



BULLETIN

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
"Promoting faith and justice"



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QUOTE

Leadership

“the more powerful you are, the more your actions will have an impact on people, the more responsible you are to act humbly,”

(Pope Francis)

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers

This is the final issue of JCTR Bulletin this year. We are blessed with articles traversing a wide range of issues. Arguably there is an underlying theme of active citizenship running throughout all the articles. An active citizen is a person who actively takes responsibility and initiative in areas of public concern. The articles cover a number of areas of public concern such as child protection, human rights, national budget process and investment of scarce public resources in priority areas. Some of the priority areas discussed in this edition's articles are education, access to clean water in rural areas and policy issues relating to agriculture including irrigation, value chain, and food storage.

We encourage you as a JCTR Bulletin reader to engage with the issues being addressed in the articles, as this exercise by itself is an element of active citizenship. For instance, in his article "Pilate Effect: The Dangerous Limits of Child Protection Policies", Temple Anuforo, S.J. asks hard questions about child protection policies to challenge us in discerning and rethinking various forms of interventions or programs of action that are actually at the service of the intended beneficiaries (the children themselves) other than maintaining the status quo which entrenches the practice where organisations are preoccupied with shielding themselves from liability by making sure that the right boxes are ticked.

Recently Zambia was rocked in two hotly contested pronouncements, with one that invoked compulsory or mandatory HIV testing, and the other that stressed routine HIV testing. We are challenged to engage with ethical and human rights standards governing HIV testing in considering the issue of HIV testing in Zambia. In his article, "HIV Testing and Human Rights: The Delicate Balance", Simson Mwale reminds us that a well thought-out HIV testing policy painstakingly demands balancing public health concerns and human rights standards.

Usually when we hear about xenophobia we think of this issue as being very remote to us in Zambia. Leonard Katulushi in his article, "We Belong to One Humanity: Everyone is a Foreigner Somewhere", invites us to engage with the issue of xenophobia seriously. This is an invitation to human unity in our human diversity to collectively stand up against xenophobia in all of its forms. A chilling reminder is that after all, everyone is a foreigner somewhere and we susceptible to xenophobia.

As we come to the end of the year, JCTR would like to wish you all our esteemed readers a very happy Christmas and a grace-filled new year of 2018.

Alex Muyebe, S.J.
Editor

PILATE EFFECT: THE DANGEROUS LIMITS OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

Introduction

In 2007, the whole of the United Kingdom (UK) was up in arms about the death of 17-month-old Peter Connelly. Peter was found dead on August 3rd, 2007. The post-mortem examinations revealed that the child had “a broken back, gashes to the head, a fractured shinbone, a ripped ear, blackened fingers and toes, with a missing finger nail, skin torn from the nose and mouth, cuts on the neck and a tooth knocked out.” It was obvious that the young lad had suffered months and months of intense abuse. The government immediately had Peter’s mother, Tracy Connelly, her lover Steven Baker and Stephen’s brother Jason Owen arrested and tried. Tracy pleaded guilty and the trio received varying degrees of sentencing.

Soon afterwards, revelations began to show that Peter’s death was not really an accident. Not only did both partners have series of running with the law, but they also came from a long heritage of abuse, violence and drugs. As such any record of their names should have had any system beeping with red flags all over. As if these were not enough, on the 11th of December, 2006, Peter was put under child protection. The child had been seen with head injuries and bruises, indicative of abuse. Besides being admitted to hospital several times in the months leading up to his death, Peter “had been seen as many as 60 times by various professionals.” In fact, on the 1st of August, just “two days before he died, Peter was examined by Sabah al-Zayyat, a locum consultant paediatrician; who did not notice the boy’s broken back and paraplegia.”

Revelation of A Systemic Problem

These discoveries turned the tide on the case. The Standard Newspaper and other media houses in the UK published tonnes and tonnes of articles making the case that Peter’s death was as a result of the negligence and the irresponsibility of the Children’s Services Department. These revelations stoked public outrage. Under pressure, “the Minister of Education, Ed Balls, sacked the Director of Children’s Services in Haringey Sharon Shoemsmith, with immediate effect in a live press conference on Television.” Three other social workers who were directly connected to Peter’s case were also sacked for negligence and dereliction of duty.

Peter’s case represents a cycle that is seen all over the world today. The new millennium indeed came with growing awareness that as a society, we have failed to protect the most vulnerable among us-children. Following this new “enlightenment”, child protection has become a burning issue of critical concern. Today, almost every organization or society that has anything to do with children has to commit to a child protection policy. These indeed are signs of progress. However, the question that remains is whether this approach is yielding positive fruits in guaranteeing the safety of our children. It can be argued that they have not.

Reflecting on Peter’s case among other things, it not only reflects the human failures that have led to the abuse of our children and also highlight ways in which child protection policies create limits in our capacity to truly care for children consequently making them even more vulnerable while making parents and caregivers less accountable and responsible. In reflecting on this, there are four rather simple questions that could be used in getting to grips with the matter under consideration. The questions for consideration are: what am I doing when I am doing child protection? Who am I protecting when I sign child protection policies? Who is a child? What is child abuse?

What am I doing when I am doing Child Protection? The revelations from Peter’s case show that the child had been put on child protection. In fact, the details show that in the months leading up to his death, he had been visited 60 times and examined by a doctor. Yet all those eyes missed the fact that the child was being abused. In most cases child abuse this is what causes outrage. Peter’s case was the same. The fact that this happened right under the nose of child protection agents is no doubt reflective of serious irresponsibility in the way in which these agents carried out their duties.

However, one question that seemed to be somehow sidelined in this avalanche of blame-slinging is, “How was it possible that the child protection agents failed to see that Peter was being abused?” This, I believe, is a critical question – one that we need to engage seriously. While it is true that the social service agency had issues of competence, many of the social workers interviewed mentioned that the particular social workers assigned to Peter’s case were actually the agency’s best. Therefore, in order

to really make sense of this question, like Articus Finch would suggest, it means we have to enter into the shoes of these social workers and walk around in them, to see things through their eyes. Only then can we understand how it was possible for them to miss something so obvious. Hence, the question we should ask as we think of this is the same question that we have at the beginning of this section: “When an agent is doing child protection, what is she doing?” Some of my colleagues have testified of their exhausting work which is usually paperwork. But, what is the relationship between paperwork and caring for a child or a sick person?

Commenting on this, LSE Philosopher, Nancy Cartwright explains that this gradual movement towards more and more paperwork has its origin in our desire for objectivity and certain solutions whenever we are confronted with social problems. As such, once there is a problem Y, we immediately conclude that this problem was caused by X. Given this linear causal principle, we immediately make the case that once anyone anywhere does $-X$ (the opposite of X), and does it faithfully and regularly, then Y will never happen again. Whenever Y happens, it means that $-X$ has not been done faithfully. With this, every institution immediately comes up with a policy procedure that requires every agent to indicate and fill in verifiable paperwork to show that they have done $-X$ as faithfully as possible.

There are two fundamental flaws in this line of reasoning. The first is that not all social problems have a single cause. According to Cartwright, often social problems have their causal origins in what she calls “causals pancakes”. “Pancakes”, in the sense that there are many ingredients that come together to cause any given social problem. Even these causal pancakes are not enough to actually cause the social problem in question. For this to happen, there are always other contextual factors like culture or setting that create an environment for the causes to generate the kinds of outcomes that we consider a problem. So, when we pick out one singular causal factor X a-contextually and then concentrate all our energies around it, we do not only miss the point widely, we actually end up reinforcing the problem through our interventions.

The second problem, which flows from the first, is the one that I find rather dangerous. Once we conclude that the only way to solve a problem is something that does not depend on the skill or virtue of an agent but on the fulfillment of an “objective procedure” out there, then work automatically or gradually becomes the mere

automatic repetition of laid-out instructions and procedures. And how do we ensure and know that these objective procedures have been followed? Paperwork, of course! Consequently, sooner than later, paperwork replaces actual work.

The danger with this “paperwork approach” to policy is that while giving the objective illusion that the work is being done, in actual fact, it does the opposite by so engrossing and consequently, distancing the child protection agent from the main object of her work – the child. In the Monroe Review of Child Protection, the 2009 report which reviews the Child Protection Policy in the UK, Eileen Monroe points out that this trend is what is really at the heart of the failure of the child protection policies in the UK. One of the social workers interviewed and cited in the report summarized it thus: “the electronic forms have altered child and family social work in an unhealthy way.

The purpose of assessment is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child; this has been forgotten in favor of a primary purpose of filling in the forms. More so, other social workers who shared their experiences mentioned that even when they judged it necessary to act otherwise, the system makes it rather unsafe for them to do so; because should something go wrong, they would be judged by whether or not they followed laid out procedure, not on whether they were trying to do the right thing. “This”, the report said, “has led to an over-standardized system that cannot respond to the varied range of children’s needs.” Now, we begin to see why and how it was possible for the care agents to miss Peter’s injuries. They did their job. It was the paperwork, true to its nature, that was blind!

Who am I protecting when I sign Child “Protection Policies”?

This sounds like a rather “unnecessary” question. Of course it is the child, we would say. However, let us think about this a little more: When a project sponsor asks you to sign or to write a child protection policy before they release their funds to you, what are they really trying to protect? When a school or any child-care agency asks a new employee to sign a child protection policy before being employed, who are they really trying to protect, the child or the institution? While this is not said, often those who find themselves in such a situation know the message clearly: “You see, whatever you do with these children, my hands are off. You will face the music alone. Now, please sign here!” Anyone who has ever signed a child protection policy gets this message. In some cases,

overzealous employers could even go as far as to verbalize it. The implication of this is that, rather than what they show to intend, child protection policies have at least in practice become a rather subtle way for organisations to wash their hands off any responsibility for the abuse (and even the care) for children.

As I think about it now, a perfect image that comes to mind is that of the drama that happened during the funeral of Nelson Mandela. Days after the event, it was discovered that the sign language interpreter at the event was not a real interpreter. He posed as a sign language interpreter. The shame, however, was that for an event of such significance, they could not find a good sign language interpreter who was thoroughly vetted. In the UK Guardian a few days later, the Slovakian philosopher, Slavoj Zizek, mentioned that rather than the contrary, sign language instructor was, in actual fact, the real interpreter of what was actually going on:

What he (the fake interpreter) confronted us with was the truth about sign language translations for the deaf – it doesn't really matter if there are any deaf people among the public who need the translation; the translator is there to make us, who do not understand sign language, feel good...giving us a satisfaction that we are doing the right thing, taking care of the underprivileged and hindered.

Child protection policies are somewhat like that fraudulent sign language instructor at Mandela's memorial. More and more, they have become a means to safeguard our integrity not our children's dignity, to protect against possible litigations against us and not actual violations of our children.

Who is a Child?

This is yet another rather strange question. However, I think it is one that we have to deeply engage. As already mentioned in the preceding section, when organizations sign to these policies they do so mainly as part of a means or a framework for protecting themselves from possible litigation. This cycle of self-preservation does not end with the organization. It gets passed on. Thus when the organization in turn asks her employee to sign the policies, the subtle message that they are passing to the employee is not that an organization values children and that they have a commitment to protect and safeguard them. Rather the subtle message, as I highlighted above is "If you get into trouble, you are on your own! After all, you agreed and signed to protect children!

