

About the JCTR

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) is a project of the Zambia-Malawi Province of the Society of Jesus.

Our mission is to foster, from a faith-inspired perspective, a critical understanding of current issues. Guided by the social teaching of the church that emphasises social dignity in community, our mission is to generate action for the promotion of the fullness of human life through research, education, advocacy and consultation.

Cooperating widely with other groups, our Jesuit sponsorship directs us to a special concern for the poor, and assures an international connection in all our efforts.

We aim to promote an inculturated faith, gender equality and empowerment of local communities in the work of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Three projects of the JCTR include:

- Church's Social Teaching Project (CST) - promoting the values of the Church for social justice
- Debt and Trade Project - advocating for debt cancellation and fair trade to inspire pro-poor growth
- Social Conditions Research Project - advocating for improvements to the living conditions of the poor

Want to know more?
Get in touch today!

This brochure is published by the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection. For more information about the Basic Needs Basket and other activities, please contact us:

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You can also download more detailed historical and methodological information about the Basic Needs Basket from our website:

<http://www.jctr.org.zm>

We encourage you to visit our offices at:

Plot 5880 Great East Road,
Luwisha House (opposite UNZA)

Please contact us to join our monthly Basic Needs Basket mailing list for your area.

JOIN THE BNB MOVEMENT!

THE JCTR BASIC NEEDS BASKET



A tool for action by

Church Groups

What is the JCTR Basic Needs Basket?

The Basic Needs Basket (BNB) is an accurate monthly survey that shows the bare minimum cost of living for a family of six - the basic cost of essential food and non-food items needed by an average sized family to live with a decent and healthy lifestyle. It is truly a minimum, excluding additional everyday costs such as education, transport, healthcare and clothing.

The BNB is conducted by the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) every month in several urban areas. For example, the figures for January 2006 are:

| | | | |
|--------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Lusaka | K1,415,650 | Luanshya | K 922,290 |
| Kitwe | K1,054,640 | Livingstone | K1,251,900 |
| Ndola | K1,160,720 | Kabwe | K 917,140 |

The BNB is an important:

- **SNAPSHOT** of the socio-economic situation in select locations across Zambia
- **HIGHLIGHT** of the gap between the cost of living and the typical income of ordinary families
- **TARGET** for all of us to aim for when working towards a just and dignified society
- **TOOL** to use when advocating for change, justice, a better wage, a fairer policy or simply a dignified existence
- **GUIDE** for all households in deciding how best to budget to meet their basic needs

The BNB is useful to each and every one of us - households, employers and employees, community groups, church groups, trade unions, the public and private sectors, non-governmental organisations, and government - in understanding how the cost of living in Zambia affects us all.

JCTR Basic Needs Basket: LUSAKA

*January 2006

| Cost of basic food items for a family of six | | |
|--|--------------|-----------|
| COMMODITY | QUANTITY | PRICE (K) |
| Mealie meal (breakfast) | 3 x 25kg | 123,300 |
| Beans | 2kg | 13,000 |
| Kapenta (Siavonga) | 2kg | 70,600 |
| Dry fish | 1kg | 40,000 |
| Meat (mixed cut) | 4kg | 49,600 |
| Eggs | 20 | 10,000 |
| Vegetables (greens) | 7.5kg | 15,750 |
| Tomato | 4kg | 10,000 |
| Onion | 4kg | 9,600 |
| Milk (fresh) | 2 litres | 8,700 |
| Cooking oil | 4 litres | 32,400 |
| Bread | 1 loaf / day | 75,000 |
| Sugar | 8kg | 36,800 |
| Salt | 1kg | 2,100 |
| Tea (leaves) | 500g | 9,400 |
| SUBTOTAL FOR FOOD ITEMS | | 506,250 |
| Cost of essential non-food items | | |
| Charcoal | 2 x 90kg | 82,800 |
| Soap (Lifebuoy) | 10 tablets | 13,000 |
| Wash soap (e.g. Boom) | 4 x 400g | 10,800 |
| Jelly (e.g. Vaseline) | 1 x 500ml | 5,800 |
| Electricity (med. density) | | 113,000 |
| Water (med. density) | | 34,000 |
| Housing (med. density) | | 650,000 |
| SUBTOTAL FOR NON-FOOD ITEMS | | 909,400 |

Total: K1,415,650

*This January 2006 BNB is an example of a survey that is conducted every month in six urban areas.

What does it mean to me?

This brochure is aimed at raising awareness of the JCTR Basic Needs Basket within Church Groups. You are the moral foundation of the country, the keepers of faith, the people's comforter and guide in times of hardship. For Church leaders, the BNB is:

- the **SUBJECT** of sermons, homilies, meetings, and discussions linking faith to the present realities of life within Zambia
- a **TOOL** with which to uplift the moral obligation of all leaders to pay particular attention to the plight of the poor, in order to move people from less to more human conditions
- a **VEHICLE** with which to communicate the key values of the Church's Social Teaching - especially that all human beings have an innate dignity that must be respected
- a **MIRROR** to reflect internally on how justly the Church is treating its employees
- a **CHALLENGE** to work towards self-sustainability, and to understand the difficulties faced by people to tithe
- a **GUIDE** to help Church members to spend their money wisely and prudently, by encouraging them to budget and increase self-reliance (e.g. home gardening, chicken rearing or other income-generating activities)
- a **CHALLENGE** to counter-productive attitudes concerning family planning, borrowing, hard work, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, education and gender
- an **ENTRY POINT** for dialogue with groups such as youth, women, widows, NGOs and other churches on how to work together for progress
- an **INSPIRATION** to be rigorous in advocating and lobbying for the elimination of the widespread moral evil of poverty in Zambia

"The BNB helps bring the values of the Church into the lives of human beings."

Participant in BNB Workshop