



BULLETIN

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
"Promoting Faith and Justice"

(PICTURE OF SUNSET HERE!)

P. O. BOX 37774
LUSAKA - ZAMBIA

JCTR OFFICES
3813 MARTIN
MWAMBA
ROAD, OLYMPIA,
LUSAKA

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

E-mail:
jctrbulletin@jesuits.org.z
m
jctr@jesuits.org.zm

Website:
www.jctr.org.zm

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QUOTE

*"If we have no peace,
it is because we have
forgotten that we
belong to each other."*
(Mother Theresa)

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Our Dear Readers,

Three months ago, the constitution making-process in Zambia came to another halt when the proposed Constitution Bill did not get the two-thirds endorsement it required to pass in Parliament. This was an inauspicious development for the constitution-making process in Zambia, perhaps signalling yet another failure by the country to come up with a just and enduring constitution. Various reasons were given for the rejection of the proposed Constitution. Many people were unsatisfied by both the process and the contents of the Draft Constitution. Submissions that had been made by the public and by civil society organisations on issues of critical concern such as electoral regulations and the inclusion of economic, social and cultural rights in the Constitution's Bill of Rights were not incorporated into the Draft by the National Constitution Commission. As such, people felt they had not been listened to.

People and civil society organisations in Zambia have long expressed their wish to see policy changes in both the political and economic sectors. Examples of some of these advocacy issues are media laws and practices, the windfall tax, investment laws and employment-related policies. The Government has mostly been irresponsible to these reasonable demands meant to improve the livelihood of citizens. Such irresponsiveness erodes public confidence in Government, which will soon be tested in the forthcoming national elections. Furthermore, the irresponsiveness puts into perspective the dictatorial tendencies of the leaders who masquerade as champions of democracy. It highlights the difference between real democracy and semblances of democracy.

Responsiveness of the government to the preferences and needs of its citizens is an intrinsic hallmark of democratic practice. Citizens can enjoy the right to freedom of speech and expression, but this right is rendered nugatory for as long as government action and policy remains impervious to public opinion. Government's responsiveness to the justifiable demands of the public is a key indicator in measuring the quality of democracy in a country.

But commendable government action and good policies are not always a product of a process of honest political discernment based on the imperatives of justice and the common good by leaders. In most of our African political experience, they emanate, more often than not, from the instinct of political self-preservation and not a real desire to serve the common good. We are currently having an experience of this in Zambia as the country approaches the general elections to be held in a few months time. The Government has suddenly become expeditious in the construction of roads and the commissioning of new projects, and it makes sure that every Zambian is well informed about these developmental projects. The threat of electoral sanction should not be the motivating factor for a government to execute its duties. Such a motive is an imperfect one. It only reveals the conceptual poverty of those in power, who seem not to fully understand the purpose of political governance and leadership. Human beings are the foundation of political life, and the promotion of their dignity through service of the common good is the ultimate purpose of political governance.

Nonetheless, the irresponsiveness of government or any other institution with responsibility to the public should not daunt the spirit of those in the quest for justice, for as Martin Luther King rightly put it, "every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals". This passion does not just express itself in demonstrations or political activism, but also through writing, for without writing justice may indeed become dormant. It is thus our pleasure once again to bring you this Bulletin which continues to be a valuable source of information, education, advocacy and interaction on various issues of justice, spirituality, religion, indeed on issues that affect human life. As always, we thank the passionate concern of the contributors of the articles in this Bulletin that inspire them to dedicate their intellect and time to advocating what is noble, to informing, educating and building the readers, or even befuddle them. Enjoy the read!

Arnold Moyo, S.J.
Editor

ZAMBIA'S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: WHAT SHOULD COME FIRST AND WHY?

It has been frequently observed that the positive economic growth that Zambia has registered in the past decade has not led to a reduction in poverty levels in the country. Sydney Phiri attributes this to the fact that the growth in the economy has not resulted in the creation of formal employment, as employment bridges economic growth and poverty reduction. In this article, he outlines and discusses what he thinks should be Zambia's development priorities, priorities that reflect the ultimate end of economic growth, which is a dignified standard of living for all Zambians.

INTRODUCTION

In February 2011, a pre-budget opinion poll was conducted by a leading television channel, NDTV, in India. Respondents were asked what they regarded as the most important issue the Government of India should consider. The results of the poll were as shown in the table below:

ISSUE	% in favour	Priority
Inflation	53	1
Improving living conditions of the poor	20	2
Economic Growth	13	3
Employment	10	4

It is obvious from the above table that, India too being a developing country, the development concerns there are little different from those that concern us here in Zambia. However, the question that would come to one's mind is: would the *prioritisation* of these concerns be the same for us here in Zambia? Of course, one does not expect the ranking of the priorities to be necessarily the same for the two countries. If they are perceived to be the same, that would be a matter of sheer coincidence.

Prioritisation of items on the development agenda is bound to vary with spatial-temporal regions. For example, in India itself some 15 years ago when growth was relatively low, enhancing growth would have ranked very high on the priority list. Today, after having achieved sustained average growth rates of 9%, growth may not be regarded with equal concern in India. So in this brief paper, I pose two questions:

1. What would I – and many fellow Zambians like myself – regard as the right development priorities for Zambia today?
2. Are the priorities pursued by the current Zambian Government the same as those that I would consider to be the most appropriate ones?

Let me begin by discussing my own perception of priorities. I wish to emphasise at the very outset that

while my prioritisation is a reflection of my own personal opinion, it is one that is based on economic theoretic reasoning and objective perception of ground realities. I also wish to emphasise that my rankings will not suggest any rigid order in which to pursue the multiple goals. Development often warrants the simultaneous pursuance of multiple goals and there are trade-offs involved in this process. For instance, in basic macroeconomics, one talks of the *Phillips Curve* which suggests that we can trade-off more inflation for less unemployment and vice versa. Hence the nature of the trade-off will depend on which of these goals is assigned a greater priority. This can be seen in the table showing India's priorities. Inflation is accorded the highest priority and hence employment correspondingly receives the last priority. This may not necessarily be an acceptable trade-off for Zambia today when unemployment rates are extremely high.

Growth without poverty reduction in a highly impoverished country is, by and large, good for nothing.

In determining my priorities for Zambia, I adopt the following simple methodology. I ask myself the question: "Among the four major issues, which one would I readily dispense with if I had to choose?" The first one to be dispensed with would then be labelled as my fourth priority. I ask the same question for the remaining three issues and dispense with a second (my third priority). This process is repeated until only one issue remains, which then becomes my priority number one. Using this approach I rank Zambia's priorities as follows.

ISSUE	Priority
Economic growth	4
Inflation	3
Employment	2
Improving living conditions of the poor	1

I now discuss the justification for my choice.

PRIORITY NUMBER 1: IMPROVED LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE POOR

It would be easier to justify this ranking if policy makers are viewed as determining the society's scale of preferences in which the number one preference is determined by what the majority wants. The majority of the Zambian population lives in deprivation due to high poverty levels. In 2009, poverty rates were estimated at 59.3%ⁱ and the levels of inequality were as high as 52.6%ⁱⁱ as measured by the Gini-coefficient. Since the majority of the poor live in sub-standard living conditions, it should be the first priority of the Government to improve their living conditions.

The living conditions of the poor will involve health conditions (physical and mental) and other aspects of a socio-economic nature. Poverty is at the heart of the poor living conditions and the ensuing analysis will be oriented toward these central aspects as a good indicator of living conditions.

No strong direct link between economic growth and poverty reduction exists in Zambia.

In the Executive Summary of Zambia's Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP), it has been noted that the past decade has been characterised by positive economic growth but has had no substantial reduction in poverty levelsⁱⁱⁱ. Growth without poverty reduction in a highly impoverished country is, by and large, good for nothing. However, you will find that to achieve this number 1 priority, the pace and pattern of growth is a very necessary condition. The poor derive their income from work and so this growth must be accompanied by an increase in employment, whether it is employment-intensive or productivity-intensive. This then brings us to the second priority.

PRIORITY NUMBER 2: EMPLOYMENT

The level of employment, the quality of jobs and access to decent earning opportunities are very crucial determinants for poverty reduction in developing countries like Zambia. The 2005 Labour Force Survey reported employment rates of over 80% and found that 88% of the employed population was in the informal sector^{iv}. The informal sector covers a wide range of labour market activities that combine two groups of different nature. On the one hand, the informal sector is formed by the coping behaviour of individuals and families in economic environments where earning opportunities are scarce and, on the other hand, the informal sector is a product of rational behaviour of potential entrepreneurs who desire to escape state regulations.

Whatever the motives for participating in the informal sector, the majority of analysts agree that chronic economic recession is one of the foremost

causes of the development and tenacity of the informal sector^v. The Zambian economy started stagnating around the mid 1970's when formal employment represented 75% (implying 25% informal employment) of the employed population but declined to 10.3% (89.7% informal employment) in 1999^{vi}. Hence, much of the increase in the informal sector participation can be attributed to coping strategies for the majority of the poor due to the shrinking and inflexible labour market.

Labour markets in developing countries like Zambia have a dual structure in which a dichotomy exists between the 'high productive jobs sector' (and hence high paying) and the 'less productive jobs sector' (with low wages). Economic growth that results in an increase in the number of jobs is called employment-intensive growth while growth that leads to an increase in the levels of productivity is called productivity-intensive. A desirable outcome is for employment-intensive growth to occur in the 'more productive' sectors while productivity-intensive growth should occur in the 'less productive' sectors.

Classification of less productive and more productive sectors is country specific. For Zambia, mining is a good example of a productive sector employing about 1% but contributing over 15% to GDP^{vii}. Agriculture is a good example of a less productive sector employing over 75% but contributing only slightly over 20% to GDP^{viii}. Employment-intensive growth occurring in a less productive sector like agriculture may not effectively reduce poverty levels. These sectors are already characterised by low wages and an increase in the number of labourers would serve to depress the low wages further and/or increase underemployment and exploitation. On the other hand, an increase in the productivity levels would have an upward pressure on the wages, increasing them to levels comparable to those in the 'more productive' sectors.

PRIORITY NUMBER 3: INFLATION

High levels of inflation undermine poverty reduction by eating away the purchasing power of incomes of the poor. Improving the living conditions of the poor is a long term phenomenon and as this path is trod, levels of inflation have to be kept at modest levels. Low levels of inflation also create conducive environments for investment opportunities which may increase the employment levels.

Since the majority of the poor live in sub-standard living conditions, it should be the first priority of the Government to improve their living conditions.

However, high levels of discretion should be exercised if, for instance, a trade off between inflation and employment exists (as envisaged by the classical *Phillips Curve* alluded to earlier). At low

levels of inflation, higher employment at the cost of higher inflation could be accepted. Conversely, at very high levels of inflation, higher unemployment can be traded off for lower inflation. In the present development scenario, Zambia perhaps has the capacity to absorb a little more inflation (single-digit inflation, although welcome, is not a sacred cow) if it will generate proportionately more livelihood-sustaining jobs.

PRIORITY NUMBER 4: ECONOMIC GROWTH

Economic growth has been placed as the fourth priority because it is a means to an end; the end in this case being employment creation and ultimately improving the living conditions of the poor through poverty reduction. In Zambia, positive economic growth rates over the past decade have not sufficiently reduced poverty mainly because this growth has been mainly driven by the growth/boom in the mining sector. Modern mining is highly mechanised and so the boom in this sector cannot lead to a significant increase in the number of jobs (employment-intensive). Moreover, the majority of the poor are not concentrated in this sector and hence its failure to impact directly on poverty. If growth is to benefit the poor, it must perforce occur in the sector where the poor are most concentrated, i.e. the agriculture sector. No strong direct link between economic growth and poverty reduction exists in Zambia. This link must be forged deliberately and vehemently. Hence, it shall be stressed once more that the pace and pattern of growth is key to achieving my priority number 1.

CURRENT PRIORITIES OF THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT

Consider this popular joke among economists: Two economists see a Ferrari. "I want one of those," says the first. "Obviously not," replies the other. To get a smile out of this, it is necessary to know about revealed preference. This is the notion that what you want is revealed by what you do, not by what you say. Actions speak louder than words. If the economist had really wanted a Ferrari he would have tried to buy one, if he did not own one already.

I use the above-illustrated notion of *revealed preference* to analyse what the Zambian Government's current priorities are. The budget speeches over the past decade have boasted of positive economic growth rates as a success. Below is an excerpt from the 2011 budget address by the Minister of Finance on the assessment of the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) (whose theme was "Broad Based Wealth and Job Creation through Citizenry Participation and Technological Advancement").

"As the Fifth National Development Plan comes to an end this year, it is clear that we have achieved

some significant success. We have increased growth, lowered inflation and strengthened our external position" (Republic of Zambia: 8, 2010). To claim this as significant success in the absence of significant poverty reduction seems to suggest a different prioritisation from mine. From the past six budget speeches, I notice two major priorities consistently stressed by the Government: economic growth and inflation. For example, the three major objectives for 2011 are:

- Achieve real GDP growth of over 6%;
- Reduce end year inflation to 7%;
- Maintain international reserves of at least 4 months of import cover.

The implicit presumption seems to be that poverty reduction and equity will come as by-products of this good economic climate of positive growth rates amidst low inflation rates. But one does not see any profiling of growth to show if the growth-driving sectors are benefiting the majority.

Let us for the time being assume that the Government has the same ranking of priorities as I have delineated afore. What policies should the Government focus on to achieve my number one priority? The answer, in my view, would be that the Government should focus on *inclusive growth* so that all players in the economy contribute to and benefit from the growth process. The focus of inclusive growth is on the *pace* and the *pattern* of growth^{ix}. The pace of economic growth entails high growth rates (which should be much higher than the 6 percent growth rate the Zambian Government targets). The pattern of growth refers to the fact that it must be shared, broad-based and pro-poor. Such growth should include the large part of the country's labour force. Thus, it would be important to understand the profile of growth (i.e. its employment- or productivity-intensity).

