

**A HISTORY OF POVERTY IN CENTRAL PROVINCE,
ZAMBIA, c.1850 -2000**

By

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of
Master of Arts in History**

**University of Zambia
Lusaka
2005**



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DECLARATION

I Zikani Kaira, declare that this dissertation represents my own work and has never before been submitted for a degree at this or any other University.


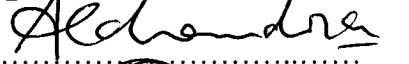
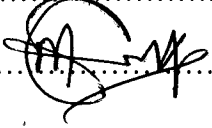
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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Zikani Kaira is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is as old as humanity. In Zambia many pre-colonial societies suffered the vice that existed in a different form. But with the advent of colonialism and subsequent development of modern capitalist industries, the dynamics of poverty in Zambia changed. The shifts of men and women from rural areas to urban centres deprived rural areas of essential productive elements. Some colonial policies such as land alienation robbed Africans of the most productive land. This study therefore investigates and discusses the history of poverty in the Central Province of Zambia in the period c1850 to 2000. This has been done in the context of the changing political economy of the country.

The study investigates the dynamics of poverty in Central Province. It also examines measures taken by government and non-governmental institutions to alleviate poverty in the Province. The study further investigates local people's response to poverty and gender dynamics of poverty. It further investigates HIV/AIDS and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) dynamics in relation to poverty creation.

The study is based on the premise that the dynamics of poverty in Zambia have exhibited changing patterns, which have so far not been adequately written about. The study also attempts to provoke further interest in the subject.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have amounted to anything without the contribution of several individuals and institutions. Constraints of space have, however, restricted me from mentioning all involved, but this should not be taken to mean that those not mentioned are in any way less important. They still form a valuable part of this work. A few however, need to be acknowledged. First, I would like to acknowledge the input of my first supervisor Dr. B. S. Siamwiza. I am greatly indebted to his genius in shaping this study. I would also like to express my heart felt gratitude to my supervisor Dr C.M. Chabatama who later took over the challenge. I am much grateful for his knowledge and experience that contributed enormously to the success of this work.

Gratitude is also due to the entire staff in the Department of History for their encouragement. In this regard I thank Professor B.J. Phiri (Dean HSS), Dr. W. S. Kalikiti (Head of Department), Dr. Y. A. Chondoka (MA Coordinator), Mr. F. E .Mulenga, Ms.D. Mwansa, Dr. K. Krishna, Dr. W. T. Kalusa and Mr. B. C. Kakoma. I would also sincerely thank Mrs. A.C. Lesho of Kabwe and Mrs. M.I. Mubanga of Gender Department (UNZA) for typing my work.

This dissertation would not have been possible in the absence of the co-operation of staff of the University of Zambia Main Library, National Archives of Zambia, Central Statistical Office (CSO), Jesuit Archives in Lusaka, United Church of Zambia Archives at Mindolo in Kitwe, Mumbwa District Agricultural office, Mumbwa District Health Management Board office, Serenje District Agricultural office, Serenje Health Management Board office, Serenje District Forestry office, Chibombo District Council office, Department of Community and Social Services in Serenje, SCOPE/OVC in

Serenje, with particular tribute to Caroline Zulu who passed away a week after availing some documents to me. May her soul rest in peace. I also wish to thank all my respondents in Serenje, Kapiri Mposhi, Kabwe, Chibombo and Mumbwa districts. Even those who refused to cooperate are included as their reactions actually further helped me gain insight into the problem under study.

Deserving special thanks are the Principal Mr. F. M. Chilufya of Malcolm Moffat College of Education and the Management Board of the College for making my sponsorship possible. This gesture rekindled my lost hope and it is my prayer that the same spirit may in future be extended to any other person in pursuit of further studies; may God bless you.

This acknowledgement would be incomplete if I do not thank my ever-charming wife, Diana Mkandawire Kaira who has stood by me in the most trying moments since we got married. Her patience and words of encouragement have indeed propelled me to this level. No wonder the scripture "He who finds a wife finds what is good..." (Proverbs 18:22). Diana is what is good! I also thank my children Daniel and Glory Kaira and my niece Prudence Kaira for their faithfulness and obedience during the long periods of my absence from home.

Other acknowledgements are due to my father Mr. Jackson Cornwell Kaira. This man set a standard for me that I have to live to accomplish. At 88, my father still appreciates the importance of academic advancement. I am equally indebted to my father in law Mr. Lighton Mkandawire and mother in law (now deceased) Mrs. Elinet Musonda Mkandawire for speaking very positively into my life.

The work would have been of little "flavour" without the inspiration received from my brothers and only sister; these are Messrs B. J. Kaira, S. T. Kaira, C. S. Kaira, M. Kaira, G. Kaira (who was always available and handy for scholarly and technical assistance) and Ms. Maurine Kaira.

I am also very grateful to Pastor Samson Kasele and his spouse Ruth of Serenje Pentecostal Assembly of God and all the members of the fellowship for their ceaseless spiritual support during the course of my programme. Their prayers and words of encouragement have not been in vain at all. Please continue with the same spirit as we encourage more of our brethren to ascend to higher levels. I wish to also thank Mr. Geoffrey Besa and his spouse Florence of Chudleigh in Lusaka for being readily available whenever I needed assistance from them. This is what friends are for. I would in the same way, thank all my colleagues of Malcolm Moffat College of Education and Mr. M.F.K. Lukwesa of Ngaswa school in Serenje for their material and moral support each time I called on them.

Notwithstanding the fact that I was alone on the History post-graduate programme for the academic year commencing 2003/2004, I was able to interact with a number of colleagues pursuing other post-graduate programmes. Their constant words of encouragement to me cannot be ignored. In this category were Mr. Peter Sampa, Mr. Simon Siame (now deceased), Mr. Fred Chishimba, Mr. M. Mulundano, Mr. J. Mande, Mr. D. Njovu, Mr. W. Chirwa, Mr. John Shakafuswa, Ms. Linah Musukuma, Ms. Clare Mwinga, Ms. Rosemary Chilufya, Mr. Thomas Mubita and Captain Denis Sinkamba.

Above all, I give glory to the Almighty God for the material and financial resources, good health and wisdom with which I was able to execute the demands of the programme. May His word endure forever.

DEDICATION

For the love of my wife Diana, sons Daniel and Vitumbiko, daughter Glory and niece Prudence.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BSACo.	British South Africa Company
CSO	Central Statistical Office
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MMD	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
NAZ	National Archives of Zambia
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SCOPE/OVC	Strengthening Community Partnerships for the Empowerment of Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
UCZ	United Church of Zambia
UNIP	United National Independence Party
ZAMSIF	Zambia Social Investment Fund
ZDHS	Zambia Demographic and Health Survey

CHANGED NAMES/PLACES

Northern Rhodesia Zambia

Broken Hill Kabwe

Abercorn Mbala

Central Province – The name ‘Central Province’ is in this study used in the context of modern definition of boundaries. It refers to the area covering the Central region of Zambia. Previously the area existed under independent chiefdoms such as Serenje, Chitambo, Chibale (Serenje District); Shaiwila (Mkushi); Nkole (Kapiri); Chipeco, Chitanda, Ngabwe (Kabwe); Liteta, Mukuni, Chamuka (Chibombo) and Shakumbila, Moono, Mulendema (Mumbwa).

Areas currently under Kapiri Mposhi and Chibombo districts were until 1991 designated as Kabwe rural. Chipeco, Mukubwe, Chibwe, Mukonchi and Liteta, fall under this designation.

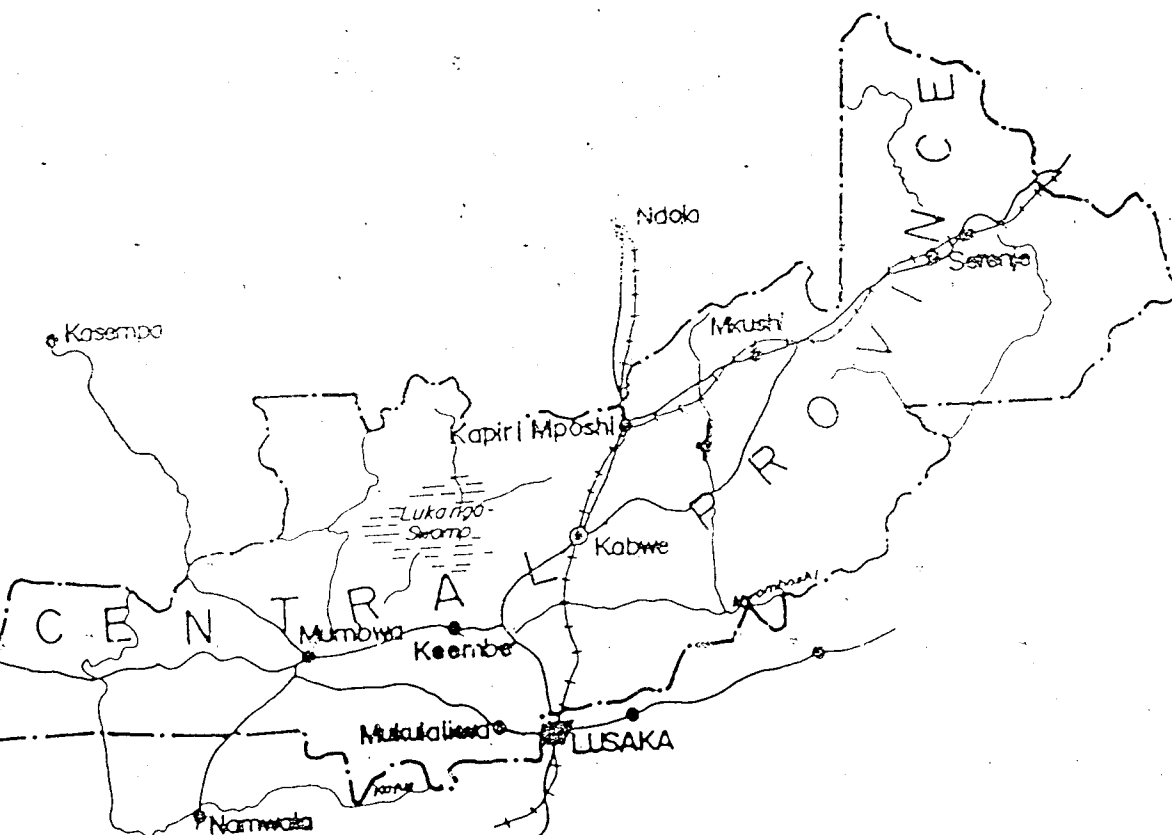
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MAP OF CENTRAL PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA



Source: Republic of Zambia Department of Agriculture Annual Report 1985-86 Season
Central Province, Kabwe, 1.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains one of Africa's socio-economic, and political challenges. In 1993 about forty percent of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa were poor.¹ The situation was even more pathetic in some countries. In Zambia poverty levels have been quite alarming; with sixty-nine percent of the total population in 1991 living below a level sufficient to sustain basic survival needs.² In some provinces and districts of the country the situation has been even worse. In 2002, Central Province had between fifty-one and seventy percent of its population living in poverty. In the Province's rural districts the scenario was even worse.³

In Central Province, poverty has undergone socio-economic and political transformation from the late nineteenth century. The transformation became even more characteristic in the early twentieth century, with the development of modern mining of lead and zinc in 1902 in Kabwe, which was followed by the development of the railway industry in 1906. The subsequent making of the town as the headquarters of Rhodesia Railways in Northern Rhodesia accentuated the process even further. These developments had a profound effect on the economic and social life of the Lenje, Swaka, Lala and other related indigenous ethnic groups which inhabit the province. Rural men left their villages for wage employment in the emerging mining and industrial town. Some women migrated to the town and other urban centres to join their husbands and to look for a livelihood. This movement, especially of women, deprived rural areas of the province of the most productive elements.⁴ This triggered the process of impoverishment in the province which had not been the case before.

Munday, portrayed the Lala of Mkushi and Serenje as a prosperous group prior to the twentieth century.⁵ Muntemba also argued that the Lenje were a prosperous group through the exploitation of the Lukanga Swamp fisheries, prior to the development of the mining and railway industries.⁶ This means poverty in Central Province arose through the process of

industrialisation, although during a crisis such as drought and famine, wage labour was a hedge against poverty.

