



JESUIT CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

3813 Martin Mwamba Road, Olympia Park

P.O Box 37774, 10101 Lusaka, Zambia

Email: jctr@jesuits.org.zm

www.jctr.org.zm

Tel: +260 211 290410 | **Fax:** +260 211 290759

RURAL BASIC NEEDS BASKET



Social and Economic Development Programme

“A JUST ZAMBIAN SOCIETY GUIDED BY FAITH, WHERE EVERYONE ENJOYS FULLNESS OF LIFE”

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Introduction

Since the early 1990s, the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection has been devoted to monitoring cost of living in various towns of Zambia. This work started with a price survey of food items called the “Food Basket” which later evolved to becoming a monthly price survey of basic food and essential non-food items for an average Zambian family of five called the Basic Needs Basket (BNB).

The activity of monitoring the cost of living and therefore living conditions was initially only done in Lusaka before it was extended to other fourteen urban towns of Ndola, Kitwe and Luanshya on the Copperbelt, Chipata in Eastern Province, Solwezi in North Western Province, Monze, Choma and Livingstone in Southern Province, Kabwe in Central Province, Mongu in Western Province, Kasama in Northern Province, Mansa in Luapula and Chinsali in Muchinga Province. Over time, the BNB has been used to advocate for policies that respond to challenges faced by urban households in accessing required necessities.

After further reflection and subsequent consultations, the JCTR decided to embark on extending the activity of monitoring living conditions to the rural areas. According to the 2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), poverty levels in rural areas were at 76.6% in comparison to 23.4%. Generally, rural people or communities face more challenges – inadequate education and health provisions, long distances, poor road infrastructure, inadequate food production and intake, compared to urban areas.

In Rural Basic Needs Basket (JCTR) targets 6 districts these include; Mambwe, Malama, Masaiti, Sioma, Mufumbwe and Mambwe for data gathering.

Below is the criteria that was used in picking districts:

- A rural area in a district where an urban Basic Needs Basket is already being carried out.
- Weather patterns, with attention to economic activities shaping livelihoods, for example tourism, agriculture.

- Serious consideration was also given to whether or not a particular area has had any prominence with regards to development interventions either by government, NGOs or international development agencies.

JCTR Mission Statement

To foster from a faith-inspired perspective a critical understanding of current issues. Guided by the church's Social Teaching that emphasizes dignity in community, our mission is to generate activities for the promotion of the fullness of human life through research, education, advocacy and consultation. 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 enculturated faith, gender equality and empowerment of local communities in the work of justice and peace and the integrity of creation.

Scope of the Rural Basket

The JCTR Rural Basket (see appendix) is divided into five sections. It has section A, divided into two columns focus on the food security component. It is divided into two columns, the ideal and prevailing situation. To measure the extent of food security in a given community, the prevailing situation is compared with the ideal calorie intake per person per day. Section B looks at the ideal versus prevailing cost of essential non-food items such as paraffin/diesel, lotion/Vaseline and the cost of milling to mention but a few. Section C goes on to show social service delivery in the community, such as education, health, transport, etc. This section looks at the number of schools and clinics/hospitals present in an area compared to the number of people. It also looks at the number of trained staff in schools and clinics/hospitals. Section D looks at the means of livelihood of select households in the community. Finally, section E looks at the yields that community members should produce annually if they are to attain food security. This section is derived in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture in the respective district and other relevant stakeholders. Section E is also used for education purposes to the community members in that if they are to produce enough to sale and still be food secure, they are challenged to produce more than the ideal yields indicated in the section.

Methodology

Once an area has been identified, the JCTR meets with the local traditional authorities to introduce the work and seek permission to proceed with the implementation of the Rural Basket. Once permission has been granted, a meeting with the community members is organized to explain the concept of the Rural Basket. At least two meetings are held with the community members after which a number of households (20) are chosen randomly from which the JCTR collects data on a monthly basis. During the initial contact with the community members, a researcher from among the local teachers is selected and trained by the JCTR. The researcher does the monthly data collection and sends the data to JCTR for analysis.