Therefore, the message that the employee gets is

that this organization is an unsafe space for him or her. The leadership expert Simon Sinek has talked extensively about the inherent dangers of unsafe organizational spaces. Unsafe environments are negatively correlated with productivity, with creativity, with the willingness to take risks and with job satisfaction or fulfillment. If we remember, the three social workers attached to Peter's case were acclaimed to be the best and most reputed among fellow social workers. So, in his investigation into Peter's case, the journalist, Andrew Anthony, went around asking, "but how could they have missed what was right before their eyes – that the child was being abused?" "I think it was a fog" says one social worker, "because it was like that sometimes. We used to call it 'Nam' – 'Tot nam.' Because it was just constant. You would come out sometimes and be absolutely exhausted. What we see here is a terrible work environment- one in which life has been completely taken out of the work. Even the best workers would sooner or later lose focus when placed in such work environments.

While this worries me, however, what worries me more is the next point. Not only does the employee feel unsafe but that this kind of system goes on to further present the child as the potential object or source of the danger. For instance, at the time Peter's death happened, the child protection agency was still suffering from the shadows of the death of Victoria Climbié, an 8 year old who had, like Peter, died from years and years of abuse. The response to this was exactly the same as the case with Peter: public outrage, blame-slinging, shaming, sacking of social service workers, more rigorous procedures. The cumulative effect of this kind of response, rather than improve things, actually reinforced the problem. According to one worker who joined the agency just after the Climbié case, "morale was extremely low," she said. "People were depressed. To give you some idea of the mood, the cafe opposite the road wouldn't serve social workers."

In this situation, the one thing on the mind of any social worker is the need to protect herself from any further mistakes or consequent public condemnation and judgment. For her, every encounter with a child generates this possibility, anxiety or fear - and is thus done on tiptoe – with a sigh of relief when it is over! Gradually, what we see here is a dangerous turn of events – children are no longer just endangered species –needing protection, but dangerous species – needing to be avoided lest they constitute potential but potent threats not only to the safety of the employee concerned but to the integrity of the organization.

A school administrator I worked under used to put it very well. "Reverend!" he would say, "you have to be careful o!" Meaning? When you are around children, you have to be on tip-toe like a soldier walking around land-mines.

What is Abuse?

This question, though last in our consideration, is the most important point because of its implications on how child protection is conducted in Africa. In order for us to really articulate what "protection" means and what should constitute our response in terms of child protection, we need to first make sense of what, for us, constitutes abuse or the antithesis of protection. I know that asking this question appears rather stupid, considering the fact that our conversation all along presupposes that we already know what it is that we are talking about. Of course we are talking about sexual abuse! But, the question is, what makes sexual abuse, "abusive"? For many, the argument is that it takes advantage of the innocence and vulnerability of the child. From our childhood, our moral sensors already abhor such kinds of injustice. For others, the argument is that this kind of abuse traumatizes the child. That is an important word these days.

Although these objections seem common, they somewhat express two of the strongest philosophical objections to sexual abuse. Philosophically, there are two elements that make sexual abuse evil – the first is that it is about power (taking advantage); and second, it involves the use of that power in objectifying (traumatizing) another human being. Thus when we think of sexual abuse, we think of these two elements: there is the abuse of power and trust and there is the violation of the inherent dignity of a human being, or in this case, a vulnerable child. I am aware that when we think about the abuse of children, there is an extra moral disgust that we feel, which has a more emotional or psychological origin. However, this is not something I would want to begin to dig into in a paper of this length.

The point is that sexual abuse at the philosophical level is abuse because it takes a child and uses her in a manner that negates her dignity - as a mere object. When we look around us today, do we see other instances where children have been made objects to be used for various forms of gratification? In our countries today, children are being used as beggars on the streets to help enrich certain religious leaders. In Zimbabwe, Kenya and Zambia for example, the numbers of so-called "street children", especially as a result of HIV/AIDS, are hitting alarming proportions. What of child labour in mines in Angola and in Cocoa plantations in Ghana? What of child soldiers in Uganda and Congo? Our society is full of children getting "abused" with various forms of social and political organs.

Framing the issue of child protection solely around sex is not only limiting our vision, but also limiting our capacity to act, because sex, as always, ignites those primordial but powerful forces of guilt and shame and taboo. For instance, when it comes to issues of child protection, everything breaks down to a finger-pointing game. Africans and Asians would often shout back, "Child sexual abuse is not our problem! Do not impose your problem on us!" Whether this is true or not is not the issue. The problem is how we have framed this issue. We have focused so much on sex that we have become blind to the broader experiences of abuse that our children suffer. This needs to change and urgently so!

Conclusion

What is the way forward? Surely, there are no ready-made suggestions. This is not a proposal to do away with child protection policies but to evaluate how they are being implemented. In the past few months, there have been a lot of debates and discussions especially in Africa about training for and ratification of this or that child protection policy. Perhaps we should not simply accept and repeat what seems not to be working without taking time to ask important questions, without looking into the eyes of our children and the needs of our context. Thus, this article's aim has been to provoke questions and hopefully change the conversations that we are currently having on this issue.

Nonetheless, let me conclude by making one suggestion that could guide any future policy reformulation in terms of protecting our children. During his address to the global gathering of the Jesuits in Rome recently, Pope Francis touched on one principle from St. Ignatius of Loyola, which according to the Pope is very helpful in discerning and rethinking various forms of interventions or programs of action. This principle is captured by the word "Approvechamiento" which can be loosely translated to mean "benefit", "most beneficial" or "most helpful". This means that in thinking about policies we need to ask "what would be most helpful for our children?" Unfortunately, because our present policy intervention finds its point de depart in the question "who is at fault?" we seem to have completely taken our eyes off our children. Consequently, like Pilate, our child protection policies have become a means for washing our hands off any responsibility for our children.

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GIRL CHILD PROTECTION

Introduction

Child marriage, defined as a legal or customary union before the age of 18, threatens children's well-being and constitutes multiple violations of their rights. It is a reality for both girls and boys, although girls are disproportionately the most affected. Child marriage is widespread and can lead to a lifetime of disadvantage and deprivation. In numerous contexts around the world, the practice has been shown to have profound physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional impacts, especially for girls.

Equal Opportunities

According to the United Nations Convention on Rights of a Child (UNCRC), a child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years. It is important to note that the definition of a child as given by the UN convention covers a girl child too. This means that a girl child has rights as much as a boy child that they should enjoy by virtue of being children. Many times in our society a girl child is deprived of a number of rights hence is always in a marginalized position. From time immemorial and in many different communities it is said and believed that a girl's place is in the kitchen. This means that the most form of education a girl child receives is how to take care of a home and a family when she gets married.



This is to say that educating girls is less of a priority than educating boys. When a woman's most important role is considered to be that of a wife, mother and homemaker, schooling girls and preparing them for the future maybe given little or no attention. It is for this reason that a girl child is most times denied her right to acquire an education because she will only end up being married off once she attains puberty. Child marriage, therefore, affects boys as well as girls but girls are subjected to it with marriage laws often promoting this form of discrimination by allowing a lower legal marriage age for girls than boys. It is largely girls who suffer its devastating consequences.

Benefits of Educating a Girl-child

A girl child must be accorded the same opportunity to be educated as the boy child. It is important that a girl remains healthy, safe, educated and empowered instead of being treated as someone's property to be betrothed, raped, abused and sold, with no power over her destiny. A girl child has to be able to freely make informed decisions regarding whom, when and if she marries. And also when and if she wants to have children. In addition, a girl child should be respected and valued by her community and educated, this is being able to pursue a non-exploitative career, able to invest in the economy and participate politically in a non-discriminatory atmosphere and to live her life to the fullest based on her own choices and abilities.

It is important to note that a number of studies show that girls and women who are educated and marry later are more likely to earn an income. Women invest that income into healthcare, food, education, childcare and household durables. Women who have their children later in life are healthier, raise healthier, educated children and help end perpetual cycles of inequality, discrimination, abuse and poverty. The reality, however, is that accepted social norms, and in many countries, discriminatory laws, provide a legitimacy to the harmful practices, such as child marriage, that shape a girl's life and indeed the society in which she lives. These social norms are fundamental drivers of discrimination and must be challenged everywhere.

Causes of Child Marriages

The causes of child marriage are various and complex. Child marriage has a number of proximate causes and takes place within diverse cultural contexts. However, the common themes uniting the varying traditions are sex inequality and pervasive violence and discrimination against women and girls. Child marriage may be seen by families as a way of protecting young girls from premarital sex, pregnancy outside marriage, rape and even prostitution. By marrying a girl off early, the risk of uncertainty to her prospects or damage to a family's honor is significantly

removed, although not the physical, psychological and other risks to the girl herself. Sometimes parents or caregivers fail to provide food and other basic needs for the family hence resorting to selling off their daughters into early or child marriages with the hope of realizing enough money to take care of the family needs.

This happens because of the perceived economic burden of having a young daughter who could otherwise be provided for by a husband and thus free resources for other children. It is also because of this poverty situation in homes that children themselves would rather marry without being forced just so they could have a better life with all their basic needs met even though this in reality does not happen. For this reason also, families see little point in educating their daughters as it will not be them benefiting but the husband's family. The other cause of child marriages is that children themselves indulge in premarital sex which leads to early pregnancies.

It is because of this that parents or caregivers would then rather have their children married to avoid the shame of their children being ridiculed by the community for falling pregnant outside marriage. In most African communities/countries when a girl is of age or reaches puberty they undergo initiation and this is seen as a rite of passage into womanhood and an immediate precursor to marriage. Therefore once a girl has undergone initiation she is under pressure to marry as soon as possible and in most cases the parents find a husband for her.

Consequences of Child Marriages

The consequences of child marriage are severe and long-lasting. Along with an education and childhood cut, girls suffer a traumatic initiation in sexual relationships, are put at risk of domestic violence and STI's and have the chance of a career or better life taken away. Many girls die in child birth or from pregnancy-related complications, the leading cause of death for girls aged between 15 and 19 years old in developing countries, according to UN figures. Child marriage is a violation of human rights and robs girls of their education, health and long-term prospects.

Child marriage prevents girls from living their lives free of all forms of violence and that it has adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as rights to education, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual reproductive health. Child marriage has devastating consequences which often determine a life's trajectory. Girls who marry young are at a higher risk of dying during childbirth, having their child die before its first birthday, contracting AIDS and becoming a victim of domestic violence. Girls who marry early

and give birth before their bodies are fully developed are more at risk of death or terrible injury and illness in childbirth.

Measures to Prevent Child Marriages

The first approach to preventing/stopping child marriage is to have a talk with girls. This is so because girls understand acutely the obstacles that bar them from opportunities, and they have clear ideas about what needs to change in their lives in order to succeed. It's also important to support parents who support their daughters' decision to continue their studies and enjoy their childhood hence delaying the choice to become a wife and mother.

Any effort aimed at ending forced child marriage, must address how to strengthen girls' education programs to ensure that girls stay in school and learn enough for parents to consider it worthwhile postponing their marriage. This would be done by providing girls with life skills such as numeracy, literacy and articulating their needs and interests to elders. Raising awareness and commitment among parents, teachers, religious leaders and other influential adults to eradicate child marriage and working with young people to understand and build peer support on the idea of preventing child marriage.