The level of employment, the quality of jobs and access to decent earning opportunities are very crucial determinants for poverty reduction in developing countries like Zambia.

Hull^x suggests a three-step framework for linking economic growth, employment and poverty reduction. Her analysis casts light on how best to achieve my priority number 1:

PROFILING GROWTH

This is the initial stage and what is important here is to understand how the sectoral growth affects poverty (through changes in the quantity and quality of jobs). Hull suggests that per capita GDP should be decomposed into that accounted for by productivity changes, employment changes and population

change. The third factor has a funny but grim tone to it because it may be that the mortality rates are higher than the birth rates in a particular year such that the result is an increase in the per capita output.

LINKING GROWTH PROFILE TO CHANGES IN POVERTY

This step is used to ascertain if improvements in the employment intensity or productivity intensity have a ready impact on poverty reduction both at the economy level and the sectoral level. Statistical analysis of the direction and magnitude of the relationship between poverty changes and productivity changes, poverty and employment changes and poverty and demographic changes can be done sector by sector to help identify the 'more productive' and 'less productive' sectors. In simpler words, the second step of this three-step framework enables analysts to identify whether employment-intensive growth or productivity-intensive growth is more correlated with poverty reduction, and whether these relationships vary by sector.

IDENTIFY UNDERLYING CONDITIONS WHICH MATTER FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

Once you have identified how sectoral patterns of growth affect poverty, at this stage it should be established if certain policies or institutional conditions are correlated with particular growth patterns. One would need to analyse how sectoral constraints to growth (e.g. communication, transport, tax codes, general investment climate and trade) can be overcome by appropriately designed policies. Policies designed in this way link economic growth, employment and poverty reduction.

CONCLUSION

Using revealed preference rationale, I conclude that the Government's priority number one is anything

other than improving the living conditions of the poor. The reader should note that while I show how the Government's prioritisation differs from the one that I have proposed, I do not claim any categorical superiority for my prioritisation over that of the Government. Neither do I claim omniscience on the matter. You, the readers, may have your own priority rankings which you may justify differently. As such, there could possibly be a great plurality of opinions on this subject. I, therefore, conclude this discussion with an open-ended suggestion to stretch your mind, justify your respective opinions and come up with policy prescriptions about how best to achieve what you perceive as your number one priority. Let the debate continue. Let us all help our Government make more informed, more participatory and more democratic decisions.

Sydney Chauwa Phiri
Graduate Student of Economics
University of Zambia

References

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- ⁱ www.ipsnews.net/news
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 - ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid
 - ^{iv} Labour-Force Survey. Central Statistical Office (CSO), Ministry of Finance and National Planning. Lusaka, 2007.
 - ^v Gërkhani, K. *The Informal Sector in Developed and Less Developed Countries*. Tinbergen Institute, 2005.
 - ^{vi} GRZ National Employment and Labour Market Policy. Lusaka, 2005.
 - ^{vii} 2005 Labour Force Survey, Central Statistical office, Lusaka, Zambia.
 - ^{viii} Ibid
 - ^{ix} Lanchovina and Lundstrom. *What is Inclusive Growth?* Oxford Press, 2009.
 - ^x Hull, K. *Economic Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction*. OECD. 2009.

ARTICLES AND LETTERS

We would like to encourage you to contribute articles to the *JCTR Bulletin*. These articles can be on any social, economic, political, educational, cultural, pastoral, theological and spiritual theme. A good issue of the *Bulletin* depends on your lively analytical exchange of views. The length of your article should be between 1000 and 2000 words.

We also encourage comments on the articles in this or previous *Bulletins*. Views for the improvement of the *Bulletin* are also welcome.

The next issue of the *JCTR Bulletin* (third quarter) will be out in September 2011. So to contribute, please write articles or letters to the *Editor* either by regular mail to JCTR, P.O. Box 37774, Lusaka, Zambia; or by e-mail to jctrbulletin@jesuits.org.zm. The deadline for submissions is 31 August 2011.

We look forward to hearing from you!

AID and Africa's Self-Created Poverty

Issue No.87 of the JCTR *Bulletin* carried an article entitled *Aid Fuels Poverty in Developing Countries*, written by Dominic Liche. His argument was that the aid that developing countries receive is futile and has only helped entrap them in a cycle of poverty. In the following article and with particular reference to Africa, Anold Moyo disagrees with Liche's diagnosis and points rather to Africa's own political culture as inhibitive of the effectiveness of aid.

In the last issue of the *Bulletin*, Dominic Liche, in an article entitled *Aid Fuels Poverty in Developing Countries*, argues - as his chosen title suggests - that aid perpetuates poverty in developing countries. He asserts that "there is definitely a relationship between giving aid and countries stagnating in their development". He also briefly makes reference to Dambisa Moyo who also shares the same view in her book *Dead Aid*, and who asserts that "aid is an unmitigated political, economic and humanitarian disaster". In this article I would like to respond to Liche's skepticism about the effectiveness of aid, although my discussion will be broader than just being a response to Liche. I will argue that bad governance is at the root of the demise of developing countries. I will demonstrate that it is not aid *per se* that perpetuates poverty in developing countries - in Africa to be specific - but that the lack of a culture of democracy and good governance is what makes aid ineffective and what gives poverty a breeding ground.

It was not long after most African countries attained their independence than they started experiencing serious economic problems. During the 1980s, so steep was Africa's economic decline that the decade became known as the 'lost decade'. In succession, African countries' living standards plummeted to unprecedented levels such that by the end of the 1980s, most countries were as poor as or poorer than they were at the time of their independence. Asphyxiated by the economic crises, governments no longer had the capacity to maintain public services. The continent had to be rescued, and its dire situation attracted rescuers (or exploiters depending on one's evaluation). The Bretton Woods institutions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, together with individual governments, volunteered to provide this rescue.

The World Bank and IMF drew conditions to be met by countries in need of aid in return for their assistance. Governments were required to meet some of the following requirements: to devalue their currencies; remove subsidies; reduce tariff barriers; deregulate prices; reduce public spending, budget deficits, borrowing; privatize enterprises and lift restrictions on foreign investments. Evident in these conditions is the aim by the lenders to get governments to shift from consumption to investment.

By the mid-1980s, thirty-six African countries had entered into stabilisation agreements with IMF or structural adjustments programs with the World Bank. A total of 243 loan agreements were made, and within twenty years, Africa obtained more than US\$200 billion in foreign aid. In the past 60 years, Africa has received at least US\$1 trillion in aid from rich countries. Foreign aid had become and continues to be a crucial component in African economies. To what extent has it helped Africa develop and alleviate poverty?

It needs not a technocrat to observe that most of African's living conditions have hardly improved in the last twenty years. By the early 1990s, per capita income in Sub-Sahara Africa was lower than it had been in 1960. Africa's debt accumulated to unprecedented levels such that debt service alone accounted for 25% of exports of goods and services, of which only half Africa could afford to pay. Whilst some African countries have registered some economic growth over time, human development is still far from being realised, as is the case with Zambia today. Yet Africa continues to rely heavily on foreign aid meant to improve its condition. Who is accountable for this failure?

The lack of a culture of democracy and good governance is what makes aid ineffective and what gives poverty a breeding ground.

Many critics of Western capitalism criticise it for being an economic system that thrives on the creation and perpetuation of poverty. They apply this critique in their evaluation of the effects of foreign aid to Africa. They observe that Africa's economic problems got worse while the continent was administering the medication prescribed to it by its donors. They conclude that this is an indication that these economic reforms were not meant to end the African crises so much as to solve a specific problem for the Western donors. Some argue that the financial lenders assigned themselves the role of managing the African crisis in order to push for economic liberalisation in developing countries and subject these economies to the obligation of debt payment, and by so doing erode the poor countries' hegemony over their economies by subjecting them to Western tutelage.

Others argue that some of the projects funded by these financial lenders in Africa, and which were technically crafted by or with the help of the lenders, have hardly been useful and profitable and have been insignificant in their contribution to development in Africa. Some contend that even the aid that Africa is being given is not sufficient, especially considering the amount of wealth the rich countries have and which they spend on other less useful projects such as military expeditions, or their distribution of aid disproportionately to various countries. The soundness of these arguments will of course depend on whether rich countries have any obligation at all to give aid to Africa.

Whilst I admit the grave consequences that the structural adjustment policies of the World Bank and the IMF have had on African economies, I am however hesitant at throwing the first stone at these institutions. Can there not be a possibility that the African economists and politicians misunderstood the intent of these policies? Can there not be a possibility that they implemented them wrongly? Can there not be a possibility that they did not implement them fully and wholly? Let us reflect more on this.

As long as there continues to be a crisis of governance and leadership in Africa, the continent's situation will not improve much.

From the onset, conditions set by the Bretton Woods institutions aroused resentment from most African leaders, but many had to comply, at least in theory, in order to have access to aid. It is doubtful that the genuine reason for the resentment of these policies was out of foresight of the economic disaster they could bring, but of the instinctual knowledge of the political consequences of implementing the policies. The policies threatened the system of patronage and patrimonialism that underpinned the rule of most African leaders. For most African leaders, 'liberalism' is a term that constituted an oxymoron if placed against 'national loyalty'. Economic regulation was a crucial political asset for these leaders who were still trying to consolidate their power and were unaccustomed to restraint. Some interpreted the privatisation of national enterprises to mean a compromise of national sovereignty, as these enterprises were symbols of that concept. In short, these policies were deemed to be a gesture of opening the lid of political instability. Surely, faced with such danger, not many African leaders were at all ready to implement all of these policies for economic reform. Who therefore is to blame?

Those leaders who did manage to implement the policies manipulated them to their advantage. Following the condition of privatising national enterprises, they surely did so in the most literal sense of the word. Parastatals soon became personal companies owned by leaders and their

political cronies. These parastatals were not (and are not) being run efficiently and productively, guzzling a lot of money from national treasury to keep them running. The majority of the populace continued languishing in poverty whilst the ruling elite enjoyed a luxurious life. Who is to blame?

Closely related to the above is the issue of the management of aid funds. African leaders have been notorious for either keeping aid funds for their own personal use or for using them for useless projects (Zimbabwe recently contracted a loan of \$98 million from China for the construction of a military academy, all this in the face of the economic and social challenges it is facing). African countries rank among the most corrupt in the world and their leaders the most extravagant. The African Union estimates that at least \$148 billion is stolen by leaders and high ranking civil servants annually. This amount is 25% of Africa's GDP. According to Global Financial Integrity, Africa has lost \$854 billion between 1970 to 2008. Corruption increases the cost of public services and limits their availability, thereby preventing the poor from accessing them, and hence perpetuates poverty. It also stifles development by deterring investment. It is difficult for citizens of many African countries to monitor the manner in which national resources and aid money is used because of a laxity on the part of leaders in the practice of democracy that assures transparency, accountability and citizens' participation in decision making, especially with regard to debt contraction and resource utilisation and management.

Even in the absence of foreign aid, we will not be able to benefit fully from our own resources in the midst of chronic socio-political ills such as corruption.

There is an obvious lack of concern by most African governments in the development of their peoples, and their sole interest in their own enrichment and political ambitions is the cause of a lot of political instability in the continent, which I also attribute to as a contributing factor to Africa's arrested development. In the first two decades of Africa's independence, there were some forty successful coups and innumerable attempted ones. In 1990, the majority of African states either had military governments or one-party state dictatorships. These were usually brutal and intolerant of opposition, and this continues in some countries like Zimbabwe. This state of affairs has had a negative impact on the development of Africa. Considerable amounts of money have been spent on the purchase of weapons, infrastructure has been destroyed and human lives lost in genocides and countless wars. Such a politically chaotic environment scares away investors and sees the wastage of resources that could have been channeled to development programmes. Some African states are clearly not viable nation states for economic growth and human development.

This applies to the continent as a whole. Africa lacks the unity it badly needs for development. Regional groupings are not strong enough and their existence is of minor significance to Africa. Despite the large number of political and economic regional institutions that have been established since Africa's independence, there has not been much cohesion among African states, and this has increased their vulnerability to stagnation in development.

Therefore, it is clear to me that Africa is largely to blame for her slow development. Africa's poverty is largely self-created and self-perpetuated. Of course, other factors beyond Africa's immediate control do contribute to Africa's slow development. For example, the peripheral position that Africa occupies in the global economy ensnares the continent into a structural system of dependence. However, this does not at all exonerate Africa from the responsibility that it bears for the perpetuation of its poverty. For this reason, we cannot blame aid for perpetuating poverty in Africa. We should blame our governments for the

manner in which they have not used this aid effectively and responsibly for the alleviation of poverty.

To get rid of aid in order to deal with the problem of poverty will be to solve the wrong problem, which isn't a problem in the first place. As long as there continues to be a crisis of governance and leadership in Africa, the continent's situation will not improve much. Even in the absence of foreign aid, we will not be able to benefit fully from our own resources in the midst of chronic socio-political ills such as corruption. Politics sets the orientation of the economy, and therefore that of development. Good governance and good leadership anchored on solid democratic institutions are a prerequisite for Africa's own extrication from poverty and for sustainable development.

Anold Moyo, S.J.
JCTR STAFF

Taxation System in Zambia and Equity

A tax system is a legal framework for assessing/determining and collecting taxes. Every government to some extent depends on a tax system to raise revenues to finance its development agenda. To create a tax system, a nation makes decisions regarding the distribution of the tax burden; that is who will pay taxes, how much they will pay, what is the impact of tax burden on economic activity and how will tax revenues be spent. The question of who bears the burden of paying tax always raises issues of equity or fairness.