To initially form the Rural Basket for each area, a number of community meetings were held with the locals to decide on what foods should be put in the ideal basket for each quarter. Furthermore, a monthly calendar of available foods in the community was observed over a period of time. With the help of the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC), the calorie content of the ideal basket was determined to coincide with the 2400 calories per person per day, the standard set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

During the initial pilot phase, it was observed that food availability varies according to the season. Therefore, seasonality in rural areas plays a profound role on food availability, accessibility and levels of consumption.

Data is then collected from the selected households for at least six months consecutively, after which a Basket for the areas is formulated and launched.

It is important to note that the JCTR uses a 30 days recall method in its data collection. The selected household members are asked to recall what they consumed in the previous month, including the quantity and also the mode of access. The data is collected at the beginning of each month, specifically between the 1st and the 5th day of the month.

Rural Basket Components of RBNB

The Rural Basket is divided into five sections;

Section A depicts the food security component. This section has two columns, one shows the ideal food security situation for each area with the food items adding up to the recommended 2400 calories per person per day and the other column shows the prevailing situation. The 'prevailing situation' column is the one with the food items that add up to the actual calorie intake per person per day. Information on food security is presented on a quarterly basis, that is, it is presented in a manner that takes into account the seasonality of foods in rural areas.

Section B looks at the ideal versus the prevailing cost of essential non-food items. This section includes non-food items such as paraffin/diesel, milling, washing soap, bathing soap, lotion, matches and their costs.

Section C looks at social service delivery. Here, information collected relates to the number of schools present in an area, number of teachers and pupils available at a school, number of clinics and or hospitals in an area and the number of trained medical personnel and looks at the road network in the area that includes the condition of bridges if any in an area.

Section D of the basket looks at the means of livelihood of select households. These are reported just as collected, as the centre does not go into communities to change the means of survival of the people, but to just get an idea of how people are surviving.

Section E looks at the ideal yields to ensure food security in a household. This section gives the yields that a household should produce in order to ensure that the household is food secure. This section serves as a planning tool for households that is if households want to produce enough for consumption and also to sell, they are challenged to produce beyond the ideal yields indicated in the section.

**Below is a food basket for Malama area
Mambwe – Malama**

(A) BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR AVERAGE SIZE FAMILY OF SEVEN IN KALONSOLA AREA				
ITEM	QUANTITY	ITEM	QUANTITY	COMMON MODE OF ACCESS
Maize Grain	100Kg	Maize (Maize meal)	66.94	K137.5/50kg
Cassava Tubers	20Kg	Chickens	5.33	reared
Eggs	300Kg	Meat (beef)	2.89	K9.95
Chicken	5Kg	Fresh Fish	8.16	K14.47
Sweet Potatoes	10Kg	Dry Fish	1.84	K8.22
Fresh fish	5Kg	Beans	2.79	harvest
Dry Fish	1Kg	Groundnuts	1.77	harvest
Beans	5Kg	cassava (meal/dry)	30.00	K1.58
Groundnuts	5Kg	Tomatoes	3.66	K6.11
Tomatoes	10Kg	Onions	1.30	K7.31
Onions	2Kg	Rape	2.91	K3.48/ harvest
Rape	4Kg	Sindambi (dry)	0.98	harvest
Sweet Potatoes	2Kg	Sugar	4.24	k9.10
Pumpkin Leaves	3Kg	Salt	0.97	K4.61
Sugar	2Kg	Oil	1.41	K14.28
Okra	2Kg			
Salt	1Kg			
Cooking Oil	2Litres			
Avg. Calories / person /	2,400	Avg. Calories / person /	1449.13	Deficit (-950.87)

day		day		
Avg. Protein / person / day	30	Avg. Protein / person / day	47.09	Deficit (+17.38)
Avg. Calcium/ person / day	450	Avg. Calcium / person / day	341.61	Deficit (-108.39)
Avg. Iron / person / day	13	Avg. Iron / person / day	10.4	Deficit (-2.60)
Avg. Vit A / person / day	636	Avg. Vit A / person / day	937.12	Surplus (+301.41)

