



BULLETIN

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
"Promoting faith and justice"



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QUOTE

"Everything that God does, God does in order to manifest himself." "Unless we are able to view things in terms of how they originate, how they are to return to their end, and how God shines forth in them, we will not be able to understand".

St. Bonaventure (1221-1274)

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

The lead articles in this issue of JCTR Bulletin address the issue of ecological crisis from the point of view of offering some response to this global issue. The authors of the three lead articles suggest how to address the troubled relationship between nature and human activities. Recent measurements of the human ecological footprint have shown that humanity's demands on nature have sharply increased over the past few decades. This is in contrast with nature's limited ability to sustain us, or to absorb the waste coming from our varied operations. Recent climatic disasters from droughts, storms and cyclones present an imminent threat to ecological balance.

The quest to contribute to addressing the issue of ecological crisis comes from the backdrop of two landmark events in the recent pasts. The first being the twelfth meeting of the Group of Twenty (G20), which was held on 7–8 July 2017, at Hamburg Messe, in the city of Hamburg, Germany. The second is the Paris Agreement on climate, which is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020. It came into effect on the 4th November, 2016. From the perspective of the Catholic Church, we are inspired to seek to address ecological crisis by Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato si*, "On Care For Our Common Home" which was published on 18th June, 2015, which advances an argument on the environment and sustainable development.

The theme of this year's G20 meeting was 'shaping an interconnected world'. Regarding energy and climate, leaders at G20 took note of the United States' withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. They also stated that the Paris Agreement is irreversible and they endorsed the G20 Hamburg climate and energy action plan for growth. In her closing news conference, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who hosted the summit in Hamburg, said she still deplored Mr Trump's position but that she was "gratified" the other 19 nations opposed Paris Agreement's renegotiation.

Apart from these international platforms, it is suggested in this issue of the JCTR Bulletin that in order to succeed in reversing environmental degradation, we need to adopt and promote environmental consciousness as a bottom-up approach through our homes, communities, schools, business premises and institutions. This will determine how an individual relates to the creator, other creatures, and the environment. His or her simple daily actions and gestures such as: turning off unnecessary lights, opting for public transport rather than driving their own vehicle, sorting the waste, minimizing daily water consumption, making use of dustbins, recycling the recyclables, and other daily activities that reduces environmental degradation, will all be spontaneous.

Other suggestions, include taking a cue from the Ignatian Spirituality to employ our different spiritualities to develop a consciousness that can fill us with a renewed mentality that defines our relationship with nature from being basically parasitic to being symbiotic? From the African theological perspective, we are called to embrace reconciliation with creation and solidarity in trying to find common and practical solutions to minimize the increasing devastation of the planet. It is argued that African Spirituality offers an alternate ethic to the ecological crises, and that African spiritual tradition offers resources for cultivating sound ecological virtues and commitment. It is clear that the call to participate in various approaches of addressing the ecological crises could not be louder.

Alex Muyebe, S.J.

Editor



African Religion and its Positive Contribution to the Ecological Crisis

Abstract

The NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies has made it clear that for the third time, “the earth hit in 2016 record heat.” (The New York Times, January 19, 2017) This poses threats to society, nature, and future generations. Poor nations suffer the most. Erosions and fires are on the rise. Draught and starvation afflict some parts of Africa. Although it is often underappreciated, African Religion has positive and ethical contributions to make to the environmental crisis. This is the task of this article.

Introduction

No one throws a stone where he or she has placed a container of milk (*Ntawe utera ibuye aho yajishe igisabo*). The wisdom of this Rwandan saying has never been as needed as it is today, particularly with regard to the depletion of the environment. We continue to throw stones that destroy our “common home.”¹ I use this proverb to underline that African ethics is founded on taboos or proscriptions that spell out what ought to be done and not to be done in order to “preserve balance and harmony within the community, among communities, and with nature.”² This article seeks to demonstrate the contribution of African religion to our efforts to deal with ecological crisis. As most studies on climate change and environmental crisis have been generated or dominated by the West, and yet the crises continue to degenerate, I join other theologians like Laurenti Magesa to argue that African Spirituality offers an alternate ethic to the ecological crises. I also follow Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator who notes: “upon careful scrutiny, the wisdom of African spiritual

tradition ... offers resources for cultivating sound ecological virtues and commitment.”³ The creativity of this work will be mostly its ability to show how African Spirituality, with some illustrations from Rwanda, reinvites us to an *aggiornamento*, a *ressourcement*, to use traditional African resources in deep appreciation of and conversation with Pope Francis’ exhortation to care for our “common home.”

New Theological Frontiers

Ecology represents a new frontier for theological ethics. Yet given the complexity of environmental degradation, there is a need for different regional spheres to learn from each another. No individual or community can claim to have all the answers. What is clear is that the escalating destruction of the environment is mostly due to human activity. In his encyclical *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis writes, “the earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.”⁴ As the earth cries out, there are multitudes of poor men and women who are especially affected by the cracks in the planet. There is an urgent need for reconciliation with creation and solidarity in trying to find common and practical solutions to minimize the increasing devastation of the planet. Laurenti Magesa, one of Africa’s prominent theologians, remarks, “Jointly recognizing the threat to [the earth’s] survival ... humanity can work collectively to find an adequate response to this predicament of imminent disaster.”⁵ In other words, there is a moral duty to work together, to create environmental protection networks and taskforces.

¹ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si’*, <http://w2.vatican.va>, no. 21.

² Laurenti Magesa, “African Spirituality and the Environment: Some Principles, Theses, and Orientations,” in *Hekima Review*, no. 53 (December 2015), 119.

³ Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator, “‘An Immense Pile of Filth’: Human Ecology and Communitarian Salvation,” in Duffy Lecture at Boston College, Unpublished Paper (March 29, 2016), 1.

⁴ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 21.

⁵ Laurenti Magesa, “African Spirituality and the Environment,” 119.

There is also an invitation to sincere openness, self-restraint in our use of the earth's limited resources, and tolerance with one another as humanity seeks to heal the planet. Pope Francis warns us that: "if we are truly concerned to develop an ecology capable of remedying the damage we have done, no branch of the sciences and no form of wisdom can be left out, and that includes religion and the language particular to it."⁶

Before embarking on the contribution of African religion to the ecological crises, let us briefly look at the challenge the world faces.

The Earth and Humanity with it at the Threshold of Collapse

Our global village is in bad shape and is seriously wounded by the environmental degradation the effects of which are felt in the form of climate change. In her book, *The World as Creation: Creation in Christ in an Evolutionary Worldview*, Emily Binns warns that the worst is yet to come; we have yet to experience the full magnitude of the climatic changes the greenhouse effect will inflict on us. "Famine and social disruptions are unavoidable consequences to befall us following the present carbon dioxide emissions, and the sulfur oxides which are bringing us acid rains and the pollution of the seas that are killing our fauna."⁷ Five of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific are already underwater. The Sea has swallowed some coastal towns in Ghana and the Marshall Islands are in imminent danger of disappearance. The current president of the World Bank, Kim Jim Yung adds a voice of warning, saying that the year 2014 was among the warmest on record in the past fifteen years. He points out that "the world is approaching extreme temperatures that touch the physiological limits of what humans and animals can withstand."⁸

Global warming has opened other devastating effects such as floods and droughts in different corners of the globe. In 2014, Malawi experienced floods that inundated people's farmlands and destroyed crops. "In March 2015, 600,000 people were affected; 64,000 hectares of land were flooded. This was followed by outbreaks of cholera and other diseases."⁹ Malawi is just one example. There are many examples in other parts of the world. In May 2016, the towns neighboring the capital city of Rwanda (Kigali) were inaccessible because of floods. Regrettably, those who suffer most from the effects of global warming

⁶ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 63.

⁷ Emily Binns, *The World as Creation: Creation in Christ in an Evolutionary Worldview* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1990), 71.

⁸ Kim Jim Yung, "Plan for the Planet: Confronting Climate Change," in *Public Lecture at Georgetown University* (Washington, D.C., April, 2015), <https://www.georgetown.edu/news/world-bank-group-president-on-climate-change.html>.

⁹ Ibid.

and flooding are mostly the vulnerable, poor nations. As the African saying goes, *when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers*. When nature fights back against human exploitation, it is the less fortunate, those with little means to afford themselves good housing, healthcare, education, security, etc., who bear the consequences.

The concern for healing the universe arises from the fact that the earth and humanity within it is in impending danger of collapse. "If human attitudes and behavior toward the world do not change, then this will have an impact sooner rather than later."¹⁰ Pope Francis highlights several areas of human behavior that need immediate change to save the environment. There are different forms of pollution that lead to climate change and the resulting loss of biodiversity that is essential for ecological health and human survival. There are misuses of and subsequent depletion of natural resources, such as water, that are indispensable to life; "and social inequalities and injustices between individuals and within and among nations that threaten local and global peace."¹¹

Contribution from African Religion

African Religion seeks to link (*religare*) the African person to God by means of African patterns of life or culture as its starting point. It is a religion rooted in the totality of how Africans view the world and conduct themselves in it. It is an integrated combination of a system of beliefs about everything and behavior towards everything in existence. It refers to thoughts and actions of individuals and the entire society. This religion cuts across many African countries as one finds similar patterns of living in different cultures.¹² It has a religious significance on account of the 'spiritual' power with which all creation is endowed. In short, it is a religion that reminds humanity that creation is essentially sacred.

Does African religion then have something to offer to remedy the ecological crisis? In matters of ecological depletion, Africans are no exception. We have many instances of abuse and misuse of natural resources of land, water, gas, animals, and forests because of excessive greed, careless farming and overgrazing, and deforestation. The increased depletion of the universe is, in my opinion, what Catholic theology means when it refers to the wounded or broken humanity in us. It is one manifestation of the "original sin," from which no one is exempt. When it comes to creation, it seems clear that we all have solidarity in sin because of the human abuse of creation. "Refusal by humanity – motivated by original sin – to honor boundaries in its relationship with creation inevitably

¹⁰ Magesa, "African Spirituality and the Environment," 120.

¹¹ *Laudato Si'*, no. 205.

¹² From my conversation with Laurenti Magesa on March 25, 2017. Magesa is Africa's prominent theologian.

presages the consequent annihilation of creation and human destruction.”¹³

Human Connectedness to the Universe

In this short article, I want to highlight four positive contributions from African religion to the ecological crisis. *First*, the umbilical cord is significant and can be used to foster humanity’s mutual dependence to nature. It links a baby to its mother in her womb. The growing fetus cannot survive in its mother’s womb without the umbilical cord. “In many African cultures, when it is cut after the birth of a child, the umbilical cord is buried in a special place in the homestead, to signify the belonging of the new-born not only to the clan and its spirits, but also to the ancestral soil from which it should normally not be alienated.”¹⁴ The connection of the umbilical cord to one’s land has an ecological dimension. It connotes humanity’s connection with the universe. To carelessly handle or to lack respect for the umbilical cord means the destruction of humanity’s link with the universe. For Magesa, it “implies the death of humanity in the long run. By destroying nature, humanity slowly loses belonging. It has nowhere to belong to, no other place to call home, and no ambiance to deeply and meaningfully connect with in life and with which to enter into communion after death.”¹⁵ Indeed this is an invitation not to throw a stone where we have placed our umbilical cord, like where we place our treasured milk, or by analogy it is an invitation not to worsen the cracks within our “common home.”

The Place of God in the African Cosmology

Second, in many African cultures, God is both connected with and transcends creation. God “influences history not from without but from within.”¹⁶ Consequently, oneness, harmony, mutuality, and interdependence are central to most African cultures’ conception of existence because everything that exists as a being-with-others. Life in the universe is so interlinked that to upset one aspect of it is to begin to put an end to the whole of it.

Additionally, the physical world is the place where the divine dwells. Most African traditions hold that the earth is a footrest of the divine. “Nature is a privileged locus for encountering the gods, goddesses, deities, and ancestral spirits.”¹⁷ Rwandans go further to note that God spends the day elsewhere, but sleeps in Rwanda. This is to highlight the fact that God is not remote from God’s creation. According to Margaret G. Gecaga, this spirituality of locating God within the physical universe allows humanity “to unlearn

to view the physical world ‘as a sphere of profanity and darkness.’”¹⁸ In other words, African cosmology shuns dualistic tendencies that separate the sacred from the profane.