In the recent past, the Zambian tax system has come under fire with regard to its fairness. It has been argued that a few people in the formal sector bear the heavier burden of paying tax compared to other taxpayers. This is a fact that even Government has acknowledged. Presenting the 2011 budget, the Minister of Finance increased the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) exempt threshold by K200, 000 and not the traditional K100, 000 so as to provide significant relief to the burdened tax payers. Of great concern has been the disparity between tax contributions of the mining sector and that of people in formal employment. While under pay as you earn the 500,000 formerly employed people finance the budget to the tune of almost 20%, the contribution of the mining sector to the budget is less than 10%.

The Zambian tax system, since its reforms in the early 1990s with the establishment of Zambia Revenue Authority, has increased revenue contribution to the budget from around 50% in 2001 to about 70% in 2010. So when viewed against the budget, one would say the Zambian tax system has performed considerably well. The increased revenue to the budget has implied less reliance on aid and debt. However, when tax revenue statistics are disaggregated, it is very clear that individuals are bearing the heavier burden of paying tax compared to other taxpayers. Looking at the component of income tax contribution to the budget, it is obvious that pay as you earn contributes the larger share than company tax, withholding tax and mineral tax put together.

(Continued on Page 27)

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Delineating the nature and role of civil society in political governance and the way and extent to which it should relate to state governments has always been a delicate undertaking, given the varied form civil society organisations (CSOs) take due to the different political landscapes they operate in. Notwithstanding this complexity, there is some general consensus that CSOs have an instrumental role to play in enhancing democratic practice and in providing social services for the well being of populations. Geoffrey Chongo and Sosten Banda here discuss in depth civil society's role in promoting democratic governance.

INTRODUCTION

The harsh reality of disparity in economic and political freedoms and lack of good governance in most countries across the globe has called for a shift in the development paradigm. The traditional way of relying on government and the business sector to deliver has not always worked. Thus, while we have witnessed rapid economic growth and prosperity and political freedom in some regions, more than a billion people continue to live in poverty whilst others continue to suffer political oppression in other regions. Likewise in Zambia, the economy has been growing in the last five years at an average annual GDP of 6.1% and yet 64% of our people continue to live below the poverty datum line. In light of this sad reality, people have been demanding greater political participation and greater share of economic growth. This demand has called for the inclusion and participation of new partners, the civil society organisations (CSOs), in matters of economic and political governance. This new approach reflects the three roles of civil society: as participants in the design of strategies, as service providers through community organisations and as watchdogs to ensure government fulfillment of its commitments.

A nation cannot be democratic unless it promotes participation of civil society in matters of governance.

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to analyse and assess the role of these increasingly important actors in development. What can CSOs do to promote local democratic governance? Can the CSOs be effective advocates of policy change? Do they have a role in ensuring greater accountability and transparency in governance? These are some of the questions we attempt to address in this paper. In the course of this discussion, we will highlight the opportunities, challenges and threats that CSOs face.

1. CIVIL SOCIETY

The question of the role of "civil society" in democratic governance always begs the question:

what is "civil society"? And if we may add, what is "democratic governance?" or simply put, what is a "democracy"? We ask this because without a good understanding of democratic governance, we may not appreciate the role of civil society.

"Civil society" is defined as that section of society outside of government and business sectors, both organised and essentially disorganised, that represents the workings of people to achieve their aspirations, meet their needs and live creative, active, healthy lives. This definition may sound too broad to be appreciated, but we hasten to state that it adequately covers the wide spectrum of issues that civil society deals with. To define the term much more precisely actually works to limit it, when in fact the essential character of civil society is its unlimited quality.

Civil society therefore includes community-based organisations (CBOs), community foundations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organisations, civic clubs, unions, social clubs, academic institutions, charities, environmental groups, and cooperatives. Often times, these organisations do work together to host civic events, plan programs for civic change and development, and cooperate to help one another achieve civic goals. In theory, these civil society institutions ought to be distinct from those of the government and business sectors, though in reality the boundaries between government and business sectors and civil society are blurred and sometimes complex.

2. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

"Democratic governance" or "democracy", which derives from the Greek word "demos", or "people", is defined as a government or political system in which the supreme power is vested in the people. In the words of Abraham Lincoln, democracy is government "of the people, by the people, and for the people". Whether democracy is directly or indirectly exercised, it entails a higher degree of people's participation in the political and economic decisions. A democratic government should therefore embrace the principles of good governance such as submission to the rule of law, responsiveness to public reason, participation of

the people and respect for their plurality, and accountability.

3. ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

So what is the role of civil society in democratic governance? As a third sector, it is widely acknowledged that civil society does exert a positive influence on both the government and the business sectors. It is seen as an indispensable agent for promoting good governance practices like transparency, effectiveness, openness, responsiveness and accountability. Civil society can therefore enhance democratic governance, first, by policy analysis and advocacy; second, by regulation and monitoring of state performance and the action and behaviour of public officials; third, by building social capital and enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms and democratic practices; fourth, by mobilising particular constituencies, particularly the vulnerable and marginalised sections of the masses for them to participate more fully in politics and public affairs; and fifth, by development work to improve the well-being of their own and other communities.

i) CSOs AS ADVOCATES OF POLICY CHANGE

The increasing global trend toward democratisation has opened up the political space for CSOs to play a more active policy-influencing role. The growing focus among policy makers and citizens on the need for good governance and greater transparency has also opened doors for CSOs as players in the development business. Parliamentarians, media and other opinion leaders increasingly rely on CSOs for information and policy advice.

CSOs believe that in order for government to formulate policies that are appropriate for sustainable development, their involvement is necessary since they work for development and can make important inputs to the policy making process. The involvement of CSOs in and their understanding of policy issues makes them better placed at ensuring that policies are appropriate to the needs of the people, feasible and implementable on the ground. They can use their grassroots experiences and innovations as the basis for improved policies and strengthening of local capacities and structures for ongoing public participation. CSOs can provide information that is vital for the development of policies that are appropriate to the communities the policies are meant to serve.

CSOs, especially those that have programs that complement the policy goals and programmes of government, need very close working relationship with government in the formulation of policies; otherwise their policy work will remain of no use.

ii) CSOs AS WATCHDOGS

CSOs, in collaboration with the public, monitor the performance of the state and the behaviour of public workers to ensure that they are accountable. Accountability is the willingness of politicians to justify their actions and to accept electoral, legal, or administrative penalties if the justification is found lacking. Accountability is a pillar of democracy and good governance that compels the state, the private sector and civil society to focus on results, seek clear objectives, develop effective strategies and monitor and report on performance measured as objectively as possible.

Civil society has to play the roles of critic, catalyst and advocate of those interests unrepresented or underrepresented.

CSOs have a particularly crucial role to play in fighting corruption. This is an area where the other two pillars of governance are notably handicapped in dealing alone with the issue. Governments are often part of the problem and lack credibility even when promoting anti-corruption strategies. Similarly, business is often as much the perpetrator of corrupt practices as it is the victim.

iii) CSOs AND PUBLIC MOBILISATION

CSOs help give voice to those who have been historically marginalised and provide them with a crucial vehicle for exercising their rights and holding government accountable. CSOs do therefore help to amplify the voices of the poor, coordinate coalitions to overcome their collective action problems, mediate on their behalf through redress mechanisms, and demand greater service accountability. Elections, informed voting, and other traditional voice mechanisms should therefore be strengthened. These processes — and the information they generate — can make political commitments more credible, helping to produce better service outcomes. As such, they play a vital role in strengthening democracy and the skills of citizenship essential for a healthy society. However, inclusion in political systems long dominated by the state is not easy and depends, in part, on the institutional strength of policy newcomers — CSOs, and, in part, on their perceived legitimacy.

iv) CSOs AND DEVELOPMENT WORK

In order to improve the well-being of the masses and that of CSO members themselves, CSOs involve themselves in economic development and poverty alleviation works. The rising popularity of CSOs in developmental works, especially in developing

countries, is largely in response to the widespread disillusionment with the performance of the public sector in many countries. Even governments are now increasingly viewing CSOs as an integral part of the institutional structure, particularly for addressing the problem of rising poverty as reflected in the poverty strategy reduction papers (PRSP). Arguments in favor of CSOs include:

- CSOs are perceived as more flexible, participatory and responsive to local needs of the poor - all prerequisites for sustained development;
- Typically, CSOs require less financial inputs than government agencies and therefore are more cost effective;
- CSOs can be more resourceful and innovative as they involve local communities in the identification and resolution of development problems which are more cost effective, more sustainable, and more compatible with community values and norms;
- Over and above these direct development roles, CSOs also have a very important advocacy role to play in promoting effective governance.

4. CHALLENGES OF CSOs

i) LEGITIMACY

Although civil society is said to be a neutral player that ensures that both government and the business sector discharge their duties diligently, its legitimacy is frequently questioned. Whose interest does it represent and what is its constituency? Unlike democratic governments that derive their legitimacy from the people who elect them, CSOs are not elected by any one. However, it should also be noted that although democratically elected, governments do not always act in the interest of voters. Most democratically elected governments, especially in developing countries, are rarely bound by the rule of law and hardly respect the universally accepted standards of human rights.

It is the role of civil society to act as a counter-veiling force against government where this is justified.

The business sector also, in its pursuit of profit, does not always serve the interests of the poor majority. It is conventional wisdom that the forces of the market can sometimes be socially blind as they at times contribute to social injustice. The existence of this vacuum created by government and the market legitimises civil society's participation in governance issues. What legitimises them therefore is a concern

about issues that are not adequately dealt with by government and the business sector whether deliberately or not. Civil society has to play the roles of critic, catalyst and advocate of those interests unrepresented or underrepresented. CSOs also have to raise awareness to awaken society to the disastrous effects of the economic and social injustices in society.

ii) SUPPRESSION PRACTICES FROM GOVERNMENT

The CSOs' critical stance against government makes them the prime target of suppression by government. Suppression measures range from outright banning of CSOs to stringent registration requirements. Such regulation only tends to limit the operations of civil society organisations that dare disagree with government. Yet it is the role of civil society to act as a counter-veiling force against government where this is justified.

iii) FUNDING

International donors of late have opted to support governments directly through budget support or sectoral support programmes. Bilateral donors have also cut back aid flow as they attend to their domestic pressing economic challenges such as budget deficits. This has adversely affected most CSOs as they try to cope with the income deficit.

iv) NON PARTISAN

While it is often argued that civil society is the voice of the people and a neutral third sector, a counter argument is that civil society has tended to reinforce, rather than counter, existing power structures. Instead of identifying themselves with the poor, they identify themselves with the elites, having members and headquarters that are among the rich in the cities while claiming to represent the poor.

However, it should be realised that the various strategies that CSOs employ or propose for tackling certain problems may be similar to those of and shared by certain political parties. CSOs are therefore likely to be accused of partnering with particular political parties. CSOs should therefore try to maintain their non partisan approach as it is intended to ensure full participation of the people they represent who might have different political inclinations.

v) FRAGMENTATION

There are diverse CSO actors with different motives, values and interests. Networking and consultative processes which are the whole marks of civil society are rare. This results in duplication of efforts, lack of shared visions and ineffectiveness.

5. HOW CAN THE ROLE OF CSOs IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE BE ENHANCED?

i) ENHANCED DIALOGUE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CSOs

The fact that civil society is independent of government does not always mean that it must always criticise and oppose government. CSOs have a duty to make government more accountable while also working towards a positive engagement with it. CSOs also have to strengthen citizen's respect for the state where good efforts are being made. On the other hand, government should not perceive CSOs as its rival. A nation cannot be democratic unless it promotes participation of civil society in matters of governance.

ii) ENHANCED ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEMOCRACY AMONG CSOs

CSOs' legitimacy largely depends on how accountable and democratic they are. They must be able to live up to the standards to which they call government if they have to be taken seriously and if their advocacy work has to bear fruit.

iii) CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

To perform their functions effectively, CSOs must have the capacity and ability to understand the issues at hand. For example, winning policy advantage requires that mobilised public opinion be accompanied by convincing analysis that is at least on par with the analytic capability of the decision makers (MPs) CSOs are trying to influence.

Who does not know the role CSOs played in Zambia's transition to multiparty politics in 1991? Who does not remember the role that CSOs played in the campaign for debt cancellation that started in the year 2000, or in the third term bid campaign in 2001?

It should therefore be noted that civil society is a guarantor of the interests of the people that governments represents. It reminds governments of their responsibilities and ensures that the interests of those that are weak, poor, illiterate and unorganised are served and protected. Certainly, it will not be exclusively the role of civil society to remind government or the business sector of the proper role they should play in the interest of the masses just as much as governance is not the domain of government alone.

Because of the recognition of the importance of CSOs in democratic governance today, it is no longer contentious to say that without the active involvement of civil society we would live in a world ridden with much more violence and human rights abuses, burdened with greater social injustices and equipped with less sensitivity to these challenges. The democratic process, therefore, can only be sustainable if continually reinforced and supported by civil society as civil society itself is a sphere in which democratic values are realised and can hence be extended to the state through civil society participation in governance.

Geoffrey Chongo & Sosten Banda
JCTR Staff

6. CONCLUSION

While CSOs the world over may be maligned by many and their relevance questioned, it is an undeniable fact that many CSOs have weathered many kinds of political and economic changes, even here in Zambia.

Promoting the Common Good

The common good is the reason for the existence of political, social and economic institutions. It enables men and women to express commitment and concern for each other as well as attain the fullness of love. The idea of the common good calls upon each person to contribute and commit themselves responsibly to building a peaceful and just society for all. This, however, can only happen when civil society and government encourage the citizens to participate.

Source: JCTR Church Social Teaching 2011 Calendar

CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Good governance has often been cited as a necessary condition for development. But what does good governance actually constitute? In this article, Fr. Patrick Banda examines the chief elements of good governance.