Service	Cost	Distance	Qualitative Indicator:	Comment:
Water	Free		# boreholes:8	3 boreholes water is salty
			# HH rely on streams: 50	Boreholes not enough in this chiefdom
Sanitation	Free		# latrines at school: 4	Constructed by splash
			# HH with VIP latrines:	
Firewood	Free	Local	other:	All households depend on fire wood energy in the chiefdom
Primary School			# teachers:4 # pupils:185	The school is understaffed
(grades 1 to 7)	Free	Walkable distance	# OVCs:52	Number increasing due to HIV/AIDS
Basic School			# teachers:4 # pupils:80	More teachers are needed
(grades 8 to 9)	K150		# OVCs: 17	
Secondary School			# teachers: # pupils:	Secondary school is very far from the primary school in Malama

(grades 10 to 12)			# OVCs:	
Clinic	Free	walkable	# trained medical staff: 2	Staff on contract basis
			Coartem availability:	Coartem is always available
Hospital			# trained medical staff:	The hospital is very far from the health post or clinic in Malama
			ARV provision: Yes	
Transport			other:	Medical staff from kamoto hospital conduct
(Malama to Mambwe)	K75	105km		
Agricultural Extension			# extension officer visits:	No extension officers visits
Input Delivery			# FSP bags received: Nil	
			# small scale farmers	
Crop Marketing			# FRA visits: Nil	
			unbought maize (kgs): Nil	
Hammer Mill			# Hammermills: 2	One for CRB and for the youths
Community Development			bridge status:	Many streams/rivers have no bridges
			# welfare officer visits: Yes	Several times

The rural basket in Mambwe district is conducted in chief Malama's area. It is located about 110kms from Mambwe Boma and 90kms from Mfuwe airport. It is positioned in a game management area, which provides additional tourism attraction, with a variety of animals that have found sanctuary in the area. During the survey 3

communities where visited which include Malama, Kalengo and Malanga communities. In Malama 13 villages where visited and a total number of 260 households where interviewed. It was found that the area had five boreholes, of which only two were working. One was at a school and the other one at a clinic. Malama only had one school and one clinic. In Kalengo area 6 villages where visited and 45 households were interviewed. Kalengo area only had one school and no clinic. In Malanga area 6 villages where visited and a total of 50 households were interviewed. The area had one primary school, two basic schools and two clinics.

Below is a basket for Kalongola area

Sioma – Kalongola

(A) BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR AVERAGE SIZE FAMILY OF SEVEN IN MWALUMINA AREA				
ITEM	QUANTITY	ITEM	QUANTITY	COMMON MODE OF ACCESS
Maize Grain	100Kg	Maize (Maize meal)	90.67	harvest
Cassava Tubers	20Kg	Munkoyo	26.25	brew
Eggs	300Kg	Chickens	4.78	K 13.6
Chicken	5Kg	Meat	4.00	K22.5
Sweet Potatoes	10Kg	Fresh Fish	1.67	K24.00
Fresh fish	5Kg	Dry Fish	0.88	K35.23
Dry Fish	1Kg	Small fish(kasepa/kapenta)	0.71	K37.23
Beans	5Kg	Beans	3.11	K10.8/harvest
Groundnuts	5Kg	Groundnuts	5.86	harvest
Tomatoes	10Kg	Other Legumes	1.17	harvest
Onions	2Kg	Sweet Potatoes	21.25	harvest
Rape	4Kg	Tomatoes	7.37	harvest
Sweet Potatoes	2Kg	Onions	3.17	K6.95

Pumpkin Leaves	3Kg	Rape	5.55	harvest/gift
Sugar	2Kg	Sweet Potato Leaves-	0.85	harvest
Okra	2Kg	Pumpkin Leaves	1.64	harvest
Salt	1Kg	Okra - (Fresh)	0.74	harvest
Cooking Oil	2Litres	cabbage	7.06	K1.07
		Sugar	2.27	K10.39
		Salt	1.67	K4.36
		Oil	1.95	K15.93
Avg. Calories / person / day	2,400	Avg. Calories / person / day	1825.47	Deficit (-574.53)
Avg. Protein / person / day	30	Avg. Protein / person / day	52.01	Surplus (+22.30)
Avg. Calcium/ person / day	450	Avg. Calcium / person / day	361.77	Deficit (-88.23)
Avg. Iron / person / day	13	Avg. Iron / person / day	13.6	Surplus (+0.60)
Avg. Vit A / person / day	636	Avg. Vit A / person / day	1608.91	Surplus (+973.20)