African traditional beliefs share a commitment with Ignatian spirituality, namely that as part of the creation, in and to which God is present; we actually have both the ability and the calling to find God in all things. Ignatius of Loyola invited those who undertake the *Spiritual Exercises* to “reflect how God dwells in creatures: in the elements giving them existence, in plants giving them life, in the animals conferring upon them sensation, in man [*sic*] bestowing understanding ...”¹⁹ This reflection must be accompanied by or lead to moral responsibility to care for the world as we rejoice in the wonders of creation, the marvels of human life, the beauty of the stars, the forests and the macro- and micro systems of our universe. We are urged to “expand our horizons in understanding justice which comprises Human-Earth relationship.”²⁰

The Deep Meaning of a Covenantal Relationship

Third, the symbol of ‘covenant’ resonates with many African societies. In traditional Rwandan society, *kunywana* (covenant) is a powerful sign of friendship whereby two families who enter into a covenantal relationship promise to one another that they will be there for each other for better or for worse. According to Orobator, covenantal relationship has various dimensions. Primarily, it “presupposes mutuality and shared interest between ‘humanity and nature.’ [It] cannot be an impersonal pact. It is deeply interpersonal.”²¹ As there is no covenant without “a certain feeling” for the other; South African theologian Peter Knox is right to say that “without taking a mystical approach, a first step toward the salvation of our planet must be developing a kindred feeling for the planet and every one of its inhabitants.”²² Covenantal relationship presumes mutual responsibility and longevity.²³ Each party knows that for the relationship to work there have to be ways of working together and there is permanency in this relationship. Likewise, humanity’s connection to nature entails responsibility and long-term commitment. Humanity “honors, protects, and reverences [nature], while the latter sustains humanity in a variety of ways.”²⁴

¹⁸ Margaret G. Gecaga, “Creative Stewardship for a New Earth,” in Mary N. Getui and Emmanuel A. Obeng, ed., *Theology of Reconstruction: Exploratory Essays* (Nairobi: Action Publishers, 1999), 33.

¹⁹ Louis J. Puhl, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1951), no. 235.

²⁰ Felix Wilfred, *Asian Public Theology: Critical Concerns in Challenging Times* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2010), 153.

²¹ Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, “‘An Immense Pile of Filth’: Human Ecology and Communitarian Salvation,” in Duffy Lecture at Boston College, Unpublished Paper (March 29, 2016), 11.

²² As cited by Orobator, “‘An Immense Pile of Filth’: Human Ecology and Communitarian Salvation,” 11.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

¹³ Magesa, “African Spirituality and the Environment,” 121.

¹⁴ Ibid., 122.

¹⁵ Ibid., 122-23.

¹⁶ Ibid., 72.

¹⁷ Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, *Theology Brewed in an African Pot* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2008), 132.

It is a give-and-take (*guha uguha*) relationship. This is close to Pope Benedict XVI's argument that our individual and communal understanding of self has a lot to do with our understanding of our environment: "The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa."²⁵ As a result, covenantal relationship should be expanded to include humanity's pact with the environment.

Existence of Mutuality Between Man and Nature

Fourth, in an era of intense individualism and ecological crisis, we have to reinterpret human relationships. Known as a continent where communal life is cherished, our African humanity invites the world to learn to go beyond solidaristic relationships to mutuality with the universe. Life encompasses all created reality which includes plants, animals, and nature. "'Life' is the guarantee of wholeness and universal harmony within and between the material and the spiritual realms."²⁶ The point is that there is an unbreakable relationship between nature and the society that lives in it. "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it, and thus in constant interaction with it,"²⁷ Pope Francis states. In other words, one can live meaningfully only by mutually and reverently relating to nature. Wangari Maathai put it beautifully:

*Nature is not something set apart, with or against which we react. It is not a place to fear as something within which we might lose our humanity or, conversely, a place where we might gain perspective and simplicity away from the corruption and treachery of the court or the city. It is instead, something within which human beings are unfolded.*²⁸

Moving beyond solidarity to mutuality means treating nature as a partner to humanity. This recalls what Bénézet Bujo names "world ethos" and "salvation ethos" which is an ethic of respect for the environment on the part of humanity and more importantly, it refers to the understanding that "the African's whole world is religious."²⁹

Pro-life and Pro-nature Worldview

Finally, teachers have a moral responsibility to help students to acquire and exercise "prudence, justice, courage, unselfish and aesthetic attitudes, self-discipline, respect for others, and nature; and commitment to the common good."³⁰ These pro-

²⁵ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, <http://w2.vatican.va>, no.51.

²⁶ Orobator, "'An Immense Pile of Filth': Human Ecology and Communitarian Salvation," 8.

²⁷ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 139.

²⁸ Maathai, *Replenishing the Earth*, 94.

²⁹ Bénézet Bujo, *African Religion in Its Social Context* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 121.

³⁰ Emmanuel Wabenh, "The Ecological Crisis and the Normative Ethics of

life and pro-nature virtues are already present in African Spirituality, but more than ever they need to be vigorously promoted in most of Africa's school systems. They increase students' awareness of the full meaning of the linking web of human life and nature.

Additionally, prayer can also be a transforming and educational tool. Village days of prayer as well as provincial and national days of prayer for the protection of the environment need to be given greater vitality. In some places, they do not even exist. Village elders, leaders, and other stake holders must be encouraged to come together to draft these prayers and disseminate them in African villages to pray for the change of mind and heart toward proper use of the environment. As the saying runs, a community that prays together stays together, and this togetherness includes nature. A community that cares for the nature in which it finds itself cannot throw a stone where it has placed the container of milk. This container is nature itself!

Conclusion

He who does not know who bore him insults his mother (*utazi ikimuhatse atuka nyina*). The wisdom of this Rwandan saying rings so true in our era of ecological crisis. Individual and communal mistreatments and abuses of the ecosystem are a grave sign that we have disregarded the fact that nature nurtures us, as a mother nurtures her children. We must repent from this sin.

Using some symbols from African religion, this article has argued that the way most Africans treat the environment is influenced by their traditional belief systems. Certainly there is much to criticize regarding African religion but it is easy for such critics to ignore African Spirituality's many positive contributions. Our mother-earth will only rejoice by reducing the number of stones we throw at her. This necessitates individual, communal, legal, and political will, but it also calls for the rootedness and the kind of *ressourcement* in our cultures. In the arguments in this paper, African religion and its symbols offer opportunities and questions, which will always be worthy considering and asking.

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Being," in *Hekima Review*, no. 53 (December 2015), 46.



What Next Now that the Wells Seem to be Running Dry? The Paris Agreement

In his recent visit to Europe, and before heading to Sicily where he met with the leaders of the wealthy nations at the G-7 meeting, the United States of America President, Donald Trump met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on the 24th May 2016. This came as the Catholic Church marked two years since the release of '*Laudato si'*', Pope Francis' encyclical letter on 'the care of our common home'. The meeting was a closed door, and none of the party has categorically disclosed the proceedings. It is speculated that their talk revolved around the issues on climate change, terrorism, and the immigration problem.

From the look of things, Trump seems to have been impressed by the Pope and on departing he promised not to forget what the Pope had told him. In exchanging gifts, the Pope gifted him a copy of the '*Laudato Si'*', a present that he promised to read. All the hopes that Trump's gestures had given rise to, melted to nothing a week later when he officially announced America's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. The Agreement had been termed by many as a landmark on the environmental agreement ever to be reached at unanimously by international communities.

Trump's move to pull America out of the Paris Agreement is not totally unexpected remembering that during his campaign he had promised to do exactly that. He may be praised by some for keeping his campaign promises, but on what and on whose expense? Many Americans who are in support of the Paris Agreement are outraged. It is worth though to acknowledge the encouragement coming from the

efforts of some individuals, companies, and even States in challenging and trying to find ways to circumvent this decision.

In announcing his decision to withdraw America from the Paris Agreement on the 1st of June, 2017 at the press conference in the White House, Trump cited that, 'the Paris Agreement was less about climate change and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over USA'. He called for a renegotiation, something that United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is adamant about. UNFCCC holds onto its position that it would not be forced into renegotiation because of one member country. In my reflection, I will explore the Paris Agreement, its goals and objectives, what the Agreement means to Africa, and lastly, I will suggest a way forward for the continent now that America, the big donor and second largest polluter is out of the picture.

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement, was an accord reached by the International Community on the 12th of December, 2015 under the umbrella of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) during its 21st conference (COP21), which was held in Paris. The Agreement came as the fruit of an intensive and extensive scientific research, economic, and political lobbying that spurned more than two decades. Countries began signing and ratifying the Agreement officially on the 22nd April 2016 during the Earth Day at the United Nation's (UN) Headquarters in New York.

On its first day, more than 175 countries signed up as members, 47 of whom were African. Moreover, two, of the fifteen countries who ratified the Agreement on the very day were from Africa. Though the Agreement remained open for a year, a period during which other countries were to sign and ratify; it came into action on the 4th November 2016 after it had been ratified by 55 countries, who contribute to nearly 55% of global emission. So far the agreement has managed to bring on board more than 190 countries as Parties, of which 148 of them, contributing to more than 80% of global emission have ratified the Agreement.

Objectives of the Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement has an ambitious goal of combating climate change and enabling developing countries adapt to its changes. It aims at doing so by keeping the average global temperature well below the 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels. To achieve these, the accord emphasizes the need for: financial assistance and technological transfer from developed to the developing countries, educating the public on climate change, making information on climate change accessible to the general public, and investing on research that explores the possibility of capturing industrially emitted greenhouse gases (GHGs). These GHGs will then be stored in the underground sinks and reservoirs.

The Agreement is drafted in such a way that there is no punitive action to non-complying Party. On the contrary, it relies on the transparency, mutual trust, and goodwill of each member to preserve 'our common home'. Each country sets its targets through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and it is expected to transparently and genuinely report their emission levels and their progress towards realizing their set objectives. UNFCCC will carry out a 'global stock' every five years beginning from 2023. The aim is to assess and determine the global progress to achieving the goal of keeping temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels by the end of century.

Why aim at keeping earth's average temperature below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrialization as a way of combating climate change? To study and advise them on climate change, UN formed an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This body is composed of scientist who review the latest scientific research findings on climate change. They then write a thorough and consensus report, which UNFCCC uses as reference to advise policy makers.

In their research, IPCC found that the earth's average temperatures have risen by more than 0.8 degrees Celsius over the last century. According to them, this

increase cannot be attributed to the natural cycles alone. The only alternative explanation for this change is to include the effects of greenhouse gases (GHGs). They also identified a wide range of GHGs such as methane, nitrous oxide, and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which actually have higher heat-trapping abilities than carbon dioxide, but carbon dioxide stands as the main culprit of the 'global warming'. This is because the total sum of carbon dioxide found in the atmosphere is higher than all other GHGs combined. Hence, when scientist talk of GHGs, they do so in terms of the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide.

How Does GHGs Contribute to Global Warming?

The accumulation of GHGs and other air pollutants in the atmosphere are responsible for the global warming. They do so by trapping and absorbing sunlight and solar radiation bouncing back from the earth's surface. In normal circumstances these radiations are meant to escape into the space, but due continuous accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere, they are trapped causing the so called 'greenhouse effect'. Hence, the planet will continue getting hotter as long as the GHGs emission level increase. The greatest source GHGs is human activities such as burning of fossil fuel to produce electricity, transportation sector, and burning of coal. It follows that by reducing the level of carbon dioxide emission, we automatically reduce global warming, which in-turn halts climate change.

The Impact of Paris Agreement on Africa

Despite the fact that Africa contributes comparatively less to the climate change, it stands as the most vulnerable continent to the impact of the climate change. This makes the Paris Agreement a crucial deal to the continent. The Agreement is expected 'to help Africa source funds and technology to mitigate climate change, develop renewable energy resources and chart a course to a sustainable future while adapting to the impact of increasingly erratic weather patterns'.

According to IPCC report, global warming has significantly increased over the past century in Africa. This has led to extreme and unpredictable weather patterns across the continent. The recent draughts in parts of Somalia, Ethiopia, Northern Kenya, South Sudan, Nigeria; floods in Mombasa, Kenya; winter storms in Cape Town in South Africa; and the spread of weather-sensitive diseases in the Democratic Republic of Congo can serve as concrete evidences showing the impact of climate change on the continent.