INTRODUCTION

In a liberal democracy, good governance is non-negotiable. It is a priority objective of any genuine democratic government. A government that fails to satisfy the expectations of the voters on issues of good governance risks losing their support. One does not need to have credentials in political science to know that now, more than ever before, the governed no longer tolerate governments whose governance seldom rises above mediocrity.

Strangely, some governments continuously defy the demands of good governance and yet expect the electorate to re-elect them when elections time come. This is anomalous and illogical. Good governance is not only a principal task of any authentic government but also a necessary requirement for any sitting government that wishes to prolong its stay in power.

But the question would be what constitutes good governance? Knowing so well that different people hold different views on this issue, I propose yet another way of looking at what constitutes good governance. The aim for doing so is nothing but to contribute to the on-going debate on what we should put into consideration when choosing the people to form the next government for our beloved country, Zambia. Outlined below are what I consider to be the constitutive elements of good governance.

1.1 WILLINGNESS TO SERVE THE INTERESTS OF THE GOVERNED

Plato's conception and criticism of democracy, or rather 'the rule by the people' in the *Republic* is not only interesting but also challenging. As Rosen and Wolf put it, "In its essentials Plato's argument is that the ability to rule is a rare skill which, like any form of genuine expertise, needs both talent and extensive training. Given this, it is as irrational to let the people, the rabble, have any say in how they are to be governed as it would be to let the passengers navigate a ship on sea" (M. Rosen & J. Wolf, *Political Thought*, pg 91).

By quoting this statement, I am not implying that it is incorrect to allow the governed to have any say in how they are to be governed. Rather, I intend to indicate the simple fact that, the ability to rule is a rare skill which needs both talent and training. A

talented and well-trained ruler exercises his or her authority with the interests of the governed in mind. For as Plato himself asserts, "no ruler of any kind, *qua* ruler, exercises his authority, wherever its sphere, with his own interests in view, but that of the subject of his skill. It is his subject and his subject's proper interest to which he looks in all he says and does" (Plato, *Republic*, Book I, 342e).

Good governance is not only a principal task of any authentic government but also a necessary requirement for any sitting government that wishes to prolong its stay in power.

Against this background, it is necessary for both parties – the electorate and those aspiring for positions in government – to be aware of the fact that genuine leadership calls for self denial. Candidates for election should thus be people with the capability to respect the interests of the governed. Whether in government or in the opposition, any aspirant who falls short of this requirement can hardly be expected to change once in office and serve the interests of his or her subjects. Elections time is the opportune occasion for paving the way into government for those who exhibit willingness to serve the interests of the governed, whether they are in opposition or in the ruling party.

1.2 RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

By "respect for the rule of law" I mean the just application of the supreme law of the land - the constitution - in a constitutional democracy; which I suppose Zambia to be. However, a government cannot apply a law that is non-existent. Any government respectful of the rule of law, or at least that claims to govern through the rule of law, must first work at establishing a peoples' constitution.

But what do I mean by a "peoples' constitution"? Obviously I do not mean a simulated constitution. Rather, I mean a genuine constitution comprising people's principles and norms endorsed and adopted in a manner favoured by the majority. This is a constitution that represents the interests of all. As such, it is a constitution that is consistent with the peoples' conception of right and justice for regulating mutual political relations among and between them.

Respect for the rule of law in a constitutional democracy, therefore, entails a just application of the democratic norms on issues of governance, justice, morality, development, human rights, etc, a due respect that is consistent with the dictates of the rules and norms enshrined in the constitution. Respect for the rule of law is important in any democracy. It is not only a measure of good governance but it is also consistent with the universally acknowledged declaration of the equality of all peoples.

1.3 TOLERANCE OF REASONABLE PLURALISM

A well-ordered constitutional democratic government does not only tolerate but also cultivates a culture of free institutions. As John Rawls says: "This is because a basic feature of democracy is the fact of reasonable pluralism – the fact that a plurality of conflicting reasonable comprehensive doctrines, religious, philosophical, and moral, is the normal result of its culture of free institutions" (John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, pg 131).

Moreover, central to good governance, a democratic government neither suppresses nor "attacks any comprehensive doctrine, religious or nonreligious, except insofar as that doctrine is incompatible with the essentials of public reason and a democratic polity" (Ibid, pg 132). Reasonable pluralism is one of the political and social roots of contemporary constitutional democracy and is fundamental to its enduring strength and vitality.

This point is crucial especially here in Zambia where there has been an apparent growing tension between the Government and the opposition and also between the Government and the Church. The root cause of these tensions or misunderstandings can be attributed to the noticeable intolerance of reasonable pluralism. Good governance, as indicated earlier on, demands the cultivation of a culture of free institutions.

1.4 CONCLUSION

In concluding my discussion I need to clarify one thing. The views expressed herein were neither meant to discredit the merits of the Government nor a campaign strategy for anyone. Rather, in this article I sought to indicate two things. First, that good governance is a priority task of the government. Second, that good governance constitutes particular elements. As for the latter, I outlined three characteristic elements of good governance.

A well-ordered constitutional democratic government does not only tolerate but also cultivates a culture of free institutions.

First, I indicated that good governance consists in the government's willingness to serve the interests of the governed. As such, anyone with the intention to serve in any government must part ways with egoism. Second, I noted that for any government to be accredited for good governance, it must also exhibit some signs of respect for the rule of law. Third and last, I mentioned that good governance, in a constitutional democracy, constitutes among other elements, tolerance of reasonable pluralism.

Lastly, I would like to conclude by reiterating Plato's conception of ruling as indicated in the *Republic*. Plato argues that the ability to rule is a skill which, like any form of genuine expertise, needs both talent and extensive training. Just like the captain of a ship is not captain by virtue of being on board, but because of his professional skill and command of the crew, so should be the leader we should seek during the forthcoming elections.

Fr. Patrick Hebas Banda
Collegio San Paolo Apostolo
Rome

A Light Moment!!!

A man went in for a brain transplant operation and was offered a choice of two brains by the surgeon. He could choose either the Architect's brain which would cost him \$10,000 or the Politician's which was \$100,000.

"Does that mean that the politician's brain is much better than the Architect's?" exclaimed the clearly puzzled man.

"Not exactly" replied the surgeon, "the politician's is new because it has never been used."

Cross Cultural Business Management: Challenges & Prospects in African Economies

Culture encompasses all human phenomena, and as such has an influence in every aspect of human life, including in business and economics. In this article, Corbinian Kyara highlights some cross-cultural barriers that multinational companies are confronted with when doing business in Africa. He recommends that for Africa to maximise her benefits from investments, her governments must create enabling environments for investment and business growth; and that if multinationals are to maximise their success in Africa, their strategic plans should take into consideration the culture of the people in which their businesses operate, in other words – some kind of business inculturation.

INTRODUCTION

The gradual development of infrastructure, existence of cheap labour, availability of natural resources as well as growing democratic political regimes in Africa are among the factors which are likely to inspire more multinational companies to invest in African economies. Lately, most African nations are taking various measures to ensure peace, stability and economic prosperity in the continent. However, there are cultural, political, and legal challenges confronting African governments that continue to be a concern for most stakeholders. The focus of this paper therefore, is to highlight some cross cultural management challenges facing Africa's emerging markets. I argue that despite the prevailing multidimensional challenges of doing business in Africa, if one embraces the challenges, the opportunities are greater in Africa than almost anywhere else. This is because Africa presents many untapped business opportunities. Consequently, the key for successful investment in Africa is innovative management of the prevailing challenges.

THE NEXUS BETWEEN CULTURE AND BUSINESS

The term “culture” refers to a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people and when taken together constitute a design of living. “Values” are shared assumption about how things ought to be. It is what a group of people believes to be good, right and desirable. “Norms” refer to the social rules and guidelines that prescribe appropriate behaviour in particular situations. Therefore, culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities acquired by people as members of society. Culture functions by setting loose boundaries for individual behaviour and by influencing operations of social institutions such as families, educational institutions, governing systems, mass media etc.

Hence, culture shapes the everyday behaviours and lifestyles of people and in turn lifestyles shape

the needs and benefits one seeks. It follows therefore, that culture creates business opportunities, which in turn influences the goods and services one seeks. Thus, culture influences business as well as the consumer behaviour, governing system and societal norms.

CROSS CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF DOING BUSINESS IN AFRICA

Currently, governments in Africa are facing multidimensional economic, political and cultural challenges. Such challenges have significant influence on business operations. I use the term “challenges” rather than “drawbacks” or “problems” because when such challenges are innovatively approached, investments in African economies will be viable and will offer lucrative returns to the investors. In this section, I discuss some major cultural challenges of doing business in Africa.

i. EXAGGERATED PERCEPTIONS AND LACK OF CROSS-CULTURAL LITERACY ABOUT AFRICA

The greatest cross cultural challenge facing business in Africa today is the continent's painted unfavourable image. There have been grossly exaggerated perceptions about Africa, making the continent a high-risk investment destination. Some of these negative perceptions include dictatorial and undemocratic regimes, political instability and wars, ineffective rule of law, economic mismanagement, corruption, deadly diseases, etc. Although there are some rays of truth with regard to some of these perceptions, it is neither to the extent they are portrayed nor something that can be generalised to describe the entire continent.

Culture shapes the everyday behaviours and lifestyles of people and in turn lifestyles shape the needs and benefits one seeks.

Investors, who lack cross-cultural literacy about African politics, customs, norms, laws, etc, are likely to make ill-informed decisions because their decisions will be based on the aforementioned exaggerated and deceptive perceptions. It is worthwhile to recognise that Africa is a big continent whose constituent countries exhibit dramatic variations such as language, culture, natural resources, climate and governing systems. This should therefore mean that in analysing investment risks, investors need to seek detailed analysis of the country or the sub-region in question instead of taking Africa as one country.

ii. ETHNOCENTRISM: SELF-REFERENCING CRITERION

One of the factors which distinguish one society from the other is its cultural traits. Due to cultural traits, every culture has its own biases, the major one being ethnocentrism. The term “ethnocentrism” refers to a “tendency to make judgments by reference to the values shared in the subject’s own ethnic group, as if it were the centre of everything”. In this case, one considers his cultural orientation as the standard measure upon which others are to be judged right or wrong, equal or inferior. Conscious or unconscious use of own cultural values as a point of reference is also referred to as *self-referencing criterion*. When an individual or a group in a particular society is singled out (especially the native people) for such treatment, they are most likely to receive less favorable treatment from other members of the society.

Government bureaucracy and choice of appropriate business strategy are among the major cross cultural organisation challenges of doing business in Africa.

Hence, business enterprises of foreign origin doing business in Africa experience a great challenge in their daily operations when they happen to have either consciously or unconsciously exported their ethnocentric tendencies to African societies despite the prevailing native cultural base. Such tendencies appear discriminatory; they undermine the self-esteem of the native people. Sometimes ethnocentric tendencies are interpreted as racism.

Consequently, foreign entrepreneurs will be very misguided to expect the native citizens to necessarily share their ethnocentric feelings. Companies operating in foreign nations are likely to fall into the trap of using self-referencing criterion or being ethnocentric when they are led to think that their own ethnocentric strategies or reputation are better than any other in the nation. Entrepreneurs who are able to surmount the ethnocentric feelings which are slowly crowding African markets can be assured of more promising returns from investments.

iii. ORGANISATIONAL COMPLEXITY

Government bureaucracy and choice of appropriate business strategy are among the major cross cultural organisation challenges of doing business in Africa.

a). *Government Bureaucracy*: It is normal for any governmental systems to depend on a large workforce arranged in a hierarchy to carry out specialised tasks based on internal rules and procedures. Hence, governmental systems depend on bureaucracy, without which no modern government can function. However, some rules and procedures governing government bureaucracy in Africa are grossly exaggerated and they are posing big challenges to investors. For example, to get a license to open a small consumer shop takes an unnecessarily long time and one has to follow a monotonous chain of procedures for approval. Exaggerated bureaucratic structures produce rigid mind-sets obsessed with procedure than results. This situation fuels an emergence of vices such as corruption and nepotism, increases operational costs and discourages investment.

Table 1.0 below shows an overall picture of cost of doing business indicators. We notice that African countries, i.e. non-industrialised nations, exhibit a high number of procedures to be fulfilled before starting business and high cost of starting business. These are two typical indicators of a severe bureaucratic system. On the contrary, the industrialised countries exhibit the opposite scenario. Likewise, less industrialised nations offer lower protection to investors as compared to the industrialised ones.

b). *Entry Strategy - Deciding Appropriate Marketing Strategy for African Markets*: Companies doing business in Africa need to be creative and innovative and understand the peculiarities of emerging markets in Africa. Usually, there are four basic *cultural philosophical orientations* followed by business companies when venturing into new markets. The first trend is *ethnocentric orientation*. This is a home country approach which insists that the home country culture is superior. Under this philosophical mindset, a foreign company venturing into a foreign market simply extends home country products, policies and programmes to the host country. This orientation has been a common approach for many investors venturing into Africa’s emerging markets.

Polycentric orientation is an alternative entry strategy whereby a business firm operates in a foreign market holding a conviction that there are so many differences in cultural, economic and marketing conditions such that products, policy and marketing programs should be attuned to reflect the local situations and needs. Thus, variation of culture, economic and market conditions are indications of varying consumer needs and wants across cultures. The third orientation is the *regiocentric orientation*. The philosophy underlying this approach is that it is possible to identify both similarities and differences

between regions and thereby design/extend a marketing strategy integrating similar regions and approach the uniqueness of other regions using modified strategies and programs reflecting particular local needs and wants.