Service	Cost	Distance	Time	Qualitative Indicator:	Comment:
Water		500m – 2km	5m–25m	# boreholes: 01	Not enough to cater for everyone
				# HH rely on streams:	

				many	
Sanitation				# latrines at school: 04	
				# HH with VIP latrines: 08	
Firewood Oxcart	K60	1-4 km	30m-1hr	other:	
ECE		1-4km	30m-1hr	# teachers:1 pupils:51	# 26male, 25female-need more teachers
Primary School				# teachers:08 pupils:606	# 291 male, 315 female, need more teachers
(grades 1 to 7)				# OVCs:110	
Basic School				# teachers:07 pupils:140	# 82 female, 58 male, need more teachers
(grades 8 to 9)				# OVCs: 48	Receive support
Secondary School				# teachers: # pupils:	
(grades 10 to 12)				# OVCs:	
Clinic				# trained medical staff:	
				Coartem availability:	
Hospital				# trained medical staff:	
				ARV provision:	
Transport				other: Kalongola Primary health care unit	1 community health worker
(Kalongola-Sioma)	K80	60km	1hr30min		
Transport				other: Libonga PHCU	1 community health worker
(Kalongola to	K60	20km	1hr		

Senanga)					
Agricultural Extension				# extension officer visits:	Visits per schedule because is within the area
Kalongola agriculture camp	Walking	20km	3hrs	2 visit / zone in (4)	
Input Delivery				# FSP bags received: 154/ 50kg	Not enough to match 2389 farmers
Chemical (stalk bore)	Driving	24km	30min	# small scale farmers:2389	
Crop Marketing				# FRA visits:	
	Walking	3.6km	40min	unbought maize (kgs):	
Hammer Mill				# Hammer mills: 8	enough
Maize mill (20kg)	K6	2km	20min		
Community Development				bridge status:	No bridge
				# welfare officer visits:	

Western province is dominated by the Barotse Floodplains of the Zambezi River, extending from the confluence of the Zambezi with the Lungwebungu and Kabompo rivers at the northern border of the province, to a point below Senanga and above the Ngonye Falls in the south. Sioma is a town in Shangombo District, Western Province, Zambia. Sioma is adjacent to Sioma Ngwezi National Park.

A total number of 7 communities were visited and 20 households were interviewed. The communities visited where; Ngilandi, Namayula, Namita, Kakusi, Silai, kalongola and namilenga. Kalongola area only had two boreholes one was at a school and the other at the police post. The area only had one primary school called

Kalongola which had grades 8 and 9 and Namita was the nearest village to the school. The area had two primary health care units, one was at the school and it was called Libunga primary health care unit, which was in the northern part, Libunga primary health care unit was monitored by Silowana. In the southern part was Kalongola primary health care unit which was monitored by Sitoti clinic. The nearest school to the village was about 4 km. Kalongola was under Sioma district but due to lack of facilities people preferred going to Senanga district because of facilities. The distance between Kalongola and Sioma was 60 km and Kalongola to Senanga was 20km. From Kalongola to Sioma it was about k60 and during rainy season no vehicles passed through because the place became flooded.

The Saka Basket-Masai

Below is a basket for Saka area

(A) BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR AVERAGE SIZE FAMILY OF SEVEN IN MASAITI AREA				
ITEM	QUANTITY	ITEM	QUANTITY (Kgs)	COMMON MODE OF ACCESS
Maize Grain	100Kg	Maize (Maize meal)	54.58	Harvest
Cassava Tubers	20Kg	Munkoyo	11.00	Harvest/ K0.92
Eggs	300Kg	Chickens	2.36	free
Chicken	5Kg	Meat	2.40	K12.58
Sweet Potatoes	10Kg	Dry Fish	2.11	K7.89
Fresh fish	5Kg	pork	3.50	free
Dry Fish	1Kg	Sweet Potatoes	4.50	K5.28
Beans	5Kg	Siyobani	0.00	free
Groundnuts	5Kg	Tomatoes	3.20	free
Tomatoes	10Kg	Rape	5.44	free

