

TPT Document 10: THE CASE STUDY OF ZAMBIA: YOUTH AND PRSPS

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1.0 SITUATION OF YOUTH IN ZAMBIA

- The population of Zambia is estimated at 9.9 million of which 21 percent is composed of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 (*Draft National Youth Policy 2005*)
- The major challenges facing youth in Zambia include
 - Unemployment
 - Access to Education
 - HIV/AIDS
- Over 70,000 thousand Youths are offloaded on the Job market each year.
- Unemployment in Zambia is generally very high; Out of a population of about 9.9m only 350,000 thousand are formally employed in Zambia.
- The closure of industries in the various provinces due to the open market economy and privatization as well as economic decline has reduced formal employment opportunities for young people.
- Secondary Education is accessible for only a few young people while tertiary education is largely inaccessible due to the few colleges and universities in Zambia.
- Most young people have been affected by the HIV pandemic, A lot of young people have lost bread winners as a result of HIV/AIDS while others have actually been infected, this has led to the high vulnerability of Young People resulting into high Youth Poverty levels.
- The majority of youth in Zambia are socially and economically disadvantaged. They have no adequate access to the basic conditions required to develop and live an independent life.

2.0 YOUTH AND PRSP FORMULATION

- Zambia adopted its PRSP in the year 2002 for a Two-year period ending 2004.
- The adoption of the PRSP was preceded by a series of consultations among stakeholders including Youth Groups.
- PRSP formulation was a Government responsibility however Civil Society in Zambia created a network for them to contribute to the PRSP process.
- Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) initiated a network called the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) to engage Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the formulation of PRSP.
- Out of 24 CSOs in CSPR Network only three were Youth organisations namely Operation Young Vote (OYV), Youth Advocacy and Lobby network (YALON) and the National Youth Constitutional Assembly (NYCA).
- Participation of Youths in the process was not effective due to lack of coordination among the Youth organisations in contributing to the PRSP formulation process.
- Youth was not considered to be a sector during the formulation of the PRSP, However similarly to gender issues, Youth was considered as crosscutting issue by Civil Society. Youth organisation contributed in Governance, Education and Health sectors.
- Prior to the PRSP process The Jesuit Centre for Theological Research (JCTR) led a vigorous campaign for debt cancellation through the Jubilee Zambia debt cancellation campaign, Several Youths mostly those in the Catholic Church in Zambia participated in the debt cancellation campaigns.
- Civil Society produced a Shadow PRSP document while Government Produced a Zero draft PRSP.
- The Two documents were harmonised into a Final PRSP,
- Though Civil Society contribution was captured in the final PRSP Youth issues were not given special attention in the PRSP.

3.0 PRSP IMPLEMENTATION IN ZAMBIA

- Implementation of the PRSP was affected by the Poverty Reduction Growth (PRFG) facilitate which was a funding mechanism for HIPIC countries.

- The PRFG Through the letter of intent with the Government of Zambia called for reduction in public spending as a condition for debt relief.
- Though the PRSP called for attention on pro poor policies i.e. implementing Programmes that directly benefit the poor, Government called not effectively implement these Programmes Employment freeze and shortage of Staff in some government sectors.
- The Health and Education sector were the worst affected with regards to staffing, Over 2000 graduating teachers and medical personnel remained unemployed for Two years amidst serious shortages of staff in the Health and Education sector.
- Access to quality education was comprised due to insufficient teaching staff at Basic, High School and Tertiary level.
- Access to Health services was equally compromised.
- Infrastructure in the Education and Health sector has improved as the result of the PRSP implementation.

4.0 YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PRSP IMPLEMENTATION

- Through CSPR Youth have participated in the monitoring of the PRSP implementation.
- The Operation Young Vote and the National Youth Constitutional Assembly have trained young people in participatory methodologies for them to conduct Poverty Assessment surveys in measuring the levels of Poverty.
- Though not focused on Youth some young people have participated in monitoring the implementation of the PRSP tracking expenditure on Poverty Reduction Programmes (PRPs).
- Effective participation in the PRSP implementation has been affected by insufficient coordination of Youth organisation.

5.0 FORMULATION OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- Zambia is currently formulating a Six-year 5th National Development Plan.
- The PRSP expired in 2004,
- Similarly to the PRSP formulation, the formulation of the NDP has attracted Civil Society participation,
- Unlike the PRSP the 5th National Development Plan has included a Chapter on Youth,
- NYCA has been coordinating CSOs input into the NDP Chapters of Education, Youth and Children. Over 25 Youth organisations have been participating in the NDP process, NYCA together with thematic member organisations have contributed to the NDP process.
- Youth organisation drafted Shadow chapters on Education, Youth and Children, which have, were submitted to Government for mainstreaming into the Government Chapters of Education Youth and Children.
- The NDP process is still on going till December 2005.

6.0 CHALLENGES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POVERTY REDUCTION

- Insufficient resources to initiate Poverty Reduction Programmes
- Lack of coordination among Youth organisations
- Insufficient awareness and knowledge on Poverty Reduction Programmes