A Call for a Collective Effort

Child marriage is a problem directly and indirectly affecting many girls and boys, women and men around the world. It is a global human rights and development issue that has a disproportionate impact on girls. It is a cross-cutting human rights issue affecting children's and women's rights to health, education, equality, non-discrimination, and to live free from violence and exploitation, including slavery and servitude. It requires a holistic and comprehensive response by states working in collaboration and partnership with a range of stakeholders.

It is important to understand the underlying practical, physical and mental health needs connected to child marriage, for both the girl and any children she may have, so as to underpin any plans for development at the community, state, regional and international levels. States should address the issue through a child protection framework and use a joined-up approach. Ending child marriage should be a global priority so that this and future generations of young girls will enjoy all their human rights.

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HIV TESTING AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE DELICATE BALANCE

Intriguing Questions about HIV Testing

What does the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing involve? Is HIV testing supposed to be client-initiated or provider-initiated? Which HIV testing method is most suitable? What are the ethical and human rights standards governing HIV testing? What HIV testing policy options exist for particular countries? Well, these are just some of the questions that confront policy makers when it comes to making individual choices for designing an HIV testing policy. Undoubtedly, making choices in matters so delicate as involving human beings isn't always an easy undertaking. No wonder, certain options are met with so much resistance, outrage, controversies and dissatisfaction.

A well thought-out HIV testing policy painstakingly demands balancing public health concerns and human rights standards. Zambia was recently rocked in two hotly contested pronouncements, with one that invoked compulsory or mandatory testing, and the other, that stressed routine testing. Far from providing a scientifically desired option, this article reflects on the different policy options that inform HIV testing. It highlights the fact that HIV testing remains a very highly disputed arena not only for Zambia but also for the global institutions offering guidance. It further revives the complex and politically charged relationships evolving between public health and human rights.

HIV Testing at a Glance

An HIV test detects the presence of the HIV virus itself or antibodies to the virus, in blood, saliva or urine. HIV tests are used for screening blood or organs, to prevent transmission of HIV to recipients via infected blood or organs; diagnosing HIV infection in individuals, to

confirm whether a person has HIV infection or not; or conducting surveillance or research, involving testing specific groups of people to find out the incidence of HIV (the number of cases of HIV infection) or to estimate the prevalence (percentage of a population infected with HIV). Currently, over 100 different kinds of HIV tests are available with the most common ones detecting HIV antibodies (e.g., simple/rapid tests performed in less than 10 minutes) and those detecting the virus itself (e.g., viral culture that grows the virus from a sample of blood in a laboratory). It should be noted, however, that no HIV test is 100% accurate. Moreover, test technology has improved becoming more accurate, simpler, quicker, and being used even in resource-poor settings. Despite these developments, HIV testing for individuals is still a complex issue.

In the early years of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, there were aggressive calls for punitive or forcible testing for this new and feared disease. These were sometimes accompanied by calls to ensure that the HIV status of those who tested positive should be publicly known – in the worst cases, that these people be known in their workplaces and communities as HIV-positive, even that they be tattooed to show their status. AIDS activists understood that those most affected by the disease, particularly gay and bisexual men and drug users, were already socially marginalised, stigmatised, in many cases even criminalised, and fearful of seeking government services. Layering that fear with the added fear of public scorn thus meant that populations most affected by HIV and AIDS would be the least likely to be tested.

WHO's Policy Statement on HIV Testing

Against this backdrop, the Joint United Nations

Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) and World Health Organisation (WHO) established in their 2004 Policy statement on HIV testing, three underpinning principles (sometimes called the '3 Cs'), namely: confidentiality of test results and of the fact of seeking a test; counselling and information about HIV and AIDS before and after the test; and consent to be tested given in an informed, specific and voluntary way by the person to be tested. As UNAIDS/WHO emphasize, the primary model for HIV testing in most countries has been one of voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) initiated by clients. However, increasingly, provider-initiated testing has been advocated by public health officials in many settings.

Alongside these, is mandatory or compulsory HIV testing that has been applied to sex workers, military recruits, drug users, migrants, refugees, international travellers, students and scholarship recipients, pregnant women, patients in health facilities, people being treated for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), people planning to marry, visa applicants and job applicants. Mandatory testing is when people are tested for HIV without having any choice, or when it is difficult for them to refuse to be tested. The reason often advanced for its use on certain groups or situations, is that it will protect the wider community from HIV.

Contrary to this claim, mandatory testing has serious disadvantages both for the people who are tested and for the wider community. It does not ensure that members of the group are or will remain 'HIV free', because it does not detect HIV in people who have recently acquired HIV or who acquire HIV after being tested. It also prevents people from seeking medical care, advice and counselling, if they fear that this will require being tested against their will, creating a false sense of security, and reducing the likelihood that a person will change risky behaviours to prevent HIV transmission to others.

The Delicate Balance

Experience over the years has shown that introducing HIV testing without counselling, education, care and follow-up support for people who test HIV positive, creates many problems. Lack of choice about being tested can often lead to stigma, discrimination and personal distress, which in turn can lead to lack of acceptance of HIV test results and lack of behaviour change. This is why earlier guidance from UNAIDS/WHO (2004) sought to encourage governments to review and reform their public health laws to ensure that they protect the right to consent, privacy and confidentiality during HIV testing.

A human rights-based approach to HIV testing therefore emerged which urged that the only form of acceptable mandatory screening is that done on donated blood, and that the '3 Cs' (consent, counselling and confidentiality) must form the bedrock of HIV testing services. In this approach, the focus is

on patients voluntarily electing to test for their HIV status. Although these standards have evolved over time, reflecting changing public health approaches, they have continued to be based on the fundamental human rights to exercise one's autonomy, to privacy and to access the highest attainable standard of healthcare.

In 2007, there was a shift in the international guidance when UNAIDS/WHO issued guidelines on Provider Initiated Counselling and Testing (PICT). These proposed an approach in which HIV testing was to be recommended to all patients who present themselves at a healthcare facility with certain conditions. If the offer of HIV testing was accepted, consent would be obtained for the test with the overriding principle being the best interests of the individual patient. This approach requires the giving to individuals of sufficient information to make an informed and voluntary decision to be tested, maintaining patient confidentiality, performing post-test counselling and making referrals to appropriate services. This shift was prompted by the new human rights goals of universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support services.

Four Types of HIV Testing

The 2007 guidelines, thus, distinguishes four types of testing: (i) VCT which remains critical to the effectiveness of HIV prevention among any population that may have been exposed to HIV through any mode of transmission; (ii) diagnosis HIV testing which is indicated whenever a person shows signs or symptoms consistent with HIV-related disease or AIDS to aid clinical diagnosis and management such as HIV testing for all tuberculosis patients as part of their routine management; (iii) routine offer of HIV testing by health care providers made to all patients being assessed in STIs clinic or elsewhere to facilitate tailored counselling based on knowledge of HIV status, or seen in the context of pregnancy to facilitate an offer of antiretroviral prevention of mother-to-child transmission, or seen in clinical and community based health service settings where HIV is prevalent and antiretroviral treatment is available; and (iv) mandatory HIV screening for HIV and other blood borne viruses of all blood that is destined for transfusion or for manufacture of blood products, and mandatory screening of donors required prior to all procedures involving transfer of bodily fluids or body parts, such as artificial insemination, corneal grafts and organ transplant.

In addition, the guidelines do not support mandatory testing of individuals on public health grounds, arguing that voluntary testing is more likely to result in behaviour change to avoid transmitting HIV to other individuals. Conversely, it recognises country discretion requiring mandatory HIV testing for immigration purposes, or for pre-recruitment and periodic medical assessment of military personnel for the purposes of establishing fitness, and strongly

recommends that such testing be conducted only when accompanied by counselling for both HIV-positive and HIV-negative individuals and referral to medical and psychosocial services for those who receive a positive test result.

However, the agencies recommend that for provider-initiated testing, whether for purposes of diagnosis, offer of antiretroviral prevention of mother-to-child transmission or encouragement to learn HIV status, patients retain the right to refuse testing (basic conditions of the '3 Cs'), i.e., to 'opt out' of a systematic offer of testing. Ironically, HIV testing without consent may be justified in the rare circumstance in which a patient is unconscious, his or her parent or guardian is absent, and knowledge of HIV status is necessary for purposes of optimal treatment.

The primary model for HIV testing has thus been the provision of client-initiated voluntary counselling and testing services. Increasingly, provider-initiated approaches in clinical settings are being promoted, i.e., health care providers routinely initiating an offer of HIV testing in a context in which the provision of, or referral to, effective prevention and treatment services is assured.

An Enduring Conflict

A decade after the guidelines' publication, challenges lingers on to reach a broad international consensus about the ethical and human rights standards that should govern HIV testing, whether provided in voluntary counseling and testing sites or in the context of clinical practice. The debate, substantially documented, rages on balancing public health concerns and human rights principles. One most remarkable consensus though is that testing in all settings requires consent. "A person must be able to opt-in or opt-out of an HIV test with knowledge of the possible consequences, alternate options for care and other services" and that a refusal to be tested will have no impact on the quality of care the person receives. That is, people being tested for HIV must give informed consent to be tested. They must be informed of the process of HIV testing and counselling, the services that will be available depending on the results, and their right to refuse testing.

And that, mandatory or compulsory (coerced) testing is never appropriate, regardless of where that coercion comes from: health-care providers, partners, family members, employers or others. Mandatory testing is considered counterproductive in its aim to get more people learning their status, as it only serves to drive more people away from vital health services – particularly those groups who may already feel marginalised or stigmatised and who may be most at-risk. VCT remains the most preferred effective mode of fighting HIV and AIDS because it is anchored on sound public health practice and respect for human rights.

Importance of HIV Testing

As access to antiretroviral treatment is being scaled up, HIV testing is equally being encouraged largely because it plays a pivotal role both in treatment and in prevention. Sadly, the current reach of HIV testing services remains poor, even in settings in which VCT is routinely offered. The reality is that stigma and discrimination continue to stop people from having an HIV test. To address this, the cornerstones of HIV testing scale-up must include improved protection from stigma and discrimination as well as assured access to integrated prevention, treatment and care services. The conditions under which people undergo HIV testing must be anchored in a human rights approach which protects their human rights and pays due respect to ethical principles.

Indisputably, HIV testing is important for monitoring the progress of the epidemic, for making sure that blood is safe for transfusion, and for diagnosing HIV in individuals to confirm if they have the virus or not. It is crucial that HIV testing be scaled up, but done in a manner that minimises harm and maximises benefits. Given the epidemic's toll, whatever uncertainty there is to be resolved in favour of an approach that might radically scale up HIV testing should entail scaling up of the capacity of health systems both to respect people's right to consent to a medical procedure that has great consequences in their lives, and to give them as much information as possible to protect themselves from abuses that may accompany the knowledge of their HIV status. Expanding access to HIV testing is important if it works alongside better prevention and treatment efforts, and an end to stigma against people living with HIV. In the end, of course, decisions about HIV testing will be have to be taken by individual countries, with the recommendations of international organisations constituting but one element, however important, to shape their national policy.