Onions	2Kg	Pumpkin Leaves	4.53	free
Rape	4Kg	Okra - (Dried)	0.83	free
Sweet Potatoes	2Kg	Sugar cane	2.50	free
Pumpkin Leaves	3Kg	Sugar	1.75	K9.43
Sugar	2Kg	Salt	0.60	K3.75
Okra	2Kg	Oil	0.83	K16
Salt	1Kg			
Cooking Oil	2Litres			
Avg. Calories / person / day	2,400	Avg. Calories / person / day	1067.65	Deficit (-1332.35)
Avg. Protein / person / day	30	Avg. Protein / person / day	32.6	surplus (+2.88)
Avg. Calcium/ person / day	450	Avg. Calcium / person / day	395.8	Deficit (-54.20)
Avg. Iron / person / day	13	Avg. Iron / person / day	12.77	Deficit (-0.23)
Avg. Vit A / person / day	636	Avg. Vit A / person / day	1333.02	Surplus (+697.31)

Masaiti Saka

Service	Cost	Distance	Time	Qualitative Indicator:	Comment:
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Water	Free	10m	10min	# boreholes: 3	2 at school 1 at Ntenke village
				# HH rely on streams:	Majority
Sanitation	Free	10m	10 min	# latrines at school	1 VIP block for pupils
				# HH with VIP latrines:	3 VIP
Firewood	Free	10m	20min	other:	
Primary School (grades 1 to 7) PTA K20				# teachers:10 # pupils:427	8 male and 2 female
	Free	10km	1hr	# OVCs:	
Basic School (grades 8 to 9)				# teachers: # pupils:	
	K 300	10km	1hr	# OVCs:	The same teachers were each assisted to teach on basic school
Secondary School (grades 10 to 12)				# teachers: # pupils:	
		19km	3hrs	# OVCs:	
Clinic	Free	10km	1hr	# trained medical staff:	
				Coartem availability:	
Hospital	Free	25km	4hrs	# trained medical staff:	
				ARV provision:	
Transport				other:	
(Mwalumina to Boma)					

Transport (bicycle)	Free	19km	3hrs	other:	
(Mwalumina to Lusaka)					
Agricultural Extension	Free	19km	1h30min	# extension officer visits:	Once a week depending on the availability of transport
Input Delivery	Free	19km	1h30min	# FSP bags received:	Over 500
				# small scale farmers	Over the majority
Crop Marketing	Free			# FRA visits:	During input delivery and during collection of maize
				unbought maize (kgs):	
Hammer Mill	KI	10km	1hr	# Hammermills:	3 in the area 2 functional at the moment
Community Development	Free	19km	1h30min	bridge status:	Very poor condition
				# welfare officer visits:	Regularly when funding is available

Masaiti is a rural district situated in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia and is the oldest rural district in the province. It shares borders with six districts – Luanshya and Ndola districts in the north, Mkushi district in the southeast, Kapiri district in the south, Mpongwe district in the southwest and Lufwanyama district in the west. The district is also unique in that it shares an international boundary with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the east.

Masaiti was selected for its' two unique features; firstly, it lies in a medium rainy belt and most importantly represents a rural area in a district where an urban basket is done (Ndola BNB). A total number of 15 households were interviewed and five villages were visited. Saka had 3 boreholes one was sunk by government while the other two were sunk by the rotary club. The area also had two VIP toilets and one block toilet for pupils and teachers. Saka primary school was the only school in the area and it had grade eights and nines. Masaiti secondary school was the nearest secondary school which was 12km away from Saka. Due to high competition community members failed to be admitted at the school.

The health sector in this area was worrying because it only had one clinic at Ndeke village which was not opened officially but was being used by trained locals who gave malaria pills. The area had two nurses and no midwife. The distance between Saka and the Boma is 19km and people use bicycles as a form of transport. The transport cost from Saka to Luanshya is k10.