In addition to economic, health, and social problems that the climate change brings, the continent faces eminent environmental disasters. These ranges from: deforestation, air pollution, loss of biodiversity, food insecurity, desertification, soil erosion, water scarcity, floods, and droughts. It is for these and many more reasons that climate change effects for a speedy, collective, and sustainable response by the continent.

When the Well is Running Dry

Although many signatories to the Agreement, some of whom had to bend over and backwards to please America are disappointed by Trump's decision, their commitment to the agreement has not weakened. It has rather strengthened. A day just after America pulled out of the Agreement, China and the European Union entered into a deal renewing their commitment to the Agreement. Other countries including India and Canada have pledged their unflinching support and they promise to continue implementing the Agreement.

It is a reality that, it will be a big challenge to fill in the void left by America and achieve the dreams of the Agreement. This is because America has been the biggest donor and supporter of many programs envisioned in the Paris Agreement. And still more challenging is that America is the second largest polluter after China. Now that America has opted out, Trump will not support programs like UN's Green Climate Fund, which was started in 2010 with an aim of transferring up to \$100bn a year of cash from the rich countries to the poor ones by 2020.

This indicates that some wells from which the continent has been drinking from will soon run dry. This however, should not make us resign and crawl back to our cocoons or abandon the goodwill intended by the Agreement. Rather, like other parties, we should step up our efforts and rise up to the occasion. Furthermore, it is high time we acknowledged that governments and states are but only the legal custodians of the Agreement, and that the real shakers and movers of the Agreement are the citizens of the world. Hence, the most reliable and sustainable way of implementing the Agreement is through a 'bottom-up' approach.

Entrenching the Bottom-up Approach

This approach commences from an individual, then percolates into the families, local communities, nations and the International Community. Here, an individual is made conscience of the question that Pope Francis in his encyclical letter 'the care of the common home' poses to us: 'What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?' The appropriate

places to instill the environmental consciousness would be places of prayers, schools, higher learning institutions, and other structured organisations.

Once an individual is conscious of this question, it will determine how he or she relates to the creator, other creatures, and the environment. His or her simple daily actions and gestures such as: turning off unnecessary lights, opting for public transport rather than driving their own vehicle, sorting the waste, minimizing daily water consumption, making use of dustbins, recycling the recyclables, and other daily activities that reduces environmental degradation, will all be spontaneous.

In fact, if individuals become sensitive to the issues of climate change, then businesses, cities, nations, and institutions, which in actual sense are run by them will develop and implement environmental friendly policies. This will deter the actions of the few minority such as Trump and other environmental skeptics who are working against the Agreement. Some will argue that economic growth often comes at the expense of environmental degradation. This is true if a nation, cities, businesses, and communities are led by selfish and insensitive individuals. In his book, 'Wellbeing Economy: Success in a World Without Growth', Lorenzo Fioramonti thinks that a shift to 'green economy' and 'reduction of consumerism culture' can enable us strike a balance between growth and care of the environment.

Now that America, the second largest polluter has exited from the Agreement, it is time for a massive campaign to educate our consciousness on the reality of climate change. The Paris Agreement will never be attained if individuals do not personalize and interiorize the need to combat climate change. In addition we must all share Pope Francis' optimism that, 'though human beings are capable of the worst, they are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start'. We should take inspiration from a Swahili saying '*haba na haba, hujaza kibaba*', which can literary be translated as, '*little by little fills the measure*', and know that our small and individual efforts count a lot in combating climate change. It is encouraging that some environment-conscious individuals, families, communities, cities, and nations across the continent are ready to double their efforts on combating climate change and in making the planet a safer place to live.

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A Reflection on the Relevance of the Principle and Foundation of St Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises in Achieving Ecological Consciousness

Recent measurements of the Human Ecological Footprint have shown that humanity's demands on nature have sharply increased over the past few decades. This is in contrast with nature's limited ability to sustain us, or to absorb the waste coming from our varied operations. Recent climatic disasters from droughts, storms and cyclones present an imminent threat to ecological balance.

In religious circles we are challenged by Pope Francis' Encyclical, *Laudato Si*. Pope Francis concludes that social disruptions require a concerted effort towards caring for the environment. At International level, talks have been held, the most recent one held being, The Paris Summit on Climate 2015. However the question arises, how far do these talks lead to concrete action given a clear trend among several statesmen towards individualistic approaches?

Principles of Eco-Spirituality

Donald Trump has been reiterating the "America first" slogan, saying that climate change financing is a waste of funds that can be used on American citizens. There is always a space between us, the Church and the States. This is where my contribution comes in through advocating a theological response to ecological crisis by using principles of Eco-

Spirituality. My question is: How can our different spiritualities help in developing a consciousness that can fill us with a renewed mentality, redefining our relationship with nature from being basically parasitic to being symbiotic?

Having recently done the full Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, I was struck by the introductory contemplations that set the tone of the retreat. No 23, this Principle and Foundation spells out clearly how we ought to relate with nature, as well as with its creator. "Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. And other things on the face of earth are created for man, that they may help him in pursuing the end for which it is created." [Exo 23.2-3]

The text above clearly explains that we are created for a purpose; it does not contradict the anthropocentric view affirmed in the creative narrative in Genesis. God created people for love and out of love, and He gave Adam and Eve authority to give names to plants and animals. In Genesis 1 vs. 26 – 28, people were given dominion over all things on earth, to subdue them, but this does not mean having an exploitative attitude to defenseless created thing. All other things were created for men, but this does not mean that

their intrinsic value matters less than our dominance.

Inspiration from the Theo-centric View

Ignatius modeled this dominance by advocating an understanding of creation filled with love. We assumed a co-creative role that obligates us to allot nature its rightful value. During the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, reference is always given to composition of place, what you see, the air and other surrounding things. In the narrative of St Ignatius Cardoner's experience, nature played a significant role in his mystical experiences. All created things were created to help us achieve our end that is: to reverence, praise and serve God.

We also know that nature on its own also praises God. The canticle of Daniel comprehensively sums up all facets by which nature reveres the divine. It is our selfishness in how we use nature that hinders a proper and ordered reverential relationship with nature. For every tree we cut there is a bird that has lost its habitat, and all chemical wastes that come from our advanced scientific operations hinder the proper development of aquatic life.

A call to Ecological Conversion

Understanding how we are to relate with nature will help us to overcome our tendency of looking down at the rest of creation, because our reverential purpose to God is aided by other created things and if we affirm that, then ecological conversion of heart is attainable.

Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si*, that each creature has its own purpose. The entire universe has a role to play in the perfection of God's kingdom. In the 'contemplation to attain divine love', in the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius we also think in detail about how God carefully cares for everything and how all these created things have enabled us to be where we are today. This complementarity that exists between nature and humanity can therefore be a paradigm moving us towards a genuine ecological consciousness.

The Ignatian Indifference

Another significant dynamic comes from the Principle and Foundation in the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius. This dynamic is called the "Ignatian indifference". This means that a person approaches choices in a state of balance, thus freed from our attachments. Our greatest "attachment" or desire is often that of dominance. We are naturally inclined to exploit, this emanates from our creative superiority over nature. If

this internal liberty is achieved, our relationship with created things will never be hierarchical but rather mutual.

This indifference is not merely prudential passivity, but active attentiveness and prompt responsiveness in our actions, otherwise that may not be purely ordered to the service of God. It also involves making decisions concerning our social endeavors. Having understood the complementarity that exists in the matrix of our relationships with God and created things, we will always consider the will of God first rather than our own selfish inordinate desires.

The Principle and Foundation

If through the gift of our spirituality we can infuse such an attitude in our friends in schools, in the community, the parish or at an institutional level, our discernment in decision-making will be profound and subtle. A few examples of areas where we could have used such a method might have prevented us constructing a shopping mall on a wetland in Zimbabwe or a pipeline in the South Dakota in the United States of America (Guardian Mail January 2017).

The inspiration I got from the Principle and Foundation in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius has deepened my understanding of the Catholic Church's emphasis on the option for the poor. I believe that this principle will open our eyes to see how this ecological crisis can be solved and avoid subsequently deepening the suffering of our poor brothers and sisters. Effective collaboration in caring for our common home can only be achieved if we share common beliefs and attitudes of mind. This can be partially achieved if we can infuse this idea in our respective pedagogies as a paradigm for ecological consciousness.

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AFRICA IS RICH WHO BENEFITS?

The Human Face of Corruption: Should it Matter?

Does corruption really bother us as much as it should? In Africa, we make a lot of noise about corruption. However, in the midst of all the anti-corruption drama, one wonders whether there is any serious outrage about the reality of corruption. In his, *Man of the people*, Chinua Achebe beautifully captures the soul of the reaction of the average African to the reality of Corruption. Max, a contestant for one of the government positions is making a speech to the voters:

Max began by accusing the outgoing government of all kinds of swindling and corruption. As he gave instance after instance of how some of our leaders who were ash-mouthed paupers five years ago had become near-billionaires under our very [own] eyes, many in the audience laughed. But it was the laughter of resignation to fortune. No one among them swore vengeance. No one shook with rage. They understood what was being said. They had seen it with their own eyes. But what did anyone expect them to do? The Police man put it very well. "We know they are eating" he said, "but we are eating too. They

are bringing us water and they promise to bring us electricity" (Chinua Achebe, *Man of the People*).

When Achebe wrote this piece, little did he know that even politicians like Max, who are supposed to, at least pretend to be outraged by corruption in public office, would also publicly declare –in public, that when it comes to corruption, they have resigned themselves to fortune (read "fate"). Not even Achebe with his sharp wit and vivid imagination could imagine that a sitting president could come out and say in public that just like the people, when it comes to corruption, he is also "helpless and frustrated"; nor could Achebe imagine another president saying - with a straight face, on national TV that "there is a difference between corruption and stealing." Nor could he imagine this scene - of a president sitting and smiling in parliament while the senators that he has come to address turn the house into a theatre of madness – each shouting and accusing him of corruption. He, on the other hand, just sits there – majestic, like an African King - laughing, loudly, triumphantly - untouched! Surely, not even Achebe's imagination could put together such a spectacle!

The Explanation We Offer

It is true that corruption has always been there with us. However, the fact that these days, people are no longer outraged by its reality is what really strikes me as daring and indeed scary. There are many explanations that have been offered for this. On one hand, we have people like President Uhuru Kenyatta, who affirm that corruption has become so pervasive to public life in Africa that we feel somewhat helpless. Every effort anyone puts in feels like an attempt to burn the ocean with fire. Just like one senator at a conference I recently attended got up and said, “tribalism is a reality we have to accept”, it seems that many of us have come to the same resignation in reality. We have accepted corruption as a reality we have to accept and live with.

Others, on the other hand, argue that both the prevalence of corruption and our attitude towards it is directly linked to the history and experience of “nation states” in Africa. A traditional African chief I spoke with recently in Zambia put it this way, “the government is so removed from the people!” Consequently, the average African still sees the government as an extension and a continuation of the colonial enterprise.

In their study of everyday corruption across three African nations, G. Blundo and J-P Olivier de Sedan show that much of the petty corruption in Africa happens in the interphase of the interaction between the common citizens and the officials of the state. The details we have in great speeches and political documents about the “official” functioning of the African state are completely different from the “real” functioning of the state – the one that the average African experiences on a day to day basis. The state that the average citizen meets on the streets, is one that functions with corruption almost in the same way that a computer runs with an operating system: the policeman on the street would ask you for “money for mobilization” so that he can transport himself faster to respond to your security need; the clerk at the government office will ask for “money for ink”, with which to get a pen to help you sign the important document that you have come to ask for; when visiting a government official, traditional norm would demand that you go with some “kola” or “refreshment” as a way of “showing respect” and as a gesture of cordiality. These words – “money for mobilization; money for ink; kola as a way of respect, and so on” are the code words for corruption in the day-to-day interaction between citizens and officials of African states. Consequently, when the man or woman on the streets thinks of *government*, this is what he or she thinks of.