Multinational companies which have opted to follow the ethnocentric approach in penetrating Africa's emerging markets are facing immense difficulties in terms of sales and social acceptability. This is due to the fact that a cross-cultural business requires an understanding of the nature and diversity of consumers in various societies and thereby develops effective targeted marketing strategies to use in each foreign market of interest. However, there are companies which have genuinely devised methods and developed product portfolios fitting for African economies, and they are experiencing maximum returns. A case in point is *Shoprite*, which has invested profitably in African countries outside South Africa by adjusting to the market trends and consumer culture of the various countries in which it invests. This is "a case of localised opportunities".

iv. POVERTY

Nowadays it is increasingly acceptable that business leaders have a greater role to play in helping companies fulfill their social responsibility. A leader, e.g. plant manager or hospital administrator, needs to deal with the scourge of poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS not only because it is a right thing to do but because it makes good business sense in a region like Africa where firms are expected to be rooted in the community they serve. In Africa, business leaders have no option but to confront problems such as those associated with poverty and HIV/AIDS. Sometimes an attempt to confront such diversity leads to conflict of interests. Thus, doing business in such a background requires a very sensitive and brave response from entrepreneurs.

However, it is ironic that Africa's very poverty creates opportunities. The key challenge to most entrepreneurs with regard to poverty is the ability and willingness to make adequate and innovative social analysis in order to come up with ways of tapping the huge untapped potentials among the poor. Many poor people lack good education, reliable health care facilities, physical infrastructure, banking services, etc. While these deficiencies on one hand present what most ordinary people in developing nations go without, on the other hand, they provide a platform for investment to innovative investors. Investors' ability to study the cross-cultural consumer needs and develop appropriate products to satisfy them and in turn generate some profit, is what can make a difference in Africa's emerging markets.

However, since the basic problem of the poor people has to do with their ability to pay for their needs, then entrepreneurs' challenge is how to develop a strategy which can allow low income earners to enjoy at least the basic market services.

Taking into consideration the prevailing poverty scenario, the big challenge for investors in Africa is to invent a method of marshalling the unharnessed big potentials at the bottom of the pyramid. *Equity Bank*, a home grown Kenyan bank, shows us how an innovative entrepreneur can marshal the huge potential among the poor and provide banking facilities for them.

Equity Bank – 6.5 Million Customers for Bank for the Poor

For many decades, multinational banks dominated Kenya's banking sector by focusing mainly on the middle and upper class customers. On the contrary, the *Equity Bank*, a home grown bank, focuses on the typical customers (i.e. the low income earners such as the watchmen, tomato sellers, street vendors, domestic servants, small-scale-farmers, etc). Within few years of its operation, *Equity* has gone from being a quirky, fringe player to one of the most profitable banks in Kenya. For instance, in 2003 the bank had 256,000 accounts only, but by March 2011 *Equity* reported to have registered 6.5 million accounts, equivalent to an over 57% share of Kenya's banking market. Besides, *Equity* does not rely on donor funding and government subsidies. All along, the ultimate priority for *Equity* has been to provide banking services to the millions of low-wage earners in Kenya who wanted to save and especially to borrow but were locked out of the financial system. Although as individuals these low income earners are not worth pursuing, but as a block they present an enormous and potentially very profitable market.

In Africa, business leaders have no option but to confront problems such as those associated with poverty and HIV/AIDS.

In rural areas, where most commercial banks retract, *Equity Bank* has mainly adopted a secured mobile banking strategy. While traditional banks ask for pay slips or utility bills as proof of address before opening new account with high minimum balance and monthly fee, *Equity* asks for a national identity card only and the typical saving account balance is about \$150. What is more interesting about *Equity* is micro-credit operation. Loans can be for less than \$8, repayable in just few months. And since most clients are low income earners working in informal sector and who have only few assets of value, the loans are backed with "social collaterals". For example, account holders can group together to guarantee an individual's debt. With this innovative unconventional credit risk strategy, the default rate is estimated to be 3% as compared with industry average of 15%. In the first quarter of 2011, *Equity* has announced 87% growth in its after tax profit, which grew from US\$ 14.8 million in March 2010 to US\$ 27.3 million in March 2011. Such gigantic growth is associated with growing customers' confidence. In this way *Equity*

has proved the viability of low-margin, high volume business model.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognising the differences in lifestyle patterns and customs of people in different cultures is a major managerial challenge for those engaged in cross-cultural business. Most multinational companies are constantly lured to offer the same brand of commodity across countries. Changing brand with respect to changes in consumer needs across cultures is a challenging exercise and it sometimes involves extra costs. However, since in reality there is no such thing as a 'universal consumer', then entrepreneurs doing business in Africa have to modify their products to meet the local market needs and wants.

In order to seize the growing marketing opportunities in Africa for the benefit of both the marketers and the targeted consumers, cross-cultural challenges surrounding African markets need to be addressed timely. Some of the significant steps that can be taken by various stakeholders to address these challenges include:

i. Developing cross cultural literacy among various players in the market: This can be achieved by making a comprehensive cross-cultural analysis with regard to psychological, social, political and cultural characteristics of various consumers in Africa's emerging market. Such analysis will help to alleviate the prevailing shortage of cross-cultural literacy and thereby confront the exaggerated negative perceptions about Africa. Also, stakeholders not only need to appreciate that cultural differences exist, but also to recognise what such differences mean for cross cultural business operations.

ii. Employing indigenous business personnel: In order to combat the risks of making ill-informed decisions, foreign business enterprises in Africa should consider employing local citizens to help them do business in particular cultures. Choice of appropriate entry strategy, ability to identify the required brand and implementation of relevant marketing policies and programmes are some of the areas where managers recruited from among the citizens of the host nation can play a very significant role in realising business goals and objectives. Besides, home-grown companies have the added advantage of understanding the social and cultural context of a place and thereby give a more informed response to the local needs. Moreover, while Africa needs to continue collaborating with multinational companies, at the same time it needs to seize investment opportunities and put more effort in grooming its local companies.

iii. The role of government in cross-cultural business: Solutions to some of the problems discussed in this paper require prompt government attention. The continent is in a great need of entrepreneur spirit in order to address most of its production and distribution issues more innovatively. The significance of good governance for growth and sustenance of such a spirit cannot be disputed. In this case, African governments need to recognise the important role of the private sector which includes the informal sector and the poor. Besides, the ultimate way to support the continent and enable it to occupy its rightful place in the global economy is by enabling African entrepreneurs walk in the path that they themselves define. Any form of support from the international community and foreign entrepreneurs to African economies ought to be inspired by this spirit.

**Corbinian V.J. Kyara, S.J.
Nairobi**

Table 1.0: Cost of Doing Business Indicators

Economy		Number of Procedures to start business	Cost of starting business(% of capital income)	Rigidity of employment index (0 - 100)	Protecting Investors (Disclosure index 0 - 7)	Enforcing Contracts (Number of procedures)
Non-Industrialised Nations	Angola	14	884.6	75	2	47
	Chad	19	344.2	80	1	52
	DRC	13	556.8	77	1	51
	Egypt	13	63.0	53	1	55
	Ghana	12	87.5	34	2	23
	Mali	13	187.4	66	1	28
	Niger	11	396.4	90	1	33
	Rwanda	9	316.9	76	1	29
	S. Africa	9	9.1	52	6	26
	Tanzania	13	186.9	65	1	21
	Togo	13	229.4	76	2	37
Industrialised Nations	Russia	9	6.7	27	3	29
	Australia	2	2.1	17	6	11
	Singapore	7	1.2	0	5	23
	USA	5	0.6	3	7	17

AN ETHICAL REFLECTION ON WORK AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Employment is a human right and a good that brings with it both individual and social benefits. There is a direct correlation between employment and poverty reduction. Employment guarantees income, and income is necessary for the acquisition of and access to basic needs and property. Sr Brenda Walsh explores the importance of work especially in promoting human dignity, and advocates an economic system that is socially responsible and designed for and oriented towards the creation and preservation of decent employment for all.

In recent times, there has been a lot of interest and discussion about work and economic development. Why are they so important? Work is the creative expression of our gifts and talents to be used in the service of a world that is peaceful, humane and ecologically safe. Through work people shape their own lives as well as the lives of their families and community. Meaningful and stable work is the foundation for security in the family, neighborhood and society. President Obama, in his address to the nation, expressed his hope and efforts for a just, stable and growing economy. This is a human issue and therefore an ethical issue.

The opportunity to work belongs to every human being who desires and has the ability to work. The opportunity to do meaningful work improves the quality of life for others as a basic human right. For many years we have discussed full employment as a goal but it was never taken very seriously. It still needs to be pursued with vigour. It must take into account the rights of minorities and women, people with disabilities, the young and the aged. A just wage and a safe working environment are essential elements to be considered. Environmental concerns, energy use that is safe and good for the environment are also coming to the fore at this time.

Institutions were shaped by humans and can be re-structured by the same humans in the service of a just, peaceful and secure world.

We are at a crossroads in the world of work and production, due to new developments in economic, technological and political conditions of our time. The internationalisation of production, high technology and the present crisis of plant shut-downs resulting in high unemployment have left millions in severe economic upheaval that is likely to last for some time to come. We also need to orient our economic development efforts and use technology for just and peaceful ends and not for weapons of destruction. We are called to use our technology to benefit the entire human family, which currently is greatly lacking in basic human needs such as food, health care, housing and education. What kind of world do we

want to live in during the years to come? The choices we make today will greatly impact the answer to this question.

We need to develop an economic system:

- that allows workers to participate in the decision-making processes affecting their work lives;
- that promotes cooperation between workers and management;
- that provides adequate training and placement opportunities for jobs now and in the future;
- that provides a just wage and a safe environment;
- that is sensitive to urban-rural interconnectedness;
- that considers the rights of minorities, including women, persons with disabilities and the young and elderly;
- that is devised to serve people and is not allowed to violate the priority of people over profit;
- that prepares workers for work needed, and encourages excellence in the workplace as a joint responsibility of employer and employee;
- that is socially responsible and accountable to the local community.

Some communities are exploring ways of keeping the wealth within the community. Examples are described in Community Wealth at www.communitywealth.com. The founder of this group is Gar Alperowicz, a Racine, Wisconsin native. Local companies are trained to develop cooperatives to meet the needs of local people and to share in the profits of the company.

Institutionalised injustice is found in many of our institutions, culture, and society and within our economic system. Institutions were shaped by humans and can be re-structured by the same humans in the service of a just, peaceful and secure world. Our responsibility is to examine our own institutions and work toward that end.

Several years ago, a great social justice advocate, Joe Holland offered this advice: “The community must be the foundation of economic, political and cultural life. We need to affirm co-operation over competition as the foundation of our society. The key principle is to build accountability of capital and technology to the community”. This is the vision we have – of people as a community, of a people called by God and accountable to ourselves and to each other and to the rest of the world and above all to the poor and powerless among us. Basically, our future is with the community. Coupled with this local effort, planning and action are needed at a national and global level, by working for full employment for all, in the service of a world that is human, along with a just and living wage and safe

working conditions. Economics in its derivation means the ‘management of the household’. Its main goal therefore should be to see that all members of the human family have the opportunity to live a full and meaningful existence. Our task is to face our economic contradictions and to ensure that the system serves the human family, especially those with the greatest need, and that contributes to the building of a peaceful world. In this way, we can pass on a future with hope to generations still to come. Let us begin today courageously.

Sr. Brenda Walsh, OP
Racine, United States

“What is the Church Social Teaching Saying about Labour?”

The dignity of the human person is the foundational principle of the social teaching of the Church. The Church sees all social activity as revolving around the human person for the person’s flourishing. Likewise, with regard to labour, the Church sees human labour not only as proceeding from the person, but as also essentially ordered to and as having its final goal in the human person.

Work makes possible the attainment and enjoyment of one’s independence. Getting a decent income facilitates the acquisition of private property, thus making it possible for one to be self-sufficient and less dependant on others for one’s upkeep. Over-dependence on others at times reduces one’s self-esteem, self-worth and self-respect, thus blemishing one’s dignity. Dependency opens opportunities for the abuse of the dependant by the one who provides the assistance. Women are the most vulnerable in such situations. When people are getting a decent salary, they reduce this dependence and exercise greater autonomy in directing their own lives.

The income that we get from our labour expands our freedoms and human functionings. If we have money, we are able to engage in various activities and buy various things that we as human beings require for a decent life. Closely related to this is also our ability to enjoy other economic, social and cultural rights such as the right to food, clean water, adequate housing and health, all these being necessary for a dignified life. Our dependants are also able to enjoy rights such as the right to education. Labour thus makes it possible for us to lead happy and fulfilled lives that we otherwise would not if we had no work, and therefore no source of income.

Good remuneration from our labour also makes it possible for us to participate in society and to enjoy the benefits of contemporary cultural and technological innovations. Poverty has the tendency to marginalize people by pushing them to the periphery of society. Such people are not offered the opportunity to enjoy with others the benefits of belonging to and being an active member of society contributing to the common good. These benefits of employment make it an imperative that the right to employment and the dignity which accompanies it be promoted by the relevant sectors of society, especially the Government.

Extract From JCTR Booklet

A CASE FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE 'PEDAGOGIC RECONTEXTUALISING FIELD' IN THE 2010 EDUCATION BILL

In the following article, Donald Mwiinga examines the imperfections of the 2010 Zambia Education Bill, which gives too much power to the state in determining the national education curriculum. In his view, this responsibility should rather lie heavily with departments of education and research foundations for the guarantee and continuity of a genuine, effective and good quality education system.

This article aims to propose the strengthening, in the Zambia 2010 Education Bill, of departments of education and research foundations in determining the form and content of subjects and courses transmitted in education, and a subsequent weakening of the determination by state and its selected agents. Basil Bernstein's theoretical framework, the "pedagogic device", is utilised as the major language of description. The term used to refer to the departments of education and research foundations, according to the language of description used here, is "pedagogic recontextualising field" [PRF], while that used to refer to state and its selected agents is "official recontextualising field" [ORF].