Discussion of Findings

The results show that people in rural areas are lacking social and economic needs. These needs are important for any community because they help in improving the lives of people. Bore holes have been sunk in some places but access to safe drinking water continues to be a challenge. This is due to the fact that not all areas have boreholes and people still have to walk long distances to access water. The findings show that out of five boreholes in an area only two work which makes it a challenge for others to access water due to distance.

Education in these communities has been greatly affected due to few schools in the communities, on average each area has two schools. The number of people in the communities is more compared to the number of schools that are available. This makes it difficult for community members to attend classes due to overcrowding.

Findings show that a classroom has more pupils than it can accommodate which results in others sitting on the floor and makes learning very difficult.

The distance between school and homes is far for some children this discourages them from attending school and they prefer to stay home and do other things. The pupil teacher ratio is very worrying because on average you find 1 teacher having a class of 50 pupils. This greatly hinders communication between teachers and pupils which makes learning very difficult.

Results further show that the health sector in these communities performs poorly. The major problem is that clinics do not have qualified personnel so those in the communities are trained on how to administer medicine and how to take care of patients. This greatly risks the lives of people because those who administer drugs are not full qualified to do the job. Due to few health posts in the communities other patients walk long distances in order to get treatment.

The communities have many peasant farmers who need government help through farming inputs. Unfortunately the Farmer input support programme (FISP) is not enough to match the number of farmers. Hammer mills are few in the communities which also poses a challenge on the community.

Key achievements of advocacy to date

The JCTR's advocacy has helped in uplifting the lives of people in rural areas. Due to the JCTR's advocacy more schools have been built in rural areas. More teachers have been employed in rural areas which has been key to increasing interaction time between teachers and pupils. Previously you would find 5 teachers teaching the whole school but now you can find 15 teachers in one school. More staff houses have been built including VIP toilets. Ablution blocks in schools have been built and more boreholes have been sunk so that people can access clean water.

Due to JCTR's advocacy government has constructed more health posts and deployed more health practitioners in order to address the challenges of not having qualified health staff. Health posts now have ARV's and Coartem drugs to treat malaria cases.

Previously you would only find one cooperative in the community but due to JCTR's intervention you can now find 5 cooperatives in the community. Extension

officers are now been sent to rural areas so that they can train farmers with different agriculture skills.

Due to the poor road network JCTR's advocacy helped in ensuring that government constructed roads that lead to most rural areas and it helped in improving economic activities in the areas.

Conclusions

Statistics from CSO show that poverty levels in rural areas are at 76.6 percent which is more than half of the population in rural areas. The statistics show that rural areas are in a serious poverty crisis which needs to be addressed immediately. The high illiteracy levels in these areas have contributed to increased poverty levels, many children are not accessing school due to lack of learning facilities and materials. The rural areas have very few schools which makes it very difficult for people to acquire education. Accessing quality health care in rural areas remains a serious challenge and the shortage of agriculture extension officers affects agriculture output.

Poor Rural Connectivity e.g. roads, bridges, telephones and internet continues to be a blockage to the development of rural areas. Poor infrastructure development and Poor financing towards rural development are other causes of high poverty levels.

Involvement of community members in decision- making process will help to come up with workable ideas that may eventually help in alleviating poverty.

Key recommendations

- In order to improve health services in rural areas government should employ more staff to work in the areas and more health posts should be constructed in order to cover the growing population. More health equipment should be procured and medicines should be availed in the health posts.
- Government should construct more schools in order to promote education and reduce the distance that community members walk to reach school. More teachers should be deployed to reduce the teacher pupil ratio gap that is currently transpiring.

- Members of parliament in these areas should use the allocated constituency development fund prudently and ensure that the money goes to developing their constituencies.
- More boreholes should be sunk to ensure that people have clean and safe drinking water.
- The road network should be improved in order to promote trade in these areas. Bridges should also be fixed as most of them are in a bad state.
- Social protection targeting by Ministry of community development should be improved.
- Government should promote skills development in these areas by building skills centers to ensure that community member's acquire skills in different areas e.g. agriculture, carpentry, metal fabrication etc.
- Interventions programmes like self-help initiative; gender development programme, literacy programme, food security pack programme should be encouraged in rural areas.
- The CDF fund should also be allocated in time to avoid situations where money goes back to government coffers.

