

JCP

Joint Country Programme

NEWSLETTER

July - September 2018



Clean water key for sustainable development



Action by Churches Together Zambia

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We would like to welcome you to this issue of the Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia newsletter where we share various stories pertaining to the work that we do. Remember that in all that we do, our primary focus is to seek justice and save lives, and therefore you will notice all our stories show how our work contributes to these values.

The second half of 2018 has been particularly important because we welcomed the new Country Director for JCP Zambia, Mr. Lennart Reinius. He took over from Mr. Harald Nyeggen Sommer who had been at the helm of the institution since 2016. Mr. Reinius joined us at a critical time in the year where we were trying to further expand our resource base by applying for what would be the largest EU gender justice grant in JCP history.

We also received members of our Cooperation Coordination Committee (CCC), the highest governing body of JCP comprising members from the three sister agencies, Norwegian Church, DanChurch and Aid and Christian Aid. Their annual meeting discussed the future of the cooperation, including the challenges and opportunities.

You will also see how a privately funded water project in North Western Province has improved the lives of the people of

Mumbeji area; from helping save marriages to improving health and sanitation both at household level and the local health centre. Yes, the challenges are still many but as you will see from the many smiles, "water is life."

But if there is one thing you cannot miss, it's a story on how a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) gender justice project helped keep girls in school in Kolomo District of Southern Province. The project recognised that in order to help keep girls and boys in school, parents and guardians need to be economically empowered through small capital injections in their existing or new businesses so that they are better able to support their children with various school needs. The project also addressed issues of reproductive health education among school going children.

To know more about the kind of work we do and the impact in the communities we work from, Like and Share our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/JCPZambia or simply search for JCP Zambia on Facebook. Remember that we value and appreciate your input and contributions. You can get in touch with the editor on bellah.zulu@nca.no for questions or comments. Thank you.

By Bellah Zulu – Communications Coordinator/Editor



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JCP ZAMBIA HAS A NEW COUNTRY DIRECTOR



JCP Country Director Lennart Reinius,
Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

The Joint Country Programme (JCP), composed of Norwegian Church Aid, DanChurch Aid and Christian Aid in Zambia, has a new Country Director. Mr. Lennart Reinius takes over from Mr. Harald Nyeggen Sommer who has been at the helm of the institution for over two

and half years.

"I am excited and proud because I know that the three agencies making up the joint country programme have a strong history in promoting human development and human rights and collaborating across different faiths and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Zambia," said Mr. Reinius. *"Zambia like other similar countries in the region has challenges in terms of poverty, human rights and inequalities and these have to be continuously addressed if progress has to be made."*

He added: *"My impression is that Zambia is a stable, and relatively peaceful, although being culturally diverse. The stability and relative calm is however not sufficient in order to progress. People need to step up and use their passion and energies to work towards the vision of a better country, where there is progressive and even radical change in terms of human rights, justice and equality." If JCP triggers and supports such change we are on the right track."*

Though Mr. Reinius will be working in Zambia for the first time, he brings a wealth of experience from working in his home country Sweden and many other African countries including Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ethiopia and South Africa, where he has held leadership positions in different international organisations including Save the Children and Plan International.

About (JCP) Zambia

In 2011, Christian Aid (CA), Dan Church Aid (DCA) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) merged to form a Joint Country Programme (JCP) in Zambia. The JCP is implemented in partnership with local faith based and other professional Civil Society Organisations and focuses on two strategic priority themes, Gender Justice and Economic Justice. It is also supported by European Union, Czech Diakonia and FORUT.

Our Overall Goal

"Rights Holders (RHs) have been empowered and as active participants, achieved gender justice and economic justice through economic empowerment, transparent and accountable use of resources while respecting and upholding their human rights."

Within this context, mobilization of citizens and equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills is important for sustainable development. JCP is committed to working with

partners whose key focus is on challenging the churches, CSOs and other actors to institute key legal and policy reforms with regard to good governance, gender equality, and effectiveness. In the Zambian context churches and faith actors command a considerable amount of respect from both duty bearers and rights holders.

Therefore churches and FBOs wield unique and comparative advantages and are key social institutions in influencing social change among its constituents, as well as influencing the national agenda towards transparency and accountability of the state to its citizens. NCA, DCA and CA through the formation of JCP have developed consented competence and effective methods in strengthening the church based organizations for increased effectiveness and efficiency, organizational development and enhanced capacity to articulate key issues in areas of focus, as well as in implementation of sustainable programmes.