The proposition being made in this article is that in the Education Bill of 2010, the ORF is overly strong and the PRF is very weak to the point of near nonexistence. This article argues that only the significant strengthening of the PRF in determining the pedagogic discourse (knowledge to be transmitted in education) guarantees continuity, quality and genuine development of the education system. I initially define the pedagogic device and its various components, which include both the PRF and the ORF. After the definitions, I attempt to capture the viewpoint of the 2010 Education Bill (henceforth referred to as the Bill), as a way of substantiating the claims being made about its orientation. Finally, I look at the benefits of having a strong PRF, relative to the ORF.

Simply defined, the *pedagogic device* is a structure/model for the organisation of the pedagogic discourse. The *pedagogic device* hinges on three interrelated rules: *distributive rules*, *recontextualising rules* and *evaluative rules*. These rules operate at different levels: macro, institutional (meso) and micro, respectively.

The distributive rules regulate the production of knowledge by determining the structuring of meaning. Within the logic being advanced here, meaning is ordered by way of relating two worlds: the material world and the immaterial world. Any system of meanings orders the relationship between these two worlds in a particular way. There is no necessary

relationship between these two worlds. Creativity and innovation are fruits of access to orders or meaning; an ability to exploit various ways of relating the material and immaterial worlds. Ignorance to principles of orders of meaning can at best yield the reproduction of already created knowledge. I use the term "conceptual knowledge" to characterise an understanding of ways of structuring meaning. This is the level of the production of knowledge (macro level). Conceptual knowledge is opposed to "practical knowledge", which is based on particular expressions of structured meaning. Practical knowledge is dependent on specific contexts.

The recontextualising rules regulate the formation of pedagogic discourse from the knowledge produced at the level of production. An example might be appropriate here. Chemistry as a subject/course to be taught/learned is delineated in ways that do not formally correspond to the logic of Chemistry as understood and practiced by chemists in the field of production. There is *selection* (from the original site of production), *appropriation*, *relocation*, *refocusing and relating* with other discourses (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). The principles regulating this transformation (selection, appropriation, relocation, etc.) are called recontextualising rules. This field of recontextualisation could be controlled by either the *official recontextualising field* (ORF) or by the *pedagogic recontextualising field* (PRF). By *official recontextualising field* is meant the control by the "[...] state and its selected agents and ministries [...]" (ibid.). The *Pedagogic recontextualising field* consists of "[...] pedagogues in schools and colleges, departments of education, specialised journals, [and] private research foundations" (ibid.). The basic claim of this article is that the 2010 Education Bill promotes strong control by the ORF over the formation of pedagogic discourse and its practices. This move necessarily undermines and stifles the efforts of the PRF. This is the institutional level of the device.

The evaluative rules regulate the criteria for deciding the acceptable level of acquisition of the pedagogic discourse by learners. This is the micro level of the device.

The Bill is a wide-ranging document. Within the context of this article, it is not possible to go into its details in a significant way. I identify some few quotations, trusting that they sufficiently give a sense of what the underlying view of the Bill is with regards to the organisation of the education system, particularly in the formation of the pedagogic discourse.

One striking thing about the Bill is the amount of responsibility it gives to the Minister of Education in determining the structuring of the education system. In fact, one could argue that the Bill is essentially a job description for the Minister of Education. The context implied by the Bill is one lacking any significant structure within which different education institutions would function in a relatively autonomous fashion but cohesive in their relation to one another. One would assume that the Minister of Education would play more of a monitoring role of the effectiveness of various institutions and structures managing the education system, holding them accountable and supporting them and improving them in whatever way necessary and possible. The Bill seems to trust the Minister to provide the structure, not committing him/her to be at the service of the existing structure. The following quotations attest to the claims I have just made about the form of responsibility the Bill gives to the Minister. After each quotation, a few remarks are made so as to highlight points of emphasis and significance for the purposes of this article.

"[The Minister shall] [...] direct, coordinate, supervise and control the education system and any related matters [...]" (p. 15). This quotation attests to the claim being made that the recontextualising field, as envisioned by the Bill, is controlled by the ORF, in the name of the Minister of Education.

"[The Minister may] in consultation with such persons or consultative bodies as the Minister considers appropriate, formulate a development plan for education consistent with the national plan for economic and social development" (p. 15). This quotation too confirms the claim that the Bill proposes the determination of the pedagogic discourse by the ORF. This is contained in the state's [Minister] prerogative to select agents to be consulted. Of interest too is the correlation between the plan for education and the plan for the "social" and, especially, the "economic development". I will get back to this point later.

"The Minister shall appoint a regional director for education for each region established [...]. The Minister shall [also] appoint a district director of education for each district" (p. 16). The mention of the regional and district education officers gives an impression that the Bill is commitment to subsidiarity. The very fact that they are appointed by the Minister is good reason enough to suppose that they operate within the framework to be developed by the Minister.

Both positions of the regional and district directors are political positions.

"The Minister may, by statutory instrument, make regulations to provide for:

- (a) the principles to guide the formulation of national education policy;
- (b) the objectives of the education system and the roles, functions and responsibilities of the Ministry and regional and district education offices;
- (c) the establishment of an institutional framework for literacy education, open learning and distant education;
- (d) the preparation and implementation of an education development plan; and
- (e) any other matters necessary for the development of the education system" (p. 16).

The proposition being made by the above quotation is that there is no vision, no objectives, and no goals, as such, at any point, apart from those to be provided by the sitting Minister of Education. I suppose, in line with the general logic of the Bill, that the principles to guide the education policy would be based on economic and social needs. Such a basis of organisational principles, as will be shown below, promotes practical knowledge, at the expense of the pursuit of knowledge/principles responsible for the form that practical knowledge takes (or simply at the expense of conceptual knowledge.

It is the acquisition of conceptual knowledge that enables for the appreciation and enrichment of practical knowledge.

"The Minister shall specify the curriculum, syllabi, books and other materials to be used at an education institution [...] The curriculum [...] may be revised if the Minister considers it expedient to do so" (p. 52 & 53). This quotation shows the depth of control by the state [in the Minister] over the recontextualising field.

"The Minister may, by statutory instrument, determine:

- (a) the annual academic calendar, the duration of any academic year and the terms of an academic for educational institutions;
- (b) the minimum number of days in a year in which instruction shall be given;
- (c) the minimum hours of instruction which education institutions may observe;
- (d) the total learning time in respect to each study area in the curriculum; and
- (e) the number of working days and holidays in any academic year" (p. 54).

One would imagine that a structure for deciding the academic calendar would be based on demands

of acquiring conceptual knowledge, not on the prudence of the Minister of Education.

I hope the quotations cited above prove the claim made that the 2010 Education Bill promotes a strong ORF and, conversely, a weak PRF. If that is the case, I would like to propose that the ORF necessarily foregrounds practical knowledge in pedagogic discourse at the expense of conceptual knowledge. The basis of this proposition is the assumed understanding that the principles regulating the operations of the ORF are based on social and economic circumstances. Such a context specific base necessarily generates kinds of knowledge that are context specific. Only practical knowledge is context specific. Conceptual knowledge is independent of any context. In short, it seems that ORF implies practical knowledge, while it is worthwhile to note that PRF promotes the prominence of conceptual knowledge. In light of what has been established thus far, the following comments are in order.

The Education Bill seems to foreground practical knowledge at the expense of conceptual knowledge, therefore designed to promote superficiality at the expense of systematic and grounded conceptual development.

Practical knowledge does not facilitate the understanding of conceptual knowledge, but rather it is the acquisition of conceptual knowledge that enables for the appreciation and enrichment of practical knowledge. This understanding seems to elude the view of the Bill.

Practical and conceptual knowledges are based on different social and epistemological principles. Therefore, an education system that attempts to integrate them in a significant way is bound to fail. This could be supported by considering characteristic features of the two knowledges. Bernstein's characterisation of his knowledge types: "vertical and horizontal discourses", is applicable here and shall be used to supply these characteristics of practical and conceptual knowledges. These characteristics include: form of practice, distributive principles, form of social relations, and the form of acquisition of either knowledge type.

- Practices of practical knowledge depend on specific contexts and are focussed in the direction of explicit instantaneous goals, while those of conceptual knowledge are progressive procedures in extended time.
- Practical knowledge takes the form of strategies, without a necessary relation to one another, local and segmentally structured. They are distributed via segmentation, thereby exhausted at the moment of communication. In conceptual knowledge, transmission and evaluation are regulated by strong distributive rules, whereby circulation in time, space, and under what circumstances, is explicitly stated.
- Practical knowledge is generated where social relations are structured in ways that make possible for the exchange of strategies and procedures. This is because people here would have to have close interactions. On the other hand, conceptual knowledge does not depend on communalised social relations, but on individualised communication, since knowledges are regulated by coordinating principles that have nothing to do with any specific lived experiences.
- Since practical knowledge is segmentally related, acquisition takes the form of competences quite different from one another. On the other hand, acquisition for conceptual knowledge takes the form of graded performance, where what is to be taught/learnt is structured in time and space by principles inherent to its form.

In conclusion, the 2010 Education Bill seems to be based on assumptions about education that are ultimately erroneous. I recommend that if there is to be lasting positive development in the education system in Zambia, the orientation of our system, as to be recommended by the Education Bill, has to change from ORF to PRF. Efforts and commitments towards improving the education system would have to promote the exploration of inherent properties and configurations of fields of knowledge, other than simply and directly seeking to design the education system in response to economic and social needs at any given time.

Donald Mwiinga, S.J.
Lusaka

JCTR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the JCTR is to foster, from a faith inspired perspective, a critical understanding of current issues. Guided by the Church's Social Teaching that emphasises human dignity in community, our mission is to generate activities for the promotion of the fullness of human life through research, education, advocacy and consultancy. Cooperating widely with other groups, our Jesuit sponsorship directs us to a special concern for the poor and assures an international linkage to our efforts. We aim to promote an inculturated faith, gender equality and empowerment of local communities in the work of justice and peace and the integrity of creation.

AND GOD SAID: “I HAVE A DREAM!” – CAN GOD’S DREAM REALLY BECOME OUR DREAM?

How should we make sense of what seems senseless? How should we derive meaning in what seems meaningless? How should we find order in the midst of chaos? Or appreciate perfection in a situation that seems far from perfect? Fr Bernard Mallia suggests that we embrace a faith vision that will enable us to see things from God’s point of view, thus aligning our modes of thought to that of God’s, if we can succeed. This will in turn provide for us a truer and firmer foundation for our quest for justice.

GOD’S VERY GOOD DREAM AND OURS

As individual persons, we happen to belong to a society which is made up of us together. However, we are not there like cogs in a wheel but as living, dynamic, heart-throbbing and intelligent particles. Each one of us, however seemingly ‘nameless’ or apparently lost in a crowd we could be, is inherently necessary and invaluable for the whole society, where all the particles interact, each of them and all of them together giving life to each other and to the whole, while the whole gives life to each and to all. In short, we are all *made* to support each other in our common solidarity, subsidiarity and participation, each in his or her unrepeatable way and identity. This involves at one and the same time *micro* as well as *macro* globalisation in the most positive way. Also, on the underside of our personal and common historical reality, we are all somehow co-responsible for all the destructive, negative side of globalisation, which implodes into the mess or nothingness of chaos – what we may call our common ‘original sin’.

This dialectic is graphically termed the upward mobility and its opposite, the downward mobility. It is dialectic not simply because of the two sides opposing each other – the good on one side and evil on the other – but a dialectic that is an internal pull and push movement that is inextricably embedded in every fibre of both the micro and the macro globalisation, the personal and the social. This thought seems to try to very tentatively ‘explain’ the dialectic of the one and the many, a relational quandary that bothered the best and lesser minds of ancient times up to the present and will continue to do so in an indeterminate future – something that we may all be baffled about at one time or another. Not only that, this mind-boggling vision of unity in diversity gathers up all human beings in the past, in the present, and in the future – all the human beings of all time and places, a full human globalisation, the vibrant interlocking of each and everyone ever.

This whole dynamic convergence is seen as something intrinsically and totally positive as it builds itself up, not of itself, blindly and automatically, but through the positive, personally intended urge of all

the participants. This urge nonetheless keeps battling with and constantly seeks to overcome the often unexplainable negative, destructive ‘down-ward’ pull in those that seriously threaten to make things fall apart and annihilate all.

This reflection actually emerges from the essentially Christian ‘dream’, an essentially human and ultimately essentially divine ‘dream’, for at the ‘thought’ of creation God must have said, “**I have a dream!**”, a dream he forthwith implanted into the heart of our common humanity – and into the heart of the whole of creation. It is a creative dream that only God can dream up and make a reality, while he empowers us also to dream on along with him as he communicates his own original dream to us in creating us and enabling us ourselves to keep creating along with him. Thus, his dream is not just *for* and *in* us, but excitingly *with* us and *through* us all. It is a dream that could be felt alive at the deepest depth of our guts, at the very depth of the earth’s guts, at the depths of all creation – if we are only ready to at least have a glimpse of it, a glimpse that staggers us at the ordinary everyday wonders we see. We may also be able to see it written all around us – “seeing God in all things”, as St. Ignatius of Loyola puts it – if we only have the eyes to look for its living traces there, for it is God’s own dream in action. It is God himself coming across creatively in all that is, for as St. Paul says, “In him we move, we live, and have our being”.

**Job realised how mistaken he was that
he could put a creature’s wisdom on a
par with the Creator’s wisdom.**

THE DOWN-TO-EARTH REALITY

But all these strands of creation, seen in the marvelous though painstaking process of blending and converging together, may look like just a beautiful gossamer dream which may in the end turn out to be merely a hopeless and absurd ideal, far-fetched and far from the ‘down to earth’ reality that we actually live day by day. It may be the seeming possibility that creation is in fact a cruelly

meaningless and hopeless jumble of odds and ends thrown chaotically together – a dark possibility that may blind people into opting out and give up the struggle for a chimerical more and better life.