Sometimes it was the colonial policies that systematically created poverty among Africans. The policy of Native Reserves after 1924 caused many rural cultivators, not only in Central Province, but in Southern and Eastern Provinces as well, a lot of hardships. The demarcation of reserves in the Province reduced land available for African cultivators from 6,680 square mile to 2,190 square miles.⁷ Much of the soil in reserves was poor and with the publication of the Pim Report in 1938, it came to light that Africans in most reserves were suffering.⁸ In 1934 and 1935 the Swaka Chief Nkole of Mkushi complained to some colonial officials of a critical land shortage and the suffering of his people.⁹ In 1938, Chief Shaiwila also of Mkushi uttered similar complaints. He pointed out that agriculture in his chieftdom was in serious problems.¹⁰

Attempts at rural development to alleviate poverty were made by both the colonial and post-colonial governments. Agricultural schemes were introduced in the province, like elsewhere in the country, during the colonial period to develop a prosperous peasantry. Credit facilities and marketing arrangements were provided for in the post-colonial period. But these development strategies had their own challenges. The coming to power in 1991 of the government of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy turned around many policies of the previous UNIP government that aimed at eliminating or minimizing rural poverty. Government credit facilities to peasant farmers were stopped and rural marketing arrangements were 'privatised'. This development worsened the position of most rural cultivators not only in Central Province, but the country as a whole.

Statement of the Problem

Recent studies have shown that by 1998, there were more people living in the 'poor' and 'extremely poor' categories in Central Province than there were in Luapula,

Northwestern and Western Provinces.¹¹ This problem is deeply entrenched in the history of the province. However, no historical works are available yet. The scanty literature available on poverty does not deal with the problem in depth. It does not explicitly show the causes of poverty and the measures taken by institutions and individuals to countenance the problem. This study attempts to investigate and discuss the history of poverty with regard to Central Province.

Defining Poverty

Poverty can mean a number of things and situations to various categories of economic and social groups. In this study, a brief survey of the definition of poverty has been found imperative. Iliffe defined poverty as physical want, which includes lack of food, shelter and clothes.¹² Iliffe linked his description of poverty to that of Gutton's dichotomy of structural poverty, which is a long term poverty of individuals due to their personal or social circumstances; and conjuctural poverty which is a temporary situation into which ordinarily self-sufficient people may be thrown into by crises like drought or land dispossession.¹³ Thus in land-rich societies poverty could be due to lack of access to the labour needed to exploit land due to incapacitation, old age or young age and lack of labour of others because they are bereft of family or other support. In land-scarce societies, poverty could be due to lack of access to land or other resources.

Allen and Thomas defined poverty as a state of deprivation related to chronic-hunger.¹⁴ They further defined poverty in the context of income or consumption. In this context poverty has been related to inability in the provision of a minimum standard of living.¹⁵ Poverty can also be defined in terms of capabilities rather than command over goods. Thus a poverty stricken person is one who lacks the capability to get adequate health care, access to clean water and sanitation and one who lacks functional capacity as a member of society.¹⁶ He/she lacks functional capacity in the sense that as one deprived of the

necessities of life, he/she becomes hopelessly dependent on other people and so is almost, if not completely, in a state of destitution. Such a definition tends to be in agreement with structuralism as given in Iliffe's definition.

Another definition of poverty is that provided by O'Connor who associated poverty with low levels of income in terms of cash or subsistence production and therefore low levels of consumption of goods and services. This is reflected in poor diet, undernutrition and malnutrition as aspects of poverty.¹⁷

Baldwin defined poverty in terms of income. He thus considers people to be poverty stricken when income, falls markedly behind that of the larger community. Then they cannot have what the larger community regards as necessary for decency and they cannot wholly escape the judgement of the larger community that they are indigent. They are degraded for in the literal sense, they are outside the grades of socio-economic categories which the community regards as acceptable.¹⁸ Here Baldwin brings in the concept of relative poverty, which is concerned with standards within a contemporary social environment and depends on value judgement.

Baldwin, like Iliffe distinguishes two types of poverty: 'case' poverty characteristic of individuals afflicted, by bad health, or inability to adapt to modern economic life and 'insular' poverty which manifests as an island of poverty in which everyone or nearly everyone is poor not because of personal handicaps, but due to complex circumstances affecting the area or region.

Valentine defined poverty as a condition of being in want of something that is needed or desired or generally recognised as having value.¹⁹ The *World Book Encyclopedia* defined poverty simply as hunger and suffering, a situation where people have little or no food as well as those who are sick and have no means of seeking medical care.²⁰ There is an explanation on relative or comparative poverty as in Baldwin's definition in which an

individual might have the necessities of life but still considered poor relative to other individuals living in more comfort and possessing more assets.

Paul-Mark Henry treats poverty as a severe lack of material and cultural goods which impedes the normal development of individuals to the point of compromising their personal integrity. According to this notion a person in want is someone who is found in such a degrading and consuming struggle with life. This renders an individual to live in a permanent state of isolation and insecurity. Such an individual has no guarantee that he/she will be able to meet the fundamental cost of living as a human being.²¹

In measuring rural poverty, the United Nations Development Programme stressed material deprivation and dependence which depresses the bargaining power of the people in a world of unequal social relations. Poverty is also associated with lack of assets.²² In the *Macmillan Family Encyclopedia*, poverty is considered as lack of goods and services necessary to maintain an adequate standard of living. Adequate in this case means reasonable enough to sustain life, which might actually vary from one society to another.²³

The *Zambian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002-2004* report, defined poverty as deprivation in terms of material needs such as food and nutrition, health, education and literacy, safe water and sanitation, clothing and shelter. Also the deprivation of security against external occurrences such as bad weather, natural disasters, illness, economic dislocation, deprivation of human rights, disempowerment and exclusion that leads to loss of human dignity.²⁴

During fieldwork, it was noticed that rural communities in Central Province understood poverty in almost the same way as given by various authors and researchers cited in this study. In Serenje and Mkushi most respondents treated poverty as 'ububusu' which means lack of essentials of life. Damson Chisenga described poverty as 'umuntu ngatakwete apakuma ukuboko'.²⁵ This is having no means of survival. Therefore, according to this

notion a poor person is one whose well being is in limbo. One has no food, no decent clothing, no decent shelter, lacks good health and is unable to send children to school. According to Chisenga the major explanation for this would be impercunuity (lack of money). Money comes through certain ventures like cultivation, rearing of animals or engaging in some form of wage employment. If one fails to have access to any of these, then one falls into poverty. Chisenga asserted that no one would want to be associated with poverty, as it brings shame, humiliation and loss of dignity on an individual. As Chisenga commented “*tapapo uchindiko muntu mubusu.*” (no one esteems a poor person) ²⁶.

In Mumbwa, poverty was described as *bupushi* by the Ila while in Chibombo, the Lenje described it as *bupeshi*. Both descriptions denote suffering and misery due to lack of basic necessities. Isaac Namushi of Mumbwa said people were in poverty when they did not have enough to eat, lacked the means to produce food, could not send children to school, lacked medical care or walked long distances in search of water ²⁷

Among the Swaka of Chief Nkole in Kapiri Mposhi, poverty was described as *kupeenga*, meaning suffering misery or discomfort. According to Bella Chondoka such a situation would arise when essential goods and services were lacking in a community. These would include food, housing, water, roads, grinding mills and so forth. ²⁸

From the views given by various respondents we can settle on one central tenet with regard to poverty. Poverty can therefore be taken to mean inadequate or non-availability of what people consider as being necessary for their survival and their comfort. The necessary things may include money, food, water, clothes, health care, education, transport and farming inputs.

Three forms of poverty have been identified from the definitions in the study. These are structural poverty, conjuctural poverty and relative poverty. However, in this historical

study of Central Province of Zambia, our major focus is on conjuctural poverty. This does not nonetheless discount other aspects of poverty from being considered in the study.

Area of Study

Central Province comprises six districts. These are Mumbwa, Chibombo, Kapiri Mposhi, Mkushi, Serenje and Kabwe, which is the provincial headquarters. Apart from Kabwe, all the other districts of the province are essentially rural. The province is cleft in the midst of eight other provinces Northwestern, Western, Copperbelt, Luapula, Southern, Eastern and Lusaka Provinces.

Much of the province consists of undulating land rising from 900 to 1200 meters above sea level. The Eastern part stretching to the Luangwa basin is hilly and some parts form a steep escarpment.²⁹ The Northwestern side is occupied by Lukanga Swamps. The region lies on a plateau with much lower rainfall except for Mkushi and Serenje, which receive significant rainfall due to the Congo air currents.

Soils are mainly pedocal, but in Mumbwa upper valley fertile soils are evident with a similar soil belt extending into part of Southern Kabwe.³⁰ In the water shed region are escarpment soils which give way on the south east scarp to the lower valley soils of Mkushi and Serenje, particularly in Chisomo and Luano valley. The larger part of Kabwe west is covered by swampy soils.³¹

The province is covered by vegetation ranging from thick tall woodlands of the north toward the Mopane woodland of minimum rainfall areas. In Kabwe, *Isoberlinia Paniculata* *Brachystegia* vegetation dominates over the poor Mutondo country. Eastward the *Brachystegia* woodland becomes dominant. To the south of the plateau lies *Isoberlinia Globi* *Flora* –*Brachystegia* woodland which is generally thin. The upper valley soil zones are covered by scanty tree growth.³²

The province has many ethnic groups. The Lala are found in Mkushi and Serenje. The Lenje are in much of Kabwe rural. The Sala, Ila and Kaonde form the major ethnic groups in Mumbwa.³³ The Ambo and Swaka are found in the southern part of Mkushi and Serenje as well as the eastern parts of Kabwe. The Swaka are also found in Kapiri Mposhi.³⁴

Objectives of the Study

The study has five objectives. First it investigates the dynamics of poverty in Central Province. It shows the main causes of poverty at different epochs in the history of the province. Second the study examines poverty alleviation measures taken by the government and non-governmental institutions in the province. Third it investigates gender dynamics in relation to poverty. Fourth the study further investigates local people's responses to poverty. Finally it investigates HIV/AIDS and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) dynamics in relation to poverty creation in the province.

Significance of the Study

This study of a history of poverty in Central Province c1850 to 2000 is justified on one major ground. The justification is that while poverty is a phenomenon, which is very much of Zambia's history, little has been historically carried out as a study. The significance of this study therefore is that it attempts to investigate the dynamics of poverty in Central Province and their changing patterns which have so far not been adequately written about. It also attempts to provoke further research interest in the subject.

Literature Review

Little academic research has been carried out on the history of poverty in Zambia. The scanty available literature on the theme does not even relate to the historical development of poverty. This dearth, the study assumes, is critical to the understanding of poverty, not only in Central Province, but the country as a whole. This observation

notwithstanding, there is a corpus of literature that is essential to the understanding of poverty, not only in the study area, but in Zambia in general.

Sen's book is a valuable contribution to the understanding of poverty; most valuable is its use of the entitlement thesis.³⁵ Sen explains entitlement as the ability of people to command food, which he terms commodity bundle; or simply having access to food through acceptable means available in society. Basically it means possibilities of producing food by owning land and other resources necessary in food production. It may also mean acquiring food, or the means to obtaining food through trade.

Equally of importance to the entitlement thesis in helping us understand poverty is the concept of endowment which Sen treats as resources or assets that help one produce food. These may include land and farming implements. And the relationship that is established by using these endowments to gain access to food therefore makes up one's entitlement; which could be obtained through trade, direct production or wage employment.³⁶ A peasant may gain access to food because he/she is able to produce it on his/her own. According to Sen, such a person, has direct entitlement while a labourer who depends on a wage in order to have access to food is said to have an exchange entitlement. Similarly one who gains access to food by trading in commodities, gains trade entitlement.

What it means therefore is that if any resources or means of gaining access to food through purchase or through production or exchange, is cut off from an individual, there will be loss of entitlement which results in starvation and in this case, poverty. Thus if land is taken away or a market system underplayed through unfair government policies, there is loss of entitlement and so poverty results. This argument therefore, makes Sen's work extremely critical to our understanding of the subject of poverty.

Iliffe's *The African Poor* is also critical to the understanding of poverty in Africa. Iliffe's argument is that during pre-colonial times, poverty was mainly of structural form,

with the very poor people being those incapacitated or bereft of support and unable to fend for themselves in a land-rich economy. This shifted to the conjunctural form in the colonial and recent times when able-bodied people were excluded from access to productive resources and when natural disasters brought wide spread destitution.³⁷

Iliffe has researched on the impact of poverty on the people and how the impoverished sought to help themselves, how their families helped them and how charitable and governmental institutions provided for them. He has also shown clear shifting trends of poverty from pre-colonial to post colonial times. Iliffe's book provides vital information for our study mainly because it outlines and analyses the causes of poverty in its shifting pattern and actually shows how the people were affected, as well as the strategic measures that were taken.