At the heart of this reality is the fact that a lot of Africans still see the state as the artefact of the colonial enterprise. It is no surprise then that many Africans are like the policeman in Achebe’s novel. When officials in government construct roads and bridges for them, when they provide tap water and electricity, it is not because it is their duty as duty bearers to be accountable to the citizens who are rights holders. Rather, it is because they have been able to also help them “steal their share” of these goods from the “alien” government! Infact, we should be grateful to them for doing us this heroic favour. Thus, within the very anthropology of corruption, Blundo and Olivier argue, there is something else. There is the anthropology of statecraft or of public service (or lack of it) in Africa.

How We Think About Corruption

All these views hold very serious points. Volumes have been written about them so that it would be trite for me to repeat the validity of their arguments. However, I wish to point out something more, I want to argue that a deep part of the reason why corruption doesn’t seem to bother us much; lies in the very way we talk about corruption itself. Just take a census of the corruption cases that have made media headlines these past few months: In Kenya, we have the famous case of the theft of around 5 million Kenyan Shillings (about 50, 000 USD) from the health sector – the same sector where around 9 million USD reserved to provide free maternity services had suddenly “grown legs”. In South Africa, corruption charges have been pressed against President Jacob Zuma, one of which is his misappropriation of 23 million USD of public funds for the renovation of his own private house in Nkandla. In Nigeria, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission recently made a find of around 43 million USD cash, stuffed away in the closet of an apartment in Lagos.

In all these cases, one thing is evident. When we think about corruption, we think about it mainly in terms of money. This is not completely wrong, because often corruption cases involve financial misappropriation. However, the problem is that corruption is not just about the misappropriation of public resources in monetary terms, it is also about the misappropriation of *public goods*. The money misappropriated is always an opportunity cost. So, when we talk about it, we are talking about investment into education of our children, we are talking about investment into medical care such as hospitals and drugs, and we are talking about investment in infrastructure such as road construction and so on.

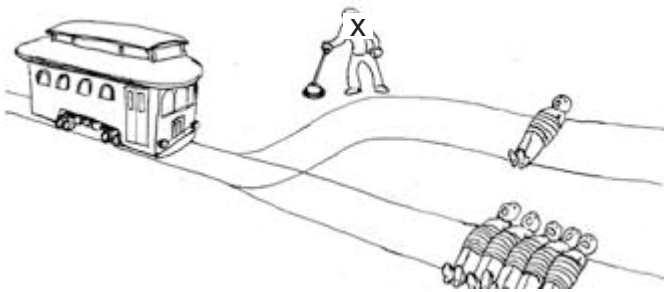
For instance, in the middle of the very heat of the Kenyan Health Corruption scandal this year, the newspapers carried the news about a man who lost

his wife and her unborn child at one of the hospitals. The report argued that the loss had direct connection to the diversion of the funds meant for the health sector. However, when we think about corruption, we only think of misappropriation of 5 million Kenyan Shillings. But this man has lost a wife, a child and the opportunity to be a father. His life was shattered. If someone had done this to him physically, people would have all been up in arms. But because it is corruption that has done this to him, nothing really happened beyond the newspaper coverage.

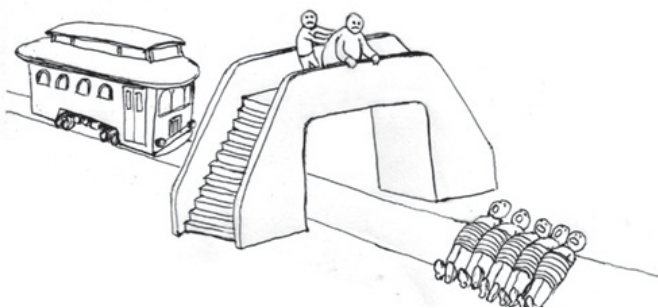
How This Affects Us

Corruption is not just about money. Corruption is a *human rights issue*. However, because we habitually frame issues of corruption in terms of money, we often end up completely corrupting our perception of the moral weight of the issue. The question is, “how does framing corruption in terms of money actually make us miss the fact that corruption is a human rights issue?”

To illustrate this, I would like us to perform a mental experiment with one of the famous puzzles that has fascinated moral philosophers over the years – The Trolley Problem. Let us take a look at the two cases



Case One: Imagine that you are the driver of a trolley hustling down a track at 60 miles per hour. Up ahead, you see five workers, standing on the track, tools in hand. You try to stop, but you cannot. The brakes do not work. You feel desperate, because you know that if you crash into these five workers, they will die for sure. Suddenly, you notice a side track, off to the right. There is a worker on that track, but only one. You realize that you can turn the trolley onto the side track, killing only one but sparing five. What would



Case Two: Imagine this time you are not a driver, but an onlooker. Standing on a bridge, overlooking the track (This time there is no side track). Down the track comes a trolley, and at the end there are five workers. Once again, the brakes do not work. The trolley is about to crash into the five workers. You feel helpless to avert this disaster - until you notice, standing next to you on the bridge, a very fat man. You could push him off the bridge onto the track, into the path of the oncoming trolley. He would die, but the five workers would be saved. (You consider jumping yourself, but realize that you are too small to stop the trolley). Would you push the man onto the on-coming track?²

Critical Analysis of the Cases

On the first case, opinions are usually divided. In some cases, even 50-50. Half say they would turn. The other half, say they would not. However, when we are confronted with Case Two, even those who had agreed to turn the trolley in Case One, change their views. For them, it would be unacceptable to push the fat man off the bridge, even if this would save five lives.

This is quite puzzling, considering the fact that both **Case One and Case Two** are logically equivalent situations. Many moral philosophers have tried to grapple with this problem. To deal with this, some moral philosophers argue that there is a *qualitative difference* between (1) allowing a trolley run over a man and (2) deliberately doing something to harm a man, for example, by pushing him off a bridge. The Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE) which provides the moral criterion for dealing with cases such as this argues that “the deliberate causation of harm in order to promote some other good is morally inferior to the promotion of some good, whose indirect consequence is to cause harm as a side effect.” As such, in the first as in the second cases, the DDE would argue that it is morally wrong to deliberately kill the one person to save the five, no matter the circumstance.

However, if we sidestep the moral arguments about right and wrong, we notice that beneath the trolley problem, there is a dangerous truth. And this is the fact that there are ways in which an action that is considered morally evil can be *framed (arranged)* so that it becomes easier for us to choose to carry it out! This is a dangerous idea!

How is this possible? When we look at both cases critically, one truth begins to emerge. And this is the fact that in Case One (as compared to Case Two) the agent is a little more *physically or experientially removed* from the action being done. She is in a

¹ This mental experiment was created by Philippa Foot in 1967. The present outline of it is from Michael Sandel. See Michael Sandel. *Justice: What is the Right Thing to do?* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009. 36.

² Ibid, 36.

trolley. The implication of *this experiential distancing* is that it somehow subtly but profoundly changes the cognitional or thinking process of the moral agent. So the question she is asking herself is not really, “*should I kill this man or not (to save five)?*” but “*should I turn the trolley right or not?*” This subtle change in cognitional assessment, leads to an almost concomitant moral distancing, by subtly shifting attention from “*the human*” to an “*object*”, unlike case two, where there is a direct experience and contact. In fact, variants of the trolley problem have experimented with situations that increase this experiential distancing. In a particular variant of the trolley problem, the agent is no longer a driver but a bystander (see man marked “X”) who has the power to change the direction of the trolley by hitting a switch. And guess what? More people found it easier to choose killing the one person to save the five.

Creating a Distance from the Event at Stake

One truth becomes clear from all these: *The more we are experientially removed or distanced from an action, the lesser the moral weight we attach to that action.* Often this happens, especially when we *perceive* and *conceive* the moral value of certain actions by using another object as medium, which is often what money does for us. The assumption we make is that the objects we use as money do not affect our evaluations since we are the ones that assign value to them. But, this is far from true. For instance, we all know that \$5000 has the same value, whether it is in the form of cash or in a credit/debit card. However, many researches on behavioral finance today have confirmed that when consumers make purchases through the use of credit cards, it is easier for them to over-spend as compared to when the same consumers use cash. Why? Behavioral economists show that with electronic transfer the consumer does not deeply feel that loss that comes with parting with one’s money. And that feeling, not just the mathematical knowledge of how much we have spent, is what forms part of our evaluation of costs. Thus, the use of e-money really distances the consumer from the tangible experience of spending, and consequently dilutes the intensity of her perception, evaluation and decision-making about purchase.

In our radically financialized age today, money is no longer just a tool of exchange or a measure of value, it is the new *trolley* from which we think about and make judgments of value. Corruption is one of such areas where money determines how we conceive and see it. Thinking about corruption in this way affects us in one important way that this article has been trying to point out. Money acts as a medium (a trolley or a switch) and somewhat distances us from the event at stake. By so doing, it also, somehow dilutes our

moral assessments and affective apprehension of corruption and its effects on our society. When a public official embezzles money that is meant for the execution of a public good, it is not just money that he has stolen. It is a *public good* that he has denied people.

In the words the economist, Amartya Sen, it is the *capabilities* of people (*what they are able to be and to do*) that have been deprived of them. *It is the human rights of people that have been violated.* It means that somewhere, there are children who may not be able to go to school; it means that a woman somewhere may lose her baby because of inadequate healthcare; it means that the average worker or commuter may have to spend five hours in traffic every morning because of terrible roads; it means that some families somewhere may have to mourn the loss of their loved ones, a loss due to accidents on bad roads. Considering corruption solely in terms of money misses all these tangible dimensions.

Conclusion

Going back to our earlier postulation, what if, instead of just saying that 5 million has been misappropriated from the Kenyan health fund, we also say that so-and-so number of persons have lost their lives because of the absence of *basic freedoms*, in this case – healthcare, which that money would have provided? What if, instead of just saying that president Zuma has misappropriated a certain amount for the building of his own house, we also put in the number of people who are suffering as a result of the absence of these *public goods*, including the many migrants and refugees who have suffered the backlash from frustrated citizens? What if, instead of the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission just telling us that they found 43 million dollars belonging to an unknown politician, they also tell us that the unpaid salaries of thousands of workers had been hidden inside someone’s closet? What if we treat corruption cases as human rights violations? This may not change much. But perhaps - just *perhaps* - it would help us better appreciate the moral weight of these corruption cases floating around, and feel the moral outrage necessary to demand and to create change!

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Media and Gender Socialization: Media Education for Young African People

Media is part of people's life. It is everywhere: in homes and outside along the roads in various formats. The major media one finds in families are TV, radio, newspaper, phones, tablets, and books. Along the street, media is in a form of banners and all the materials used by advertisers to promote different products. Media is not just sets of programs and content. It consists of reading, hearing and watching. Media exercise an influence on people who consume their content. Media shapes people's identities. Media tells people how to behave, who they are or who they should be. Besides, media tells people what to think. It creates little room for discussion, particularly classic media such as books, magazine, radio and TV; whose content is given without possibility of reaction.

It is truism to say that young people like media. One can also postulate that media is a greater influence on young people than on adults. Researches have shown that young people consume more and more media content, and very often, this happens in the absence of parents. As mentioned above, media have both positive and negative influence on young people. On the positive side, media provides useful information in young people's lives. It also provides entertainment. Thus, media acts as *educators* in providing useful lessons to young people. In this way, media become positive agents of socialization.

However, on the negative side, media constitutes a stock of content that can be harmful to young people's psychology. Media's influence, either positive or negative, takes place through media content. Media content encompasses everything. One of the sensitive issues related to the content in media is about people's representation. In fact, media has a way of portraying men and women, a way of creating images and stereotypes of both men and women. This essay defends the postulate that as agents of socialization, media creates unfair stereotypes about women. Consequently, the essay advocates for a media education where young people can learn to interpret the media content.

Media education will help young people to understand how media contributes to portraying women negatively. It will also help them to understand that this misrepresentation has an influence on the way young people perceive women in the society. Media education would then help to provide critical skills to young people so that they can be able to question the media content. The essay discusses how media is a tool of socialization and how it constructs identities of boys and girls. It discusses the topic in three main points. First, the essay presents the concept of socialization using different authors' views. Secondly, it looks at media as a special agent of socialization. Finally, the essay advocates the need of media education for young people about gender socialization in media.