MUMBEJI COMMUNITY CELEBRATES AVAILABILITY OF CLEAN AND SAFE WATER

A Norway funded water project supplied piped water to villages in Mumbeji

By Bellah Zulu



Children enjoy piped water in the village, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Mumbeji, 2018

There was jubilation in Mumbeji community of North Western Zambia after a long running Norway funded project which brought running water to villages was finally handed over to the community and the area water management company, North-Western Water and Sewerage Company.

"Now we have clean water unlike in the past when we used to rely on water wells and the crocodile infested Kabompo River," said Chilombo Maseko, a young mother from Mumbeji. "Am so happy because we now have access to clean water which has really improved lives because we no longer have to travel long distances to get water."

Running water improves community health

The provision of clean and safe water has not only reduced the distance women travel to fetch water but has also helped reduce occurrences of diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea in the area.

"The supply of clean water to this community especially the clinic has helped reduce the reported cases of diarrhoeal diseases in this area," reported Mr. Herald Kapapilo, a nurse at Mumbeji Rural Health Centre. He added: "As a clinic we are happy to be provided with water because we handle a lot of materials including chemicals, blood and other waste materials which need running water for proper disposal!"

Another beneficiary of the water project Ngambo Kabili who was attending antenatal at the local clinic spoke of how water availability is going to help her and other pregnant mothers in the area. "I am now happy because I know that with running water at the clinic, I can now deliver safely," she said. "But it also means that me and my baby will be healthier since I won't need to travel long distances in my condition just to fetch water."

However, resident of Mumbeji resident, Memory Chipoya explained how having water has even saved her marriage and improved the relationship with her husband. "Bringing water close to me means I can

enjoy my marriage life because previously my long absence from home looking for water brewed mistrust from my husband who thought I was going out there just to attract other men," she said. "So, this provision of clean water has not only cut down the distances to the well, but it has also cut down on mistrust from my husband."

Water project opens up area to development

For a long time Mumbeki was just considered a far-flung area with no meaningful development whatsoever. But this is about to change because of the presence of the water project in the area.



This is because what began as a community-based water project has now triggered more development in terms of electricity supply by the power utility company called Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO). This was after Norwegian Church Aid in Zambia, with additional funding from Norway, upgraded the pumps from solar power to hydroelectric power and lobbied ZESCO to connect the community to power.

Mumbeki community now has hydroelectric power which will fuel development of other projects in the area, due to the central role that power plays in development.

There is still need for more support

The water project is not without challenges despite having brought water to over 800 households in North Western Zambia. This was better explained by the Village Headwoman Margaret Bihemba,

otherwise known as Headwoman Shilikita.

"We're grateful for this help because water has now been brought closer to our homes," she said. "However, we still need more boreholes because ever since the surrounding communities heard that we have water they have also started moving closer to our area, and some of them with jealous intentions, so our community is also growing."

But speaking earlier, the area Sub-Chief Ngongola said that he will "work together with the neighbourhood watch to curb any vandalism of installations." "We will continuously work to sensitise the community on this need to preserve and protect this facility which has made our lives, especially that of our women and children more bearable," he added.

A timely warning

The community was challenged and warned by the area Government Representative, the District Administration Officer, Mr. Hendricks Solochi, who did not mince his words during the official handover when he said: "Don't do things that will frustrate the efforts of people that want to help you so whoever will be found wanting will be dealt with by the law." "This facility is yours as a community therefore you need to cultivate a deep sense of ownership," he added.

During the handover of the project JCP's Assistant Programme Coordinator, Mr. Paul Chisanga also emphasised the need for the community to take care of the facility so that it remains functional for a long time to come.

"This facility is meant for you and only you the local people can ensure that it saves the purpose for which it was done, and that it does so not only for you alone but other people to come," he said. "Though we will endeavour to still support you, be rest assured that this handover puts a lot of responsibility on you and the North Western Water and Sewerage Company both in terms of managing and servicing the facility."

Project contributes to SDGs

The Mumbeki Water Project which took off in 2010 was an initiative of schools in a Norway municipality called Rauma whose administrative centre is a town called Åndalsnes. After identifying Mumbeki as the most deserving beneficiary of the proposed water project owing to its water challenges and having the same population size, various schools campaigned and raised over 1.5 million (NOK) to supply clean and safe drinking water.