What a starkly sharp contrast! This is the fundamental lesson that Job presents us with, a lesson that we all, sooner or later, come to learn about as we keep trying to understand it. It is a lesson that we may stand up to and face bravely, or which we may be tempted to feel that it is better to run away from it all, doing our best to keep it always far away from us with a barge pole while it still remains stinking and rankling there.

This is where both Qohelet and Sisyphus seem to agree: all is futile under the sun! But, adamantly to the contrary, Job doesn't feel ready to accept that categorical judgment because he had strongly believed that God is well and truly in charge, rewarding the good and punishing evil-doing – a just God who keeps the world in real proper trim. But when this 'proper' world of Job started to tumble down around his ears, though he tried his absolute best to hang on to his faith by the grit of his teeth, he ended up feeling utterly astounded and decided to take God to task for not being any longer Himself by His having turned to doing injustice and making everything no longer meaningful.

In Job's deepest guts there was something that made him finally rebel at such a stark answer to all the baffling contradictions of life. Apparently Job was tempted to fall on the side of Nietzsche, though not really, because, after all, he couldn't bring himself to believe that God could so utterly contradict and negate Himself. Job's faith was indeed in tatters but he still somehow kept clinging to its bare shreds. It is true that they, both Job and Nietzsche, rightly kicked hard against this 'senseless', supposedly divine, goad. Their difference, however, is that, while Nietzsche ended up denying the goad and all, Job could not bring himself to accept that God could be merely such a heartlessly mean goad and nothing else. So he was determined to have it out with God, almost like equal to equal, trashing it all out with Him - man to man!

**God's own 'argument' is actually
implanted at the depth of all that is,
especially at the depth of each human
heart and the human community as one
but diverse.**

That means that Job was determined to know the 'reasons' why God was acting so 'irrationally' towards him who had been serving Him so faithfully and blamelessly. But the whole point about where Job went wrong, in his utter frustration, is not that it was not true that he might have had some terrible hidden sins, but that he was now pretending to reason things

out with God, as man to man, as equals, and let God explain Himself fully to him.

What is so wrong with this? It is our ultimate self-illusion that is wrong. The thing is that we think we can figure out absolutely everything about the complexity of everything in life just by our own wits. When things do not square up according to our best capacity for reasoning, we cry foul, either like Job, blaming God for being so 'irrationally cruel and high-handed', or like Nietzsche, simply chucking away any idea of God because God was just a thought-up escape-idea.

The answer that makes most sense, however, is neither Job's nor Nietzsche's non-solutions, but, surprisingly, it is the seemingly bland and authoritarian idea that God gave to Job when He accepted his challenge to put all His cards face up on the table. In fact, His cards were a series of straight and rapid foundational questions that left Job utterly speechless and awed: where you there when the whole of creation was laid out so that you could give Him some advice on how to do things better – where you there? In short, in one blinking and utterly humbling instance, Job realised how mistaken he was that he could put a creature's wisdom on a par with the Creator's wisdom.

MEETING POINT OF GOD'S DREAM AND OUR DAY-TO-DAY REALITY

How could one ever reconcile God's dream and our day-to-day reality, if they are at all reconcilable? Or, how are these two thoughts fundamentally and intimately connected in the end? Can God's dream really be our own dream? And even if they are, are they 'for real' or are they just wishful thinking? In the end it seems that the answer cannot be any other except the one that Job got at the end of all his questioning. It is all too true that in our lives there is much un-clarity, but there could also be moments when we do seem to be catching glimpses of clarity that push us to keep hoping beyond all hope. If we were to measure everything simply by our wisdom stick - unless, of course, we are hopeless optimists - we will only end up thinking like Qohelet, or Nietzsche, or Sartre, or worse, as then there would be no way out.

It is exactly the lesson that Job learned – not to measure as far as our sniffing noses can take us! That does not mean that we are to despise our search for understanding, our God-given capacity to reason – not at all! But as St. Anselm put it so well, it is to keep searching for ever deeper understanding *with faith*. It is faith that seeks understanding and not understanding that seeks a 'rationalised' faith, a man-made faith. Faith is a gratuitous gift - that is, a gift is a gift - that enlightens our right reason to be able to see beyond all reason. Then, indeed, are we right to believe that God's dream is indeed also our reality dream, His dream implanted in us!

It is true that at first glance God's hidden answer in His cosmological retort looks more like a mere repetition of the arguments of Job's 'friends' in defense of an autocratic God. But in fact it is not so because Job realised that any argument attempting to explain away God's 'plans' would still fall short from God's own reality. The catch in the argument lies in God's repeated question: "where you there?" From our own side we can only see as far as all our arguments can take us and no further. From God's own side only God can make full head and tail of everything. Still, God's own 'argument' is actually implanted at the depth of all that is, especially at the depth of each human heart and the human community as one but diverse.

That is where we come back to God's dream in our micro and macrocosm, our personal and social integrity and 'globality'. What every person and society needs to do is to see what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin saw – the interactive presence of God's spirit within our spirit, within the spirit and the heart of the world. That is why it is never enough to try to do justice simply according to our way of thinking, even

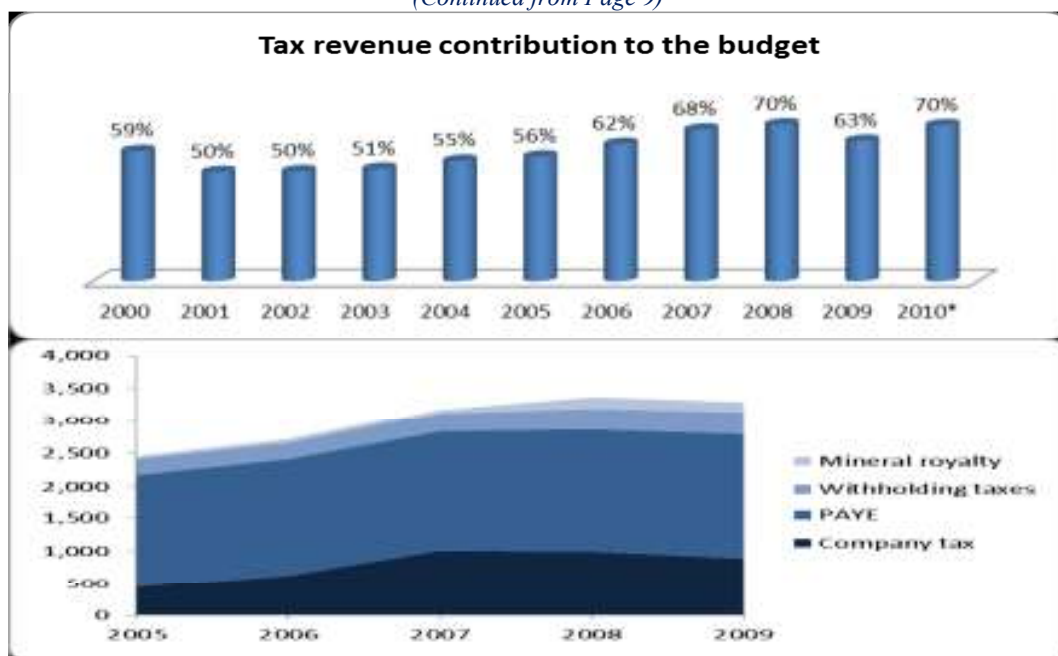
though that can take us quite a long way. For simply from our own 'secular' point of view we can never be able to really see the whole picture, or, what is more foundationally important, we may find at one time or another that our judgement is actually eschewed or incomplete or flawed at one point or another.

God's dream, God's own point of view, seen as in a glass darkly, within every living tissue of our own reality, makes the whole difference to our own dream. This is what we may call *faith doing justice*. Of course, every sincere effort made at seeking justice, not only by those led by faith but also by all those who claim to be just 'humanists', does indeed lead to 'the dream' at the heart of our common dream. What Benedict XVI is constantly insisting on is that by our own wits alone we all end up as relativists in seeking what may be truly just at all levels of personal and social ethics. It is the justice of God which alone can do true justice to all that is, micro and macrocosmically, or micro and macro globally.

Bernard Mallia, S.J.

Taxation System in Zambia and Equity

(Continued from Page 9)



It is against this background that people have questioned the fairness of the Zambian tax system and appealed to Government to address this disparity. It is important that Government reverses this trend by focusing not only on the growth of tax revenue but on the manner of growth. Indeed there is a trade-off between efficiency and equity, but Government should endeavour to balance the two.

Source: JCTR Tax Study Report, 2010.

GOD OUR FATHER: PATRIARCHAL IMPOSITION VERSUS INCLUSIVITY

The Church is not a supra-historical phenomenon undisturbed by societal developments of the historical times in which it is situated. Thus, at times its theology develops in response to paradigm shifts of the human environment of which it is a part. To what extent and for what reasons should today's theology, whose expression has largely been masculine, be gender sensitive as a way of responding to a culture that now places equal value to men and women? Ujah Ejembi offers a philosophical reflection on this intricate topic.

INTRODUCTION

Why did Jesus teach the apostles to pray "Our Father in Heaven?" (Matt. 6:9). Perhaps Jesus' cultural surroundings made the 'Our Father and Mother in Heaven' an impossibility. Nonetheless, as Virginia Mollenkott recommends, our cultural surroundings today make it not only possible but also necessary to pray "Our Father and Mother in Heaven" (61). Inasmuch as I think Mollenkott's claim is not utterly true, I however feel her suggestion invites us to consider an inclusive language as a medium for modern theological exegesis and for scriptural proclamation. Unfortunately, Christian scripture and tradition has almost exclusively used masculine language: *Father, Lord, King, He*, despite the fact that Christian theology maintains that God has no gender. According to this theology, God's divinity contains the perfections of both male and female, and, for this reason, any *patriarchalistic* interpretation or assimilation of the scripture misses the point of Christian theology. This paper proposes to examine whether calling God "Our Father" imposes a patriarchal interpretation on the Holy Scripture. I shall discuss the latter view from the perspective of feminist theology.

By his use of *abba*, Jesus transforms the patriarchal concept of Divine fatherhood into what might be called a maternal nurturing concept of God as a loving, trustworthy, caring parent.

DEFINING PATRIARCHY

By patriarchy I mean not only the subordination of females to males, but also the whole structure of father-ruled society (Ruether 61). Etymologically speaking, patriarchy is derived from the Greek word "patriarkhia", which directly means "rule of fathers". It has evolved to refer to a social system that treats the role of males as primary figures, principal humans, as people of authority who are central to the organisation of the society. Religions that reinforce hierarchical stratification (e.g. Roman Catholicism) use the Divine as the apex of this system of privilege and control. It is against this equivalence of *father*

and power, which I call the distortion of masculinity and which feminist theology is correctly reacting to. The effects of this distortion range from the damaging effect such language can have on those who have suffered from their human fathers to the assertion that the term *Father* legitimates a patriarchal ordering of Christianity (Martin 267). While I think such language derives from a cultural expression of Christianity, I strongly suggest that it should be reinterpreted or used alongside its feminine word so as to meet the urgent and practical needs of our age.

GOD AS FATHER IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The term *Father* (*abba*) is applied to God in the Old Testament (OT) rather infrequently though it is a term that is implied in the relationship between the Israelites and God. The majority of the OT texts refer to God as *Father* because he acquired a people who are the object of his special care, e.g. Jer 3:4, Is 63: 15-16, etc. In the later literature, we sometimes find God addressed as *Father* by an individual, e.g. Sir 23:1.

The New Testament (NT), on the other hand, contains a renewal and radicalisation of prophetic consciousness, now applied to a marginalised group in a universal context. One may concur with Ruether that class, ethnicity, and gender are now specifically singled out as the divisions overcome by redemption in Christ (63). By adopting the word *abba* for God, Jesus perhaps affirms a primary relationship to God based on love and trust. Though the English word *daddy* does not capture the full sense of the word *Father* as used by Jesus, I however maintain that it is enough to conclude that by his use of *abba*, Jesus transforms the patriarchal concept of Divine fatherhood into what might be called a maternal nurturing concept of God as a loving, trustworthy, caring parent. Understood in this way, calling God "Our Father" does not impose maleness on the scripture.

Nonetheless, when the word *Father* is taken literally to mean that God is male and not female, represented by males and not females, then this word becomes idolatrous. This is why Jesus replaces the

patriarchal community with a new community of brothers and sisters in Matt. 12:46-50 or Mark 3:31-35. This new community is a community of equals and not of master and servants, father and children. Additionally, Jesus justifies women's right to study in the circle of disciples around Rabbi Jesus in the words, "Mary has chosen the right part which shall not be taken from her" (Luke 10: 38-42). Understood in the light of Jesus' action towards women, the word *Father* was not meant to impose patriarchal interpretation on the Holy Scripture.

INCLUSIVITY: AN OPTION!

Notwithstanding the above claim, many feminist theologians feel the word *Father* is not an inclusive language and does not amply describe God. This is why gender-inclusive theology and language for God are presently among the most powerful forces in mainline Christianity. This trend is viewed by many as a natural outcome of the full recognition of women's equality to men. Mollentcott argues that an affirmation of the equal rights and dignity of women in contemporary society requires an expression of the Christian faith that equally validates the "Divine feminine" (qtd in Cooper 21). From this vantage point, feminist theologians suggest, for example, the use of the expression "God the Creator" as oppose to "God the Father" because the word *Father*, instead of equally validating the Divine feminine, imposes a patriarchal interpretation on the Bible.