Conclusion

While scaling up HIV testing as a prerequisite to expanding access to treatment is crucial in light of changing therapeutic prospects, new opportunities must be grounded in sound public health practice and also respect, protect, and fulfil human rights standards. The conditions of the '3 Cs', advocated since HIV test became available in 1985, must form the bedrock principles underpinning the conduct of testing individuals, both to comply with human rights principles and to ensure sustained public health benefits. For indeed, public health strategies and human rights principles are mutually reinforcing. But, managing that delicate balance remains a critical task!

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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL BUDGETING PROCESS

There has been an eminent lack of participation by citizens in the national budget cycle which evidently emanate from a limited understanding and awareness on the structures of budget formulations. The budget cycle remains complex for ordinary citizens to understand and the procedures on how citizens can engage in the budget cycle also remain unclear and not known to the wider public. Further, there are no established platforms for citizens to provide input into the budget submissions, the main form of participation in the budget cycle is usually through Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Strengthening Community Participation

As submissions to the National Budget have to be based on the needs and demands of the Zambian citizenry, CSOs thus rely on the input and participation of citizens to make meaningful and inclusive submissions to the national budget. Therefore, the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) has been working at strengthening the awareness of citizens on the budget cycle and how they can utilize the various platforms available for engagement.

why everyone should be involved in order for their needs to be incorporated.

JCTR's experience of community sensitization in five districts of Kafue, Choma, Monze, Luanshya, and Kitwe attests to the lack of understanding of the budget process by community members. Most people in attendance to these meetings did not feel the direct need for them to participate in the process and claimed it was the duty of their representatives to discuss such issues with the relevant authorities. They further stated that there has been lack of awareness to sensitise citizens on the process and also the fact that they can also participate in the process. This they said has led to their lack of participation and involvement.

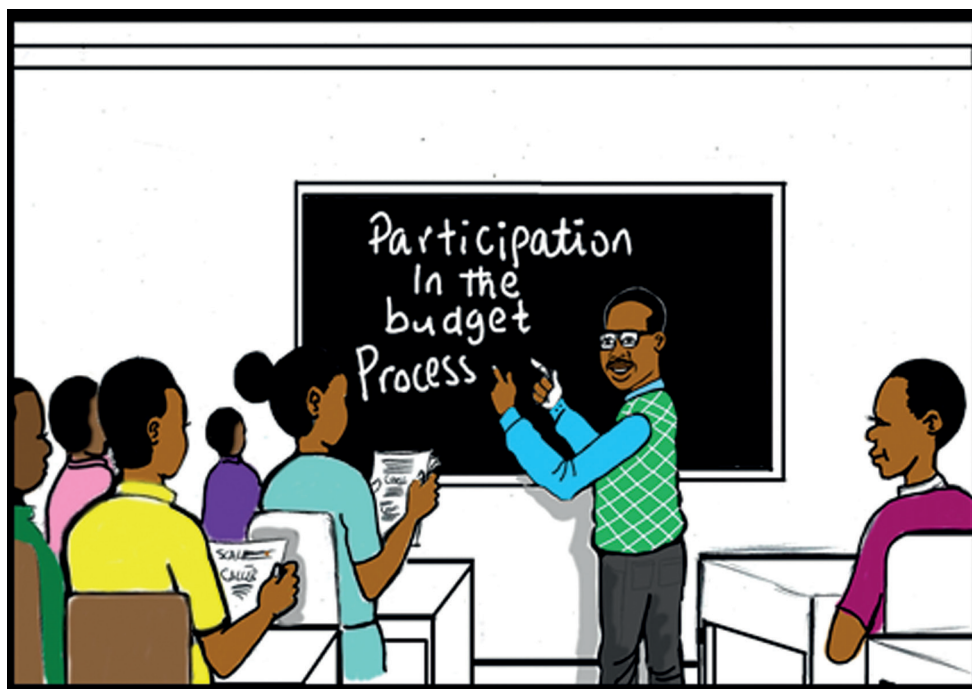
What is the Budget?

A budget can be defined as a plan for future income and expenditure that is used as guideline for spending, saving or investing. The focus will be on the national budget and the importance of all citizens to take part in the process. The national budget encompasses the needs of all citizenry hence the importance of participation in the process.

There are eight steps in the budgeting process that citizens can use in being part of the national budget process; this is an annual activity and so it is important for continued participation in the process.

Step 1: Prepare to Participate
The first step is to identify what the community needs are. It does not take technical knowledge or special skills to identify what the community needs particularly social amenities such as clinics, schools and markets. After the needs have been identified,

there is need to prepare a write up of a priority list of what the community needs are in order for them to be considered at community or district level. The list prepared must be realistic and in line with government's mandate for it to have a higher chance of inclusion.



Community members seldom participate in the National budget process, with most of them claiming that it is a political process where ordinary citizens cannot participate while others feel the process is too technical for an ordinary citizen's participation and understanding. However, the whole budget is meant to take care of the needs of all people which justifies

Step 2: Know Where to Participate

Communities must identify a group in which they can participate by engaging with community leaders and Community Based Organizations. The following are some of the spaces that communities can utilize in making their submissions;

- Ward Development Committee,
- District Development Coordinating Committee,
- Council or the constituency offices
- Directly submit to Ministry of Finance when a call for submission is made

Step 3: Know the Stages and Calendar

Community members should ensure that the calendar of the budgeting process is known. This is because the forum of participation at the lower level must take place before the opportunity is given for submissions, which is from May to July of every year for all citizens, ministries and spending agencies. For this reason, communities should make their position known by March or April in every calendar year.

Step 4: Make the Submission

The call for submissions is made by Ministry of Finance sometime in May and July but the submission in various forums at community, district and provincial levels must have already been made. The submission should have the issue well outlined and a clear justification on why this must be done with an economic benefit stated. It is imperative to ensure that the submission is according to the mandate of government and also that it is realistic.

Step 5: Follow up on Submissions

A follow up on the issues raised must be done to note if issues submitted were incorporated into the presented budget. Feedback on the presented budget must be given by all from all levels that made submissions, both negative and positive. This can only be done if community members follow the budget presentation. Taking part in the national budget process entails following every step in the whole process keenly if objective checks and balances are to be provided.

Step 6: Give Feedback to the Budget Speech

The community must organize a small meeting to discuss the contents of the budget and whether or not they are happy with it and which parts exactly. This feedback is important and must be done in a timely and objective manner. Feedback can be written to the local authority or directly to the Ministry of Finance and copied to the closest public office (District or Provincial).

Step 7: Monitoring the Budget

Once the national budget has been passed in Parliament, it is implemented from January to

December of the target financial year. During this time, citizens can participate by monitoring the implementation of the budget to ensure that resources at their level are being used accordingly.

Step 8: The Auditor General's Report

Citizens can follow up on how funds were utilized in a financial year, sector by sector by accessing the Auditor General's (AG's) report. They can also follow up on recommendations that were made in the previous year and ensure that they are considered in the following year's budget submissions. The AG's report is a public report that is given after an analysis of the public sector spending highlighting how public resources have been used by public institutions to deliver services through various programmes and activities. Familiarising with the AG's report will give an opportunity for public engagement and promote accountability by duty-bearers.

Conclusion

Every citizen has needs that translate into development needs for the community. These needs should be incorporated into the planning process for development in order for the government to allocate funds accordingly and in order to ensure budgetary implementation during the course of any given financial year. It therefore becomes important for government to know the development needs of the communities in order for them to allocate resources. The government will only know the needs of the community when the community, through representatives, participate in the budgeting process through the forums and systems available.

Participation in the budgeting process is essentially a constitutional right provided for under the Constitution of Zambia. Article 205(d) of the Constitution guarantees the right for every citizen to participate in the national budget process. However, while the constitution provides for citizens participation in the national budgeting process, government is yet to enact the planning and budgeting act that will stipulate the details on community participation. JCTR has formulated a planning and budgeting manual for use by community members in understanding the budget process. This is the tool that JCTR uses when engaging various communities to come up with budget submissions. It is JCTR's hope that communities will continue to participate actively in the national budget process and in the national development agenda.

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NEW STATE HOUSE VERSUS OTHER COMPETING NEEDS

The Usual Question of Priorities

In a story carried by Zambia Daily Mail of 14th October 2011, the late 5th Republican President Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata (MHSRIP) canceled a contract to build a new State House supposedly by a Chinese Company, Shanghai Construction (Group) General Co. He stated that the “country’s State House is more than adequate” as he wondered why the former Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) government wanted to embark on an expensive venture of building another State House. What this implied, was that the late president was a man of integrity.

The debate that has been going on about constructing a new state house cannot be ignored. It is alleged that a new state house would be built as soon as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released the loan Zambia applied for. If that happened then, this Kingdom is doomed and definitely lacks vision. The state of the art ‘new State House’ should not even be a topic of discussion because it is not the building that governs a country but brains.

Why would a poor country like Zambia prioritise building a new State House in the midst of many competing needs of our development that need urgent attention? It would be helpful if Government took stock of the many dilapidated

infrastructure in the rural areas with a deliberate focus on education. Many schools that were built in the 1950s are in such a deplorable state, uninspiring and for lack of a better term – a death trap. The state of the buildings does not need one to be an architect to know that these were the real death traps compared to the current State House.

Deplorable State of Rural Schools

Some schools in the rural parts of the country, for example in Monze District are in deplorable state. Most teachers’ houses have cracks that tear the walls from the floor to the roof through which the inside could be seen; with roofs leaking as rains fall. Meanwhile, how does one explain the collapsing of the classroom wall and sinking of the classroom block into the ground leaving a huge gap in the foundation at one school in Monze? One wonders what type of foundation was laid out for this classroom block. It is saddening to see a similar kind of situation in many rural schools in Zambia.

During the campaign period which is the only time our elected leaders ever visit the rural areas canvassing for votes; politicians are not interested in addressing real issues like the deplorable state of classroom blocks. They spend most of election campaign period on personal attacks, character assassinations and violence. Little

time is given to discussing how the nation will be developed with poor people especially those from rural areas sharing in the national cake.

District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC) and Provincial Development Coordinating Committee (PDCC) carry out monitoring visits in operational areas where they inspect projects. One wonders how useful are these visits to the local communities whose plights remain unaddressed over the years. If anything, the situation of the infrastructure and the standard of living in rural areas is getting worse.



A Call for Active Citizenship

Electorates have a duty to be alert and participate actively in governance issues, time has come to wake up from slumber. The leaders that citizens put in power come from their communities and yet they are allowed to use the people (the electorate) to rise to political positions only to enrich themselves, their families and their cronies. The people allow the politicians to give false promises which they do not intend to fulfill. For instance, politicians have time and time again made false promises about improving the conditions of our schools but they do nothing about it once they are voted into power.

Every year, Government disburses Constituency Development Funds to foster development. Unfortunately there is no effective mechanism of monitoring the use of this money. With

ramshackle buildings for classrooms and for teachers' houses we cannot expect the quality of education in this country to improve. The rural population is helpless and they can only hope and pray that these ramshackle buildings built in the 1950 will not collapse on the inhabitants and cause avoidable loss of lives.