Annex

The Rural Basket Advocacy

The JCTR conducts the Rural Basket in order to get an idea of the food security situation in the rural areas where the Centre operates. Furthermore, information from the Rural Basket helps the Centre to know the social service delivery situation as well as the coping strategies employed by the people in these areas. This is done in order to advocate for a focus on rural development by highlighting the struggles faced by rural households on a regular basis. Furthermore, the Basket helps to track the effect of developmental projects on the livelihoods of rural people. It is therefore intended to stimulate action from Government, International Community, Rural Development focused non-state actors, local communities and many other stakeholders to respond to these challenges and contribute towards the development of rural areas. Without this crucial dimension of the advocacy, the rural BNB would simply be another passive research exercise.

The JCTR performs a key role by highlighting and providing an insight into rural issues in a number of rural districts in Zambia. This is done through the Centre's work on the Rural Basket Research conducted in rural districts. The Social and Economic Development programme of the JCTR operates as an advocate for rural communities and seeks to influence others, especially the government, in ensuring that the quality of life for all is improved. This is in recognition that the average person is struggling to meet basic needs by comparing the findings, i.e. the average calorie intake per person per day, with the recommended calorie intake by the World Health Organization. Furthermore, a comparison of the ideal cost of essential nonfood items to the actual cost is done.

In particular, the JCTR focuses on highlighting issues on behalf of those who are at risk of exclusion or who find it difficult to make their own voice heard. This is possible as the JCTR operates as the rural voice through its work on the Rural Basket research using both evidence and knowledge from the research to work on behalf of the rural poor. The Rural Basket research is a household survey that seeks to expose the household food security situation in rural areas. It is through this

research that the JCTR has exposed the living conditions in these areas and has been advocating for strengthening the demand for good governance and making sure that the voices of the poor are heard.

Current Advocacy

Specifically, the JCTR advocacy is targeted at getting the attention of various stakeholders especially the government through its strategic ministries to address the plight of the rural poor. It is realized that with more people living and working in rural areas, it is imperative that rural development is paid particular attention if the nation as a whole is to develop. Inadequate responses to address the rural development challenge will only exacerbate the poverty situation in the country. As poverty increases in the rural areas, more and more people from these areas could migrate to urban areas in search of jobs without adequate preparation for the Labour market, which demands higher levels of education. This is likely to further increase population especially in high density areas.

The centre also works to empower the communities to influence decision-makers on issues that affect their dignity and rights. For instance, through the annually held stakeholders meetings in the various districts, issues affecting the people are brought up and shared with the relevant stakeholders.

The Rural Basket is accompanied by a press release once per quarter focusing on various socio-economic issues.

Future advocacy strategies

Similar to the urban BNB, the Rural Basket advocacy must be decentralized and front-lined by strategic partners from all walks of life, especially at the grassroots. Ideally, existing networks and groups of people will embrace the Rural Basket message and choose their own battles to fight using the JCTR's rural development primary information. This section suggests the possible usefulness of the Rural Basket to a wide-range of strategic stakeholders. Hopefully one of the following ideas will spark your creativity:

People: The ESSENTIAL stakeholders as possessors of human dignity

- Rural Basket to empower people with a sense of their human right to basic food and essential non-food items and a decent standard of living
- Rural Basket a testimony to the systemic nature of food insecurity and low availability of opportunities (i.e. dependency on the short-lived rain fed agriculture, temporary housing structures, impassable roads, especially in the rainy season, non-existent of higher education facilities in many instances, inadequate health personnel and drugs)
- Rural Basket a tool for planning. Locals are challenged by the JCTR Rural Basket to produce beyond the ideal yields for an area if they are to produce enough for sale.
- Rural Basket a tool for civic education (understanding how socio-economic policies relate to the people, encouraging responsible voting)

Communities: The most grassroots level of organization

- Rural Basket a guide in negotiation of increased budgetary allocations for district councils
- Rural Basket an entry-point to training for transformation (allow a community to identify own problems in light of the Rural Basket and develop own solutions)