Critical to our study in Iliffe's book is his inclusion in his analysis, of the collapse of the copper price between 1975 and 1980 as having had an impact on poverty levels in the country. The depressed copper prices, the country's almost sole earner of foreign exchange and major source of revenue for the country, meant that economic development was affected. It was in the aftermath of reduced copper prices on the international market that some rural based schemes witnessed reduced funding hence affecting many rural households that had depended on them for sustenance. It is in this respect that Iliffe's brief analysis of poverty helps us understand some aspects of the origins of poverty in Zambia.

Iliffe's historical analysis of the poor and poverty in Africa was complemented by publication of O'Connor's geographical approach to the analysis of poverty in Africa.³⁸ O'Connor examines the extent, nature and distribution of poverty in Africa, identifying factors that contribute to it. O'Connor distinguishes between poor countries and poor individuals and reviews the environmental and demographic context of African poverty. He also focuses on food and famine and on the gap between rural economy and urban economy.

Although a geographical study, O'Connor's work is useful to our understanding and appreciation of different environments that give rise to poverty.

O'Connor argues that the causes of poverty have no simple explanation, contrary to underdevelopment theorists who suggest that poverty has its roots in colonialism and greediness of the rich world. O'Connor's suggestion is that poverty is caused by a set of circumstances such as poor communication, unwillingness of the people to work, low wages and so forth. So while some colonial policies could have been responsible for poverty in Zambia and in the Central Province in particular, there were other factors that need to be considered too.

Ndegwa and Green's³⁹ study is not very strikingly different in analysis from O'Connor's. The work seeks to understand the major causes of poverty not only in East Africa but in the continent as a whole. Ndegwa and Green identify increasing unemployment levels, environmental degradation and external debt as factors in the perpetuation of African poverty. The two also emphasize political mismanagement as yet another cause of poverty in the continent. Although closely related to O'Connor's *Poverty in Africa*, Ndegwa and Green's *Africa to 2000 and beyond*, goes beyond the causes of poverty by suggesting solutions to the challenges of poverty, which they argue, lie in Africans themselves. Ndegwa and Green suggest that as the main actors and victims, Africans must not wait for outsiders to provide solutions; their suffering must be a source of innovativeness. This suggestion is important; in our study, we will attempt to find out how the Central Province peasantry responded to the challenge of poverty.

So far the literature reviewed has looked at some broad studies of poverty with little connection to Zambia and to Central Province in particular. However, a fair corpus of literature exists on the theme. Muntemba's study of rural underdevelopment in Kabwe district⁴⁰ is critical to our understanding of the development of poverty not only in Kabwe

rural district but in Central Province too. In this work, Muntemba suggests a systematic and deliberate impoverishment of the district's peasantry. She examines the role of international finance capital represented by the mining concern and secondary industries, settler capital and after independence in 1964, the role of local businessmen and politicians. She argues that throughout the colonial period, the peasantry remained underdeveloped and subordinated to capitalist, settler and mining interests. Muntemba argues further that because of capitalist control of African labour and the unfriendly land policies against Africans, the African peasants were unable to produce enough for their own consumption and national requirements.

Muntemba presents the peasantry in the study area as an uninnovative lot at the mercy and manipulation of colonial forces. She completely ignores any possible responses to colonial machinations by the peasantry. One may expect that the peasantry put up struggles and challenges against encroaching poverty; an aspect our study will attempt to investigate. Moreover, Muntemba seems to ignore in her underdevelopment thesis, the fact that colonial presence and the advent or development of mining and secondary industries contributed to development in some rural districts. Contrary to Muntemba's study Watson,⁴¹ Seleti⁴² and Chondoka⁴³ have demonstrated the benefits of some colonial policies to African communities. The studies have also shown how African peasantry in various areas of the country responded to the demands of the market brought about by the development of the mines and related industries.

Chisenga's study⁴⁴ provides our work with an understanding of the role of missionaries in poverty alleviation among the peasants. Central in Chisenga's argument is that the knowledge and agricultural skills that the missionaries imparted in the Lala peasantry of Serenje district resulted in a cash-crop economy, which had not existed before; and so exerted much influence on rural development. He cites peasants in the areas favoured by

missionaries like those of chiefs Mailo, Muchinka and Kafinda as having emerged prosperous; while those in areas less favoured like those of chiefs Chibale and Chisomo remained impoverished. Like Muntemba, Chisenga espouses the underdevelopment thesis. He contends the entrenchment of the cash economy in the district, reoriented local commercial systems and trade relations, which undercut indigenous trade.

Related studies have also been carried out. Siamwiza, has, for example,⁴⁵ written about famine in Zambia. In his study, he has illustrated change in famine and investigated its causes, severity and location. He has also examined the aspect of social impact, survival strategies as well as external assistance. Of particular importance to our study is his analysis on the discernible changes in the famine patterns in Zambia, in relation to the historically changing political economy of the country.

Siamwiza has neatly organised his argument around three major patterns of famine. In the pre-1890 period, drought and violence have been identified as the main causes of famine. Between 1890 and 1920, natural disasters and colonial policies were the major factors behind famine. Lastly, in the period between 1921 and 1949, natural disasters and landlessness were the main causes of famine. Siamwiza's study is crucial as it deals with famine which is inextricably linked to poverty.

Seidmann's work⁴⁶ is critical to our study. Seidmann argues that the growth of the export institutions impoverished rural areas both directly and indirectly. Directly by extracting surpluses produced by the lowly paid labourers who were drawn from rural areas and indirectly, through surpluses accumulated from the sale of high-priced goods manufactured and sold by big trading firms and their agents. Seidmann argues that the surpluses realized from the sales, were syphoned out of the country, leaving the host country with little income, which could not suffice for developmental projects. Seidmann, like

Muntemba, further argues that the problem of rural poverty has been perpetuated by African governments.

Much of the literature reviewed is basically concerned with causes of poverty in general. It does not show the actual problems that affected the peasants or the rural people. It does not even show us what measures were put in place to counteract poverty. Further, most works treat the theme of poverty from a contemporary perspective and seem to assume poverty is static.

Methodology and Data Collection

Data for this study was collected over a period of six months. The initial stage of the research was done in the University of Zambia (UNZA) Library where both secondary and primary sources such as books, journals, dissertations, theses, government reports and other materials were consulted.

The second part was conducted in the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) where we mainly consulted, district notebooks, provincial tour reports and districts' tour reports. At Central Statistical Office (CSO) we obtained valuable statistical and historical data on living conditions in Central Province.

From this point we moved to the United Church of Zambia Archives (UCZ) at Mindolo in Kitwe to consult primary sources concerning missions in relation to poverty issues. The Librarian availed us written reports done by former students of the college, which proved to be valuable for our research. From Kitwe, we moved to the Jesuit Archives in Lusaka for more primary and secondary sources with regard to Catholic activities in relation to poverty in Central Province. The priest in charge of the archives made available a few memoirs which proved very useful.

The next stage of the research involved conducting oral interviews with villagers in the districts. The main motive was to gauge their understanding of poverty. We started with

Serenje and moved to Kapiri Mposhi, Mumbwa, Chibombo, Kabwe and Mukushi. During the visits, some government officials were also interviewed and in some cases they availed us some important documents related to the study. Some of the officials included District Commissioner (DC) of Serenje, District Agriculture Coordinators (DACOs), District Forestry officers and others.

The last part of the research was analysis of data accompanied by continued consultation of sources in the University of Zambia main Library's special collection. This was followed by writing of the dissertation.

Organisation of the Study

The study has four main chapters apart from the introduction and the conclusion. The first chapter deals with poverty in the context of the pre-colonial era. It also examines how indigenous people managed to survive through their own initiatives. The second chapter is concerned with poverty in the wake of the new colonial political economy. The main argument is that effects of industrialisation revolutionised the pattern of poverty in Central Province. The third chapter continues dealing with poverty of the colonial epoch in which the colonial government ensured that poverty levels in African communities were kept low. The fourth chapter discusses poverty in the context of Zambia's independence during which time new patterns of poverty and new initiatives against it emerged. The chapter also examines the effects of SAP and HIV/AIDS in Central Province.

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CHAPTER ONE

POVERTY IN PRE-COLONIAL CENTRAL PROVINCE, 1850 – 1890

Introduction

Pre-colonial Central Province of Zambia was endowed with abundant natural resources.¹ But poverty still permeated through its communities. Lack of security against natural disasters, together with man-made calamities were critical causes of poverty in the area. The inhabitants of the province were therefore placed in a position which required them to struggle constantly in order to survive. Among the natural disasters were drought, epidemics, floods, animal raids and locust invasions. Man made calamities consisted mainly of internecine wars and slave raids. These calamities destabilised communities and rendered human life worthless.

In this chapter therefore, we argue that in pre-colonial Central Province, poverty of famine nature was prevalent. We further argue that between 1850 and 1890, natural disasters, especially drought and epidemics, and man-made calamities such as internecine wars and slave raids were the main causes of conceptual poverty in the province. We also argue that notwithstanding the absence of organised institutions of poverty alleviation, the inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province, participated actively to avert poverty at individual, household and kinship level. They were able to put in place initiatives meant to counteract the crisis in their midst. In the face of hopelessness, the inhabitants resorted to short and long term measures to ensure survival.

Nature and Geography of Poverty

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, poverty in Central Province took the form of famine. The main causes to this were drought, epidemics and locust invasions. Coupled with natural disasters were man-made calamities such as internecine wars and slave raids. All these immensely devastated the pre-colonial communities of Central Province, because whenever they occurred they caused severe food shortages leading to starvation and death in many cases.

In as far as the geography or location of poverty of famine nature is concerned we would therefore, argue that much of pre-colonial Central Province was affected. There were, however, a few areas which were in most cases not affected by drought although they were in some cases vulnerable to floods. The Ambo of Luano Valley and the Lala of Chisomo area enjoyed this advantage. The reason being that the inhabitants in these areas preferred to occupy river basins and **dambos**. The Ambo, for example, settled on the banks of the Lusumfwa and Lukusashi confluence. The riverine alluvial soils were always wet and fertile enabling the Ambo to grow crops for much of the year.² On the contrary, the Lala of Mkushi and Serenje occupied dry woodland areas and were quite susceptible to drought. So while the Ambo were safe from famine caused by drought, the inhabitants of Mkushi and Serenje were very vulnerable to drought. A similar situation applied to the Batwa who occupied the wetlands of the Lukanga swamps and the Lenje who occupied the drier parts of the main land. While the Lenje suffered the vagaries of drought, the Batwa were not menaced by it. This position was observed by J.M. Mourbray as he travelled through the land of the Lenje. He noted thus:

The Awatwa (sic) of Lukanga Swamp – the water people situated their villages near the edge of the swamp and some of them were placed on small rising pieces of ground (sic). Diet for the Awatwa (sic) was flour from bulbous root of water lily which was to

be found in great abundance. For them water provided their food needs through out their life (sic) the mainland people, the Lenje of Sitanda had to grapple with the ravages of nature in obtaining their food.³

It would appear the Batwa and the Ambo together with the Chisomo Lala, had carefully selected their settlements. They had good knowledge of their environments. This is why they rarely experienced hunger or starvation. The other groups – the Lenje, Lala of Mkushi and Serenje areas, and the Swaka on the Southern parts of Mkushi, constantly experienced poverty due to drought because of the areas in which they were settled.

Poverty caused by tribal wars and slave raids was also common in many parts of Central Province in the second half of the nineteenth century. Before slave trade became prevalent, sources point to the existence of wide spread skirmishes among various groups of people in Central Province. The Lozi for example, frequently attacked the Lenje of Mungule and Chitanda areas in much of the 1850s for cattle. The Nkoya too, frequently attacked the Lenje or much of the Southern part of modern day Kabwe for food, land, cattle and women.⁴ Roberts also informs us of the Bemba chiefs Mwamba and Chikwanda (II) who constantly pillaged the Lala of Serenje and the Swaka in Kapiri Mposhi area for cattle and iron products in the 1870s.⁵ So, by the time slave trade became prevalent in the region towards the latter part of the nineteenth century,⁶ the inhabitants of Central Province had started experiencing food problems due to tribal wars. As regards slave raids sources also note that many areas of pre-colonial Central Province were affected.⁷ The Ila, Kaonde and Sala of Mumbwa area were affected. Similarly the Lenje, the Swaka, the Ambo and the Lala of Serenje fell victims to the slave raids. However, most Lalas of Mkushi seem not to have been so much adversely affected

as they were active participants in slave trading. We drew this conclusion from J.T.