The schools effort is a great contribution towards Sustainable Development (SDG) number six which hinges on the provision of clean water and sanitation. It's reported that water scarcity affects more than 40 percent of people around the world, an alarming figure that is projected to increase with the rise of global temperatures as a result of climate change.

Therefore, ensuring universal access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030 can only be achieved through adequate infrastructure development such as the one in Mumbeki. Indeed, continued international cooperation is needed to encourage water efficiency, supply and treatment technologies in developing countries.



Mumbeki resident Kelvin Kakoma enjoys clean water, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Mumbeki, 2018

FAITH LEADERS CHALLENGED TO ADVOCATE FOR TAX JUSTICE IN ZAMBIA



Participants at the Tax Justice platform meeting, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

Christian and Islamic faith leaders in Zambia have been challenged to actively advocate for tax justice to ensure that citizens get maximum benefits from the country's abundant resources.

The call came during a Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia supported tax justice platform meeting in Lusaka on 9th October organised by the Family Development Initiatives (FDI), an Islamic inspired NGO which works for dignified, skilled and self-reliant communities in Zambia.

"Religious leaders are supposed to take up the role of guiding both the governors and the governed," said Sheikh Yusuf Ayami, Team Leader of FDI. *"We need to be talking about topical issues and ensure that the people we put in positions of trust manage our resources correctly."*

Urgent need to address inequality

In a keynote address, the Country Director for the JCP Zambia (Norwegian Church Aid, Christian Aid, DanChurch Aid), Mr. Lennart Reinius reflected on the negative consequences of inequality and how a just tax system can help in redistributing wealth.

"A life in abundance for all, with human dignity for all, mutual respect and sharing of resources is possible and can be achieved through a progressive tax system which provides redistribution of resources and that is the responsibility of national governments," he said. *"Many economies are growing in Southern Africa and yet only a few individuals are benefiting from the growth."*

He also explained that the vision of JCP is to seek justice and save lives; and we envision a time when citizens will be active participants in development and are able to claim their rights."

Social justice at the core of Islam

Speaking during the same event, the Vice President of the Islamic Council of Zambia (ISCZ), Sheikh Musa Saidi said social justice was at the core of Islamic teachings and encouraged all faith leaders to play a key role in tax justice advocacy.

"Matters of tax justice are not an issue for Muslims, Christians, Bahai's or Hindus but all citizens of this country," he said. *"It is great to see the participation of both Muslim and Christian leaders on issues that affect all of us because when Zambia develops, all citizens regardless of religious affiliation will benefit."*

He further added that *"as faith leaders we all have an obligation to advocate for what is moral and forbid what is immoral, and therefore it's important that we engage government and citizens to create a just tax system."*

FDI Team Leader Sheikh Ayami expressed hope for a better Zambia if the country's resources are well managed. He noted that it was possible to achieve an egalitarian society where citizens enjoy all the basic services and necessities but added that this could only be achieved through an optimal taxation system and prudent use of resources. *"People therefore were not supposed to be overtaxed but rather taxed in a manner that helps them save and reinvest their savings in order to spur local investment,"* he said.

Taxes can bring development

Meanwhile, Faith Leaders participating in the meeting have agreed that a well-managed tax system has the potential to spur development and reduce inequality in the country especially if the resources are spent in a prudent and transparent manner. However, Zambia has yet to come up with a well administered



tax regime and income expenditure approach capable of kickstarting local economic development.

And speaking during his presentation, Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) Head of Programmes and Research, Mr. Brian Mwiinga said that *“the gap between the rich and the poor in Zambia is too much”*, and that *“just a few kilometres from Lusaka, people still have huge challenges in terms of access to basic needs such as water.”*

Mr. Mwiinga further added that *“the mining communities for instance are among the poorest in the country and one wonders how money from the mines is being re-distributed to these areas.”* Quoting Zambia’s former Finance Minister Felix Mutati, Mr. Mwiinga said: *“You need to depend on yourself because the future of Zambia and Africa as a whole lies in domestic resource mobilisation,”* adding *“for as long as we depend on others to finance our development, we will never have control of our development.”*

Taxes always choke the poor

Speaking during the same event, the Executive Director of Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), Kriticous Patrick Nshindano spoke on the current taxation system in Zambia and its impact on the poor. *“In Zambia the tax burden is on the poor, and while tax itself is important, it has to be informed by the principle of equity,”* adding that *“it’s the obligation of government to protect tax payers instead of letting small businesses collapse due to unfair competition.”*

Mr. Nshindano further noted that in addition to the misuse of public resources locally, tax avoidance is one of the greatest sources of problems that the country currently faces, and that considering the country’s resource base, we should have been getting far much more than what we were currently getting.

