative impacts of mining on these communities was reported as land degradation, pollution and vegetable depletion.

Regarding land degradation, the study concluded that the mining activities under scrutiny were responsible for removing top soil and vegetation cover, and they covered arable land with debris. This had a serious impact on the members of the community, who rely on the land for their livelihood. Also, the study discovered that there had been notable air pollution, with pollutants in the air registering at levels higher than recommended by ZEMA and WHO. Therefore, this is a case where there are laws in place to prevent this, but the laws have not been adequately implemented.

Regarding water pollution, the study showed that the pollutants in the water were within the statutory limit. However, the water table had been lowered due to the fact that underground water had to be pumped out to prepare for mining activities. This negatively impacted the local communities, since it meant that the soil surrounding the mine did not have enough moisture to be arable. This represents an example where the laws in place do not adequately protect the local communities from the negative impacts of mining.

The harm done to the communities in Kitwe and Mufulira calls us to acknowledge that Zambia is not preserving the environment (or the commons) in the way that it should. If one considers the study of 2018, one has to realise that this damage could have been avoided. In these stories, one can find a call to change and conversion.

### Towards a Sustainable Future

In 2016, a Laudato Si' conference was held in Lusaka, hosted by Caritas Zambia, JCTR and in conjunction with the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB). The conference was entitled: '*Care of our Common Home in the Context of Large Scale Investments: Mining and Agriculture.*'

The official statement released by the conference acknowledged the great importance of mining and agriculture to employment and economic growth in Zambia. At the same time, the conference emphasized that there needs to be a "prudent and sustainable management of the earth's resources to reduce poverty among the people for the benefit of all and future generations." In terms of mining, the conference invited Zambia to find ways for local communities to reclaim land that has been used by mining for future usage.

Regarding agriculture, the conference called on Zambians to consider how to promote agricultural production in a way that is responsive to the needs of the environment, that promotes biodiversity, and that benefits local communities.

### Conclusion

The Laudato Si' conference concluded that Zambia needs to revisit its mining and agricultural sectors. It invited leaders in these industries to consider how to conduct mining and agricultural production in ways that better preserve the environment and benefit local communities. In other words, the conference challenged business and government not be self-centered with regards to mining and agriculture.

This challenge can be posed to all of us. We need to



acknowledge the value of the environment, as well as the importance of the human beings who rely on the environment for their livelihood. We are called to a conversion of heart: from a self-centered outlook to one that cares for others.

In this sense, Hardin and his 'tragedy of the commons' continues to give us pause for serious reflection. Are we using the environment only in ways that are selfish, without due regard for the negative consequences on our neighbours and future generations? In the language of Pope Francis and *Laudato Si'*, this question could be rephrased as follows: Are we nurturing a throwaway culture in our societies, where we consume our natural resources without consideration for the poor and those

hardest hit by environmental damage?

As Zambia moves forward with its 8<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan, we will rely on agriculture and mining to stimulate the GDP growth that the country needs. The message of Hardin and Pope Francis is clear. If we are to do this in a way that is in alignment with God's plan for the world, then we have to find a way to use Zambia's natural resources in a way that does not do damage to the environment and to our children's ecological heritage.

**Grant Tungay, S.J.**  
**Faith and Justice Programme**  
**JCTR - Lusaka**

“ ”

*Are we using the environment only in ways that are selfish,  
without due regard for the negative consequences on our  
neighbours and future generations?*



# WHY SHOULD ZAMBIA EMBRACE AGROECOLOGY?



## The Future Challenges

**I**n the decades to come, Zambia has to tackle two challenging dynamics. Firstly, it has to feed a rapidly growing population. The population is projected to grow from 19 million Zambians to over 40 Million by 2050. Secondly, Zambia will most likely be strongly impacted by climate change, as will the whole Southern African region. Even now, some areas in the region face tremendous changes in climate, with increasing temperatures and a destabilisation of rainfall patterns. For the agricultural sector, these dynamics mean that Zambia needs to produce more, and under progressively insecure and unstable conditions.