Munday's records in which he notes:

... It was only the west Lala (of Mkushi) that claimed all the ivory from elephants killed in the areas and who were able to obtain slaves in various ways, who did much field and household work and who often sold their subjects to traders. The western Lala only came to have their power and authority usurped in the late 1890s when slaves and ivory were no longer available.⁸

But on the whole we should safely assume that slave raids affected a large proportion of Central Province in the latter part of the nineteenth century. This entails many areas were depleted of people and so the manpower needed for food production was greatly reduced. Therefore, poverty due to shortage of food, must have been rampant in Central Province.

In short, with regard to the nature and geography of poverty in pre-colonial Central Province, we would assume that poverty caused by food shortages arising from both natural and man made calamities was the main form of poverty. A large proportion of pre-colonial Central Province was vulnerable to this form of poverty.

Natural Disasters and Poverty

Natural disasters in the pre-colonial era are to be considered in the light of epidemics, drought, floods, animal raids, locust invasions and pestilences. The link between natural disasters and poverty in the pre-colonial era lay in the destabilisation of the normal productive life of the inhabitants. Apart from this, it hinged upon the meagre resources of food that people depended on for their survival. Floods for instance, would sweep away a promising crop which was to provide food and seed for the following season. They would wash away huts which provided shelter for the people. They would also cause rivers and streams to overflow thereby rendering it difficult to travel from one

community to another and so denying them valuable communication. Drought would prevent the growth of an entire crop for the season. Moreover, rivers and streams would dry up, making it difficult for both human beings and animals whether wild or domestic, to find water to drink. An epidemic would kill people indiscriminately, thereby depriving the community of the productive elements of labour. Animals would equally die. Locust invasions would devour the entire crop in the fields while tsetse flies would kill large herds of cattle and people.

Pre-colonial Central Province was between 1870 and 1890 faced with this kind of situation. For example, in 1877 and 1878, there was a serious drought in the Zambian region which greatly affected the province.⁹ There was a severe shortage of food and water. Therefore, people were faced with acute starvation. The situation was so serious among the Lenje of Chief Chitanda area that historians have recorded it as having been termed by travellers, “an infernal country to travel through.”¹⁰ Other travellers also observed that there was lack of game in Lenje and Swaka areas due to drought.¹¹

This meant that during this period, the people lost their direct entitlement as they could not have access to food. Their efforts to produce the food were frustrated by drought. Equally their initiatives to forage were thrown into limbo as even wild food crops had failed. This explains the poverty of the people at the time. Since food was in short supply people starved and this left them susceptible to attacks by diseases, and possible death. Some became too weak to work. Others, with enough strength spent many hours walking for long distances in search of food, or any edible stuff in the bush. In short, the inhabitants of Central Province who previously had led a normal productive and prosperous life were suddenly thrown into conjunctural poverty of famine due to the

drought of 1877-78. This was worsened by the occurrence of rinderpest in the province beginning early 1889 through the mid 1890s. The results of rinderpest were devastating as large portions of game and cattle in the Lunsefwa and Mulungushi area were wiped out.¹² Much of the area of the Ila, Sala and Kaonde in Mumbwa area too was affected. Here large numbers of buffalo and eland were wiped out.¹³ Rinderpest is a disease which attacks cattle and some species of game that are ruminant or chew cud. The disease is highly contagious and anything that has been touched with an infected animal is capable of transmitting it.¹⁴

The prevalence of rinderpest in the province meant that poverty was created among the Lenje, Swaka, Ila, Kaonde and Sala peoples through the loss of their herds. Cattle among these people, especially the Lenje and the Ila was a symbol of wealth and social prestige. Any one with cattle would be considered a rich person and would not starve because it could be used in many ways – trade, marriage and food. The ravages of rinderpest implied that people who had been rich were reduced to destitution. So beginning in the mid 1890s the Lenje, Ila, Sala, Swaka and Kaonde experienced yet another form of conjuctural poverty which was in addition to the poverty they had experienced between the late 1870s and early 1880s. As a result affected communities were forced to remain in a state of struggle as they had hardly recovered from one calamity before they were struck by another.

The presence of tsetse fly in the Luangwa Valley from the 1890s, was a menace to the Lala of Serenje. Equally affected were the Swaka who had already suffered the droughts and the rinderpest epidemic. Among the Lala of Serenje, sleeping sickness arising from tsetse fly became a menace to the inhabitants.¹⁵ The disease had meanwhile

already depopulated large areas of some Island of Lake Victoria and Lake Nyanza in East Africa by the early 1880.¹⁶ At that time the only method of killing the fly was clearing the bush where *Glossina palpalis* bred. One of the first symptoms of the disease is the swelling of two glands one on either side of the spine at the back of the neck. The patient gradually loses all energy and dies very easily.

In the 1890s, therefore, quite a large proportion of the Lala and Swaka especially those close to the Luangwa Valley and the game reserve area were faced with this problem. What this entailed was little productive work could be done especially in relation to agricultural activities. Those not infected by the disease had to care for the sick or spend time trying to find remedies. All this was done at the expense of productive work. The result was poverty for the Lala people. A similar situation arose among the Swaka, who were afflicted by sleeping sickness and the smallpox epidemic which caused heavy mortality among them.¹⁷ The loss of men, women and children, the number which sources have not been able to establish meant loss of substantial productive workforce. This led to food shortages and poverty.

Natural disasters in pre-colonial Central Province could therefore be said to have contributed much to the creation of conjunctural poverty of the inhabitants. In every occurrence, people lost access to food or to the means of producing food. They were incapacitated in so many ways by forces of nature which were beyond their control. They lost their entitlement to basics of survival which resulted in suffering. The natural disasters however, were not the same in every community. In one community, it would be an epidemic, while in another it might be a conglomerate of calamities. But what is

significant to note is the fact that whatever factor or factors besieged a community poverty was created and people were subjected to misery.

Warfare and Poverty

Conflicts were a common feature in many pre-colonial Zambian societies. But the most prevalent type of conflict was that which involved different ethnic groups. The other type of conflict quite common in pre-colonial Zambian societies, involved migrants moving to areas already occupied by other groups of people. The new arrivals would attempt to grab land and other property from the owners of the area and war would ensue. At times the new arrivals would want to establish their authority over the existing chiefs. A good example was that of Mukuni Kapansha and his Lunda group from Mwantayamvo who established his chieftainship among the Lenje in the early eighteenth century.¹⁸ After trial settlements and wars accompanied by offers of better protection, the Bena Mukuni subjected the Lenje to terror. He grabbed their cattle and women and so forced those who detested his rule to flee from their villages.¹⁹

Other similar groups like the Lima and Lamba including the Batwa around the Lukanga swamps, were equally besieged by the Mukuni. The Kaonde and Ba-sala on the western parts of modern day Chibombo were conquered and fled southwards across the Kafue.²⁰ All these groups which were fought and conquered had their land, cattle and sometimes women taken away from them. During this period, the people had been involved in ivory trade with the Portuguese and Mombari traders which was disrupted by the raids. What all this entailed was poverty for the conquered groups because their very source of survival - cattle, land and other resources were taken away from them. Even in the areas where they later settled, it took time for them to adjust to the environment and

start their normal productive activities. Sometimes they were subjected to perpetual attacks, thereby subjecting them to more poverty. This was the case with the Kaonde who faced perpetual Lozi attacks in the nineteenth century. However, they later managed to hedge them off by sending tributes to the Lozi chiefs.²¹

Wars and conquests as earlier noted, destabilised communities and destroyed the economic and political base of the people. This was even more serious in the light of the many natural disasters that befell the people. When conflicts or conquests occurred during hard times famine was aggravated, resulting in increased poverty levels.

We also need to note that tribal wars or conflicts posed a security menace on the people and the communities in general. People constantly lived in fear and so failed to apply themselves to tasks as they normally would have done. People feared that if they produced a lot of food the stronger groups would pillage it. So they usually ended up producing much less than they would have done under normal circumstances. This was a situation of poverty too, as people's food requirements could not be adequately met.²²

This could have been the case with the Lala when they were incessantly stormed by the Bemba between 1879 and 1890. The Lala had their Kaffir corn, beans, millet, pumpkins and cattle plundered by the Bemba who were known to be poor cultivators.²³ In this way, the Lala, who within their own limits had the ability to produce enough food to sustain their lives, were thrown into conjuctural poverty by a man-made calamity. Hunger and suffering became part of the Lala society when previously this had not been the case. Munday noted of the self-sufficiency of the Lala before the Bemba incursions as follows:

The Kinship villages among the Swaka-Lala tended to be small and quite self-contained, each producing that was needed for everyday use except cloth ... Each

village lived a life more isolated from other villages as they had what they needed.²⁴

The Lala were not only self-sufficient in food in the 1870s, but also in iron products through their skillful iron working activities. But even these products were plundered by the Bemba and the Bisa. We note during the same period, Chikwanda (II) of the Bisa, levying the Lala smelters in iron. Chief Muchinka of the Lala weary of Bisa attacks submitted to Chikwanda by taking iron products to him.²⁵ In the meantime, widespread Bisa and Bemba attacks extended as far south of Lunchu river in Serenje, near the present day Kabwe, among the Swaka. The Bemba and Bisa seized food and cattle and forced Lala communities to flee. Seizing food and cattle from the Lala and Swaka meant depleting their limited stocks of livestock. These people could not afford to maintain their dietary needs and so poverty became endemic among affected communities.

The advantage the Bemba and Bisa had over the Lala and Swaka tribes lay in the latter groups' weak military defence. The Lala and Swaka chiefs offered neither resistance nor defence against the raiding groups. In many cases Lala chiefs fled from their areas carrying only a few people with them. When they did not flee they stayed inside their stockaded villages.²⁶ Munday noted the following on this:

Many Lala today speak of their olden chiefs who sat on lion's skins and who boasted of having been anointed with human blood, and whose young clansmen had worn scarlet feathers as a sign of having killed a man but did nothing for their people in their extremity.²⁷

Therefore, in much of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Lala were insecure and vulnerable to attacks or raids of the more daring groups. This denied the Lala economic prosperity and political stability.

Issues of defence and security in war-torn societies therefore become extremely crucial in determining the course of development and prosperity of a society. The Lala society was in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s in poverty partly because of attacks from ferocious neighbouring groups. We would therefore argue, that strong militarised societies like the Bemba, Ngoni, Lozi, and others, were able to keep out poverty of famine nature from their communities because they had strong armies. Inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province were constantly raided and thrown into poverty because of their weak military defences.

We would therefore disagree with the assumption of some European explorers and settlers like Kirk²⁸ and Johnston²⁹ who believed that the shifting of villages and settlements among African communities, contributed greatly to their poverty. What such an assumption seemed to ignore was the issue of security. The inhabitants of pre-colonial societies were in constant search for security. When they found it they settled and stabilised. They could then produce their food, averting poverty in the process.

Slave Raiding and Poverty

In this sub-section, we shall discuss slave raids and the impact they had on Central Province in relation to poverty-creation. We shall concern ourselves with slave raids related to commercial slave trade that depleted many pre-colonial societies of their populations. This is in contrast to domestic slavery, which we feel, did not have any devastating effect on the societies.

Slave raiding was the main problem that faced the Bantu rulers of Central Africa from the middle of the nineteenth century. This was influenced by what Gann has termed the “gun powder revolution”.³⁰ In this revolution, three kinds of goods were extremely

essential-wild rubber, ivory and men.³¹ Over the years, however, rubber lost its importance, leaving ivory and slaves as the main trade items. It was this phenomenon which was among other calamities which threw many Central African societies into serious impoverishment. Central Province was to be of no exception to the ravages of this activity.

The exchange in guns, ivory and slaves brought many streams of invaders from the coasts of Angola and Mozambique into the heart of Central Africa.³² The Arabs whose caravans reached the Great Lakes and Congo basin during the 1860s was one stream. There was also the Yao from Nyasaland, a second principal group. From the Zambezi came the Portuguese half-castes who pillaged the Luangwa valley. And from Angola came the Mbundu who went as far as the mouth of the Kafue in about 1878.³³ Local agents like the Bisa and Chikunda were among the most ferocious in slave transactions.