“In order to significantly improve its domestic resource mobilisation effort, Zambia and Africa has to urgently address the issue of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) because they’re a huge drain on resources which hinders development,” he said.

Faith leaders should help with tax compliance

Assistant Director from the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), Mirriam Sabi explained some of the challenges faced by the organisation in effective collection of taxes. *“Zambia’s tax system is fair since it’s progressive, but there is so much unfaithfulness in the country when it comes to payment of taxes,”* she said. *“Faith leaders are better placed to talk about taxation and the need for people to be truthful.”*

She urged people to look at the benefits from taxes in a holistic and broad way rather than on an individual basis, adding that *“all citizens ought to be responsible and be part of the solution.”*

But the Head of Programmes for the Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia, Margaret Machila challenged the status quo and called for more engagement with all stakeholders including government and CSOs in the prudent management of the country’s national resources. *“Truthfulness should not only be expected from citizens but from the government as well,”* she said. *“We all need to reposition ourselves to be able to influence development in our country. Tax justice is not only in the collection of taxes but also the prudent management of public affairs and resources.”*

The meeting was inspired by JCP/NCA’s ‘Tax Justice: Make It Happen regional campaign which aims to promote Tax Justice as well as stop IFFs, by calling on governments in the region to address inequality and poverty. JCP/NCA’s Southern Africa regional advocacy Strategy goal is that African governments increase their share of revenue from natural resource extraction and commercial activities and manage the increased revenue in a transparent and accountable manner to ensure that the revenue is used for social development and social protection.



JCP Country Director Lennart Reinius with FDI Team Leader Sheikh Yusuf Ayami, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

JCP'S GOVERNING BODY MEETS TO DISCUSS FUTURE OF COOPERATION



CCC members met with Mpunde Mission hospital administrators, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Mpunde, 2018

The Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia's highest governing body, the Cooperation Coordination Committee (CCC) recently met in Lusaka to discuss the future of the cooperation. The annual meeting brought together representatives from Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), DanChurch Aid (DCA) and Christian Aid (CA), the three agencies which make up the joint country programme.

"JCP has established itself as a good and solid programme with an experienced team," said NCA Senior Advisor and Outgoing Chairperson of the CCC, Johan Hindahl. *"This meeting is particularly important because we will dialogue about the future of JCP and get an update on the country programme's fundraising opportunities."*

The CCC members who were in the country between 23rd and 28th September, first visited project sites in Southern and Central Provinces of Zambia. *"As CCC we have to know the different programmes to understand the strengths and weaknesses in order to have informed and relevant discussions,"* said Mr. Hindahl.

DCA's Global Coordinator Antony Grange felt that there was need for more interaction between staff from the Country Office and the three Head Offices. *"There is need to maintain linkages between country office staff and head offices so that we can draw from our varied*

knowledge and skills," he said.

"We need to engage more so that we can increase our knowledge of the kind of work that we do in Zambia which can help with proactive exploration and collaboration between programme staff," he added.

CCC member and Head of Africa Division for Christian Aid, Karimi Kinoti said she was happy with the projects the team had visited. *"Am happy to see how one*

of JCP's projects, Making Agriculture a Business (MAB) is progressing," she said. *"I have seen the enthusiasm among young ladies and men (rights-holders) and it seems they appreciate the potential of the project to improve household income."*

She agreed that the project visits and the meeting in general had helped the team to interact and also improve programme visibility. *"The meetings have helped improve visibility for all the three agencies and have also helped us find ways to maximise and prioritise our resources,"* she said.

JCP's new Country Director Lennart Reinius, expressed his satisfaction with the CCC and that the programme engages three ACT members. *"Joining hands and acting together in joint programs brings together our knowledge and resources enabling us to have an even greater impact in our work"* he said. *"Since NCA is the lead in the program it is particularly important to ensure that the Country Office maintains regular and productive links with the two other members, DCA and CA"*

The CCC membership is for a period of five years and according to Johan Hindahl: *"New members help to stimulate good discussions because each member brings unique experience drawing from their different backgrounds and experiences."*



Some CCC members meet young beneficiaries from the MAB project, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Mpunde, 2018

JCP'S MAB PROJECT RECEIVES NOD FROM SCOTLAND DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

On 24 September, Scotland's Minister for International Development, attended a symposium for Scottish government funded in projects in Zambia's capital city of Lusaka to see how Scottish support is changing lives.