## The Impact on Small-Scale Farmers

It is small-scale farmers who are most vulnerable to these environmental dynamics. They account for approximately half of the Zambian population. Today, 78% of Zambians in rural areas are classified as poor, compared to 28% in urban areas. From the outset, this leaves them with fewer possibilities to adapt. These particular environmental challenges could potentially unleash a vicious cycle of poverty, hunger, and environmental destruction. Furthermore, they could result in an overuse of natural resources through charcoal burning, for instance, as well as cause a reduction of agricultural productivity. On top of these consequences, this vicious cycle could drive an acceleration of climate change and even more growth in the population. This outcome carries with it the risk of social conflicts, as a young gener-

ation grows up facing a desperate situation.

Small-scale farmers are a very important target group for political parties, as their large number can bring many votes. Unfortunately, the support is often too narrowly focused on the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP). Besides the problems of the late distribution of the inputs, farmers often remain dependent on the program after many years of support, which runs counter to the goal of FISP to make farmers independent.

## FISP and the Green Revolution

The logic behind the FISP is that the poverty of the rural population will be alleviated when farmers have sufficient access to chemical fertilizers, improved seeds, and agrochemicals for pest & disease control. In conjunction with farm mechanization and irrigation techniques, these inputs constituted important components of the 'Green Revolution' to improve yields and agricultural productivity.

The term 'Green Revolution' refers to the development of intensive farming, which movement started in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was intended to alleviate poverty and to stimulate economic growth in developed countries. In Asia, the approach of the Green Revolution has led to an increase in yield. However, despite many attempts at the Green Revolution in Africa, the yields of farmers have stagnated or even reduced over the years. In Asia, the approach of the Green Revolution has led to an increase in yield. However, despite many attempts at



the Green Revolution in Africa, the yields of farmers have stagnated or even reduced over the years.

Additionally, in time, more and more negative environmental impacts of this approach have been observed. Besides the exhaustion of the soils (which seems especially rapid, considering that African soils are geographically older), the key consequences of this agricultural approach have been the contamination of ground and surface water, the extinction of flora and fauna, as well as the many health issues experienced by human beings as a result of direct exposure to the impacted environment, or through the intake of food. Intensive agriculture has been also identified as one of the main drivers of climate change, it being responsible for nearly a quarter of the global greenhouse gas emissions.

The costs of these negative impacts are generally borne by the public, and are not assumed by the big agrochemical companies. On the contrary, the latter companies profit strongly through the promotion of this approach. The polluter-pays-principle demands exactly this.

### Climate-Smart Agriculture and Agroecology

Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) can be understood as an evolution of the Green Revolution. It takes into account the negative environmental impacts, as well as Climate Change. However, among the technologies promoted by CSA are the products from agrochemical industries and GMO seeds, which have impacts on natural ecosystems which are still highly debated. It seems that CSA still promotes the interests of big agricultural businesses more than it does the interests of small-scale farmers. The needs of the small-scale farmers are therefore ignored, like they were under the Green Revolution. So the risks remain, and there are few positive impacts that one can observe.

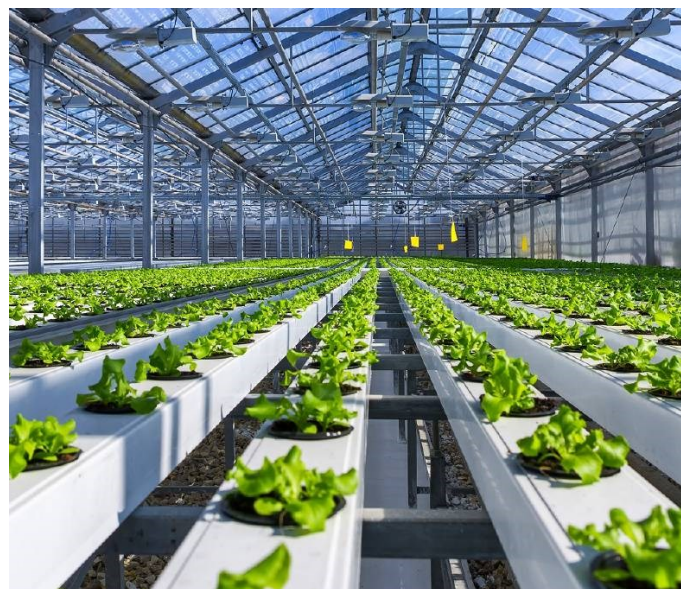
In addition to avoiding completely the use of synthetic agrochemicals, Agroecology (AE) promotes a more holistic approach. Not only does it take into consideration the economic and environmental dimension, but it also considers the social dimension of farming. The question which AE is concerned with is not primarily how small-