It is to be expected for feminist theologians to link patriarchalism - a male dominated hierarchy that preserves the privilege and power of men - with androcentrism, the cultural assumption that male ways of doing things -decision making, learning, communicating, resolving conflicts, and the like - are normative for everyone (Cooper 31). By calling God "Our Father", God's followers are indirectly scrutinised by a masculine category. This is the reason why I think one may possibly argue that patriarchalism and androcentrism have cooperated not only in making women subordinate, but also in marginalising them. Therefore, the use of the word *Father* for God may hinder, in some cases, a fruitful pastoral ministry since women would feel marginalised in an atmosphere of biblical hermeneutics that is *patriarchally* motivated.

Calling God *Father* imposes maleness on God and such exclusive speech about God serves in manifold ways to support an imaginative or structural world that excludes or subordinates women.

For a true pastoral concern for victims of sexism, feminist theologians recommend an inclusive language for God, especially for people who are spiritually alienated from the all-male God of scripture and the Christian tradition. Both males and females who have been abused, ignored, or abandoned by

their fathers often have a difficult time relating positively to a Heavenly Father. Their entire experience of fathers or other powerful males has been either deeply traumatic or empty and meaningless. It may be emotionally impossible for such people to trust a God who is represented as an all-powerful masculine being, no matter how forceful his attributes of love and goodness are preached. With this in mind, feminist theologians concede that calling God *Father* may result in pastoral ineffectiveness as it imposes a patriarchal interpretation on the scripture, thus alienating women. Perhaps, it is religiously crucial for these people to be able to pray to God as *Mother, Lover, Friend* or perhaps *Parent*, rather than as *Father* and *Lord*. Otherwise, their only viable alternative to inclusive language might be to abandon God altogether.

Inclusive language for God should be part of today's scriptural interpretation because scripture and tradition are themselves codified collective human experience.

According to the theologian Elizabeth Johnson, the language of scripture and the Church suggest that God is male, or at least more like a man than a woman, or at least more fittingly addressed as a male than as a female (5). So, calling God *Father* imposes maleness on God and such exclusive speech about God serves in manifold ways to support an imaginative or structural world that excludes or subordinates women. But this appeal for inclusive language, compelling as it is, is not sufficient to authenticate such a practice. This is because if special care is not provided, inclusive language may become irreconcilable with scripture, the confessions of the Church, and healthy piety (Cooper 36). What I think is needed is a demonstration that feminists argument for an inclusive language theology does not introduce doctrinal heresy or false religion, but that it is consistent and warranted by the authoritative standards of the Christian faith and in fact faithful to the gospel.

PROFFERING A WAY FORWARD

Beginning from the OT, scripture contains feminine allusions to God, such as the image of a nursing mother in Isaiah 49:15. However, in cultures where fathers are absolute heads of their households, and where kings (such as Pharaoh and Caesar) are the ultimate authorities in their worlds, the categories of father and king are obvious choices for divine self-revelation. If this was why the Israelites were comfortable with calling God *Father*, then calling God *Father* would help correct the absoluteness of heads of households. In this sense, it is understandable, as Cooper astutely maintains, that masculine categories were necessary in a patriarchal society (45). But in our own society, which recognises the equality of men and women and

where both men and women possess authority, it is necessary to use gender-inclusive language to express the intent of the biblical revelation of God.

In the NT, some parallel parables suggest an inclusive language for God. In my view, such parables reflect the innovation of early Christians of including women equally in those called to study the Torah. We observe this in the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven bread where the explosive power of the Kingdom is compared to a farmer sowing the tiny mustard seed that produces a great tree or a woman folding the tiny bit of leaven in three measures of flour which then causes the whole to rise (Luke 13:18-21, Matt. 13:31-33). The parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin serve a similar purpose (Luke 15:1-10). These metaphors for divine activity are so humble that their significance has been easily overlooked. The images of male and female in these parables are equivalent. These images are not drawn from the social roles of the mighty but from the activities of Galilean peasants. Lastly, the parallel male and female images do not picture divine action in parental terms, not as mother and father (Creator), but as seeker of the lost and transformer of history (Redeemer). Since inclusive language permeates the Bible, inclusivism should be the new face of theology and for this reason calling God *Father* may pose some difficulties because of its exclusively patriarchal implication.

Therefore, calling God "Our Father" instead of "Our Father and Mother" may not be appropriate because revelation also occurs in women's experience. In fact, women's experiences are an integral part of Christianity, past and present. For this reason, inclusive language for God should be part of today's scriptural interpretation because scripture and tradition are themselves codified collective human experience. In this way, the Bible can be seen as a revelation in progress. By reading scripture using inclusive language, women are part of a continuing revelation of God.

Nonetheless, how far then can we validate feminist theology, especially their cry for an inclusive language in describing God? It must be firmly affirmed that God transcends all categories, including gender. Human language for God like "Our Father" is just anthropomorphic, symbolic, figurative, analogical, or metaphorical but never literal. I contend that God's name is not important, but that what God is and what God does are real and important. I say this because an attempt for complete inclusivism in the scriptures may lead to a loss in the true meaning of scriptural words. Therefore, in their attempt to name God, feminist theologians have to respect the original structure of the biblical language of revelation and not reduce it immediately to a propositional content. Thus, for example, we cannot eliminate fatherhood from the gospel without destroying its very sense. If the biblical witness to God's masculinity is dismissed, how can any of the claims of revelation be trusted?

Therefore, it may be apt to make it clear that those masculine words and titles in the Bible serve a function although God lacks gender. In the long run, gender inclusive language may harm some women because that simplifies and demotes them to creatures of mere sexuality.

Even so, using only masculine language for God leaves the impression that God is masculine or that he is in fact exclusively masculine. This language thereby obscures the Christian doctrine that God is genderless. In the process, it hurts both men and women. Feminist theology requests that if gender terminology such as *Father* does not attribute gender to God, it must be possible also to call God *Mother*.

CONCLUSION

By way of concluding, calling God *Father* indeed imposes a patriarchal interpretation on the Holy Scripture. But this depends on interpretation. Since male dominates the history around the writing of the Bible, it is not a coincidence that one meets masculine images of God in the Bible. However, since God has no gender, *Father* necessarily implies male and female by analogy of God's title. In any case, the suggestion from feminist theology that an inclusive language would do more good than harm should be considered seriously, especially in communities dominated by women. But even this must be carried out carefully so as not to abandon the true message of the gospel in search of modern equality. A balance is needed between exclusive use of masculine titles in the Bible and the need to implore inclusive language. The dilemma remains - where does one strike this balance?

Gabriel Ujah Ejembi, S.J.
Arrupe College
Harare

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THE JCTR BASIC NEEDS BASKET

The Social Conditions Programme of the JCTR conducts monthly research on the cost of basic needs within a number of urban and rural areas across Zambia that include Lusaka, Ndola, Kitwe, Luanshya, Kabwe, Livingstone, Mongu, Kasama, Chipata, and Monze. For the month of June 2011, the cost of the Basic Needs Basket in Lusaka stood at K2 928 750, just more than May's K2 917 350.

(A) COST OF BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR A FAMILY OF SIX IN LUSAKA

Commodity	Kwacha	Quantity	Total
Mealie Meal (breakfast)	46,300	3 x 25 Kg bags	138,900
Beans	14,200	2 Kgs	28,400
Kapenta (Siavonga)	66,700	2 Kgs	133,400
Dry Fish	55,000	1 Kg	55,000
Meat (mixed cut)	23,800	4 Kgs	95,200
Eggs	7,900	2 Units	15,800
Vegetables (greens)	3,300	7.5 Kgs	24,750
Tomato	5,400	4 Kgs	21,600
Onion	9,400	4 Kgs	37,600
Milk (fresh)	14,500	1 x 2 litres	14,500
Cooking oil	24,900	2 x 2 litres	49,800
Bread	4,300	1 loaf/day	129,000
Sugar	6,900	8 Kgs	55,200
Salt	3,700	1 Kg	3,700
Tea (leaves)	3,800	1 x 500 g	3,800
Sub-total			K806, 650

(B) COST OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD ITEMS

Charcoal	116,500	2 x 90 Kg bags	233,000
Soap (Lifebuoy)	2,400	10 tablets	24,000
Wash soap (Boom)	4,000	4 x 400 g	16,000
Jelly	9,100	1 x 500 ml	9,100
Electricity (medium - fixed)	130,000		130,000
Water & Sanitation (med - fixed)	210,000		210,000
Housing (3 bedroom)	1,500,000		1,500,000
Sub-total			K2,122,100

Total for Basic Needs Basket

K2,928,750

***Note that the cost of housing has not been adjusted because research and consultations are still ongoing**

Totals from previous months	Jun 10	Jul 10	Aug 10	Sep 10	Oct 10	Nov 10	Dec 10	Jan 11	Feb 11	Mar 11	Apr 11	May 11
Amount	2,799,280	2,809,480	2,828,780	2,850,680	2,877,830	2,861,480	2,879,430	3,019,100	2,982,350	3,008,800	3,003,550	2,917,350

(C) SOME OTHER ADDITIONAL COSTS

Item	Kwacha	Item	Kwacha
Education		Transport (bus fare round trip):	
Grades 8-9 (User+PTA/year)	K350, 000 – K470, 000	Chilenje-Town	K6, 000
Grades 10-12 (User+PTA/year)	K600, 000 – K900, 000	Chelston-Town	K7, 000
School Uniform (grades 8-12)	K90, 000 – K200, 000	Matero-Town	K5, 400
Health (clinic)		Fuel (cost at the pump)	
3 Month Scheme (per person)	K5, 000	Petrol (per litre)	K7, 639
No Scheme Emergency Fee	K5, 500	Diesel (per litre)	K6, 999
Mosquito Net (private)	K30, 000 – K120, 000	Paraffin (per litre)	K5, 030

(D) SOME COMPARATIVE FIGURES OF WAGES--"TAKE HOME PAY"

	Teacher	Nurse	Guard with Security Firm	Secretary in Civil Service	Average Monthly Income in Urban Low-Cost Area - CSO	Pieceworker on a Farm
Pay Slip	K1,300,300 to K2,200,600	K1,300,000 to K3,450,000	K250,000 to K850,000	K1,390,500 to K1,900,000	645,326 (between October 2004 and January 2005)	K5,000 to K15,000 per day

The June Basic Needs Basket is approximately US\$605 based upon an average middle exchange rate of 4840 Kwacha per US\$ at the end of June.

THE JCTR UPDATE: PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES

WHAT KEEPS US BUSY AT THE JCTR? HERE ARE SOME RECENT ITEMS OF INTEREST

Faith and Justice Programme

In the second quarter, the Faith and Justice team members were mostly glued to their computers as they worked on various publications, the main ones being the booklet on the Church's social teaching and labour, the 2012 JCTR Calendar and the Bulletin. On 16th June, the Programme, in collaboration with the Social Conditions programme, held a training session with a group of Catholic business leaders on the topic of Government dis-incentives in doing business, how this affects their dispensation of justice in the work place and how the problem could be responded to.

Social Conditions Programme

In the second quarter, the Social Conditions programme continued on its expansion strategy of the Rural Basket which highlights the food security and social service delivery in select rural areas. The expansion process that spanned over a period of three weeks from 18th May to 2nd June 2011 was against a background of having two additional areas in each of the districts the Programme operate in so that emanating findings are more relevant to district planning and related advocacy work. In consultation with the district administration in all these areas, the Programme successfully expanded in Chongwe, Kazungula and Shangombo Districts. The expansion process involved meeting with communities and other district stakeholders.

The Programme finalised a study on employment generating policies and strategies in Zambia. This report provides comprehensive insights into various plans, policies and strategies on employment creation. The report will form a good basis for JCTR's advocacy on employment generation in the country. Furthermore, the programme aired a 13 series programme on Radio Phoenix on employment in Zambia featuring stakeholders with technical expertise on employment and labour related issues.

Economic Equity and Development Programme

The Programme continued to carry out activities (based on the Taxation Study) aimed at promoting equity and efficiency in domestic resource mobilization through the taxation system. It held a radio programme on Radio Phoenix's "Let the People Talk" programme and a television programme on ZNBC, where it engaged other stakeholders from the Private Sector Development Association and the Zambia Revenue Authority. The Programme also produced and aired on ZNBC a documentary on the taxation system. It also collaborated and hosted Civil

Society Organizations' input in preparing proposals on tax and non tax revenue measures for the 2012 budget as requested by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning.

As part of the Programme's objective on trade and the market system, the programme was heavily involved in the CSO preparatory meetings for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) meeting and also participated in the AGOA forum where the views of CSO were presented on how AGOA can deliver on poverty reduction.

The Programme has prepared two concept notes on how the market system can deliver on pro-poor development and on up-dating the Debt Management Bill into a comprehensive Public Finance Management Framework. The research and study on Aid Transparency is on going with the collection of data on whether aid transparency results in more aid effectiveness.

Outreach

The Programme undertook capacity development trainings to Mongu, Kabwe and Ndola between April and June. These trainings were aimed at enhancing Outreach members' capacities to undertake their planned activities as well as to identify issues of relevance for advocacy within their communities. Among the issues was the need for local communities to continue pushing for a system that encourages people's participation in national processes like the Budgeting Process.

Also held were activities relating to sensitisation of various communities on values that should guide elections and qualities to look for in aspiring candidates especially as the country approaches the general elections.

In June, the Programme participated in a meeting organised by the Centre for Social Accountability in South Africa. One key issue from that meeting was how the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region could collaborate in pushing for Social Accountability in respective member countries. This collaboration would involve sharing of information, experiences and strategies being employed by respective countries.

In late June and early July, the Ndola Outreach team participated in the Zambia International Trade Fair through display of JCTR materials at a stand and attending to several radio and television interviews. This platform continues to offer the JCTR an opportunity to disseminate its information and interact with various stakeholders.