Necessity Versus Opulence

Given the deplorable state of our schools in rural Zambia, one wonders why construction a 'new state house' should even be on the cards in the first place. This is greed and insensitivity of the highest order. It does not require rocket science to understand that given the pathetic state of education and health in this country the noble thing our leaders would do would be to prioritize investing public resources in the social sector first before considering channeling the scarce public resources into construction of a 'new state house'. The late President, Sata was right after all – isn't the United States of America's White House older than our own State House? And yet, even with a very healthy economy, USA is not talking of building a new White House! The country will benefit more from improved school and hospital infrastructure in rural areas across the country than the new State House. For once, let us promote rural development and motivate teachers that impart knowledge to future leaders. Let us give quality education the urgent attention that it deserves. After all, education is a right, the best equalizer and a driver of development.

By Phoebe Moono
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A CRITICAL LOOK AT AGRICULTURAL POLICIES AND LAWS IN ZAMBIA

Introduction

Generally, Zambia's development process has been guided by National Development Plans (NDPs) and from independence to date, there have been nine NDPs. The first was the Transitional Development Plan (TDP) 1964-1965. The second was the First National Development Plan which was implemented from 1966 to 1971. Thereafter, there was the Second National Development Plan implemented from 1972 to 1976 which was followed by the Third National Development Plan 1979-1983. The Fourth National Development Plan was executed from 1989 to 1993. The Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) and Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) were implemented from 2006 to 2010 and 2011 to 2015 respectively. During the course of implementation of the SNDP 2011-2015, the Patriotic Front government came into power and necessitated the need for the SNDP to be aligned to its manifesto. Therefore, the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (RSNDP) was formulated and implemented from 2013 to 2016. The current plan, the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) was launched on 21st June 2017 and will be implemented from 2017 to 2021.

Focus of NDPs in the Post-independence Era

From 1964 to 1991, the NDPs guided all the sectoral policies, including the agricultural policy. Overall, the focus of the NDPs before 1991 was development of infrastructure and manufacturing sectors. Consequently, much of the public investments were in the infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, with mining emerging as the mainstay of the economy. In agriculture, the pre-occupation of the NDPs prior to 1991 was for the country to achieve self-sufficiency in maize. Besides maize, the government also influenced the production of cotton, tobacco, soya beans, sunflower and wheat. The main

elements of government policies in the sector were fixed producer prices, transportation and storage subsidies, consumer price subsidies and subsidies on agricultural inputs and credit. To protect the sector from foreign competition, anti-trade practices such as tariffs and bans were a consistent feature of the policies. In addition, the policies were characterised by government controls for both inputs and outputs through parastatal companies such as the Zambia Cooperative Federation (ZCF), Lima Bank and the National Marketing Board (NAMBOARD).

The prices for maize were fixed at the same level across the country. In addition to price and procurement guarantees, farmers received seed that was produced by the state-owned firm, Zambia Seed Company (ZAMSEED) and fertilizer at subsidized prices. The policies aimed at guaranteeing higher incomes to farmers in remote areas and cheap staple food to the urban population. To maintain these policies, huge subsidies went into maize marketing, the state fertilizer sale, ZAMSEED and food stamps for the poor population. These payments rose from \$68.5 million in 1976 to \$102.3 million in 1988. In the late 1980s, NAMBOARD's operating losses were roughly 17% of total government budgets. The policy-induced distortions in the operation of maize markets not only resulted in uncertainty, but also served as a deterrent to private investment across the maize value chain. However, most of the parastatal companies tasked with implementation of policies in the agriculture sector failed to become self-sustainable thus government had to continuously provide subsidies to keep them afloat. This diminished greatly the resources that government could invest in key agricultural growth drivers such as infrastructure (roads, irrigation and processing), market development, research and extension. The result of the costly policies of the past was a desolate marketing infrastructure because

of resource constraints for investments in infrastructure and other key services. Besides this clear misallocation of resources itself, the policies had a direct negative effect on the agriculture sector, as agents were prevented from utilizing comparative advantages. However, sub-sectors with least government controls like floriculture, horticulture, coffee, chicken and livestock, among others, had high private sector participation in addition to having significant marketing activities in value terms.

Agricultural Reforms under SAP

Following the transition from a one-party state to multi-party system in 1991, the government embarked on agricultural sector reforms, which were part of the overall economic reforms pursued under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The main policy thrust of the reforms were liberalization of the agricultural sector and promotion of private sector participation in production, marketing, input supply, processing and credit provision. The new policy regime endeavoured to create an enabling environment for private sector participation. The government, however, continued its involvement in certain key areas with unfavorable, distorting effects on prices, trade and the fiscal deficit.

In 2004, Zambia formulated its first ever policy on agriculture, the First National Agricultural Policy (NAP) 2004-2015. Among the key achievements from the implementation of the policy were increased crop production and significant growth in the livestock and fisheries sub-sector. However, the implementation of the policy was inadequate in that it failed to significantly reduce poverty, especially in rural areas. Rural poverty in the implementation period of the policy reduced by 2 percent from 78 percent in 2004 to 76 percent in 2015. To overcome the challenges faced during the implementation of the NAP, a Second National Agriculture Policy (SNAP) was developed in 2016. This is the policy currently under implementation. The SNAP has made attempts to increase agriculture production and productivity as well as promote the livestock and fisheries sub-sectors. This is in an effort to diversify the agriculture sector and achieve significant poverty reduction by 2021.

Legislation in the Agriculture Sector

The SNAP is in line with the aspirations of the 7NDP that has identified agriculture as a vehicle for achieving economic diversification and job creation in Zambia. The 7NDP seeks to achieve agriculture diversification and promote value addition. Other areas of focus in the 7NDP with regard to agriculture sector are improving access to domestic, regional and international markets and reducing post-harvest losses. With regard to legislation, there are a number of laws that have been enacted to govern the agriculture sector. The major ones include the

Agricultural Credit Act of 2010; Food Reserve Act of 2005; and the Cooperatives Societies Act of 1998. The Agricultural Credit Act 2010 was enacted to establish the warehousing licensing authority and provide for its functions.

Among the major achievements of the enforcement of the Act is the establishment and operationalization of a warehousing licensing authority the Zambia Commodity Exchange (ZAMACE) in 2015. ZAMACE was established with an aim of providing an efficient and vibrant agricultural commodity exchange supported by a warehouse certification and receipt system to enhance market access, liquidity and credibility in the commodities market. However, operationalization of ZAMACE has been slow and intermittent thereby limiting the innovations under the Act. This has been attributed to the long time taken to establish ZAMACE and the inadequate dissemination of information to relevant stakeholders on the initiative. Furthermore, the enforcement of the Act and ZAMACE have both been relegated to the private sector entirely and is not a prominent feature of government programs on agriculture. This has led to few stakeholders using the ZAMACE platform to market their agricultural produce.

The Food Reserve Act was first enacted in 1995 and amended in 2005. The Act establishes among other things the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) and the Strategic Food Reserve. According to the Act, the roles of FRA are to administer a national food reserve, marketing and market facilitation and management of storage facilities. With regard to maintaining a national food reserve, the Act has been successful as far as maintaining a stable supply of the main staple, maize, as well as its price in the country. The Act has also contributed to increased maize production in the country, as farmers even in the remote areas are assured of a secure market for their produce.

Lack of Diversification and Challenges Facing Cooperatives

However, the Agency in carrying out its mandate has been seen to concentrate on the marketing of maize, thereby not promoting the production of other crops. This is against the country's aspiration of diversifying the agriculture sector. Additionally, to stabilize the supply and prices of designated crops, especially maize, FRA is required to sell the reserves at below the cost/market price. This has led to depleting the resources that are needed to replenish the reserves. Additionally, the stabilization of the supply and prices of maize and other designated reserves through the FRA has resulted in distorted markets for the grain reserves as well as crowding out of the private sector as they cannot market their produce competitively.

The Cooperatives Societies Act was enacted in 1970 and amended in 1998 with the aim of promoting the development of cooperatives. The amendment of the Act in 1998 brought about the withdrawal of government in the running of cooperatives. Yet, with the withdrawal of government, most of the cooperatives failed to cope with policy changes and general expectations of a liberalized economy. Thus, cooperatives lost the market monopoly and were consequently exposed to competition. Additionally, despite the Act being in place, an analysis of the Act and its enforcement revealed that the cooperative movement is generally weak and their contribution to social and economic wellbeing of the members is little if any.

Most of the cooperatives are either defunct or non-performing with a weak financial base. In recognition of the various problems that the cooperative movement has been going through, the government approved the National Cooperative Development Policy (NCDP). The objectives and strategies of the NCDP have great potential to revamp the cooperatives in the country. Nonetheless, there is urgent need for the 1998 Cooperatives Societies Act to be amended to ensure that the legislation and the NCDP effectively complement each other.

Government's Role

To show its commitment to the growth and development of the agriculture sector, the government of Zambia has signed several regional/international treaties. These include the Africa Agenda 2063; Southern Africa Development Community Trade Protocol (SADC-TP) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The Africa Agenda 2063 is a global strategy to optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans. With regard to agricultural development, the Agenda identifies the modernization of agriculture as one of the key strategies in achieving its first Aspiration (A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development). To align national plans to the Agenda, Zambia through the 7NDP has made efforts to mainstream the Agenda, especially on agriculture.

The SADC-TP which provides a framework for reform measures aimed at liberalizing intra SADC trade and implementing a mechanism for a phased removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers was ratified by Zambia in 2000. Despite signing this protocol, Zambia's trade policies regarding the agriculture sector have been highly inconsistent and often anti-trade in nature. This has affected the growth of the agricultural export

subsector. Under CAADP, Zambia committed itself to allocate at least 10% of its national budget to agriculture in order to achieve at least 6% annual agriculture growth required to reduce poverty in the country.

To guide the identification of priority areas and implementation of the CAADP, Zambia is currently implementing its first National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) 2014-2018. CAADP is anchored on four pillars for agricultural development namely: (i) sustainable land and water management; (ii) improving rural infrastructure and markets; (iii) increasing food supply and reducing hunger; and (iv) agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption. When the supplementary funding to output price support through FRA and input subsidies via the Fertilizer Input Support Programme (FISP) and the Fertilizer Support Programme (FSP) is included in the analysis, it could be concluded that Zambia has not completely failed to achieve the 10% CAADP target.

Budgetary Allocations Tell the Story

The budget for the agriculture sector in 2016 was 6.5% of the national budget down from 9.5 percent in 2015. In 2010, the budget allocation to the sector was 7% of the national budget down from 9% in 2008 and 2009. In 2007, 13% of GDP was allocated to agriculture up from 9% and 7% in 2006 and 2005. However, an analysis of the expenditure patterns in the sector from 2003 to-date shows that the country has not placed emphasis on the public investment focus areas identified by CAADP. The findings show that starting in 2003, a significant proportion of the annual agricultural budgets (averaging about 58%) has been allocated to subsidies. This is despite the fact that the rate of return for expenditure on agricultural subsidies is very low (negative to 12%) compared to those for research and extension (35% to 70%), roads (20% to 30%), education (15% to 25%) and irrigation (10% to 15%).