scale farmers can be integrated into an international agribusiness system, but rather how rural livelihoods can be improved by a bottom-up approach. The following can be described as the benefits of Agroecology:

### 1. AE brings Self-determined Development Rather than Dependency

Some years ago, there was an outcry in the media over a wave of suicides of smallholder farmers in India. Many of them were caught in a debt trap. Following crop failures, they could not pay back the price of the inputs they had borrowed, like seed and fertilizer, and they were about to lose everything they had. In Zambia, a similar scenario could happen, considering that climate change could increase the risks of crop failure for local farmers.

Agroecology helps farmers to avoid the debt trap, by teaching them to produce inputs on location at their farms. An example of this is Bokashi fertiliser. This is a type of fertilizer produced by the farmers on site. It works not only with plant nutrients in their chemical form, but focuses rather on establishing a healthy soil life, where microorganisms can help make the necessary nutrients available to plants. This technology takes into consideration that plants and soil-microorganisms live in multiple symbioses (mutually beneficial relationships), where plants share the carbohydrates they produce from energy derived from sunlight, and the microorganisms provide essential plant nutrients from the soil.





## 2. AE Brings Local Crop Diversity Rather than Highly Improved Seeds

The global seed market is a billion dollar business, with only a handful of companies dominating the market. The commercially available crops are few in number, and within their species, they exhibit very little genetic diversity. Under ideal conditions, they can bring extremely high yields. The problem is that small-scale farmers do not work under ideal conditions. They are therefore not profiting from the promised yield gains, as other factors are limiting their production system.

Additionally, the narrow genetic diversity limits the potential for natural adaptation – an adaptation which is urgently needed because of climate change. Needless to say, the local economy does not profit much from the globalized seed market.

In the agroecological approach, farmers are encouraged to be the guardians of their traditional seeds. They are empowered to safeguard the diversity of their local crops, which are extremely well-adapted and which constitute

## 3. AE Brings Food Security Rather than High Commercial Yields

The diversity of crops grown by a farmer has a direct influence on the food security of the family. As these crops ripen at different times of the year, instances of shortage are avoided. Moreover, this diversity increases the nutritional benefit to the family, as the different crops lead to a more balanced and healthy diet.

The food security of small-scale farmers will better alleviate hunger than the mere increase of production in the agricultural sector. This is because the families of small-scale farmers in Zambia are more exposed to the risk of hunger than others. Even if the agricultural products in the country are high, it is not guaranteed that small-scale farmers will have access to this food.

Surplus production of these diverse cropping systems can be locally processed, and can enhance a local economy. This can create income for the families of small-

scale farmers, as well as employment for more people – thus ensuring that the revenues remain in the local communities.

As an important side note, research has shown that overall yields in an agroecologically diverse cropping system can be even higher than in a conventional monocropping setup, due to beneficial effects between the crops.

## 4. AE Nurtures Resilience through System Inherent Factors and Diversity Rather than through External Factors.

The diversity of crops is one of the components in AE which creates a higher resilience compared to other agricultural approaches. The diversity of crops with different planting times helps to overcome dry spells, which are more likely to increase in Zambia. Some crops do better in wet weather, some in dry environments. Crop diversity ensures that a farmer has always something to harvest.



Another component of resilience is improved soils. By focusing on organic matter and soil life, the structure of the soil is improved. Gradually the soil develops the properties of a sponge, and as a result it can absorb large amounts of water in a short space of time, thereby reducing runoff and erosion.