Gould defines socialization as “the type of social learning that occurs when a person interacts with other individuals” (80). According to Weitzman, socialization is a process which starts at the early stage of human life. During the “early childhood socialization”, Weitzman holds that from birth a baby girl and a baby boy are treated differently. The girl grows up as a fragile person while the boy play “violent” game with his father. As children grow, the different treatment is reinforced. To illustrate these statements, Weitzman presents findings of a study where researchers observed mothers with 6-months babies: boys and girls. From the observation made, women were not behaving the same way with girls and with boys. In the study, women had to give a toy to children – doll, train, or a fish. The researchers observed that women would give a doll to a girl-child and a train to a boy-child.

Weitzman cites another study with thirteen-month-old babies. During the study, researchers observed how girls and boys related to their mother and the frequency of these relations. In this study, it was observed that “*girls clung to, looked at, and talked to their mothers often than the boys. Each of these behavioural differences was linked to differential treatment by the mother when the babies were younger*” (3). As Weitzman notes, this research and further researches with the same mothers indicate that

“sex role socialization begins before the child is even aware of sexual identity: before he or she can have an internal motive for conforming to sex role standards. It also indicates that cultural assumptions about what is “natural” for a boy or for a girl are so deeply ingrained that parents may treat their children differentially without even being aware of it” (4).

As for agents of socialization, Weitzman mentions books as tools of socialization. She writes that when children are learning using books with pictures, they learn a lot about the world and the environment surrounding them. They learn about reality outside their classroom and the information they pick from books shape the way they will look at reality as they grow (7). She further notes that “picture books also provide children with images of what they will be like when they grow up” (8).

The school is another agent of socialization according to Weitzman. Weitzman writes that at school, girls learn in their very first days that they are less intelligent than boys, therefore less important than their brothers. This reinforces the sex roles stereotypes, notes Weitzman (36). Children learn this

reality in books they read as those books narrates stories of boys as heroes and girls as fragile beings to protect. She cites findings from a study showing that in most stories, 73% of characters were male characters. Moreover, the portrait of the few women that appear are not the role models for girls.

She notes that teachers are the ones who put into place this socialization when they treat differently girls and boys in classrooms. Weitzman illustrates this showing that “boys receive much more disapproval and behavioural criticism from their teachers” (39). This reinforces disruptive behaviour in boys, she asserts. Besides the school, parents have influence on their children as they “*have different sex-related expectations*” (43). Finally, peers also constitute a major agent of socialization as young people share among themselves their perception of themselves.

As we have mentioned, socialization is a process in which people learn values from different agents. In this process of learning, “*the older generations transmit their beliefs and traditions to the younger. But socialization also reflects beliefs and ideas about the future, as when parents seek to bring up their children to cope with what they consider will be the requirements of the future*” (Frønes 3). Frønes states that through socialization, individuals acquire information about their culture, beliefs and values that run the society in which they live (6). Socialization produces as effects the feeling of belonging to a community that does not only share values but also brings about recognition of differences among individuals within the community.

The two effects are homogenization and differentiation. Frønes views the first as “*that which makes children into members of cultures and societies*”, while the second is about “*the development of different competencies, values, life courses and personalities*”. Thus,

“Socialization produces integration into communities as well as cultural differentiation between communities and groups; social and economic equality as well as inequality; cultural homogeneity as well as different lifestyles and different life courses; and standardization as well as individualization and emancipation” (Frønes 7)

Like Weitzman, Frønes identifies different agents of socialization. For Frønes, parents come at the first stage in the process of socialization. After parents

come other people that young people consider as their models: media heroes, friends or neighbours. There are also other agents in that process, such as media. Although Frønes recognizes that media can have influence on young people's behaviour, she also recognizes that young people consuming media are not just passive consumers who undergo media influence, but they also shape the media to some extent. She writes that the debate is endless whether violence and sex in media have negative influence on young people.

A major effect of socialization on individuals consists of building up one's identity. But also, being part of a community, and feeling the sense of belonging to a family is another important effect of socialization. Thus, socialization process enables one to develop a sense of self and of how to relate to society at large. Gould holds that the feeling of belonging to a community takes place once the individual internalizes values, beliefs, and norms of one's environment and culture. This helps the individual to be rooted in his or her culture and to acquire an identity in a given society (Gould 80).

This view is shared by Grusec and Davidov. They support that the process of socialization requires individuals to accept certain values and to learn to adjust to the society's requests. The two authors write that

"these values, standards, and customs are not simply transmitted from one generation to the other but, to some extent at least, constructed by each generation", moreover, they note that *"an important (but not the only) goal of socialization is that values and standards be internalized in the sense that members of the group behave in accord with them willingly, rather than out of fear of external consequences or hope of reward"* (Grusec and Davidov 285).

From this discourse, one can see that socialization is a process that brings individuals in general, and young people in a particular way, to construct their identities as social beings. They come to learn their position and expectations the society has from them. In this process, parents come at the first level followed by other agents of socialization such as the school, friends and other role models. As mentioned above, along with other agents, media constitutes an important agent of socialization.

The influence of media is such that young media

consumers tend to trust in what they read, hear and watch in various media instead of learning from real experience. This is the view of Gould who maintains that media dictates young people's way of looking at reality (Gould 81). This is possible because young people are more and more exposed to media content.

Findings from a research have proven that young people spend a lot of time interacting with media, especially TV (Dubow, Huesmann, and Greenwood 408). That research showed also that media content has an effect on people's behaviour. The three authors argue that people spend an important amount of their time interacting with media and most of the time parents are not aware of the nature of the content children are exposed to. They hold that the time children spend interacting with media reduces the time spend on other forms of socialization. Though they admit that interacting with media can be a source of learning, they also acknowledge that *"what children observe through the mass media's window on the world alters their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours"*, (Dubow, Huesmann, and Greenwood 408).

In a gender perspective, Kretchmar holds that media *"communicate ideas about what is gender appropriate behaviour for boys and girls"*. Kretchmar maintains that even if media have begun to represent both men and women in a fair way, some books still convey stereotypic images where man's place is much more enviable than the woman's often shut away at the household (Kretchmar 105). This way of portraying a woman as belonging to private sphere reinforces gender inequalities. Leaper and Friedman write that since the very early age, children get to understand who they are according to the way the gender question is handled. They hold that from childhood, children are already capable of having personal ideas about gender and these ideas inform the nature of activities they would like to do once they are grown up. These ideas are confirmed or modified in a positive or negative ways as those children become mature and socialize with others at school and at home. For Leaper and Friedman, socialization agents, such as families, peers, media and schools, come in to inform children about *"their gender self-concepts, beliefs, and motives"* (Leaper and Friedman 561)

From Leaper and Friedman's account, one understands that media contribute in creating and reinforcing young people's beliefs in gender. In this case, media shapes the image of women in young people's mind. This means that if women are

constantly portrayed as weak people and passive beings, young people will grow considering women as fragile people who need care and external motivation to move. Media creates representations in people's minds and in a given situation, people tend to behave or react according to the representations they have formed in their minds about the situation.

Representations arise from information one gets. When the information is not filtered, one will grow up with a biased representation of a given reality. Thus, there is a need to accompany young people when they start to interact with media. This would help them assess the information they read, hear or watch; it would help evaluate any type of media content they are exposed to. Once they know to evaluate the information, they can reject the wrong information, identify the biased information, and their attitude towards gender or any issue related to women in the media will depend on their capacity to assess the information they get. This capacity to evaluate the media content is acquired through media education. This is why media education is necessary.

Several reasons justify the need of media education. Two of those reasons are the issue of gender stereotypes in media and what Baran and Davis call the "*Early window*". Baran and Davis use the expression *early window* to signify "the idea that media allows children to see the world before they have the skill to successfully act in it" (204). They further note that "one thing that children do learn about from the early window is gender roles" (Baran and Davis 205). The pervasiveness of gender stereotypes is another reason to advocate for media education. Baran defines stereotyping as "the application of a standardized image or concept to members of certain groups, usually based on limited information" (Baran 344). For Baran, media shows a part of reality, because its architects make choices in what they put out. This means that the content which is published, aired or broadcast is a result of many largely subjective decisions. It is one side of the story. Not giving the whole story to the public often lead to stereotypes as some categories of people are not properly or adequately represented.

For this reason, young people need to understand that media can construct reality. From here, one can define media education as an education to read media message critically. In a gender perspective, it is an education to deconstruct stereotypes that have been constructed in narratives that circulate in the

media. The aim of any media education is to create awareness into people's mind about how media construct reality and how they can actively interact with media. It is about imparting media literacy to media consumers.

Baran views media literacy as "the ability to effectively and efficiently comprehend and use any form of mediated communication" (18). For Baran, the critical thinking skills are the fundamental characteristics of a media literate person. He affirms that, "*thinking critically about the content we consume is the very essence of media literacy*" (Baran 21). "Media literacy promotes the critical thinking skills that enable people to make independent choices with regard to (1) which media programming to select and (2) how to interpret the information they receive through the channels of mass communication" (Silverblatt et al. 4).

A media literate person is aware of the impact of the media on individuals and society. The authors argue that over the time media have defined new ways of life, new forms of cultures. For instance, alcohol consumption and smoking habits are learnt through media. The authors further argue that "media literacy 'interventions' have helped curb aggressive and antisocial behaviors among third and fourth grade children" (17). A media literate person is equipped to challenge "*cumulative message*". Silverblatt et al. define *cumulative message* as those that are repetitive, come back often and end up by creating a fixed image in people's mind, as they are pervasive and invasive. Recurring messages can be about sex roles in movies, gender stereotypes in popular novels... (11).

A media literate person is aware of the fact that media content reinforce "cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths" (100). Thus, young people should know that a long exposure to gender stereotypes reinforce sexism, gender roles ideas... Media literate people should then know to evaluate how much time or space a media allocate to a content related to gender and the reason behind this time. In other words, young people should question *cumulative message* about gender.

A media literate person should also identify stereotype in *cumulative message*. The authors define stereotype as "*an oversimplified depiction of a person, group, or event*". They also write that "*stereotyping is an associative process; that is, ideas about groups are based upon a shared understanding*

about a group” (104). They can do it by analyzing a character in a movie. For instance, in watching a TV advert, young people can try to say whether a female character is playing a stereotyped role associated to the conventional woman, if she is put in an inferior position; if the female character is there to evoke “a common cultural understanding and consensus” (Silverblatt et al. 322) as it often is the case.

Though the essay discussed views from non-Africa authors, what they wrote and what they came up with their researches can apply to Africa. Like in other parts of the world, media is omnipresent in the African environment. Two examples illustrate the pervasiveness of media on the whole continent: DSTV (Digital Satellite Television) and *Star Times* have brought in many African homes a variety of content for all ages. In some families, TVs are always on. When parents are not around, children are left to themselves, and in most cases, they are free to watch what they like. Contrary to the other forms of socialization, media needs much attention because media does not allow interaction and feedback. An example can illustrate this. For instance, when young people come across some opinions about gender or women, if they are at school, they can ask questions to their teachers or to other friends. At home, they can discuss with their parents. Within a circle of friends, they can exchange ideas. But when they are alone at home, in front of TVs, there is no opportunity for exchange or feedback. Most of the time, children consume media content in a passive way. In many African homes children watch adverts portraying women in a biased way. They watch movies where women are treated as objects without the possibility of an open debate or critical analysis of what is being presented on the TV.

Media education starts when adults (teachers, parents, and friends) discuss the media content with young people. Coming back to the case of gender socialization in media, a teacher, a parent, an educator can watch a movie or a TV commercial with his or her students, children... and after a movie the group can discuss on how, what images of women the movie or the TV commercial was conveying. This, however, requires the adult to be a media literate person to be able to help.

In conclusion, media constitutes a particular agent of socialization because media builds and reinforces in young people's minds gender stereotypes. Most of time, young people interact with media in the absence

of their parents. Therefore, young people need media education which can help them to both evaluate any media content and to deconstruct biased opinions on the place of a woman in the society.

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Do Parental Decisions Affect Children's Upbringing?

Introduction

Zambia has a population of about 14 million people, whose 80 percent is made up of the youths, leaving the burden of raising the young in the hands of about 20 percent adults. In addition, Zambia is characterized by a sharp rural-urban divide and despite being one of the most industrialised countries in the southern region, the country continues to host a very rural and traditional population of about 51 percent. In such a scenario, decisions about children's upbringing and future become very critical indeed. This article seeks to discuss children's upbringing in relation to the traditional and modern Zambian family set-up.