Overall, like earlier NDPs, the policies and agricultural laws implemented from 1992 to-date have failed to spur the needed growth in agriculture. The sector has continued to underperform to the following factors: (i) continued concentration of policies on production and marketing of maize; (ii) unfavorable external market conditions; (iii) poor rural infrastructure; (iv) weak institutions; and (v) low research and access to innovative technologies, among others. Despite Zambia's economy growing at an annual average of 5.8%

during the period 2000 to 2005 and at 6.9% from 2006 to 2015, the country has continued to be dependent mainly on its copper industry. This is in spite of several policy initiatives to diversify the economy by building stronger manufacturing and agriculture sectors.

The emphasis of the policies on maize rather than broad-based growth of the sector has been cited as the major factor restricting agricultural growth and diversification. Even under the liberalized economy, recent policies have continued to be narrowly focused on subsidies to stimulate maize production and marketing. Although Zambia has made some progress towards achieving the growth and spending objectives of CAADP, a closer examination of the agricultural sector's quality of expenditure raises significant concerns. This is because the distribution of the agricultural budget since 2001 has not placed enough emphasis on the broad-based public investments necessary to stir agricultural growth and economic transformation.

Over the last 2 decades, government has implemented two subsidy programmes namely the FISP (50% subsidy) and the FSP (100% subsidy). In 2005, 37% of the agricultural budget was devoted to FISP. Another 12 percent of the agricultural budget was devoted to supporting vulnerable rural households under the FSP implemented by the MCDSS. Furthermore, an additional 15% of the agricultural budget was devoted to financing the operating costs and trading deficits of the FRA. This left only 33% of the agricultural budget for investments in key drivers of growth for the sector. The distribution of the agricultural budget remained unchanged over the period 2013-2015 as can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Zambia's Agricultural Sector Budgetary Allocations, 2013-2015 (KR' Million)

MAIN BUDGET LINES	2013		2014		2015	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Personal Emoluments	262	15.0	379	12.5	449	10.9
Recurrent Departmental Charges	162	9.3	275	9.1	365	8.9
Grants and other payments	11	0.6	91	3.0	91	2.2
Poverty Reductions Programmes (FISP & FRA)	861	49.2	1,575	52.0	2,377	57.9
Capital Expenditure	94	5.4	377	12.4	148	3.6
Agricultural Show	6	0.3	4	0.13	11	0.27
Agricultural Development Programmes	298	17.0	330	10.9	646	15.7
Arrears	55	3.1	0.77	0.03	-	-
Total	1,749	100	3,032	100	4,108	100

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Similarly, in 2016, a significant proportion of the agricultural budget (58 percent) was allocated to FISP and FRA. Unfortunately, subsidies have been found to be ineffective at boosting productivity or reducing rural poverty. It has been established that growth and diversification of the sector, value addition and efficient marketing cannot be guaranteed without a reliable infrastructure, availability of information, research and education. Many studies have found strong positive correlations between provision of public and merit goods/services (infrastructure, research and information) and competitiveness of the agriculture sector. As a result, the lack of support for research, education, extension, and information as well as the neglect of the other key sub-sectors (e.g. aquaculture, livestock, and horticulture) by the post-1992 policies have been found by many to have restricted the growth in agricultural exports, slowdown the rate of diversification from mining, and limited the contribution of the sector to GDP. Consequently, apart from maize, Zambia was at 2016 a net importer of most of the agricultural and related products (including milk, fish, fruits, vegetables, horticulture).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the growth and development of the agriculture sector in Zambia has been hampered by incoherent and inconsistent policies and laws, misplaced priorities and limited funding. Additionally, a mismatch between priorities in the policies/plans and the sector allocations in the national budget have contributed to the slow progress in the growth of the sector. Therefore, to improve growth and development of the agriculture sector, the government of the republic of Zambia must prioritize the agriculture sector in terms of funding and matching the priorities in the agricultural policies and laws with those in the national budget. There is need to ensure that the policies and laws in place are coherent and consistent.

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ACCESS TO WATER IN RURAL AREAS: A KEY FACTOR IN POVERTY REDUCTION

Introduction

There continues to be a gap between urban and rural areas with regard to access to clean and safe water and hygienic sanitation facilities. Many poor households in rural areas do not have access to clean and safe water yet they have a fundamental right to have access to these services. Of particular interest is the lack of water for crop production. Poor and non-existence of irrigation systems in rural areas have continued to threaten agricultural yields due to uncertainty in the supply of water for crop production. Many rural areas lack irrigation systems to store or even pump water leading to fewer crops, fewer days of employment and less productivity. This article attempts to show a causal link between access to water and reduction of poverty in Zambia. It also attempts to point out that economic development of the underprivileged particularly those in the rural areas hinges on access to water.

Challenges of the Rural Population

For the many poor people who live in rural areas, agriculture is the main source of income and employment. But depletion of land and water is rapidly posing a serious challenge to produce enough food and other agricultural products to sustain livelihoods. It cannot be denied that Zambia is faced with multiple issues that adversely affect public health and one of the challenges is the ability for both rural and urban population to access a clean water supply. The 2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) captures

rural poverty at 76.6% of the 54.4% national level statistics. The situation implies that citizens face challenges in accessing food, quality health care services and clean and safe water among other challenges.

Many pronouncements have been made by the Zambian Government and the International Community with regard to ending urban and rural poverty in Zambia. To this end, many interventions have been carried out both in terms of rolling out economic programs and educating people. Examples of these include; Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), infrastructure development, social cash transfer, attempts to reduce taxes and raise thresholds for the payment of wages, micro-lending and establishment of cooperatives have been encouraged together with a host of other measures such as the heifer project and rural empowerment. All these measures have in some way, born fruit in their own way.

The restructuring of the economy which was done twenty years ago has led to liberalization of economy in Zambia. In more recent times, infrastructure development has led to the opening up of the countryside through construction of new roads, which in itself has allowed the small farmer to quickly access the market. Such a development has spurred farming and contributed to the country recording incredible bumper harvests even in the midst of serious droughts. However, rural poverty, in particular, remains a challenge, notwithstanding that farmers are receiving subsidized agricultural input

under Farmer Input Support Program than ever before, with figures well over a million peasant farmers. The real issue has been Zambia's over-dependence on the rainfall for irrigation. It is for this reason that infrastructure development should of necessity include provision of water to mitigate the harshness of weather patterns.

Farming as the Mainstay of Rural Population

Rural populations in Zambia depend on farming for their survival. While it is true that Zambia accounts for over 60 percent of water sources in Southern Africa, it is equally true that this resource has not been well exploited. What this means is that farming activity in Zambia generally takes place for three to four months, during the months of December to March. During this period, rural populations are able to survive on both nature's produce and cultivated crops. In subsequent months following the harvest, farmers make some income from August to October as the crop marketing season opens. This is only three months of economic activity in the whole year! From April to December, the heavens are shut. The rural farmers are forced to wait for the next rains, and during this time poverty quickly sets in.

It is an undeniable fact that three months of economic activity are not enough to radically deal with the problem of rural poverty. Big commercial farmers who have the means continue to cultivate throughout the year. They do so by use of highly sophisticated irrigation systems known as center pivots. These pieces of equipment cost a fortune and subsistence farmers cannot afford such equipment. This makes the rural farmer become a victim of the weather. During the dry spell, the farmer waits; the land deteriorates; animals die of thirst; and wells run dry. There is no more income for food, school fees, medicine, and for further development of their farms.

Policy Intervention

The country has some good key policies regarding provision of clean and safe water as well as water resource development and management. Some of the supporting policies outline short term and long term goals. For example, the vision 2030 of Zambia's water and

sanitation situation sector is "a Zambia where all users have access to water and sanitation and utilize them in an efficient and sustainable manner for wealth creation and improved livelihood by 2030". The adoption of the National Policy on Environment in 2011 by government is a good move towards addressing environmental issues. The policy provides a framework for environmental protection and management of natural resources on a sustainable basis. It is premised on the fact that a country can grow, create jobs and reduce poverty, without doing undue damage to its environment.

In addition, within the Ministry of Local Government and Housing, the Department of Housing and infrastructure development (DHID) is responsible for water supply and sanitation, infrastructure planning and resource mobilization. The DHID established a specific Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Unit (RWSSU) in 2003 but as of 2008, the costs were high and unable to meet the MDGs targets. Besides having local policies, the country has also signed agreements with other countries regionally and internationally. Being a signatory means that the country is obliged through the government to meet the rights of the citizens.

According to the MDG progress report of 2013, improved access to safe water and sanitation is critical to achieve the goals for Poverty Alleviation and Development and to ensure environmental sustainability. One of the aims was to halve, by 2015, the proportion of rural people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The report showed that Zambia had made improvements in the provision of clean water. The proportion of the population without access to an improved water source had decreased from 51 percent in 1990 to 36.9 percent in 2010.

The Missing Link in Poverty Reduction Efforts

As noted earlier, there is a strong relationship between poverty reduction and access to water. In the rural areas water is everything and those who live close to water sources tend to be better off throughout the year as they are able to engage in gardening and farming of cash crops. With improved roads, markets are now

more accessible than ever before. On the other hand, those who are far from water sources, and in Zambia these tend to be in the majority, face abject poverty in the intervening months before the onset of the rains. They have no access to daily income. Whereas the heifer project is an attempt to bridge this gap in some areas of Zambia, milk production and yield is affected by low supply of water for the animals.

Zambia has not done much to harness water. More than 80 percent of rain water runs off without being harvested. Secondly, aquifers remain untapped. Thirdly, there is no strategic sinking of boreholes in rural areas as this is done mainly for domestic consumption and not as a specific response to agricultural needs. The Zambian government has prioritised agriculture in the period 2016 to 2021 as a way both of breaking the traditional dependence on Copper mining and reducing the poverty gap between the urban and rural areas. This is indeed optimal and to be commended. It must, however, be said, that increasing subsidies is not even the immediate answer (if anything, there is an understanding that the IMF package will demand the removal of said subsidies!). The much neglected answer lies in harnessing water and storing it for continued annual use. Subsidies do not reduce the farmer's vulnerability to unpredictable weather patterns. They rather increase the indebtedness of the country. If the country needs to borrow money at all, let it be to increase access to water, particularly for the rural farmer.

The Plight of the Rural Farmer

Rural farmers have shown a remarkable willingness to work and to be productive. They need no encouragement in this regard. The sad reality is that their harvests are often much lower than what they could be if they were not entirely dependent on rain. To start with, farmers cannot plant anything until they are sure that the rains have actually come in earnest. That is a huge opportunity cost and is not a very smart way to farm. It makes planning become haphazard. It is the proverbial management by crisis because rains never announce the day they will stop. This often means that a portion of the crop goes to waste once the rains disappear.

Creating a smart Zambia means being smart about water. Zambia has the potential of

becoming a green country with greater access to water. The emphasis on industrialisation of Zambia should and must include industrialising water provision in order to phase out the idle months created by the end of the rain season. Such months remarkably increase incidents of poverty and disease, both of which require immediate and emergency interventions. It further turns rural areas into drunkard zones as the only meaningful form of earning money is through brewing illicit beverages.