Furthermore, the higher absorption and retention rates can lead to a replenishing of the groundwater, and can keep more water available for the plants so as to help them overcome eventual dry spells more easily. This can even help to turn around the effects of climate change, as organic matter ensures that more carbon is bound in the soil, which reduces the incidence of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

In intensive systems, this resilience can only be achieved through high external inputs and irrigation systems, which are costly and need proper maintenance to work flawlessly.

### Conclusion

As a Christian Nation, Zambia should embrace agroecology and should revise its strategy on how to develop smallholder agriculture in general, and through FISP in particular. There is a need to oppose the destructive powers that are unscrupulously exploiting mother earth, and doing so for self-centred purposes.

On several occasions, Pope Francis has denounced an economy which denies and suffocates life, rather than affirming it: an economy which promotes and serves the human family. According to Catholic Social Teaching, economic development must not only focus on the interests of the rich, but must include all perspectives - especially those of the most vulnerable of society. This development must ensure that no one is left behind.

This is also in line with the thinking that Pope Francis develops in his encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*. He emphasises that respect for creation includes the responsibility for the diversity of creatures. He also sees in the ecological crisis, before all else, a crisis of spirituality. That is, a crisis of not caring for our brothers and sisters. The practice of Agroecology will help us to put the well-being of our brothers and sisters at the centre of our environmental care and management.

*Fr. Claus Recktenwald, S.J.*

*Kasisi Agricultural and Training Centre - Lusaka*

“”

*Today, 78% of Zambians in rural areas are classified as poor, compared to 28% in urban areas... in addressing the crisis of spirituality, we must embrace agro-ecology as a means of developing smallholder agriculture.*



# THE NEXUS BETWEEN ZAMBIA'S DEBT CRISIS AND THE COST OF LIVING

**-\$27 billion**



## Burden of Debt Serving

**Z**ambia is still battling with a debt distress which has denied the country the opportunity to grow at its full potential. This has worsened the poverty levels as the past few years have seen a rechanneling of resources from key sectors of the economy such as: social security protection; education; health; water and sanitation among others to debt serving. The coming in of Covid-19 further worsened the living conditions in Zambia through disruptions of livelihood as productivity was lost and government's responsibility to meet health needs of its people increased. Zambia therefore needs to grow to its full potential to improve livelihoods of its people and eradicate poverty. It is for this reason that the country desperately needs a debt restructure to unlock investment and improve fiscal space.

## Mechanism for Debt Restructuring

Zambia was among the first countries to apply for debt restructure under the G20 Common Framework for debt treatment in early 2021. Progress has been made in this regard as the next step is for the Official Creditor Committee for Zambia to agree with the authorities the specific modalities of how official creditors intend to deliver debt relief consistent with the Fund-program parameters in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The authorities aimed to complete discussions on the MoU by the end of 2022, however, this is yet to

be accomplished as the process has lagged. The Zambian government has remained committed to fiscal sustainability. The country has also received support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through the US\$1.3 billion extended credit facility and a total of US\$740 million concessional loan from the World Bank (WB). This has helped Zambia return to positive economic growth levels. However, debt restructuring is needed if Zambia is to achieve sustained economic growth.

## Measures to Improve Livelihoods

The Zambian government has implemented a medium term strategy to run for the period between 2023 and 2025. This is intended to improve livelihoods of its people through reduced cost of living; improved and sustained economic growth averaging 4.2 percent; increased domestic revenue and improved reserves in the treasury. For all these to be actualized, Zambia needs investment inflow. The delayed restructuring in Zambia's debt is blocking investment inflow into the country as investors may not perceive Zambia to be credible. This is making it difficult for the government to meet the needs of its people to the required extent due to limitations of resources. It is very important to understand that no nation can grow in isolation as global partnership and trade is very important. Foreign direct investment boosts the countries reserves, increases the country's revenue generation capacity and creates jobs.