JCP Zambia funded by the Scottish Government, is implementing an innovative new project called Making Agriculture a Business whose beneficiaries are mostly women. The five-year project will support some of the poorest and most marginalised farmers in Central Province.

The minister took time to visit the stand to understand the progress made and the challenges faced since inception in October 2017. He interacted with the Project Manager and Programme Coordinator for Economic Empowerment Kingsley Cheelo, and the Country Director for JCP Zambia Lennart Reinius.

Most farmers and enterprises in rural areas of Zambia tend to be small scale, unstructured and homebased with little opportunity for growth. But limited business skills are not the only obstacle facing ambitious Zambian farmers. Socio-cultural barriers are disempowering women, leaving them unable to speak up for themselves or able to

influence policy and practice.

JCP Zambia is implementing the project with its partner Churches Health Association of Zambia (CHAZ) which will support women through community microcredit and savings groups, and promotion of business skills, entrepreneurship and market value chains.



Scottish Minister of International Development Ben Macpherson at the symposium, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018



L-R JCP Country Director Lennart Reinius, Scottish Minister of International Development Ben Macpherson, JCP Economic Empowerment Programme Coordinator Kingsley Cheelo, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

FAMILY UNIT KEY FOR GIRLS EMPOWERMENT IN ZAMBIA

Innovation builds bridges across stakeholders to help address girl's challenges

By Bellah Zulu



Peer Educators at Nsalali Basic School, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kalomo, 2018

Dominant social norms and practices, poverty, teen pregnancies and early marriages are among the highest causes of school dropouts among young girls in Zambia. The dropout rates are significantly higher for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), students from poorer families, and those attending schools in rural areas. Above all, traditional practices and beliefs, misinterpretation of doctrines and low social status among women and girls makes it hard for girls to remain in school.

The innovation "Changing Communities One Family at Time" funded by the UNDP through the SDG Philanthropy platform and implemented by Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) in partnership with Forum for African Women Educationalists in Zambia (FAWEZA), uses a holistic and integrated approach to challenge structural causes of early marriages and GBV. This is done by engaging and empowering girls and boys, parents, teachers, traditional leaders and communities to help keep girls in school.

Despite the existence of national level policy frameworks such as the National Gender Policy, Re-Entry Policy and the National Education Policy among others, ingrained social norms and practices make it hard for children especially girls in rural areas to remain in school. Ministry of Education's District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) for Kalomo

District, Mr. Michelo Kaliba appreciated the project's existence in the District: "I believe this intervention came at the right time," he remarked. "This project has changed attitudes at household level and also influenced other schools not in the project to do something about girls' rights and education in their communities with many of them offering to volunteer their time and energy."

Going the extra mile to transform behaviours

The success of this project is to a large extent attributed to the selfless and hardworking Community Action Groups (CAGs) members who volunteer their time and energy to help sensitise their communities, especially parents on the importance of girl child education. The CAGs are a dedicated and determined team of change makers who have seen the importance of girls education and are willing to go the extra mile to make sure girls get an education.

"Many parents in our community are now aware that no child should stop school because of having fallen pregnant," said the CAG Chairperson for Mubanga area, Mr. Philent Muleya. "However challenges of transport to cover the long distance make it difficult for us to reach many people especially that we work as volunteers."

The CAG members usually have to walk long distances to reach some of the neediest villages in their areas, with minimal support from the project. Perhaps it is this willingness to go the extra mile that gives hope for the sustainability of the project and explains the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) assurance that "the facilitators are very enthusiastic and are willing to go a step further by reporting those parents who are stopping children from going to school."

The CAGs also track children absenting themselves due to child labour and also involvement in child marriages. These groups are equipped and oriented on positive masculinity, HIV, affirmative policies among others.

Second chance to make a difference

Universe Sikabundu is a 16-year old grade seven pupil at Mubanga Basic School in Kalomo District of Southern Province with a four months old baby girl. She dropped out of school when she fell pregnant, but is now among the eight pupils that have since been re-admitted into Mubanga Basic School after the project's intervention.