The lack of adequate rural water supply impairs rural community health, especially among the poor. Some of the negative social impacts are on girls and women who are often charged with collecting water for their homesteads – sometimes walking extremely long distances. This prevents women from doing income-generating activities as the majority of their day is spent walking long distances to fetch water. It is undisputed that improving access to clean and safe water particularly in rural areas significantly impacts positively on national development. For instance, time saved from walking long distances to fetch water may be put to better use such as for education which is the greatest equalizer and the best catalyst in breaking the chain of poverty.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between access to safe water, sanitation and poverty should be better understood by integrating improved analyses of community priorities and needs into policymaking and implementation, and by delivering increased access to water and sanitation to the poorest people. Many communities do not have the capital, expertise, or water infrastructure to increase their water access. However, some steps can be taken to increase water infrastructure in Zambia. In rural communities where large centralized water distribution systems would not be cost effective, the use of cooperatives and community funding can be used to construct decentralized water system.

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THE GOOD TURNED BAD — THE STORY OF THE FOOD RESERVE AGENCY

Introduction

On 26th July, 2017, the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) TV aired a program entitled “FRA – 2017 Crop Marketing” in which a panel of two people from the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) discussed on the state of the crop market – 2017. On the same day, His excellency the president of the Republic of Zambia Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu spoke of “Market forces” as playing the decisive and fundamental role in determining the prices. As such, the head of state rightly appealed to both the farmers and the buyers to strike a reasonable and balanced consensus that would benefit both parties. That being the case, the head of state assured the country that he would not intervene ‘for now’ and hit the road for Mansa with the words, “Good luck!”

In this article, I endeavor to explore the original mandate of the FRA and their Constitutional obligation to support and boost the small-scale farmers all over the country. I shall look at the FRA Act, the mission statement and the vision they embody. Eventually, the reader shall judge whether the government and the FRA are helpers or rivals in praxis.

History of the FRA Act

The FRA Act was first passed in 1995 and became effective in 1996. The Act provided for

the establishment of the Food Reserve Agency. The original directive of the Agency was simply to ‘tactically buy food commodity for reserve in times of famine.’ The Act was later amended in 2005. This amendment brought with it the immersion and authority to engage in crop marketing. Since then, the Agency has been heavily involved in the marketing and purchasing of food crops most especially in the maize market.

FRA ACT: Its Purpose

The FRA Act is ‘An Act to establish the Food Reserve Agency and define its powers and functions; to establish a national food reserve’ (Act No.12 of 1995 Statutory Instrument 105 of 1995). Under the same law, it was stipulated that the purpose of the FRA shall be among others to correct problems relating to the supply of designated commodities which result from the manipulation of prices or monopolistic trading practices. As already stated, the 1995 Act was amended in 2005 which enabled the FRA to engage actively in the food market.

FRA Vision and Objectives

The FRA Strategic Mission states in brief that it endeavors ‘to be an organisation that efficiently manages sustainable national food security, ensuring national food security and income through the provision of complementary and high quality marketing.

FRA Pricing Mechanism; a Big Deal for the Modest Farmer

With such a foundation and establishment, one continues to wonder why farmers are desperate and grumpy about what they perceive to be unfairness and indifference to their cause. Is it because the Agency has lost its original charisma and spirit or rather 'market-forces' have simply played their reasonable and inevitable part? Or maybe the farmer is not just "lucky" in the 2017 season. Without doubt, certain factors have played a role in the outcome of events. Of course, this matter ought to be of utmost importance to the producer, buyer and the government at large.

Maize farming, for instance, is the main economic activity for many small-scale farmers and businesses. Consequently, the prospect of uplifting the living standards of ordinary and poor Zambians is dependent on the agricultural and financial policies. These policies impact greatly on the lives of the small-scale farmers whose very livelihood depends on agricultural activities and the market of their produce. This means that the role of the government and of an agency like FRA in addressing the plight of the farmers cannot be overemphasized.

Price Rationale

FRA's involvement in the crop market as decreed by Parliament was provoked by the unstable, volatile, unjust, and low and prices of agricultural produce. The government saw the need to intervene since low prices would discourage many farmers from continuing with the farming enterprise. Such a turn of events would in the long run impact negatively on the Zambia's economy. Therefore FRA emerged to address this challenge by having a government agency intervening through direct purchase of farm produce and thereby acquiring a voice in the price declaration. The idea was that this would benefit all farmers, both small-scale and commercial farmers. This is a very optimistic viewpoint as opposed to another view which perceive this institution as politically motivated and inclined to providing the best prices and services during the election years. We leave this debate for another day.

Institutional Assessment

FRA has been known to be the "big buyer" by all market standards. As a result FRA has been consistently been considered wasteful because it is in the habit of excessively purchasing agricultural produce and later fail to properly manage storage of such produce. Surprisingly, this excess stock would in no way affect the prices in the next farming seasons. Business would go on as usual with more metric tons of maize being purchased at even higher prices in the following farming seasons. This was the case in 2014 where FRA planned to purchase 500 thousand tons of maize, but ended up purchasing slightly above 1 million tons (Chapoto, 2014). Such uncalculated purchases led to excessive deficits in the budget (2013 ministerial statement by the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock).

FRA has been indifferent to the law of 'demand and supply' in which the price ultimately depends on the dynamics between demand and supply on a willing seller – willing buyer basis. FRA seems to operate outside the market forces reinforcing the perception that prices for the maize commodity are politically motivated. In the recent years, the FRA has enjoyed monopoly of trade due to their 'tremendously favorable prices.' Some people argue that this has some harm to the private sector.

The Way Forward

FRA needs to seriously engage in the food market on a fair-play basis without excessive back up from the national treasury. This will benefit both producers and consumers especially the poor and the needy. In addition, briefing and educating the farmers in layman's terms on how agro-economics operate in order to ensure that price fluctuations may be rightly understood should be encouraged by all stakeholders.

In conclusion, the vision and mission of FRA is a noble and worthy one as it aims at ensuring food security for the nation. The challenge has been largely due to political influence in the manner that FRA conducts its business.

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Salesians of Don Bosco
Lusaka - Zambia



JCTR'S REVIEW OF AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAINS' ROLE IN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Agro-processing in Zambia

Agro-processing offers Zambia one of the most effective alternatives to achieving economic transformation. It offers multiple benefits – economic growth and job creation on one hand and inclusivity and better environmental outcomes on the other hand. The good thing is that the sector is already contributing quite significantly to manufacturing. Statistics show that agro-processing (food and beverages sector) accounts for 63 percent of all manufacturing activities in Zambia. If we add the textile and leather-processing sector (which are other sub-sector of manufacturing falling under agro-processing), the contribution of agro-processing to manufacturing would even be higher.

The agriculture sector in general remains one of the priority areas in the country's growth and poverty reduction agenda. This is because the sector is still operating below potential and offers a lot of opportunities especially in agro-processing. The Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) has been marketing agro-processing as one of the sub-sectors of manufacturing with a lot of untapped potential. The Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) has even proposed the establishment of agro-processing parks as one way to tap into the extant potential in agro-processing.

It should be acknowledged, however, that whatever efforts are being exerted towards enhancing activities in agro-processing will yield very limited results if efforts are not informed by evidence on the inhibitors of growth in the sector. To this end, the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) commissioned a study covering Western, Northern, Eastern, Lusaka and Southern provinces to document experiences in agro-processing in relation to economic transformation. This is in an effort to create a better understanding of agro-with regard to its role in economic transformation and how the potential in agro-processing can be tapped to ensure economic transformation.

State of Agro-processing Value Chains Versus Economic Transformation

The investigation revealed that forward and backward linkages do exist along the agricultural value chains. Majority of key informants procure the bulk of their inputs from local farmers. There is however some difference between the relatively smaller agro-processors and relatively larger processors in that while the former get almost all their raw materials from local farmers, the latter are able to import from outside the country. This clearly creates some difference in the value chains between the two types of processors. These differences notwithstanding, the two types of agro-processors contribute in the same way to the local economy: they both

contribute to employment creation and provide a market for local small-scale farmers. In addition, they also create a market for local suppliers of auxiliary services and materials necessary for the processing. Further, these agro processors are playing a vital role in the promotion of sustainable development.

Clearly, the activities of small-scale farmers cannot be sustained without the agro-processing value chains. Agro-processing value chains form an important link between the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. It offers one of the most effective alternatives to achieving economic transformation. Specific benefits of agro-processing value chains identified in this study include poverty reduction, reduction of inequality, job creation, inclusive growth and better environmental outcomes. Generally, it is felt that the poor stand to benefit from these value chains principally in two ways, (1) directly through the sale of their agricultural products, and (2) through employment and other income generating opportunities.

Key Sector Constraints

Agro-processing has a lot of untapped potential to transform the structure of economy while helping in reducing poverty and inequality. However, this potential is being inhibited by a number of constraints. It was established that these constraints range from economic, to policy and environment-related issues. Common constraints linked to agriculture value chains included: limited access to markets, costly transportation and limited access to financing. Of these factors, market access was closely associated to value chains and agro-processing. Closer business linkages between farmers, agro-processors, exporters, traders and retailers provide significant potential for improved and increased employment and economic return for rural producers which were also mentioned as significant challenges.

Possible Solutions to Identified Bottlenecks

The study also revealed that in order to strengthen the agro-processing value chains for economic transformation and sustainable development, support services are vital. These

include financing, marketing, extension services and technical assistance. These services could be provided by government agencies, donor organizations, research institutions and other private organizations. Some of these services can be provided through incubation programs which can offer mentorship especially to fledgling agro-processing firms. Financing can be made more accessible to agro-processing Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (SMEs) if government can guarantee these loans. There is need for more innovative sources of financing especially for SMEs in the sector.

Discussions revealed strong need to support agro-processors in marketing and extension services. It is evident from narratives given by key informants that the market linkages programs being implemented by the government through agencies like the ZDA are not benefiting some of the agro-processors. Some of the agro-processors actually are not aware of the existence such a program. There is need therefore for more effective information sharing strategies. This will help in knowing available opportunities for agro-processors. Finally, the marketing challenge can be overcome if efforts can be put in place to promote cooperatives among agro-processors. This will help in a number of ways including enhancing the bargaining power of agro-processors, enhancing information sharing, overcoming quantity limitations associated with lone players and increasing quality through positive peer pressure.

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WE BELONG TO ONE HUMANITY: EVERYONE IS A FOREIGNER SOMEWHERE

The Call to Preserve Peace

Peace is a topical issue in many of our discussions around the world. The need to “preserve peace” is a common call everywhere today. When we talk about peace, do we really know what it means? We hear the call to preserve peace often on our radios, television and in newspapers. Yet it putting this call to practice can at times be elusive. When people see others who are darker than themselves or are from a different ethnicity, why should they consider them enemies? What is wrong with the world we are living in? When a fellow African kills another African because of belief that the other person is taking up his job, do we call that “Afro phobia” or xenophobia?”

When a Mozambican brother in South Africa pleaded for his life as though it was given to him by those who were beating him, with no one to help him out, people around him looked at him and thought he deserved to be killed like an animal, forgetting the humanity and brotherhood in him. They failed to realize that he was a father, an uncle, a friend, a husband and a child of someone. Their hearts where at rest after leaving him lifeless to battle for his life and most of all not realizing that he was a son of Africa.

He was darker than them, he was a foreigner, from a different country and ethnicity and he was a human being but died like an animal.