Traditional and Modern Zambian Family Set-up

A traditional Zambian family is in very general terms a family that is shaped by tribal traditions and culture. While this type of family is mostly found in rural areas, it is not uncommon to find traditional families in urban areas, and more so among the wealthy people of Zambia. Tradition plays a pivotal role in families when parents and/or guardians decide that their children need to take on traditional names or undergo traditional rituals when they are born. They may also follow strict initiation rites and/or ceremonies when they grow into early adolescents and are instructed and prepared for marriage by traditional elders who ensure that there is no departure from the tribal customs and norms. Such people may come

from families that may either be from the suburbs of Lusaka or the Copperbelt Provinces. Therefore, 'traditional' may not necessarily be about location but about upholding norms, values, customs and culture regardless of one's location.

The modern family on the other hand is mostly found in the urban areas and is characterised by a rejection of traditional values, whether openly or secretly. The modern family takes as its model the western concept of marriage as expressed by the western media and education. When people are getting married, they may not follow the traditional norms and culture of going through the traditional teachings. But rather, go to the local court or council and obtain a marriage certificate and settle down together through the union of marriage. For that reason, the modern family tends to be built rather upon a cross section of like-minded friends who may not necessarily come from the same tribe or ethnicity. People's main source of 'culture' however, may be highly influenced by the books, the church, the hospital, movies and television, parties and the weekly visit to shopping malls.

Besides this, there is also a middle-of-the-way kind of family, one that combines both traditional and modern values, norms and culture. It would appear that most Zambian families in urban areas tend to fall in this third type of family. Such families may follow the tradition of giving their children indigenous or local names and

giving adolescent children the traditional rites. At the same time, the family may also be liberal in allowing their children to choose their partner to marry as well as use the council to obtain the marriage certificate.

The Impact of Parental Decisions on Children's Upbringing

From the above description, it can be seen that a child born in either a traditional and or modern family situation will be affected by decisions taken by his or her parents with regards to what sort of work the parents do, where they work, and who raises the children. In a traditional family, for instance, in a rural set-up, it is likely that the work that the father of the child does will not affect that child. The father who is responsible for fending the family would ensure that the family has all their needs met. Thus, he performs financial roles. Hence, what affects the child's upbringing in the traditional family is the role of the mother. This is because the raising of the child is largely the role of its mother who is involved in reproductive roles of caring for the family and children, cooking and cleaning the house. In addition, the mother is also surrounded by relatives in the extended family such as aunts, uncles, grandparents and of course the mother's own parents. They take upon themselves the role of ensuring that the child receives the best of their traditions and the protection that it needs to survive into adulthood (*Giddens, 2006*).

A Traditional Family Set-up vis-à-vis A Modern Family Set-up

In a traditional family set-up, the mother stays at home to look after the family. This means that almost on a daily basis she must be in her garden growing something or at the market daily selling items. She must also do the regular house chores of cleaning up, drawing water, cooking, washing up and meeting up with the other women for a chat. The child will be mostly on the back of the mother throughout the day if it is still a toddler. Slightly older than this, the child's care will be in the hands of many other people, including fellow children, with their parents watching over them from a safe distance.

In a modern family set-up found in the urban area, the situation is somewhat different. Firstly, both parents are likely to be involved in formal work; that is, the father may be working in some manufacturing industry while the mother may be in the service industry. They may have regular working hours from morning to evening. This means that they may leave home at the crack of dawn and return when it is dark. What this entails is that, from very early on in the life of the child, the care of the child must be carefully arranged. The mother may look for a maid to look after the child or the woman's mother may come in

for a few months. Afterwards, when that child is a few years older, he or she would be taken to a day care. At this point, the major influences on the child's development will be in the hands of a total stranger, the nanny or the caretaker of that institution.

The child will be brought up in some strange surroundings that are organised around strict rules, mechanical timing and strictly controlled child-play. This shows that the child will have regulated time for meals, siesta, play or watching television and so on. For the child, this artificial environment becomes its new family and plays a major role in his or her upbringing. The child will move to nursery, then reception, primary and secondary schools and on to university, drifting in ever widening circles of strangers. Sadly, this is a situation that is becoming increasingly acceptable and normal in many Zambian homes. The acculturation has become complex as the child has to deal with two very different publics, that is, the parents whom the child spends time with during the weekends, and teachers and fellow school children who invariably are influencing the child's upbringing.

To make the matter more complex, in Zambia today, there is a new phenomenon of weekly boarding schools for children. While this enables the parents to concentrate on work and raise the necessary income for the family, it also creates distance, emotional detachment and early trauma in the child, who must wonder why he or she must be abandoned into the hands of strangers for very long periods of time.

Discernable Differences Between Traditional Families and Modern Families

A comparison of the two children who may be brought up in either the traditional or modern family will show very different characteristics. The traditional family child who may be brought up with more traditional values and culture may have stronger ties to its extended family, will be more at home in the culture and traditions, and probably have a better socialisation in early childhood than the counterpart from a modern family. On the other hand, the modern family child may have a more technical mind, be more at home in life away from home, and have access to more universal ideas. A different approach to the issue may be to see traditional families in terms of families made up of father, mother and children; whereas modern families may be seen as those composed of either single parents, partnerships of unmarried people or marriages where one parent works and practically lives in a different town from where the family lives (*Young, 2000*).

A traditional family seen from this perspective is more likely to ensure that they build a very closely-knit family. The father and the mother will share roles in looking after the child and raising it. The feeding times will be well regulated and so will be the bathing times. The transmission of family and traditional values would also be done by both the parents and guardians. According to *Potter et'al (1999)*, the family can be viewed as a single emotional unit made up of interlocking relationships existing over many generations. What Potter et'al shows is that there is an interdependence created by the common emotional identity, and this is further enhanced by different alliances within the family unit built over time. In short, the child growing up in this set-up is held together by its relationship with both the father and the mother and other family members. But it is also undeniable that the emotional relationship of the child with the father will not be the same as with its mother.

In a modern family, the child is likely to be raised by only one parent, an institution or by guardians and in some cases by fellow children. This is because typically, today's modern family tends to be an alternative family. For instance, where the child is raised by one parent, it would be a mistake to assume that this parent is always female. It is frequently the case that even mothers are working very far from their homes, in a different city altogether. Such decisions about work will obviously push the family to seek out a different arrangement for the child's care and upbringing. However, some single-parents experience a lot of stress as they have to perform both financial roles and reproductive roles in the family.

For example, besides work, women have found that they spend more time caring for the sick children and relatives. They have to perform the reproductive labour of child bearing and rearing besides being engaged in paid labour. There are also professional businesswomen who may tend to focus all of the attention on their work and allow their jobs to consume every aspect of their lives. What has become common nonetheless, is the hiring of maids and helpers to assist in rearing children. This is possible for women who can afford to hire someone to take care of their home or children while they are out at work.

Psychologists have also asserted that children acquire their gender identity and learn gender roles through reinforcement that begins at birth, and through observing and modeling parental behaviour. With regard to childcare, what this means is that the modern family can provide confusing models and paradigms. If for instance, the child were raised by

one parent who was of a different sex, the child would grow up with a very confused identity. But it is also imperative to note that the choices available to such a parent in terms of childcare would necessarily involve the use of childcare facilities where the child begins to relate emotionally with people with a different family identity from oneself.

Moreover, psychologists warn that it is dangerous to view children purely from their environments. Childhood is both a biological and a sociological stage. This means that it is important to see a child as a complete and particular human being with its own worldview and its own aspirations, rather than to see it as a human being who has not fully developed. Because of this, decisions about childcare and work taken by the parent or parents have to take into consideration that the child is living its own and separate life and has ambitions and aspirations quite separate from those of the parents. The best the parents can do is to nurture the talents of the child and sharpen skill and knowledge acquisition, while at the same time strengthening willpower, morality and determination. Ultimately, the child's future will be shaped by what the parent perceives as its future.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the above discourse that whether in a traditional or modern family, a child's upbringing will be affected by decisions taken by parents. In a traditional family, what affects the child's upbringing is the role of the mother than that of the father. The child also has stronger ties with the extended family who participate in inculcating values and culture. On the other hand, in a modern family set-up, what affects the upbringing of a child is the role of both parents as well as institutions and social environment which is the interaction. The child has ties with the immediate family as well as other players like schools, churches, caretakers among others. These participate in teaching the child all sorts of modern values and norms.

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Bringing the AIDS Epidemic to an End

The first medical report on what was to become known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) appeared in a United States medical journal on 5th June 1981. The report described the condition of five gay young men whose immune systems had been mysteriously destroyed, leaving them subject to a rare lung disease. In the following weeks there were further reports on young men suffering from Kaposi's Sarcoma, an uncommon form of cancer which disfigured patients' faces that sometimes clinic staff couldn't recognise patients from one clinic visit to the next.

Scientists, medical people and the general public did not know it at the time, but what they were encountering were the first documented cases of AIDS, the disease that destroys the human immune system and leaves the infected individual exposed to a wide range of infections that can destroy the human body because its demolished immune system no longer offers it any protection. In the years since then the disease has developed into being the most devastating epidemic that the human race has ever experienced. As it swept across the world it created fear and panic, brought sickness and unspeakable suffering to individuals, tore communities apart with stigma and discrimination, and resulted in 39 million

deaths.

Today things are different. Extraordinary progress has been made against the disease with substantial reductions in the number of new Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infections, fewer AIDS-related deaths, and millions of people on life-saving HIV treatment. Powerful social mobilization campaigns (fired by a basic sense of social justice), unrelenting scientific efforts and the commitment of massive financial and human resources have changed the course of medical history and made it possible for us to foresee the end of AIDS. In fact, the world has set as one of its priorities that it should bring this horrendous epidemic to an end by 2030.

The Global AIDS Epidemic

But the epidemic is not over. Far from it. HIV and AIDS are still very much with us. Because of increasing drug resistance there is even a real possibility that the disease may become once again the mass-killer that it was a few years ago. Even though great progress has been made against it, the epidemic continues to ravage the lives of individuals and communities. The following facts show its global scale and the enormous challenge of bringing it to an end:

- There are 37 million people in the world living with HIV.
- About 15 million persons, or 40% of those with HIV, do not know that they are infected.
- HIV is a leading cause of death worldwide and the number one cause of death in Africa.
- In 2015, about two million people became newly infected with HIV; that is, there were 1; that is about four new infections every minute.
- Over the past decade the rate of new HIV infections has increased in 74 countries, with the greatest increases being in Pakistan, Panama, Qatar and Afghanistan.
- Young people aged 15 to 24 account for approximately 30% of all new HIV infections.
- Russia has a staggering but poorly addressed AIDS epidemic. In 2015 it had the third highest number of new infections in the world (after South Africa and Nigeria) and its rate of HIV infection is increasing.
- Most HIV infections are transmitted heterosexually.
- Globally, 41% of adults and 32% of children living with HIV are on antiretroviral therapy (ART).
- There is a steady increase in drug-resistant strains of HIV, with the usual combination of drugs no longer suppressing the virus in 10% of those starting ART for the first time, and not doing so for up to 40% of those who stopped taking their ARVs and then began again.

HIV in Zambia

The first Zambian AIDS cases were reported in 1983. In the 34 years since then the number of individuals infected with the disease in Zambia has risen steadily to its present estimated level of 1.2 million. This is the number of persons currently infected; it does not take into account the million and more Zambians who have died from the disease. The current prevalence rate for those aged 15 to 59 is 12.3% and among those below the age of 15 it is 1.3%. These figures mean that one in every eight persons between the ages of 15 and 59 is infected with HIV and that between one and two in every hundred children below the age of 15 are also infected.

The disease has spared no part of the country, though in some provinces it is worse than in others. Among adults aged 15 to 59 years, HIV prevalence is at its highest in Lusaka (16.1%) and Western (16.0%) Provinces and at its lowest (5.9%) in Muchinga Province. The prevalence is also very high in the Copperbelt (14.2%), Central (13.4%) and Southern

Provinces (13.4%).