The effects of these multiple invasions on local communities were far reaching contrary to what Gann seems to believe. Gann, in his assessment of slave trade, argues that the acquisition of guns and gun powder, cloth and beads, strengthened rulers and improved peoples' lives. He also argues that trade caravans stimulated food production due to the demand for food.³⁴ Such an assumption was not true, for weaker societies as the availability of guns encouraged chiefs of stronger societies conquer weaker groups. It also made warfare invariably uncontrollable. Slaves were captured from the weak societies. There was poverty and large scale misery as Foskett noted of Dr. John Kirk's experiences in Central Africa, thus:

In many places we noted burned villages, the wail of dying and the smoke of burning was common place. The country was without a population and food untouched in the fields. Grain of all sorts had been thrown away and destroyed (sic).³⁵

A similar observation, regarding the devastating effects of slave trade was made

by Johnston. He wrote:

From the middle of eighteenth century to the near end of the nineteenth century, British Central Africa has been devastated by the slave trade. Whole tribes have been cut up and scattered. Vast districts depopulated,; Arts and crafts and useful customs have been forgotten in the flight before the slave raiders. The whole region was kept in a state of incessant turmoil by the attempt to supply the slave markets of the Zambezi, of Madagascar, of Zanzibar (sic) of the United States.³⁶

With regard to the Zambian region and Central Province in particular by the mid 1850s, slave raids were rampant. Richards argues that during this period, the Bemba of Chitimukulu, held sway over the Lala and Lamba country for slaves and ivory.³⁷ Gann also notes the heavy presence of Yao traders, with the Bisa engaged in acquiring slaves among the Lala, Lamba and Swaka groups.³⁸ Meanwhile W.F. Balbock recorded severe Ngoni raids on Lala villages. The Ngoni, who entered Lala land from the Luano valley, slaughtered old men and women while capturing young men and young women and children. Those captured were sold or killed. Those who survived or managed to escape starved to death, for there was no food in the villages.³⁹ Similar accounts by Roberts indicate that more serious attacks on Lala society were launched by Mperembe, son of Zwangendaba. Slaves were sold to the Yao, while crops were plundered or destroyed at will,⁴⁰ bringing serious misery and poverty to the Lala country.

The position of the Lala worsened in the late 1870s when an Arab slave trader, Salem bin Nasur also known as 'Komakoma,' established his station among the Senga on the upper Luangwa.⁴¹ Sooner, another Arab trader called 'Kapandansalu' built his village in Chief Chibale's area in Serenje.⁴² This meant intensified slave raiding in the Lala and Swaka country. Meanwhile, the Bisa and the Chikunda half-caste traders could not be left out in the share of the Lala prey. An American journalist passing through the

Serenje-Mpika region, noted the following of Chikwanda in relation to slave raids and trade:

... sells slaves and ivory to the Wangama (Arab or Swahili) traders, some of whom are always in his village. Two caravans left for Chiguanda's from Mlozi's stockades or rather Tembe, at Kuwali's (Chibale's) while we were there. They both had cloth, guns, powder and cattle and said they were going solely for slaves (sic). The Malala have but few old flintlocks, the Awemba unlimited supplies for guns and ammunitions.⁴³

This scenario is evident of the high degree of slave raids in Lala society. This, as noted earlier, could only be attributed to the weak security system that the Lala had. The ultimate consequence was the impoverishment of the area. Since men and women including children who formed the productive force were taken away, the Lala society was reduced to desolation.

There is also evidence among some ethnic groups of pre-colonial Central Province which were not adversely affected by slave raids, in the nineteenth century. Written sources indicate that the Lenje especially of Chipeco, did not suffer from the raids. This was because they took part in the lucrative trade as carriers.⁴⁴ They helped the Portuguese and local groups like the Kunda and Nsenga in the transportation of ivory, copper, cattle and slaves to Zumbo and Tete in Mozambique.⁴⁵ Therefore, to some extent the Lenje could be said to have enjoyed some limited prosperity during this period as compared to the Lala-Swaka group which suffered poverty from the raids. However, by the 1880s, the Lenje began to face serious challenge from, the Lozi and the Nkoya, who traded with the Ovimbundu from Angola.⁴⁶ A missionary-traveller Gielgud, acknowledged large numbers of Lenje men, women and children being captured by slave raiders in 1890. He appealed to the British South Africa Company (BSACO) administration to curtail the slave trading activities in the area.⁴⁷

Muntemba has also noted how the prolonged activity of slave trade had depleted the population among the Lenje, Ila and Sala until after the mid nineteenth century.⁴⁸ Archival sources confirm this. They indicate active slave trade on the western borders of Barotse and the North-western borders with the Mombari and Portuguese slavers, as late as 1910.⁴⁹ Many Lenjes have been noted to have fled from their settlements, running away from slavers. Therefore by the twentieth century, the Lenje had been so much affected by tribal wars and slave raids which threw them into a serious state of impoverishment and left a vivid physical mark on them. We get this gloomy picture of the Lenje from the Land Commission Report of 1943:

The Lenje are a backward people, of poor physique, as it is to be expected of a race that was for years subjected to raids by more powerful tribes and slavers ...⁵⁰

It is very clear from this description that prolonged slave raids on the Lenje left a permanent physical mark on them – poor physique. The report reflects the severity of slave raids in the creation of poverty not only among the Lenje society but other societies too.

The impact of slave raids as already noted, was severe in many parts of pre-colonial Central Province. Communities were broken up. But what was more significant was that whoever was taken away, went with their potentiality and skills. As Daniel Kunda Kawila, a headman of Chinfunde village in Chief Muchinka's area in Serenje explained:

Most of the intelligent people, like medicine men, skillful hunters, artisans and others were sold as slaves because chiefs and their Chilolos feared they would lose the allegiance of the people to them. No wonder Europe and America benefited, from our own people. This can only be blamed on the jealousies of the chiefs. The intelligent and the industrious, were taken away. Those were the people who could have helped their communities prosper. Meanwhile, those with potential to bring prosperity developed fear. So they could not expose their talents and abilities lest they were sold

as slaves. The end result was that Serenje area, at least in Muchinka's area, remained impoverished and backward to this day...⁵¹

This scenario clearly depicts how vulnerable communities in Central Province became impoverished during the slave era.

There were instances when, crops were left to waste since the potential labour resource was taken away. Only the old, lame, and sick remained in villages to face the vagaries of starvation. It became unsafe to travel and normal trade activities ceased. Those who managed to escape the 'slavers' trap' could still not move around freely. They had to spend much of their time hiding or fleeing from one place to the other. There exists two caves in Serenje at Bimbi and Nyenje hills for example, which sources indicated were hiding places for the Lala against the slave raiders – the Ngoni, Bisa and Bemba.⁵² About fifty to eighty people could have sought refuge in each of the caves at a given time. A grain store with sticks forming the frame still stands today in the caves. Pots and other items for cooking were also found. This could mean people spent long periods in the caves hiding from the raids. Leaders and their followers were also known to have fled their areas. Headman Mulungwe under Chief Chitina of the Swaka on the Lunsemfwa river, fled from Ngoni slave raiders to Belgium Congo with a large following in the 1880s.⁵³ This depleted the Swaka area of productive labour. So in addition to losing direct entitlement (loss of ability for food production), people also lost their exchange entitlement as they could not engage in trade, worsening the poverty situation.

Oral sources also indicate enhanced growth of witchcraft or the use of invisible powers during the slave era.⁵⁴ This was in desperation to escape from the raiders. What came out of this practice was very retrogressive. Inhabitants concentrated their energies and time, hunting for such charms instead of doing productive work. Worse still, they

started using such charms to destroy other peoples' lives, especially those who were industrious. As a result more poverty was created, as people developed fear to grow more food lest they were bewitched. Scarcity of food therefore continued in many areas.⁵⁵

Apart from dislocating communities, slave raids also caused profound damage to the ecology which further exacerbated poverty among the people. According to Vail, prior to the slave trade era, people had followed extensive agricultural systems which required high input of labour. With the depletion of populations arising from slave raids, coupled with natural disasters, such agricultural systems were weakened. As human labour was removed the productive capacity of the areas was reduced. The result was the appearance of ecological disasters such as the tsetse fly which had already proved a serious problem in East Africa, and another troublesome insect – the jigger scientifically known as *palex pentrans* from South America. The insect made its first appearance in East Central Africa in 1890 on the coast of Mozambique.⁵⁶ The pest burrows under the skin of human beings to lay its eggs, with consequent loss of limbs due to blood poisoning.⁵⁷ The disease was known to have existed in the late 1890s in Serenje among the inhabitants of Kanona area.⁵⁸ And oral sources in Serenje and Kapiri Mposhi areas have alluded to a strange disease of the feet which made its victims fail to walk properly in the early years of the twentieth century.⁵⁹ This could have been Jiggers. Mourbray also noted of Jiggers and swollen eyes as a common feature among the east Lala and those south of Serenje.⁶⁰

Slave trade created a stigma among the inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province. People became suspicious of any white person or group of white persons they

saw. Kirk noted that “whenever a new party of white travellers and their carriers arrived in a village, people went into hiding as they could not trust them, thinking they were slavers.”⁶¹ This attitude led to the formation of closed societies through out the 1890s. In Central Province, this attitude led to the delay in the inhabitants’ acceptance of schools and dispensaries into their communities, early in the twentieth century. For instance, the Lala, chiefs were known to have shown no interest in the school at Chitambo mission in 1907.⁶² Chief Chipepo of the Lenje also turned away the Catholic missionaries wishing to establish a school in his area in the early 1920s.⁶³ And in the 1930s in Lunchu area in Mkushi, the inhabitants shunned the dispensary suspecting it to be a death trap for Africans, to serve European desires.⁶⁴ This situation resulted in the creation of more poverty in the province. The stigma from slave trade had become deeply entrenched among the people.

So unlike what Chabatama notes of the Luvale and other tribes of pre-colonial North-western Province, who responded favourably to the long distance trade caravans,⁶⁵ the ethnic groups of pre-colonial Central Province were traumatised by the activities of trade caravans. While among the Luvale, food production of both new and old crops was stimulated by the demands of the caravans, among the Lala and the Lenje, the inhabitants were thrown into poverty, as they had to flee or hide away from the slavers.

We have therefore established that slave trade, like warfare, was very much responsible for the creation of poverty among the inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province between the 1880s and the 1890s. Most of the areas of the province were affected, through the loss of the most productive elements of societies. The process not only led to the destabilisation of communities, but also overturned the ecological set up.

Pre-colonial Survival Initiatives against Poverty

At the height of poverty, households adopt varied patterns of behaviour in response to it. They may become violent against the governing authorities or simply remain resigned, accepting the situation helplessly. At times they may seek gratuitous relief from others or may move away from places of poverty and go to havens of prosperity. Writing about the famine of Bengal of 1941-1943, Greenough, notes varied initiatives the Bengalis adopted after passing through a period of difficulty. He notes:

...heads of households in great many cases adopted to their situation with acts of abandonment. Spouses were deserted, children were turned out or sold ... These clear immoral acts were understood ambivalently, however, being intended to preserve those actors whose survival was conceded by all to be essential for the reconstruction of society and the economy in the famine's aftermath.⁶⁶

In the African context, pre-colonial societies too had ways of facing their poverty in order to survive. Illiffe explains how the poor in pre-colonial Africa relied more on their own effort to survive.⁶⁷ People learnt to survive on their own because of the harsh conditions that prevailed at the time. Illiffe notes thus:

By protecting themselves from famine, by exploiting the resources of the bush, by hawking or begging or stealing, by endurance or industry or guile, by resourcefulness of the blind or the courage of the cripple, by the ambition of the young or the patience of the old-by all these means the African poor survived in their harsh world.⁶⁸

The inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province, fall within Greenough's and Illiffe's conception of survival against adversity. In this sub-section we are therefore going to consider how the inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province managed to survive in the midst of disasters between 1850 and 1890. We shall also explore the mitigating initiatives that were put in place to prevent poverty from encroaching on their communities. The survival initiatives were short term and long term.

Short Term Initiatives

Short term initiatives, constituted immediate reactions to the calamities that befell the households. These included food gathering and foraging, hunting, distress migrations, and others. Most of these initiatives were carried out as group initiatives, since communities were organized along clan lineages, or depending on the gravity of the situation, they would be done on individual basis. During the 1877 – 1878 famine period, sources have indicated that both among the Lenje and Lala tribes, people went into the bush in groups, to look for fruits, tubers, roots and other edibles.⁶⁹ Drought forced bands of some Lala people to trek to the land of the Aushi in Luapula in search of food. Others migrated to the Bisa area of Chief Mpumba in Mpika.⁷⁰ Although food gathering formed part of the day to day activities in pre-colonial Central Province, the activity was intensified when there was a food crisis.⁷¹

Another common initiative which was intensified during famine was hunting. Small animals such as mice, mole, rabbits and birds were killed. They would be roasted or cooked as relish or sauce. During starvation, hunting for survival involved men, women and children. During such times big game would be rare as the large animals would have migrated to other areas where they would find food and water. So every one would be on the look out for smaller game which involved little risk to kill.⁷² During favourable times however, hunting would be transformed into a mainstay activity, with big game being hunted down by men and their sons. Muntemba has for example noted how important this activity had been in the 1850s among the Lenje. These killed elephants, buffaloes and rhinos and sold the tusks to the Chikunda.⁷³ The activity was

also noted among the Lala in the 1860s who killed elephants and sold the tusks to the Bisa in exchange for calico and gun powder.⁷⁴

Famine relief through the institution of Chiefs and individual patronage although not common, is said to have existed in some pre-colonial African societies. During the Great famine in Ethiopia 1888 – 1892, Siamwiza notes the monarchy having given food to starving people.⁷⁵ The Ndebele king was also known to have kept large reserves of food and provided for the poor.⁷⁶ The Bemba too were customarily known to have had two open royal gardens where no restrictions applied. Anybody in need of food could get it.⁷⁷ But among the people of Central Province. There was no institution of chiefs to provide relief food.