Black Against Black

This is one of the many incidents that are seen all over the world of how human beings treat each other when they put their nationality, race, religion and status before everything else. Mother Theresa of Calcutta once said, “When we see so much pain and suffering in this world, it is not because there is no love, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to one humanity.” Xenophobic outbreaks are often impossible to predict beforehand, because violence arises in incidents unrelated to the structural conditions which breed discontent between local inhabitants and immigrants or visitors. One person asked a bus driver: “Why do they need to kill these “foreigners” in this manner?” The bus driver’s response was that under Apartheid, fire was the only weapon black people had. They did not have ammunitions, guns and the likes. With fire they could make petrol bombs and throw them at the enemy from a safe distance. Today there is no need for distance any longer. To kill “these foreigners” one needs to be as close as possible to their body in order to set them in flames or

dissect. Each blow opens a huge wound that can never be healed. Or if it is healed at all, it leaves on “these foreigners” the kinds of scars that can never be erased.

Implications of Xenophobia

Although some people have not experienced xenophobia, whenever a fellow African experiences it, they are being directly or indirectly affected by the implications thereof. I am affected seeing my brothers and sisters being burnt by their fellow human beings. The current hunt for “people of other ethnicity or nationality” is the product of a complex chain of complicities — some vocal and explicit and others tacit. Some African governments for example, have taken a harsh stance on immigration and response to the attacks of the foreigners. Their effects are devastating for people already established legally in these countries. The problem is not necessarily only the killing of the foreigners who are thought to be residing there illegally but the chain goes as far as killing those that are legally in those countries. This means that amongst the perpetrators of xenophobia overlook the creativity or contribution of the non-South Africans to that country’s economy.

The belief that foreigners are stealing jobs from the local population is an ill-conceived ideology that is becoming more vicious. Some South Africa national believe that they do not owe any moral debt to Africa. They forget that not too long ago, before South Africa’s independence, there were many South Africans in exile scattered throughout the world. One wonders what would have happened had the nationals of the other countries decided to expel from their countries South African nationals who were hosted in these other countries. One also wonders if countries like Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and other Frontline States should start quantifying what was sacrificed by these countries for the sake of liberation struggle in South Africa. Should there be a price tag to the destructions made by the Apartheid regime on the economy and infrastructures of the Frontline states all in the name of solidarity with the black people of South Africa? Should the African National Congress (ANC) government that has inherited the South African government be asked to pay back what was spent on behalf

of the oppressed black people of South Africa during those long years? Do black South Africans appreciate the concept of moral debt?

Government’s Responsibility

It is obvious that South Africa is gradually turning into a killing field of the so called “these foreigners”. It appears that the government of South Africa is either unable or unwilling to protect those who are in South Africa legally from the rage of its people. South Africa has signed most International Conventions, including the Convention establishing the International Penal Tribunal in The Hague. Some of the instigators of the foreigner hunting are known. Some have been making public statements inciting hate. One wonders why these people not referred to The Hague?

Ideally speaking, no African should be a foreigner in Africa. No African is a migrant in Africa. Africa is where we all belong, notwithstanding the limitations of our boundaries. No amount of national-chauvinism will erase this. No amount of deportations will erase this. Instead of spilling black blood on our own African soil why should we not plant seeds of love so as to live together in harmony? When love takes centre stage of our lives, the African continent will be rebuilt and thereby putting to an end the long and painful history of conflict that has dented our image. Being a foreigner should not be an issue because for all we know, everyone is a foreigner somewhere.

Leonard Katulushi

Missionary of Africa Student

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear editor,

Toll Gate Fees – Are We Winning?

Greetings. My mind is ever so busy and today my focus is on revenues realized from the tollgates being collected across the country – Zambia. Is it too early to request the Government to give us an insight into how much has been collected, and more importantly, how this money is being utilized so far?

I would like to learn which roads have been rehabilitated and which new roads (if any) have been constructed using tollgate collections.

It would definitely break my heart should I learn that funds collected from tollgates, are being diverted to fund other activities different from the intended purpose. I am sure this is not asking for too much from our transparent and accountable government.

I pen off.

Anonymous Reader

JCTR BASIC NEEDS BASKET

Lusaka November 2017

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

Commodity	Price (ZMW)	Quantity	Units	Total (ZMW)
Mealie Meal	55.86	2	x 25 Kg	111.71
Beans	28.17	3	Kg	84.50
Kapenta (Dry)	246.83	2	Kg	493.67
Fish (Bream, Dry)	131.00	1	Kg	131.00
Beef	36.21	4	Kg	144.85
Dark Green Vegetables	7.48	4	Kg	29.92
Tomatoes	7.36	4	Kg	29.42
Onion	5.57	2	Kg	11.14
Cooking oil (2.5L)	45.69	3	Litres	54.83
Bread	7.54	1	Loaf/day	226.29
Sugar	25.40	3	x 2 Kg	76.20
Milk	7.58	4	x 500ml	30.33
Tea	70.00	1	Kg	70.00
Eggs	10.00	2	Units	20.00
Salt	8.56	1	Kg	8.56

Subtotal ZMW 1,522.42

(B) COST OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD ITEMS

Commodity	Price (ZMW)	Quantity	Units	Total (ZMW)
Charcoal	124.00	2	x 90 Kg bag(s)	248.00
Soap (Lifebuoy/Champion)	5.08	10	Tablet(s)	50.83
Wash soap (BOOM)	10.20	4	x 400g	35.66
Jelly (e.g. Vaseline)	20.43	1	x 500ml	20.43
Electricity (medium density)	200.00	1	x 1month	200.00
Water & Sanitation (med - fixed)	197.20	1	x 1month	197.20
Housing (3 bedroom)	2,650.00	1	x 1month	2,650.00

Subtotal ZMW 3,402.12

Total for Basic Needs Basket ZMW 4,924.54

Totals from previous months	July 16	Aug 16	Sept 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 17	Jun 17	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sept 17
Amount (K)	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	4,952.69	4,859.35	4,928.37	4,883.57

(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	7.00
Grades 8-9 (User + PTA/year)	500.00	Chelston - town	7.00
Grades 10-12 (User + PTA/year)	975.00	Matero - Town	6.00

Health		Fuel (cost at the pump)	
Item	Amount (ZMW)	Item	Amount (ZMW)
Fast Track / High Cost fee	10.00	Petrol (per litre)	12.97
Self-referral (Emergency Fee)	5.50	Diesel (per litre)	11.09
Mosquito net (private)	75.00	Paraffin (per litre)	9.87
CD4 Count	20.00		

(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

This survey was conducted on 27th October 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 October Basic Needs Basket is approximately US\$488 based upon the exchange rate of K9.97 prevailing on the days of data collection. Please note that other monthly costs would include personal care, clothing, recreation, etc.

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Location: 3813 Martin Mwamba Road, Olympia Park, Lusaka

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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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 4th Quarter of 2017 carried on work around the budget process with analysis of the Executive Budget Proposal - Budget speech presented to Parliament by the Minister of Finance on 29th September, 2017. In doing this, the Centre reviewed the budget based on the submissions made both at district level and at national level through two key platforms i.e. Zambia Tax Platform and Child Budget Network (CBN).

The analysis revealed that progressive measures such as revision of the tax free holiday of five years given to foreign firms and an allocation of US\$ 200 million secured from the World Bank towards feeder roads to enhance agriculture production and marketing. Challenges noted and raised by JCTR to the Parliamentary Expanded Committee on Estimates and Expenditures were that despite considerable funds being allocated to social services large proportion of this went to administrative expenses e.g. nearly 80% within the education sector. JCTR as a part of the CBN also noted that the allocations towards education and health fell below the agreed Education for All (EFA) and Abuja targets of 20% and 15% as percentages of the total budget respectively. The programme in the period in partnership with GIZ also worked to promote accountability of duty bearers by embarking on Social Audits in Kitwe on C7 clinic in Wusakile, Choma on the Mwapona Clinic in Mwapona to assess if funds allocated and disbursed for the two projects have yielded the desired outcome and work with communities and local authorities to ensure that the two clinics become

operational and deliver health services to benefit their respective communities.

The Programme also continued work to promote access to children's rights by documenting stories from Lufwanyama where JCTR's partner Save the Children International (SCI) has been working to facilitate platforms for children's participation. The documentary was aired within the week of the Universal Day of the Child on national television (ZNBC and Muvi TV). Alongside this the programme worked in Kitwe, Lufwanyama and Lusaka to raise awareness of organisations working directly with children on the budget process as it related to Public Investment in Children. These discussions bordered around use on the Citizens budget as a tool of engagement and advocacy on the enactment of the Planning and Budgeting Bill.

Promotion of sustainable livelihoods remained key on the programmes agenda and JCTR launched to key research documents assessing Agricultural Laws and Policies as well as Agro-processing to enhance agriculture and economic transformation. The programme noted from its BNB that even though the overall BNB figure remained stable at K4, 869.47 in October and K4, 924.54 in November, there were fluctuations in the food prices due to seasonality. The programme will continue working on Agriculture to promote stable agriculture commodity prices and avenues for marketing that secure livelihoods for small scale farmers.

FAITH AND JUSTICE PROGRAMME

The Faith and Justice Programme in the fourth quarter of 2017 conducted activities that related to formation in the Catholic Social Teaching (the CST), legal reform and the Environment and its related issues.

With regard to formation in the Catholic Social Teaching, the programme held talks on the principles of the CST and how they can be applied in various spheres of life and work among different stakeholders that include political parties, Church leaders, university students, officers from the Zambia Police service. Of great significance to the formation in CST was holding of an Ecumenical Theological Day dedicated to the exploration of one of the national values, that is, Patriotism and National Unity. Present at this event were representative from different Christian denominations, Political Parties, students, Civil Society Organizations and the media. The event was opened by Honourable Rev. Godfridah Sumaili, Minister of National Guidance and Religious Affairs, the Minister, entrusted with the responsibility to promote the six national values which are outlined in the current Zambian Constitution: Patriotism and National Unity Morality and Ethics, Democracy and Constitutionalism, Human Dignity, Equity, Social Justice, Equality and non-Discrimination, Good Governance and Integrity and Sustainable Development. There was consensus that there is need to inculcate the sense of patriotism and national unity among Zambians and this responsibility is for everyone but Churches and Government need to take a leading role.

To contribute to the enhancement of good governance, the Programme conducted workshops and public forums on the Public Order Act in Livingstone, Ndola and Lusaka. These were aimed at educating the people on the provisions of this Law and sharing information about why this piece of legislation needs reform. The Law, to a greater extent, curtails the enjoyment of freedom to assemble as there is a requirement that the convenor of a public meeting must seek police permission to have a meeting as opposed to notification. The experience of the public is that this permission is often denied with no reasons given. There are also other provisions in the Law that need reform and Government has called for submission from the public in this regard.

The JCTR's commitment to the issues of the Environment and Climate Change compelled it to take particular interest in popularising the Laudato Si and issues raised by Pope Francis in this Encyclical. To take the issue at a practical level, the Programme launched an Environmental Project in Makululu Compound which is focusing on Lead Poisoning and solid waste management, issues that form the reality of this compound. With the launch, 20 people from within the community have been trained in this area and will be conducting awareness raising activities from January, 2018.

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