The disease is also more marked among women than among men. Of those aged 15 to 59, 14.9% of women are infected compared with 9.5% of men. HIV prevalence reaches a peak of 30.5 % among women aged 40 to 44 years, as compared to the peak of 24.3 % among men aged 45 to 49 years. These staggering figures mean that almost one in every three women aged 40 to 44 years is HIV-infected as is one in every four men aged 45 to 49. The difference in HIV prevalence by sex is most pronounced among young adults: HIV prevalence among 20 to 24 year-olds among women (8.6%) is four times higher than among men (2.1 %).

The rate of new infections though lower than it had been in the past remains very high: of those aged 15 to 59, one in every hundred women becomes infected each year and one in every three hundred men. This means that approximately 46,000 new cases of HIV occur each year among adults aged 15 to 59, while 8,900 new infections occur among those below the age of 15. Clearly all of this is a cause for great concern. It is also a matter of great concern, and totally unacceptable, that the rate of new HIV infections for women in Zambia should be three times higher than that for men.

Prospects for the Future

Notwithstanding the daunting picture that both the global and Zambian situations present, today there are plans to bring the AIDS epidemic under control by 2020 and to end it as a threat to public health by 2030. These are extraordinarily ambitious targets, but considerable progress has already been made in reducing the HIV prevalence rate and the number of new infections, in preventing mother-to-child transmission, and in reducing the number of AIDS-related deaths. These achievements have largely been due to three things:

1. prevention efforts that have led people to adopt sexual or drug-injecting behaviour that is less likely to transmit HIV;
2. the more widespread availability of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs);
3. the reduction of HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

What is needed now is a response that will step up all three interventions. HIV-prevention, that is, enabling individuals who are not infected to maintain their HIV-free status, is one pillar of the response

to the epidemic. A second pillar is to make effective antiretroviral therapy (ART) immediately available to every person who is in need. It is now known that an HIV-positive person who starts taking ARVs as soon as there has been a diagnosis of HIV will not only be able to live a normal healthy life but will also be less likely to transmit the HIV infection to anybody else. The third pillar is to eliminate stigma and discrimination, since there is no way that new infections can be prevented or treatment be made universally available if stigma and discrimination drive the disease underground.

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) believes that an AIDS epidemic will fade away if 90% of infected people know their HIV status, 90% of that group receive ART, and 90% of those on treatment have an undetectable amount of HIV in their blood (that is, they have undetectable viral levels). This means that a country's AIDS epidemic would die away when the viral levels of 73% of the HIV-infected individuals become undetectable.

In the light of these considerations, Zambia's National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework (NASF) for the period 2017-2021 focuses on preventing new HIV infections and making effective ART freely available and accessible to every HIV-positive person in the country, all in the context of the reduction of stigma and discrimination. Hence Zambia is working towards attaining the following objectives by 2020:

- 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status.
- 90% of all those with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained and effective antiretroviral therapy.
- 90% of all those receiving antiretroviral therapy will have durable viral suppression, that is, the amount of HIV virus in their blood will have fallen to such a low level that it will be extremely unlikely that they could transmit the infection.
- The number of new HIV infections will be reduced to 18,000 or fewer.
- There will be zero HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

If Zambia achieves these targets it will have brought the AIDS epidemic under control. The disease will peter out and will cease to be a public health threat. The good news is that despite the extent and depth of the epidemic in Zambia, the country is already well on its way towards achieving these 90 – 90 – 90 targets. In 2016, 67.3 % of people living with HIV

(PLHIV) reported that they knew their HIV status; among HIV-positive individuals who knew their HIV status, 85.4% reported that they were currently on ART; while among PLHIV who are currently receiving ARVs, 89.2% are virally suppressed (that is, the amount of HIV virus in their blood has fallen to such a low level that it is extremely unlikely that they could transmit the infection). So in terms of the 90 – 90 – 90 objectives, Zambia has already reached 67 – 85 – 89, that is, the viral loads of almost 51% of the HIV-infected population have already become almost undetectable. The NASF goal is that by 2020 this percentage should reach 73%.

Our Role in Bringing the AIDS Epidemic to an End

This ambitious approach faces two challenges. The first is that of reaching those who are living with HIV but who do not yet know their status. There may be as many as 1.5 million of these and their number will increase year by year because of new infections. The second challenge is that of ensuring that those on treatment can always access the necessary ARVs and that they adhere without fail to their prescribed treatment. Every person in the country – every one of us – can help in addressing these challenges by the encouragement and support we give: encouraging individuals who may be HIV-infected but don't know it, particularly men, to go for an HIV test, and even going for the same ourselves; encouraging those who are on treatment always to go for their medicines and to take them as required; and showing absolutely no HIV-related stigma, condemnation or judgement. At the same time each of us must ensure that we ourselves always behave in ways that will not run the risk of our getting or transmitting HIV. Ending the AIDS epidemic is possible, but it does not depend entirely on the Government. It depends also on each one of us. The responsibility is ours. Are **we** ready to take up the challenge and help drive the final nails into the coffin of HIV and AIDS? Are **we** ready to play our part in bringing nearer the day that AIDS will no longer be with us?

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Value of Work in the Public Service and in the Corporate World

There is an adage by Tim Notke that, “hard work beats talent, when talent does not work hard.” Another saying from an unknown sage that is rather inspirational is that, “work so hard that one day your signature might be called an autograph.” Our own Zambian heritage and tradition has sayings about work that express our philosophy and attitude towards work. Our society celebrates work and we at most times become so poignant with any tendencies to devalue or evade work.

The Old Question of a Just Wage

Work, especially hard work in our society is valued and it is often presumed that it would be well remunerated. From time immemorial man and woman have been known to be sustained by their work. Philosophers, economists, politicians, artists and popes have dealt with and addressed the theme of work in their treatise, masterpiece and encyclicals. Trade unionists, human rights activists, men and women of the cloth have often called upon governments and corporate institutions to justly reward workers with a fair living wage. Men and women everywhere deserve a just wage for their work.

It is disconcerting to find that in the world today governments and corporate institutions fail to honour offering their employees a living wage that values work and dignifies the worker. Governments have been known to be toppled because of their negligence to the workforce especially those in the labour industry. Men and women in overalls doing manual labour have built palaces, cathedrals and stadia. They have kept and prolonged the heart-beat of nations and kingdoms because of the sweat of their labour. They have at the same time endured the labour and also kept their loyalties to their governments by paying tax.

Other nations with more resources to keep their economies and industries alive have cut costs by offshoring and using immigrants for cheap labour. Other international corporations have used unskilled labour as part-time to cut costs of production. Both governments and the corporate communities have often abused unskilled labour and immigrants.

Untold Disparities Between Various Classes of Workers

Politicians and CEOs have been known to cash out with astronomical wages while the men and women in the production line wallow and labour in penury. It is an obvious case that those who work hard would be rewarded accordingly whether they use their

physical or mental skills. However, the disparities, for instance, that exist in wages for politicians, CEOs and the ordinary labourer in the industry in certain countries begs a question. Also the treatment of workers and lack of laws to protect them in terms of contracts and termination of employment have been a source of worry even in our nation.

Even though Zambia has a Minimum Wage and Condition of Employment Act not many employers adhere to it. Much more this Act does not set conditions for public service workers or those on government payroll. Yet politicians like MPs, councilors, district administrators who sometimes negate their mandate upon being elected or nominated into office often call for hike in salaries when little if no development at all is noticed in their constituencies, districts and wards.

There are many committed employees who put in their best in their workplace. They work over time and often stay absent from their families because of the nature of their work. With all these sacrifices people make because of work it is necessary that they deserve decent salaries for what they put in. Wages should be reasonable and in accordance with the principle of fairness for all who do work. It is unfair sometimes to see that some people earn more than the others while they all put in the same hours for the same skills. We know of nations that sometimes used to remunerate people differently for the same kind of work due to race, gender or other discriminatory factors. The governing principle of equal pay for equal work cannot be over emphasized.

Some people do not often want to discuss or talk about their pay. It is illegal for any employers to discourage their employees from concealing their wages from fellow employees. In a good work environment people must be free to divulge how much they are paid for their labour. This would encourage to expose and to address discrepancies in the paying system.

Monetary remuneration is a determining factor in valuing work for both skilled and unskilled labour. It would be a disservice to the cause of the worker to imply that there are other values than money. Those in public service and in the corporate world are there to sell their labour hence they deserve their wage. It is criminal for governments and corporate institutions to impose the burden of sacrifice to the labour force when the CEOs and government officials and politicians do not want to have a fair share of the burden of sacrifice.

Importance of Valuing and Loving Work

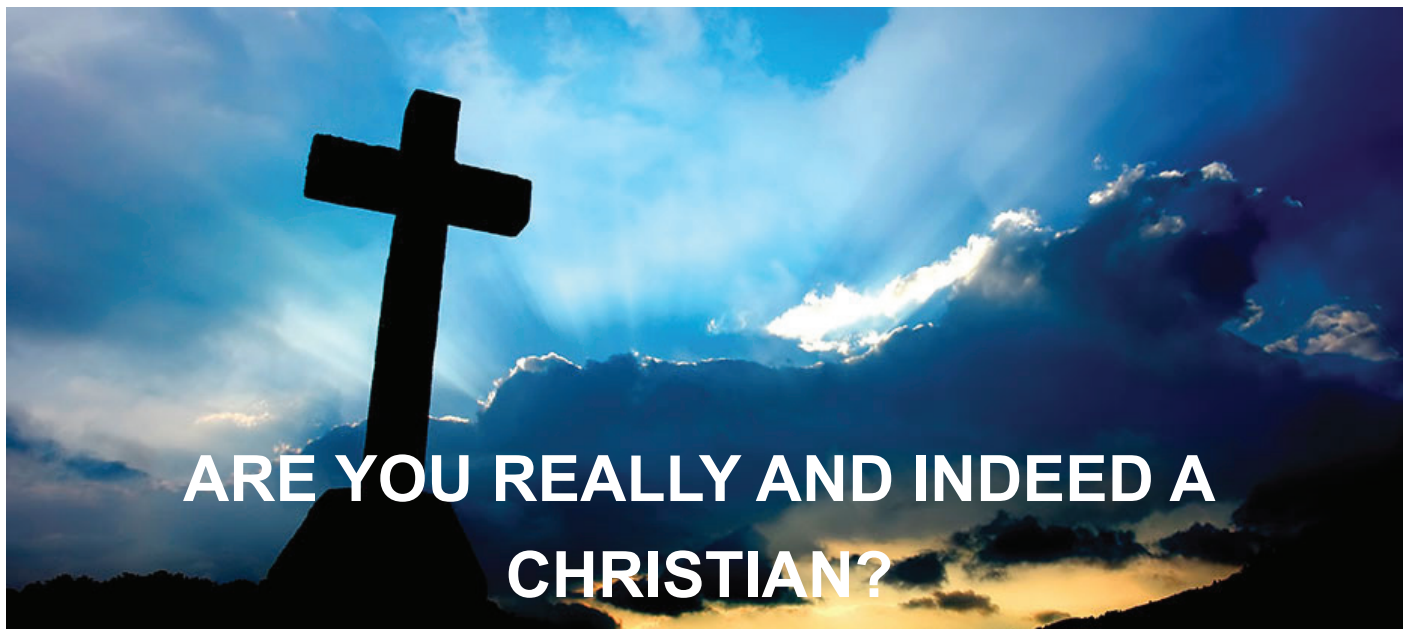
It is also important to point out that the people who do work also should be able to value and respect their work if they expect others to respect them for their work. Therefore, people's attitude towards work is also very important. It is not a hidden fact that at one time the culture of work in our country was or perhaps may still be in a deplorable state. It is not uncommon practice in government offices that civil servants would leave their jackets on the chair in the office and disappear to run private errands elsewhere on government's time.

The culture of work in an establishment often reflects how much work is valued by all stakeholders. Therefore, work environment in any institution should be conducive to motivating the employees to be in their offices or in the factory applying themselves fully to the work they were hired for. Needless to say that there is always a need to strike a balance between productivity and flexibility at the work place in order to create an environment where employees enjoy and value their work.

In as much as work is important it is always advisable to do it diligently to avoid overworking oneself. We have only one life to live. It is therefore important to strike a balance between working and resting. In the final analysis, work must be rewarding financially. Ann Landers once said, "Nobody ever drowned in his/her own sweat." It is important that everyone would love his/her work because at the long last it pays.