### Impact of the Delayed Debt Restructuring

The delayed debt restructuring is also contributing to the instability of the Zambian currency. As earlier highlighted, Zambia's huge debt overhang is eroding market and investor confidence. Reduced direct foreign investment reduces the country's forex earnings. For a country that is a net importer like Zambia, high demand for forex to import commodities adds pressure to the country's reserves and leads to the devaluation of the local currency. This has been evident as the Zambian kwacha has been depreciating against major currencies. The depreciation of the kwacha means more of the Zambian currency is needed to import commodities for consumption. This is likely to lead to increased inflation rate, which if not accompanied by increased nominal income (salaries) reduces household's real income implying that household's income can no longer purchase the same quantity of basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, medicine among others) that it previously could. Therefore, the delayed debt restructuring is likely to contribute to the rising cost of living for an average Zambian as monitored by the monthly study by JCTR on the basic needs and nutrition basket.

The rising cost of living is causing households to cut down on the number or quantity of meals per day as

well as compromise on nutritional content of these meals. It is also compromising the capacity of households to access decent housing due to reduced real income and therefore worsening the poverty levels in Zambia.

### Conclusion

Therefore government must continue to do what is within its power to get the debt restructuring negotiations concluded in order to arrest the escalating cost of living. Zambia's creditors must go beyond advancing their commercial interest to considering the larger picture that comes with providing the requested treatment on the Zambian people. Debt restructuring is critical in stabilising the economic fundamentals which are crucial for economic growth to increase incomes and expand employment opportunities for the poor. Further, government must present a clear medium term domestic resource mobilisation strategy that will enable substantial revenue generation for social sector spending, which is crucial to addressing the high living cost.

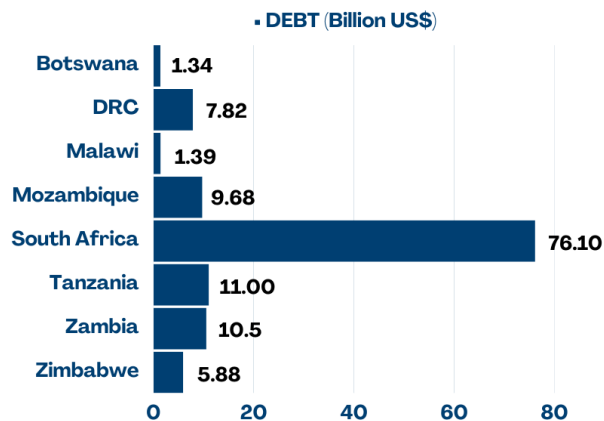
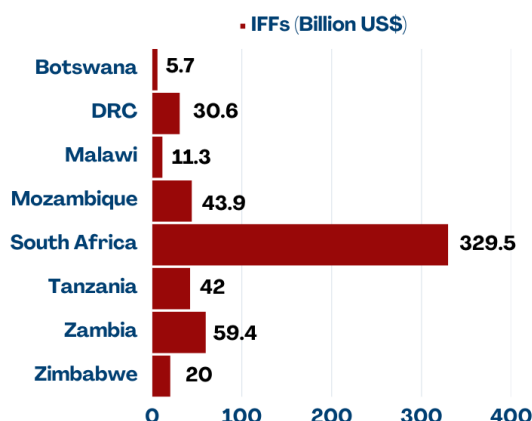
*Alex Muyebe, S.J.  
JCTR - Lusaka*

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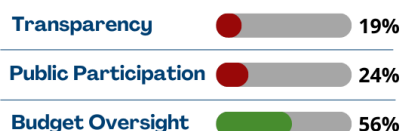
Alex Muyebe, S.J  
JCTR Executive Director



# ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS (IFFs) vs DEBT

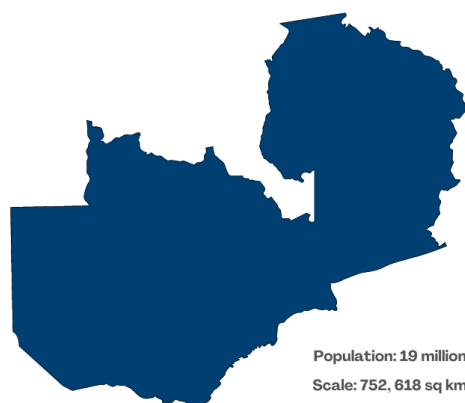


## Open Budget Survey Results

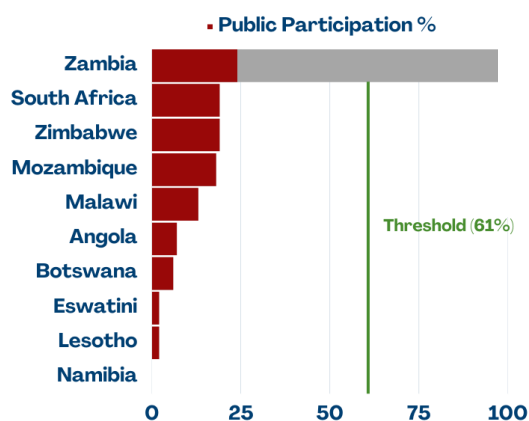


Population: 19 million \*  
Scale: 752, 618 sq km  
GDP: \$21.20 billion (2021)  
\* As at Dec 2022 grown by 4.7%

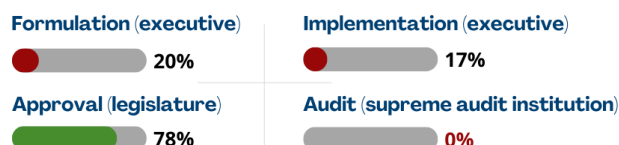
## BUDGET TRANSPARENCY in ZAMBIA Open Budget Survey (OBS) Report



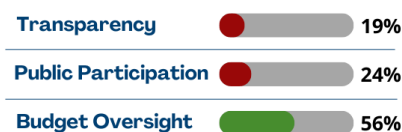
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## Extent of Opportunities for Public Participation in the Budget Process



## Open Budget Survey Results



# PHOTO FOCUS



January

Participants of a dialogue engagement between the Church, marketers, and ministry representatives pose for a photo.



L-R: Alex Muyebe S.J (JCTR ED), Chama B. Mundia (of Water Aid), and Boyd Muleya (Ministry of Home Affairs) pictured during a townhall Public Lecture facilitated by IMF

JCTR staff pose for a group photo with members of the National Assembly Committee on Education, Science, & Technology after making a submission.





# PHOTO FOCUS



February



JCTR's Social & Economic Development Manager, Muchimba Siamachoka (centred), poses for a photo with a group of experts in Brussels, Belgium, after a workshop on global governance systems.

JCTR staff pose for a group photo with members of the National Assembly Joint Committee on Health, Community Development and Social Services after making a submission.



New Diocesan entrants pictured in attendance at a workshop facilitated by JCTR on 'Eradicating Social and Economic Injustices.'



# PHOTO FOCUS



March

Discussants during a Public Forum themed "Prospects for Restructuring Zambia's Debt." The forum addressed issues with Zambia's fiscal uncertainties owing to the debt climate.



JCTR staff pose for a group photo with stakeholders & civic leaders during the launch of the 2022 Satellite Homes Survey Report.



Discussants at a stakeholder dialogue on 'Defending Election Observer Rights in Africa' facilitated by National Democratic Institute (NDI).



## ARTICLES AND LETTERS

**We would like to 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 depends on your lively and analytical exchange of views.** Should you choose to write to us, **the length of your article should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.**

We also encourage comments on the articles, in this, or any previous bulletin issues. Views for the improvement of the bulletin are also welcome.

**To contribute, please write articles or letters to the Editor-JCTR Bulletin, by email, to:**  
jctrbulletin@gmail.com and  
com.digitalengagement@jctr.org.zm






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“To enhance justice and equality for all, particularly the poor and vulnerable through the promotion of Christian Values, empowerment and provision of policy alternatives.”

## **VISION FOR JCTR**

“A leading, prophetic, well-resourced think tank that speaks and works for the poor and marginalised.”



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Bulletin

General Articles on Different Topics

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2023-06-27

# First Quarter Bulletin 2023

Nguluwe, Peter R.

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection

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