"I fell pregnant while in Grade 7 and dropped out of school because I was discouraged and afraid that people would laugh at me, but after being encouraged through the project, I decided to come back to school," she said. "Some of the biggest challenges that we face as girls is poverty and peer pressure. It's good that this project also helps our parents to do business so that they can keep us in school."

A male student and peer educator from Nsalali Basic School Stemon Muzandu, 15, explained how the project has impacted his life and what message they take to fellow young people.

"We encourage those that dropped out of school to get back by highlighting the importance of education," he said. "I love being a peer educator because it has helped me know the danger of involving myself into activities such as beer drinking and sex."

Mutinta Siambebe is a 17-year old grade



Universe Sikabundu from Mubanga Basic School and her daughter, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kalomo, 2018

nine girl from Nsalali Basic School who would love to become a journalist someday. She is a peer educator and head-girl of her school. "The project has been encouraging us not to get pregnant and instead focus on education so that we can help our parents and siblings," she said."

Addressing economic aspects of education

Beyond teenage pregnancies, poverty plays a leading role in exacerbating high dropout rates among children in rural areas. It in light of this fact that each of the selected families received a minimal financial injection into an Income Generating Activity of their choice, so as to raise household income levels.

"I am happy that this project is in my area because it has helped to keep girls in school especially those who fell pregnant," said Village Headman Muyuni from Mubanga area. "This is good because in the past girls who fell pregnant would just be in the village and even get married off especially that most the parents don't have enough money to keep them in school."

One of the beneficiary parents, Mr. Peter Miyoba explained the challenges she faced and how the project has helped him: "After being trained by FAWEZA on the value of educating the girl child and not just marrying them off I decided to bring my daughter back to school. She had passed her exams to go into grade eight but I didn't have the money to support her so I just let her stay at home."

He added: "This project gave me financial support but also reminded me that educating a girl child is something to be supported by the whole family and even community."

Project sustainability and innovations

Despite the country's many challenges, keeping the girl is school and preventing early marriage is part of the government's Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) in Zambia. That coupled with the commitment and willingness

to support the project by the Ministry of Higher Education at the district and provincial levels offer a great opportunity to reach out to many children.

The introduction of sex education through the Safe Clubs in school means that the problem of teen pregnancies can be dealt with through massive sensitisation of the young boys and girls on the dangers of pre-marital sex. But most importantly the willingness to change, and the spirit of volunteerism shown by the communities in the target areas give hope to the sustainability of the project. But still more support is needed both financial and technical if the project is to register lasting impact.

The project has since managed to re-admit thirty five children into different schools. It is being implemented in Kalomo District of Southern Province of Zambia, which has some of the highest prevalence rates of child marriages in the province. It targets four families from each of the four participating schools with high prevalence of teenage pregnancies and child marriages, which are Bbilili Primary School, Mubanga Primary School, Nsalali Primary School and Siachitema Primary School.



Village Headman Muyuni from Mubanga area, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kalomo, 2018

ZAMBIA SUCCESSFULLY HOSTS SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FORUM

ACT Alliance in the region challenged to address governance issues

By Bellah Zulu



Fr. Emmanuel Chikoya leads morning devotion, Lusaka, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

Over fifty members from the ACT Alliance in Southern Africa met in Lusaka, Zambia for the Southern Africa Regional Forum (SARF), to reflect on various governance issues around gender justice, extractives and climate justice that affect society in the region.

The meeting themed 'Re-invigorating Church's Thrust in Governance' was held from September 4 – 7 and brought together delegates from different countries including Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Kenya among others.

'The Church has a God-given mandate, and the mission of Christ was not to make popular, but to challenge systems that dehumanise people,' said Fr. Emmanuel Chikoya, General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Zambia, during devotion. 'Therefore the Church must permeate

all levels of society and change it for the better by promoting good governance so that people can live a dignified life.'

But speaking during his keynote address, University of Zambia lecturer Dr Douy Chibamba challenged the church from 'doing business as usual and start addressing the root causes of war, conflict and strife in the region.' 'People have trust in the church and when it uses its prophetic voice people including governments are likely to listen.'

He asked a series of questions to challenge the church to be more proactive and courageous in dealing with issues of governance and reconciliation: 'Where is the Desmond Tutu of Zambia? Where is the Nelson Mandela of Congo?' 'It's time that the church changed the kind of sermons that are preached in our churches and start addressing

key governance issues such as voting, illiteracy and policies.'