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Our Lord Jesus Christ once declared: 'You will know them by their fruits.....many will say to Me in that day 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your Name and done many wonders in your name?' And then I'll say to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you practice lawlessness.'

In reality, Christianity is not a religion per se, but a way of life and that is why many unbelievers usually tease professing Christians, "if such a Christian will go to heaven, then I will also qualify to go there." And from this article we shall be able to assess if Zambia is

really a Christian nation and also if we as individuals are indeed Christians.

Christianity on Trial

On the island of Tumannin around the North Pole, Christianity was banned and it became a crime to be a Christian. Mr. Thompson and his wife were accused of being Christians and they readily admitted to the charge. However, their relatives who had abandoned their faith hired a lawyer to defend them. And here is how he presented the defence:

My clients are charged with being Christians. I aim

to show that in fact they are not such, they are not Christians, no matter how courageously they insist on calling themselves Christians. The facts of being Christian are against them. And, need I say, this case will have to be judged on facts. However, let me say this that the Thompsons are a good-living, hardworking couple. As far as I can ascertain, they have never been involved in anything illegal and by any standards they are respectable people.

There are many things in their lives one can admire since they are sincere people. And one can admire their fidelity to the external observances of their religion before the ban, such as attendance at Mass and the sacraments, praying the rosary in the morning before going to work; praying the angelus every day at lunch-break. Actually, there is a witness here who is ready to testify that at lunch-break, Mr. Thompson often promptly stops in the middle of his conversations with work colleagues to pray the angelus with his wife. In fact I am willing to concede that they are Christians of some sort. They are Sunday morning Christians and very good ones. But this is not good enough.

By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them

And I used to be a Christian myself, sometime ago before I abandoned my faith, I still remember what Christ said in the gospel of Matthew and I quote: *"By their fruits you shall know them"* (Matthew 7:16). It is clear from the context that by their fruits, he meant good deeds. I am afraid that in the case of the Thompsons, the fruits are simply not there.

The apostle James was emphatic: 'Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.' I find no evidence in their lives, or in their attitudes, that they take the teachings of Christ seriously. For instance, can anyone seriously charge my clients with any special concern for the poor, the sick, the less fortunate, their neighbours, their fellow workers at their work place, those they attend to at their work place, those who need their help? And before Christianity was outlawed in this country Mr. Thompson did not even care when he drove his car to church and splashed mud-water upon his fellow Christians walking to church.

I suggest that there is not a shred of evidence to support such a charge. They have done not more than any of us who are not Christians have done. In

fact, they have even done less than some people who would never dream of calling themselves Christians.

Adducing Evidence as a Real Christian

The sick, the poor and those who need our help and attention are exactly the kind of people Christ himself went out of his way to befriend when he was on earth. And he stated categorically that his followers would be judged, not on the number of prayers they said or acts of worship they participated in, but on their response to the needs of others, especially the less fortunate. For Jesus, the prayers and worship of his followers should help them respond accordingly to the needs of those around them. But realistically, and in all truth, for our dear friends, the Thompsons, their religious activity have nothing to do with their daily life, so how can you accuse them and convict them of being Christians? The first disciples of Jesus, Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John and the rest of them were enthusiastic apostles whom he sent forth to convert the world. If they came today, they would have problems recognize the Thompsons as belonging to their company.

At this point Mr. Thompson jumped up and shouted, "But we are Christians!"

Words are not enough, Mr. Thompson.....I submit to this court that my clients are not Christians in the real sense. All they are guilty of is self-deception and that is no crime. Therefore, I ask the charge against my clients be dropped because of lack of evidence.

The judge then said, "THE JURY WILL RETIRE TO CONSIDER THE VERDICT." The jury wasted no time and within ten minutes came up with the verdict: "NOT QUILTY."

Mwinelubemba Chitimukulu Kanyanta-Manga II
The Paramount Chief of the Bemba People of Zambia
Kasama, Zambia

ARTICLES AND LETTERS

We encourage you our readers to contribute articles to the JCTR Bulletin. The articles should reflect any social, economic, political, educational, cultural, pastoral, theological and spiritual theme. All articles should be between 1, 000 and 1, 500 words.

You make the Bulletin to be what it is!

For contribution, comments or feedback, write to the editor;
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JCTR BASIC NEEDS BASKET

Lusaka June 2017

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

Commodity	Price (ZMW)	Quantity	Units	Total (ZMW)
Mealie Meal	80.40	2	x 25 Kg	160.80
Beans	29.72	3	Kg	89.15
Kapenta (Dry)	169.83	2	Kg	339.67
Fish (Bream, Dry)	127.40	1	Kg	127.40
Beef	37.42	4	Kg	149.68
Dark Green Vegetables	5.60	4	Kg	22.40
Tomatoes	8.25	4	Kg	33.00
Onion	9.33	2	Kg	18.67
Cooking oil (2.5L)	49.39	3	Litres	59.26
Bread	8.20	1	Loaf/day	245.96
Sugar	26.01	3	x 2 Kg	78.04
Milk	7.29	4	x 500ml	29.14
Tea	95.00	1	Kg	95.00
Eggs	10.00	2	Units	20.00
Salt	7.26	1	Kg	7.26
Subtotal				ZMW 1,475.42

(B) COST OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD ITEMS

Commodity	Price (ZMW)	Quantity	Units	Total (ZMW)
Charcoal	158.33	2	x 90 Kg bag(s)	316.67
Soap (Lifebuoy/Champion)	5.94	10	Tablet(s)	59.41
Wash soap (BOOM)	9.83	4	x 400g	39.31
Jelly (e.g. Vaseline)	20.50	1	x 500ml	20.50
Electricity (medium density)	200.00	1	x 1month	200.00
Water & Sanitation (med - fixed)	197.21	1	x 1month	197.21
Housing (3 bedroom)	2,650.00	1	x 1month	2,650.00
Subtotal				ZMW 3,483.10

Total for Basic Needs Basket

ZMW 4,958.52

Totals from previous months	April 16	May 16	June 16	July 16	Aug 16	Sept 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 17
Amount (K)	4,293.95	4,817.41	4,810.52	4,820.70	4,870.89	4,934.09	5,036.28	5,005.14	4,976.67	4,935.46	4,918.76	5,017.09	4,973.03	4,952.69

(C) SOME OTHER ADDITIONAL COSTS

Education		Transport (bus fare round trip)	
Item	Amount (ZMW)	Item	Amount (ZMW)
Grades 1-7 (User + PTA/year)	145.00	Chilenje - Town	14.00
Grades 8-9 (User + PTA/year)	500.00	Chelston - town	14.00
Grades 10-12 (User + PTA/year)	975.00	Matero - Town	12.00
Health		Fuel (cost at the pump)	
Item	Amount (ZMW)	Item	Amount (ZMW)
Registration (book)	4.00	Petrol (per litre)	12.50
Self-referral (Emergency Fee)	5.50	Diesel (per litre)	10.72
Mosquito net (private)	75.00	Paraffin (per litre)	6.81

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

Lusaka	Kasama	Mansa	Mongu	Ndola	Solwezi	Monze	Chipata	Mpika	Luanshya	Kitwe	Kabwe	Livingstone	Choma	Chinsali
4,958.52	2,872.80	3,241.33	2,986.87	5,027.87	4,116.84	3,746.25	2,611.43	2,645.50	3,713.41	3,008.45	3,538.46	3,844.59	3,677.26	2,788.65

This survey was conducted on 27th June 2017 by the Social & Economic Development Programme of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection. Average prices were calculated on the basis of prices gathered from retail outlets at Northmead, Shoprite (Cairo Road), City Market, Chawama, Chanda, Kabwata, Matero and schools, clinics/hospitals and filling stations around Lusaka. The JUNE Basic Needs Basket is approximately US\$550 based upon the exchange rate of K9.30 prevailing on the days of data collection. Please note that other monthly costs would include personal care, clothing, recreation, etc.

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THE JCTR UPDATE: PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES

WHAT KEEPS US BUSY AT THE JCTR? HERE ARE SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPEMNT PROGRAMME (SED)

The SED Programme in the 2nd Quarter of 2017 worked with like-minded organisations to host the first ever Zambian Provincial Mining Indaba (PMI) in Solwezi. The PMI that was hosted jointly with Caritas, Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP), Youth Alliance for Development (YAD), Extractive Industry Transparency Alliance (EITA) and Diakonia took place from the 7th – 9th of June with the theme “Benefitting from mining sector through engagement with people business and government.” The JCTR also co-hosted and chaired the 2017 Zambia Alternative Mining Indaba with the theme “Mineral Development for all: Leaving No One Behind” from the 20th – 22nd of June.

With these two Indaba’s, key issues discussed included the challenges and opportunities in the extractive industry in Zambia today; Illegal trade and exploration of minerals in mining; the possibilities and risks in mineral revenue sharing mechanisms; Policies and practices regarding Land and Compensation; the choices and consequences on Uranium Extraction; the Domestication and Implementation of the African Mining Vision (AMV) as well as Transparency and Accountability through the EITI. Regarding these topics, the consortium of CSOs proposed formalization of illegal mining activities; finalize and launch the Land policy which has stalled; put in place mechanisms and policies to guide uranium extraction before signing any exploration agreements and setting up an AMV secretariat to spearhead and monitor domestication of the vision and its incorporation into national laws and policies.

The programme also carried out community sensitization meetings as planned on Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Kasama (Chisanga, Chitambo and Tazara communities) and Kabwe (Makululu community) to encourage communities to take an active role in ensuring that their children attain ECE before going to primary school. The programme also sponsored radio programmes to share the findings of the ECE research and hosted government official to help sensitize the public on current provisions that promote access to ECE for all.

The programme also published the Budgeting and Planning Manual and other related IEC material that have been disseminated to Kafue, Monze, Choma, Kitwe and Luanshya. Further, JCTR hosted budget submission engagements in Livingstone, Solwezi, Ndola and Mongu as a way of getting more people involved in the budget planning process. It is hoped that this process will help communities and CBOs that represent them to take ownership on national issues such as the

budget preparation and implementation process that are responsible for provision of services and national development as a whole.

FAITH AND JUSTICE PROGRAMME

During the 2nd quarter of 2017, the Faith and Justice Programme carried out active citizenship trainings in Kitwe, Kasama, Mongu, Monze, Livingstone and Kabwe that were aimed at empowering local communities with relevant information on the Public Order Act, the amendment constitution, ATI Bill and the process thereto among other critical processes. The trainings provided an opportunity to assist participants identify avenues of participation and engagements with the government, civic/parliamentary leaders in governance processes. Concerns were raised by the participants which relate to poor governance tenets by those entrusted with the responsibility to govern.

The JCTR also made follow-up visits to Kasama, Kabwe, Livingstone, Mongu and Monze to assess progress made by stakeholders on commitments that were made in 2016 on improving communities’ access to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) with regard to water and sanitation, education and health. The participants were equipped with knowledge and skills to use in demanding for improved service delivery from the service providers.

The JCTR has continued to demand for the enactment of the Access to Information (ATI) Law. It is for this reason that the JCTR and the ATI coalition visited chiefdoms (Mukuni, Nzamane, Nkana, Chitambo, Chikwanda, Chitimukulu, Chimese) to lobby community and traditional leadership support in the campaign for the ATI Bill. The JCTR also held a sensitization meeting with 19 Members of Parliament about the benefits of having the ATI law in place. They pledged to continue working with JCTR on reviewing and interpreting the key provisions of the Bill.

Furthermore, the programme carried out public discussions on citizen participation in the process of constitutional review of the 2016 Amended Constitution in Kitwe, Kasama, Ndola, Livingstone and Mongu. The discussions were aimed at enhancing the capacity for the community to engage in important governance processes such as the constitution review process. Most of the participants were accessing this document for the first time. Thereafter, they were helped to be familiar, appreciate and understand various salient Articles of the Republican Constitution as amended in 2016. Thus, there is need for government and other stakeholders to continue educating people on the salient provisions of the Constitution and its legal implications given that it is the Supreme law of the land.

Views expressed in the *JCTR Bulletin* do not necessarily reflect the views of the JCTR

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