Lala chiefs believed whatever they owned was their own and could not be shared out. In fact, legends have it that it was the chiefs that depended more on the people than the people depending on the chiefs.⁷⁸ Chiefs demanded gifts and tribute from the people on several occasions. The only notable concern they exhibited during crisis was the performance of rituals and offering of sacrifices.⁷⁹ Sources indicate similar attitude among Swaka chiefs. Among the Lenje chiefs, Muntemba notes a similar behaviour. She notes thus:

The Lenje chiefs did not undertake any economic activities. So they could not provide the institution of chiefs for relief. They depended on tribute. Subjects gave tribute in the form of agricultural produce such as grain and other forms ... Chiefs believed they offered protection for the people ... At times the chiefs demanded grain extraordinarily and the people had to give up whether they had enough food for themselves or not. Sometimes fields were captured leaving the subjects to starve ...⁸⁰

So the institution which would have been expected to provide for people in a crisis turned out to be the very agent of poverty creation. When field had been captured, people had to resort to food gathering or begging, to survival. However, unlike the Lala-

Swaka system, the Lenje system did allow food secure relatives to give food to starving kinfolk or neighbours. This may be similar to what Siamwiza postulates as the institution of 'big men' or 'great men'⁸¹ which existed in some areas of traditional Africa. Big men were the prosperous, but generous people ready to provide for the poor. Another way in which the 'rich' helped the starving among the Lenje was through the system of 'food for work'-'**Imbile**'. People would only be given food if they worked for it.⁸² It helped cushion people's suffering among the Lenje unlike among the Lala-Swaka communities where it was absent.

Long Term Initiatives

After 1860, more advanced initiatives of dealing with poverty were evident in pre-colonial Central Province. These were fishing, iron working, cultivation and cattle rearing. These activities were knitted together by the process of trade.

Fishing

This was an important survival strategy for certain people of Central Province. It was more frequently practised among the Batwa who settled in the Lukanga Swamp and among the Swaka of the Lunsemfwa – Mulungushi area, east of the present day Kabwe district.⁸³ It was their main economic activity. They used fish for relish and for exchange with other items such as grain and salt with the Lala and the Bisa.⁸⁴ The Batwa caught fish using poison. Among the Lala, fishing was not a popular activity. This could be due to the fact that in much of the Lala area, streams were known to have only small fish and so, the inhabitants preferred fish from other areas like from the Luapula river and the Lukanga Swamps.⁸⁵ Among the Lenje, fishing was mainly carried out by women using baskets or poisoned plants through a method called 'kukupa'.⁸⁶ The men were more

involved in other activities such as cultivation and hunting. The Sala and the Ila did not carry out fishing on a large scale, probably because their fish requirements were met by supplies from the Batwa.

We note here, how the dynamics of gender and the geographical set up of a place affected the economic activities of different people in a given region. The Batwa lived around the waters and so fishing became an important activity for them only to be done by men. The Lenje attached less importance to fishing, and so left it to women. Meanwhile, all the groups managed to meet their needs of fish through trade.

Iron Working

Iron working was an important activity among some tribes of pre-colonial Central Province. The Lenje of Kabwe Kafulamase area were known to be good iron workers and produced fish hooks, spears, hoes and other iron items,⁸⁷ which they exchanged for other valuables from other groups. For instance, they exchanged with the Batwa for fish and with the Bisa for salt. There is also some evidence of iron working in Mumbwa and Mkushi districts, but not as active as that of the Kafulamase area. However, Serenje district was known to have produced the finest iron products and the Lala people were renowned as a nation of blacksmiths.⁸⁸ This could explain why in the 1870s Chikwanda (II) of Mpika was levying the Lala smelters in iron. And Chief Muchinka of the Lala weary of fighting submitted by giving hoes and other products to Chief Chikwanda of the Bisa.⁸⁹

Iron working, which was mainly a men's activity had between 1860 and 1890 placed the Lala, especially those of Musamani in Mailo area, and Kafulamase Lenje in Kabwe on the road to prosperity. With iron, the Lala made products which they

exchanged for other items. For example, the Lala engaged in fish trade with the Batwa and the Lenje around the Lukanga swamps. They also obtained skins, beads, cloth and salt from the Bisa. This was prosperity for the Lala. It would also be of interest to note that this prosperity was distributed to other societies through trade. Such interactions did not only exchange people's economic well-being, but also enhanced social relationships among them. Through these relations security was guaranteed as ethnic groups found it unnecessary to fight their neighbours with whom they enjoyed good rapport. The result was the strengthening of the economic base of the economically weak communities. Poverty in this way, was averted.

Cultivation

Growing of crops through cultivation was an important activity in pre-colonial Central Province. Siamwiza argues that as a major survival initiative, that had developed over a period of time throughout pre-colonial Africa, cultivation was closely dependent on the inhabitants' knowledge of their environment.⁹⁰ In pre-colonial Central Province, a variety of settlements existed which determined the kind of agricultural activity people would be engaged in. The Ambo of Luano Valley for instance, occupied river basins and *dambos*.⁹¹ This was probably due to their knowledge on the retention capacity of alluvial soils. Similarly, the Batwa occupied the marshy areas of the Lukanga Swamps in contrast to the Lenje who occupied the drier areas of the mainland.⁹² The Lala occupied dry woodland areas, and had good knowledge of the soils. They were aware of the need for potash to neutralise the acidity and so employed the 'slash and burn' method – the *chitemene* system. The burnt branches provided ash which neutralised the acid for a

good crop yield.⁹³ Equally of importance was their knowledge of which crops to grow in particular types of soils and at which times of the year.

Generally, hoe and axe cultivation was the main method of agriculture among most ethnic groups in Central Province in the 1850s. Kaffir corn, sorghum, maize, yam, cucurbits and sweet potatoes were commonly grown among the Lenje, Ila and Sala. Later, the Lenje were able to grow cotton and tobacco. They exchanged cotton with the Bisa for salt. Tobacco was exchanged with the Tonga in the Southern parts of the region, for cattle and salt.⁹⁴ Among the Swaka and Lala, finger millet formed the main crop followed by sorghum. Maize, groundnuts, beans, pumpkins and others were grown as subsidiary crops.⁹⁵ The Ambo grew maize throughout the year. They also grew pumpkins and beans. Later, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Ambo learnt to grow tobacco for exchange.⁹⁶

Hoe cultivation in Central Province reached its height in the 1870s when iron working intensified.⁹⁷ We therefore note a very positive bearing of iron on food production, which is critical in averting poverty. Both men and women were involved in cultivation, though there existed a form of division of labour. Tasks involving the axe such as felling trees and lopping branches were done by men. Women concentrated on tasks involving the hoe such as making ridges. Here we note the dynamism of women as an essential element in food production. Among the Lala and Swaka, the *chitemene* system required women to carry and gather felled branches for burning.⁹⁸

It would be significant to note that in most of the pre-colonial ethnic groups of Central Province, labour for cultivation or for agricultural activities was organised around the family or household unit. This constituted the main production basis. It consisted of

the husband, wife, children and sometimes dependants. In some ethnic groups like the Lala, a wife would have her own field too. Such a practice, ensured a high production of food in the household. When a household was overwhelmed with work, it would invite other people through a work party. After the task of the day, the work party members would be given grain, beer, meat or any other food available. Work parties – '*imbile*' were common and were a source of food sufficiency for the communities.⁹⁹ The Lenje also allowed slaves to produce their own food.

Thus the availability of arable land, coupled with good knowledge of the environment that the people had, to which was added a wide range of labor resource, invariably contributed to surplus food production in pre-colonial Central Province. This meant cutting down on the starvation of the people as they were provided with safety valves against poverty.

Cattle Rearing

The most important form of livestock among pre-colonial societies of Central Province was cattle. Cattle was an important resource among the Sala, Ila and Lenje. Among these ethnic groups, cattle had become a measure of wealth and social prestige. People built up cattle herds to raise their social and economic status, particularly so, among those who were not members of the ruling class. This concept was so firmly held by the Ila and the Lenje that a person without cattle was perceived as poor.¹⁰⁰ Even women owned cattle. Stocks were normally accumulated through trade and bride price (*lobola*). Although cattle was rarely slaughtered for meat, the Lenje obtained milk from it. The Lala and the Swaka did not rear much cattle.¹⁰¹

So while the Ila and Lenje drew their wealth from many sources in the nineteenth century, cultivation, iron working, fishing and cattle rearing, the Lala only had limited economic activities. They mainly depended on cultivation and iron working. However, they were saved from desolation by trade with the other tribes. This would therefore mean that within a given circumstance, the Lenje-Ila group was able to enjoy a higher level of prosperity than the Lala-Swaka group, considering the disparities in the number of economic activities both groups were engaged in.

We have noted that the inhabitants of pre-colonial Central Province had a variety of initiatives both short term and long term, to avert poverty. This shows the inhabitants were not passive, but active in their quest for survival.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have argued that poverty in the form of famine, existed in pre-colonial Central Province between 1850 and 1890. We have also argued that both natural and man-made calamities, were responsible for the frequent poverty cases among the inhabitants. However, the inhabitants did not just watch poverty encroach in their communities. They were actively involved in averting it. They did this through short term initiatives, immediate responses to crisis, and long term initiatives which were measures put in place well before a calamity besieged the communities. It was these long term initiatives which were often frustrated by calamities induced by man or nature, plunging the self-sufficient inhabitants into conjuctural poverty.¹⁰²

END NOTES

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2 B. Stenfamizyn, *Social and Ritual Life of the Ambo of Northern Rhodesia* (London and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1964), xvii.

3 J.M. Mourbray, *In South Central Africa* (London: Constable and Company Ltd, 1912), 58.

4 Interview with John Kashonka, Nkabila Village, Chief Liteta, Chibombo District, 24/06/04.

5 A.D. Roberts, *A History of the Bemba* (London: Longman, 1973), 163.

6 Slave raids became more acute even after the activity had been banned. Until about the 1870s slave trading was confined to the coastal areas of Angola and Mozambique. But by the 1890s, slave raiding had gone further into the interior. It was during this period when large proportions of people in Central Province were taken. Sources cannot mention how many people were taken, but they are agreed it was a substantial number.

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8 J.T. Munday, "Some Traditions of the Nyendwa clan of Northern Rhodesia," in *Bantu Studies* 1939 – 1940, 14, 448.

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10 Siamwiza, "A History of Famine in Zambia," 329, quoting F. Courtney Selous, in *Hunters' wandering in Africa*, (Cape Town: London, 1907).

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- 21 NAZ/KDA/1, Broken Hill District Note Book, 1902-1962 Vol. III.
- 22 Muntemba "Rural underdevelopment in Zambia," 26.
- 23 Interview with Daniel Kunda Kawila, Headman, Chifunde Village, Chief Muchinka, Serenje District, 28/05/04.
- 24 A.J. Hanna, *The Story of the Rhodesians and Nyasaland* (London: Farber and Farber, 1960), 29.
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- 28 Munday, "Some Traditions of the Nyendwa clan," 450.
- 29 R. Foscett, *The Zambesi Journal and letters of Dr. John Kirk 1858 – 63, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd 1965), 388.
- 30 H.H. Johnston, *British Central Africa* (London: Mathew and Company 1987), p. 156.
- 31 L. H. Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia : Early days to 1953* (London: Chatto and Windus 1964), p. 21.
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- 34 Gann, *A History of Northern Rhodesia*, 23.
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- 42 Roberts, *A History of the Bemba*, 277.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE COLONIAL POLITICAL ECONOMY AND POVERTY, 1890 – 1945

Introduction

The period beginning 1890, marked an era in which Zambia began to experience the effects of foreign domination. This started in 1890 when the British South Africa Company (BSACo) assumed control of the territory. Company rule lasted up to 1923, after which the British government took over the region, from 1924 to 1964.¹ The events, changes and experiences that occurred during this era, are what in this chapter, form the ‘Colonial Political-Economy’. During this period the local people were ushered into an alien political-economic system. For example, they had to shift their allegiance from their Chiefs to the European governors. They also had to adjust to a new taxation system, in contrast to the tribute system. Even poverty took a new dimension.