One of the participants Zanele Makombe, Programme Advisor of an initiative for the ACT Alliance in South Africa called Ubumbano spoke about the importance of the SARF in the region. 'SARF is important because it makes us reflect on our work as partners and come up with newer more appropriate approaches to address issues of social justice,' she said. 'The church brings people from different backgrounds and it's our moral duty to hold people accountable though the church itself needs to be accountable and above reproach.'

Another delegate, Head of Programmes for Christian Aid in Malawi agreed that there was need for the church to re-invigorate their role in governance. 'Everyone seems to appreciate that the church can do much more in the area of governance,' she said. 'There is need for more advocacy especially at a regional level. We need to take advantage of our numbers across the region and speak against poor governance.'

But perhaps it was the challenge from the Secretary General of the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB), Fr. Cleophas Lungu, which laid a firm foundation for the meeting. He highlighted the critical role of church in governance issues when he said, 'The challenge is for Christians to avoid being lukewarm and inactive. Being lukewarm and indifferent is not Christian because Christians will look at an evil and find ways of addressing it. The church has to be vigilant and always committed to be the watchdog of society.'



Participants pose for a group photo, Lusaka, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018



Fr Cleophas Lungu speaks during SARF meeting, Lusaka, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Lusaka, 2018

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Training, Kabwe, Zambia

From 24th to 28th September, we conducted a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) training for our Gender Justice partners and community actors from our Making Agriculture a Business project in Kabwe. Senior Programme Officer from Christian Aid in Zimbabwe, Sheila Murimoga, facilitated the training..



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- 1 JCP Fundraising and PMER Advisor Caroline Mukosa (L) receives a completion certificate from Sheila Murimoga, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kabwe, 2018
- 2 Body mapping exercise helped participants understand the different kinds of power, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kabwe, 2018
- 3 Participants during the GESI training, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kabwe, 2018
- 4 Participants show off their GESI training completion certificates, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kabwe, 2018
- 5 Understanding body mapping, Photo by Bellah Zulu, Kabwe, 2018

ZAMBIA ALTERNATIVE MINING INDABA HIGHLIGHTS

Over 170 delegates from the Church, Civil Society Organisations, mine host communities, large-scale mining companies, small scale miners and government representatives gathered in Lusaka Zambia from June 19 to 21 for the 7th Zambia Alternative Mining Indaba (ZAMI) under the theme 'Our natural resources our future! Extraction for all, putting local communities first'.

The ZAMI is a platform for policy dialogue where stakeholders in the extractive industries sector deliberate and propose legislative and policy recommendation aimed at enhancing Zambia's benefit from natural resources extraction. But more importantly the ZAMI endeavours to derive solutions to the challenges faced by the communities affected by extractive industries.



Minister of Mines and Minerals Development Mr. Richard Musukwa spoke passionately about government's resolve to ensure that mining activities benefit the country and ensure safety standards are met in all mines including the infamous copper slug dump called 'black mountain'

He said: "There is so much talk from the mines about the billions they spend on Corporate Social Responsibility but they're not commensurate with what's happening on the ground in terms of services and other social amenities."

Sadly just a day later, a portion of the mineral-rich 'rubbish' collapsed on several men who were hand-picking the chrome, leaving 11 dead while many others are still battling for lives in hospital, raising more questions on the government's commitment to ensuring that safety standards are maintained.

Advocacy and Engagement: NCA (JCP) Zambia takes every opportunity to engage the powers that be in the extractive sector. Here NCA (JCP) 's Senior Programmes Coordinator for Resource Governance Mr Felix Ngosa talks to the Mines and Minerals Devpt Minister Mr. Richard Musukwa during the ZAMI.



"Unemployment especially among the youths in my town of Chingola is rising despite being a mining town," said Mr. Paul Muzungu, a community member from Chingola town on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia. "Chingola also used to be the cleanest town in Zambia but now the roads are damaged due to the heavy trucks on the roads."



Mr. Garth Lappaman from First Quantum Mines (FQM) in Kalumbila spoke of the positive developments that the mines have brought and urged CSOs to countercheck their facts when coming up with reports.

Faith Leaders continue to play a key and pivotal role in our quest for Tax Justice and maximum benefits for all Zambians. Sheik Aadam Judas from the Muslim community in Zambia made reference to many countries that were poorer than Zambia not too long ago but have since rose to the occasion and transformed their economies. What is our problem? He wondered!



Participants at the Zambia Alternative Mining Indaba

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