Religious Organizations: The moral foundation spanning every district of Zambia

- Rural Basket to keep religious leaders in touch with living conditions of members
- Rural Basket to help religious leaders stress dignity of the human person, sanctity of work and importance of a faith that seeks justice

Small-Scale Farmers: The producers of most basic food items for urban consumers

- Rural Basket as encouragement to diversify crops beyond maize
- Rural Basket a call for farmers to organize themselves into cooperatives in order to effectively manage maize crop

Media Houses: The primary disseminators of contemporary information to the people

- Rural Basket to generate regular public discussion on the challenges faced in rural areas
- Rural Basket to inform people of their human right to basic needs such as food and shelter
- Rural Basket as theme of creative programmes that simplify socio-economic issues

Government: The authors, implementers and enforcers of policies to benefit the people

- Rural Basket as link between leaders and the people struggling to earn a decent living
- Rural Basket as challenge to the prioritization of ministry expenditure
- Rural Basket as discussion-tool between MPs and constituents to inspire formation of effective, pro-poor legislation
- Rural Basket as specific call to address ineffective agricultural policies, lack of a holistic plan for development or job creation, excessive rural to urban migration, inadequate housing in urban areas, insufficient strategic grain reserves.
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Political Parties: The ideological foundation of present and future leaders

- Rural Basket to encourage party manifestoes to address rural development issues
- Rural Basket to challenge political squabbles as wasteful and out-of-touch
- Rural Basket a talking-point during elections

Health Care Workers: The frontline nurturers of the physical well-being of the people

- Rural Basket as illustration of poverty's contribution to the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Rural Basket as input in creating holistic health care plan for the nation

- Rural Basket to help increase drug supply , especially in rural health centers

Councils: The most grassroots government representatives of community needs

- Rural Basket as basis for consulting communities on particular needs and challenges
- Rural Basket as tool to help Resident Development Committees set priorities

Educators: The primary conveyers of knowledge to the people

- Rural Basket as teaching aid for lessons on poverty (food security), nutrition, economics, social service delivery, etc.
- Rural Basket to support demand for school feeding programmes

Students: The most widespread, dynamic source of human potential in society

- Rural Basket as spark to parents and PTAs to demand a better education system
- Rural Basket as testament to how challenges at the home hinder classroom learning

NGOs: The government watchdogs and projects of compassion for the people

- Rural Basket to help NGOs understand the present challenges faced by the people and when and how to intervene
- Rural Basket as one tool to hold government accountable to its promises and priorities
- Rural Basket as challenge to the excessive spending in some government ministries
- Rural Basket as measure of the impact of external debt and trade imbalances on people in rural areas
- Rural Basket as tool to teach rural and urban people about Economic Social and Cultural Rights.
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Micro-Finance Institutions: The lenders of money for investment in the future

- Rural Basket to provide understanding of safe, effective loans to entrepreneurial people
- Rural Basket to suggest effectiveness of seasonal loans or subsidies to farmers and others

Researchers: The collectors of information for prudent action and decision-making

- Rural Basket as a community-specific food security and social service delivery situation
- Rural Basket to help researchers make recommendations to all levels of society on ways to improve rural areas

International Organizations: The pipeline of resources for the betterment of the nation

- Rural Basket as historical evidence of the Structural Adjustment Programmes harsh impact on the well-being of the people
- Rural Basket as challenge to the IMF to provide targeted interjection of grants to benefit the most poor and vulnerable people in society
- Rural Basket as input into the creation and implementation of World Bank projects
- Rural Basket as information for UNICEF, UNDP, UNAIDS, UNRS and other UN offices to further understanding of the Zambian context and implement appropriate projects
- Rural Basket as more informative measure of poverty than the abstract “dollar and twenty five cents a day”
- Rural Basket as understandable overview of Zambia’s struggles for bilateral donors considering whether or not to give aid

Chiefs: The most immediate leadership of the majority of rural people

- Rural Basket as a warning of high food insecurity in the rural areas of Zambia and thus help in the planning process
- Rural Basket a guide for organizing villagers to sell produce when price is high