In this chapter, we shall therefore discuss poverty in Central Province within the framework of these new changes and events. Between 1890 and 1945, conjuctural poverty of famine nature continued to haunt several parts of Central Province. Internecine wars and slave raids were no longer a major cause of poverty, but natural disasters and the effects of industrialisation played a critical role in poverty creation. In addition, socio-cultural factors such as religious activities like those of the Watch Tower Movement contributed to the poverty of the period under discussion. Survival initiatives also changed during this period. While traditional coping initiatives survived, new institutionalised strategies emerged.

Natural Disasters in the Colonial Political Economy

Between 1890 and 1908 Central Province did not experience a major famine. This was because there were no serious disasters. However, between 1908 and 1912, most parts of the province suffered famine owing to the occurrence of droughts, which left people in poverty. Mumbwa district was so acutely hit by the 1908-1909 drought that the missionaries at Nambala Mission were forced to close the school as there was no food to feed the students.² The situation deteriorated further in 1909 when the rains started late, making most of the sown grain to decay. Apart from starvation, the grain shortage in Mumbwa and other areas in the province resulted in a sharp increase in grain prices, from 4s per bag of maize in 1908 to 2 pounds in March 1909.³ This obviated further suffering of the people as many could not afford to buy the grain. So the people living in poverty at the time were those who had no food and could not afford to buy grain even from their neighbours. This situation forced people to survive on wild fruits and roots in most areas of the province.⁴

In 1921-1922, rains were reported to have come late in some parts of the province. Crops such as maize and sorghum started off badly and failed. The situation was critical in Mumbwa where maize failed.⁵ In Mkushi the situation was also disastrous as maize and even pumpkins failed completely.⁶ A similar report was given of the Lenje in Kabwe rural where by April 1922, people were already foraging for food. Water was in short supply as streams and rivers had dried up. People had difficulties in finding water for their cattle. This was worse in Kachindi and Liempe villages.⁷ So people not only suffered shortage of food, but were also threatened by the impending loss of their

cattle, their major source of wealth. This led to impoverishment among the Ila and Lenje who so much valued cattle.

Central Province also experienced poor rainfall during the 1929-1930 season. Kabwe District was the worst hit. Chisamba received only 24.2 milliliters compared with 31.62 millilitres of normal average.⁸ The drought caused serious food shortages but poverty of famine was less prevalent due to the previous season's abundance in other areas of the district. Those with less or no food could buy from those who had some.

A similar crisis occurred in 1930-1931 when rains fell sparingly. There was wide-spread crop failure and the situation led to serious food shortages. The Jesuit fathers noted in their memoirs that the food crisis was so acute that by Christmas time of 1931, many people were reported to be looking for food in the bush. This led to the Christmas celebrations at Mpima being attended by only a handful of parishioners.⁹ Chief Chamuka's area was the worst hit and village headmen were compelled to ask for relief from the government. Luano Valley in Mkushi district, was also seriously hit. The Jesuit priests also attributed the famine situation in Luano valley to long distances which could not allow the people to travel to centres where they could beg for food from those who had.¹⁰ A severe drought and isolation of the area amounted to severe famine and poverty in the area.

Another poor rainy season was recorded in 1937 in Chiefs Ntitima and Mulande's areas of the Lenje. Crops had failed and cattle had no water to drink. A similar situation was noted in areas along the Lukanga swamp where 50 percent of the crop was estimated as lost.¹¹ The yield was only sufficient for subsistence. This meant the people lost their exchange entitlement. They had no cash to purchase other requirements. In Serenje the

crop yield was low, a development which authorities attributed to lack of commitment on the part of the people.¹²

Flooding also contributed to the creation of poverty in some parts of Central Province between 1890 and 1945. Excessive rains destroyed crops. For example, in January 1915 and in December 1917, torrential rains caused serious flooding in Chingombe area of Mkushi, and destroyed crops indiscriminately.¹³ Reports indicated that the floods became so serious that on 13th December 1917, almost all the paths and bridges were destroyed. The land in areas like Mwenda, Mibanga and Fipera was partially ruined and crops were unquestionably devastated.¹⁴ And it was recorded in the memoir that “the Spectre of famine looms nearer at the moment than it did during the last three years.”¹⁵

Floods damaged huts. Meanwhile, the sweeping of bridges and destruction of paths cut off people from other communities where they could have got help. So trade and beggary were curtailed. This sent people into conjuctural poverty. In contrast to this, during the same period, 1916-1917 season, Mumbwa's Chitanda's area was noted to be experiencing hunger due to shortage of rain the previous season. Equally in Chibuluma area food and water shortage were acute and people were living on wild fruits and begging from neighbours.¹⁶ At Mboshya village, in the Luano Valley, floods swept the entire crop in 1940. People survived by begging from their neighbours who had been spared from the floods.¹⁷

Another notable agent of poverty between 1890 and 1945 was animal raiding or marauding. In the 1920s, for example, elephants were reported to be too numerous in Mkushi District. This was worse in Chiefs Kanyenshya, Mulungwe and Mboloma. The

numerity in elephants was a big threat to the food security of the area. It was noted in a report thus:

In the dry season they inhabit thick bush and patches of thick forest along the streams and rivers- Mushitu. In November and December, they approach the villages to see if there is any food and look for Masuku and other wild fruits in the bush. In January, they begin to raid gardens for pumpkins and young mealies. From January, onwards they can be found near gardens and continue to raid until the crops have been harvested in the cold season.¹⁸

So people in Mkushi had to share their yield with the devouring beasts. Similarly, in Mumbwa in 1917, in Shimukwayila village, the crop was destroyed by baboons.¹⁹ The village had broken up leaving only four men and old women. These were not able to put up any defence against the wild beasts and so loss of crops and hunger resulted.²⁰

In Chingombe area in Mkushi, missionaries lamented at the destruction caused by wild animals for much of the 1920s. The animals were not only a threat to crops but also to human life. The situation became worse after the missionaries had surrendered their fire arms to the government following an order during the 1914-1918 World War. As noted thus:

... These laudable efforts to make farms and gardens an economic success, were rendered more difficult through the presence of wild animals which brought havoc on mission and native crops ... They also posed a serious threat to life of missionaries and Africans.²¹

In Serenje area, apart from the heavy rains that spoilt much of the blossoming beans of the 1938-39 season, animals especially hedgehog, monkey and wild pigs adversely affected the yield by devouring the crops. In Chiefs Serenje and Mailo, the majority of villages showed a marked food shortage. Some people even declared that owing to starvation they had no power to cultivate.²² A similar complaint was raised in Chief Kafinda's area where elephant raiding of gardens was getting out of hand. In some gardens the destruction was so high that people were faced with starvation at the end of

1939. Some people had to survive on wild fruits, *mpundu*²³ In Chief Muchinda, elephants from the Belgium Congo raided village gardens reducing the villagers to destitution.²⁴ At certain times even those crops harvested but not properly stored were devoured. Villagers were advised to build grain bins inside the villages.²⁵ In Chisomo area, animal raiding was a common feature. Elephants, hippos, wild pigs, and others devoured crops in gardens every farming season between 1920 and 1940. Authorities however blamed the people for not listening to advice and not taking any precautions.²⁶ A District Commissioner noted in Chisomo area that “villagers surprisingly take few protective measures and accept losses as a matter of course.”²⁷

Epidemics of both animals and humans beings played a critical role in the creation of poverty among the people of Central Province. Between 1910 and 1918 for instance there occurred a series of small pox outbreaks. The small pox outbreak of 1912 which originated from the Luano valley, affected many Swaka people with men, women and children dying in great numbers.²⁸ The other affected areas were Lwimbo and Chikonkoto in the Kafulamase region South-east of Broken Hill. A further outbreak occurred in 1913 at Shibuyunji seventeen miles South west of Broken Hill. Although no deaths were reported, it affected the productive lives of the people who had to spend a lot of time looking for remedies. In areas where deaths occurred, the outbreak caused great trauma to the communities and so dislocation resulted. Deaths also meant the loss of valuable and productive elements in the communities which invariably obviated the prevalence of poverty. Similar outbreaks of smallpox were reported in February 1916 in Mumbwa’s Kashila and Kasongo areas. However, a quarantine call saved the situation.²⁹ During the period of quarantine little productive work was done as movements of people

were restricted. This was a fertile situation for occurrence of hunger, and consequently, poverty in the area.

Sleeping sickness due to the presence of tsetse fly took to the fore between 1913 and 1922. During July of 1913, a series of deaths occurred in the Luano valley in the Mateshi and Nswana villages where an average of five deaths per week in each village were reported.³⁰ Meanwhile reports of the disease in the lower end of the Luangwa Valley between Serenje and Petauke were that it had become endemic with many people dying and others leaving the area.³¹ All villages on the Lusemfwā river were afflicted. According to villagers, the fly was most troublesome just before the rains in October and November. The disease trypanosomiasis resulting from the fly caused many people to be ill. They recognised it by the Oedema in the legs and called it the “disease in which the legs swell.” In 1913 it claimed 20 people.³² In 1911, there had been similar cases in Mumbwa at Nambala, Chatauli and Shanobi areas.³³ Between 1912 and 1925 several cases of sleeping sickness and deaths from the same were noted in Chisomo area.³⁴ In the main, more poverty was added to communities which had already been impoverished by other agents of poverty.

In 1918, there occurred another deadly epidemic known as ‘Spanish influenza.’ Several areas of Central Province were affected and many productive activities were disrupted. Reports on the disease indicated high mortality in villages surrounding Broken Hill. An average of 40 patients a day were being admitted to Broken Hill Hospital.³⁵ About 447 deaths were reported in Mwomboshi area.³⁶ Further reports indicated an equally heavy mortality among the people of Muchinde, Chingombe and Lumani villages

in the Luano Valley. At Mkushi Boma itself several people were attacked and sought treatment from Ching'ombe mission.³⁷

The epidemic occurred when people were expected to prepare their gardens. This means the activity was reduced because people were either sick or disturbed to do anything. Moreover, the high mortality rate depleted communities of work force. Perhaps a more serious effect was the fear the epidemic created in the people. It brought some myth which denied the people opportunities to engage in wage employment in towns. Many people who should have been employed as carriers, in Broken Hill receded to outskirts of the town fearing to catch the disease. Chipungu notes thus:

... 50 miles of the Railway South of Broken Hill(sic) the greatest difficulty here now is the obtaining of carriers. There are no volunteers .. labourers are now afraid to come in from outlying districts fearing influenza.³⁸

This suggests people's economic life in the province was affected. Considering that the local people had been introduced to a cash economy, failure to engage in wage employment added to loss of income capacity. Therefore poverty among the people was exacerbated. Epidemics therefore could be said to have been a critical factor in the creation of poverty among the people of Central Province.

The period 1929 – 33 exhibited another serious menace on the people of Central Province. This was the time locusts invaded most parts of the country. The invasion began in Mweru-wantipa in Luapula Province and in Kawambwa and Chiengi districts in Northern Province in 1929. By 1930, the swarms had migrated to almost all the parts of the country. According to Chipungu, in many rural parts of the country, crops were destroyed, forcing the government to import maize from Southern Rhodesia.³⁹ By July 1932, swarms had covered wide areas of Mkushi up to the Lukusashi river and Serenje

area. A team of Europeans visiting Lala land was overwhelmed by the size of swarms that destroyed so much crop. Gullen recorded thus:

... The team had the doubtful privilege of reaching this (Lala) village in company with thick swarm of Egyptian locusts – a swarm large enough to darken the sun as it flew over and around us. Thousands of beating wings in action together produced a particular dry rattle that could be heard distinctly through the roar of the lorry motor.⁴⁰

This explains the intensity of the invasions and the extent of the damage to crops. In Chisamba, 15-20 percent of the 1932-33 season's maize crop was destroyed.⁴¹ In Mumbwa in Chiefs Kabulwebulwe, Shakumbila and Kapengele, people were so hopelessly baffled by the invasions that the District Commissioner had to teach them how to handle locusts and turn them into food.⁴² This was the case in Serenje and Mkushi where the Lala had learnt to prepare locusts into a delicacy.⁴³ It is of interest to note how an agent of poverty was translated into a food delicacy and helped to sustain people's lives.

Between 1919 and 1945 there were outbreaks of cattle diseases, which included several bouvine diseases such as pleural-pneumonia and epizootic bouvine.⁴⁴ These diseases were first noticed in Namwala and then spread to Mumbwa. In some areas of Central Province, pleural-pneumonia combined with cocodiasis, another bouvine disease which killed a good number of cattle among the Lenje of Chamuka and Chipepo areas and a good number of European herds in Chisamba area.⁴⁵ In 1931, there occurred an outbreak of foot and mouth disease first diagnosed on 31st March 1931 on the Nwanetsi Ranch in Fort Victoria in Southern Rhodesia.⁴⁶ The disease spread to Bechuanaland in January 1932⁴⁷ and to Barotseland and Kazungula districts in September 1933.⁴⁸ It spread to Mazabuka, Abercorn (Mbala) and Mumbwa districts by 1934.⁴⁹ Although the

disease did not wipe out large number of herds in most parts of Central Province, it had devastating effects on the people.

The major impact came as a result of a ban imposed by the government on imports and exports of many stock products – cattle, forage, bran, stalks, grass, cobs, hides, milk and several others.⁵⁰ In some parts of the province, beans and maize which were to be given to villagers as relief for food and for planting could not be distributed. This was because it could not be imported from Southern Rhodesia.⁵¹ Among the Ila of Mumbwa and Lenje around Broken Hill, the market for beef products was curtailed. Europeans could not buy cattle or milk from Africans as the export market had been paralysed. In other words, the local cattle industry suffered a severe set back, causing people to lose their exchange entitlement of trade in cattle products. This situation threw the people into poverty. So, the poor people in Central Province at the time were those who lost their cattle through diseases or those who lost trade in cattle products. The Lenje and the Ila were affected by this development. This explains the poverty that existed between 1931 and 1945.

Natural disasters could therefore be said to have contributed to the creation of poverty in Central Province between 1890 and 1945. The chronic food shortages not only deprived the people of their nutritional requirements, but also led to deaths. So famine occurred in this period.

Industrialisation and Poverty

After the Anglo-Boer war of 1899- 1902, many white settlers came to Northern Rhodesia from South Africa. The main attractions to the territory were new opportunities for farming, mining, trading and hunting.⁵² As part of Cecil Rhodes' plan for the

extension of British imperialism, construction of the railway from the Cape to Cairo was started. The rail line reached Livingstone in 1902, Broken Hill in 1906 and Ndola in 1909.⁵³ Meanwhile, lead and zinc deposits were discovered in Broken-Hill in 1902 and copper mining began on the Copperbelt in the early 1920s.⁵⁴ It was the combination of these two developments – the railway and the minerals which transformed Northern Rhodesia into a haven of social and economic activities. By the late 1920s, there was a spectacular expansion of mining activities at Broken Hill and on the Copperbelt, attracting people from different areas of Zambia. By 1924 there were 1,300 Africans employed on the Copperbelt and by 1928 there were 30,000 Africans.⁵⁵

The process of labour migration changed the face of poverty in Central Province, between 1890 and 1945. The new socio-economic era ushered in an additional destructor: labour migration. This process forcefully, through demand for native tax, drew the Africans away from their villages, leaving their communities bereft of the much needed agricultural labour.

Godfrey Wilson noted that labour migration created uneven development between rural areas and urban centres. While mines became rich in labour force and could meet their targets of production, rural areas became poor as they were deprived of dependable young men and women by the mining magnates. This 'killed' the subsistence economy and created hunger and poverty for those who remained in the villages.⁵⁶ And according to Iliffe's analysis, a new form of poverty was created during the labour migration era.⁵⁷

Therefore, two types of poverty existed in the province; structural poverty as evident in the people bereft of labour and means of sustaining themselves because they were old; and conjunctural poverty characteristic in areas that had been able to produce

their own food and meet their desires but could no longer do so, as the main instrument of production – labour had been drawn away. We also note that the means of indigenous survival was transformed. Through labour migration some households survived. Even the perception of poverty also changed from that of food needs to luxurious desires. J.S.

Moffat, the District Commissioner of Serenje, for example wrote in 1939 that:

When emigration first started, the one major cause was the need of money and money for payment of tax. It was only when emigrants returned with money in their pockets and standard of living gradually rose that the desire grew for articles which only money could provide. Today the desire for what money can buy is possibly as great a driving force as the need for tax money.⁵⁸

This gives us a picture of how the perception of poverty changed during the era of industrialisation. Wilson for instance notes how Africans left villages to go to urban centres for clothes.⁵⁹ Clothes signified achievement and civilisation and enhanced one's status in the village. Turner also noted that:

Cloth and utilitarian, aesthetic, moral and status value which must not be underestimated. While bark cloth was often available, it seems to have suffered in comparison with cotton cloth (sic) When cotton cloth became readily available, bark cloth ceased to be made. European clothes represented (sic) a symbolic revolution (sic) During the day, new cheerful colours flashed in the bright sunlight. Missionaries equated clothes with morality and civilisation and Africans had to learn to do so ...⁶⁰

Most people became aware of their squalid conditions in which they lived in the villages – when they compared with the new urban life. They tried to escape from this situation, while creating poverty for their own villages in the process.

From the 1920s the Broken Hill and Copperbelt mines together with the railways became the sole attractions of the people from Central Province. Scores of young men left their villages in pursuit of the newly found source of wealth. Villages began to experience severe food shortages as migrations added to the already existing food

insecurity. Thus in 1937, Chief Kabamba of Serenje complained of food shortages among his people because the area cultivated was very small, owing to the absence of many men who were working in town. Records showed that 41 percent of the taxable male population was away at work.⁶¹ And in Chipanda's village in the same Chieftdom, 34 percent of the population were streaming to the Congo as a way of evading tax and finding work in the mines.⁶² Whether at work or merely evading tax, the production of food was adversely affected. In Chief Kafinda's area in the same year, 1937, the District Commissioner of Serenje, reported the existence of hunger in the area and many huts noted to be in a state of bad repair because many able-bodied men were away at work. Of the 866 taxable men, only 362 were present in the village.⁶³ In Chief Mailo's area, the situation in 1940 was described as much worse in terms of hunger and starvation. In the villages of Mutali, Milenje, Musoka and Malenga, in addition to the poor nutritional levels of the people, the condition of huts was deplorable. The District Commissioner attributed the poverty of the area to the large proportion of men away from the villages. 70 percent of men were away from the villages as labour migrants.⁶⁴

The migration problem in Serenje became acute in the 1940s when it was reported on the Copperbelt, that more youths came from Serenje than from any other district and that the reason was hunger.⁶⁵ This worried the authorities especially that there was an impending food shortage in the district during the 1943-44 season.⁶⁶ By this time approximately 2000 men had been recruited for road work in addition to the already absent 60 to 70 percent of taxable males.⁶⁷ This situation became desperate as only old men, women and children were left to work in gardens. The District Commissioner considered this development as a severe strain on the inhabitants of the district.⁶⁸ This is

contrary to Chisenga's argument that labour migration had a positive impact on the Lala as it increased money amongst the natives.⁶⁹ Poverty and hunger haunted many households.

The situation was similar in Mkushi, where in 1940, several villages had only few men. In Fiwila, Lumonsho, Chipilungu and Kamyeshya areas, food production was in jeopardy and villages in disarray as most men had left for Broken Hill.⁷⁰ A gloomy picture also obtained in Chiefs Mukonchi and Maoma areas where the housing and food situation was very unsatisfactory, and recorded as follows:

The huts in chief Maoma's area were particularly wretched. Very small, poor construction and bad thatching (sic). Huts in chief Mukonchi's area better only by comparison (sic). crops were very poor. The reason being that many people had migrated to the railway line (sic). Again the absence of very large proportion of men away naturally makes for the dilapidation as it is nobody's duty to keep and repair the houses of the absentees ...⁷¹

In Chief Mukonchi, 436 men out of the 698 taxable male population were out at work in 1940, while in Chief Maoma's area 160 out of 267 men were reported out during the same period.⁷² A similar pattern prevailed in Chikupili area in the southern part of Mkushi where 46.6 percent of taxable men were reported to be in Broken Hill or on the Copperbelt.⁷³

Mumbwa District equally experienced the effects of labour migration. In Chiefs Kabulwebulwe, Chibuluma, Moono and Mulendema, for example, the District Commissioner's tour of 1939 recorded marked poverty among the people. The absence of 70 percent of men was attributed as the cause.⁷⁴ The situation was worsened by the migration of local women to the urban centres. Women left Mumbwa in large numbers and this brought concern to the chiefs. Women formed an essential part of production in the villages. Their absence meant that very little agricultural work could be done.

Meanwhile, it was noted by sub Chief Shagariatombwe that while in urban centres, the women had nothing else to do apart from engaging in prostitution. Similar sentiments were expressed by Chiefs Kaindu, Kashinka and Chibuluma who appealed to the authorities for a reverse in the trend.⁷⁵ This trend was unlike what Chondoka notes of the Senga women. The Senga women were able to remain in villages and produce food even when large numbers of men had left the villages for work.⁷⁶

As regards the Lenje of Kabwe rural, their response to industrialisation was gradual. They did not move to the urban centres immediately, but were merely involved in small scale trade of milk, grain, maize, sweet potatoes and fish.⁷⁷ This seemed to have been a lucrative venture for the Lenje which enabled them enjoy some prosperity as compared to the Lala. Their proximity to Broken Hill urban centre provided them with more advantages over other groups in the province. This was contrary to what Chondoka notes of Senga men, who responded promptly to the labour migrations of 1904-1923 for the purpose of tax.⁷⁸

After 1931, however, following the decision of the 1926 Native Reserve Commission to remove the Lenje and other Africans from the line of rail, the Lenje were moved from their traditional lands. One of the motives was to force them to pay tax,⁷⁹ This proved disastrous for the Lenje. Soon they became involved in the process of labour migration which left squalor and disrepair in their villages and gardens. Trade was completely disrupted.⁸⁰ By 1937 about 411 out of 1043 taxable males which was about 50 percent, had left Chief Liteta's area for work in the towns. And in Chief Ntitima's area 216 out of 694 taxable males – 35 percent had joined the urban labour force.⁸¹ The result of this was persistent food shortages among the Lenje.

It is of interest to note how conjunctural and structural poverty set into communities which were previously self sufficient. The poor among the Lenje, Ila and Lala became those who were bereft of labour of the able-bodied men and could not migrate to urban centres to work. It is however, worth noting, how the Lenje prior to the process of industrialisation, had played their role as real actors within their environment. They had been able to create their own wealth and were able to feed themselves. The Lenje did not receive wage-employment passively like had been the case among the Lala. They remained resilient and sustained themselves until they were forcefully displaced.

The First World War and Poverty

Northern Rhodesia experienced the ravages of the two world wars fought among European powers. In some areas, historians have noted that the wars brought prosperity while in others they escalated poverty. Gann has for example noted that areas along the Railway belt, recorded increased agricultural production during the First World War. This was because agricultural prices for produce went up and farmers found a wider market following increased food demands.⁸² The average yield of maize per acre rose from 2.2 bags between 1915 and 1916 to 5.28 bags between 1919 and 1920.⁸³ Some Africans benefited from this development. For instance, Jonas Chitimpa was a Lenje farmer in Chief Chipepo's area who responded well to food production during the First World War. He became quite prosperous in the 1920s and 1930s.⁸⁴

However, some areas were adversely affected by the First World War, especially those far away from the line of rail. The impact was noted in the large numbers of local people who were recruited as war carriers. Considering that there were already thousands of able-bodied men in employment within and outside the country, drawn from the

province, a severe strain was placed on the productive capacity of the local people. For example, in Serenje and Mkushi several women and children were recruited to carry or to cook for soldiers. Only old men and women, and very young children were left in villages.⁸⁵ This deprived the area of the essential labour force. In other areas, the war brought a lot of fear and anxiety in people. In Mumbwa, young men feared to be put in front as screens for white men. Afraid of death, they fled into the bush. A report by the District Commissioner read:

From many villages, the majority of men had fled, leaving only old men, the sick, children and women behind. It was only after careful explanation of the proclamation Act 1/1916 that a few were recruited as carriers at all. Chiefs did not assist the government. They concealed and withheld information concerning households of their people in many cases.⁸⁶

This suggests the extent to which people were deprived of productive time. They could neither cultivate nor engage in trade as they spent many days in the bush, hiding from recruiters. The poor people in Mumbwa, therefore, became those who lurked in the bush and old men, women and children who had lost their able-bodied kinsmen to the bush. In Serenje the structurally poor were old men, women and children whose able-bodied relatives had gone to work as carriers. In either case, whether people were recruited as carriers or ran away into the bush, poverty had been created. By 1915 deaths from malnutrition were common in Mkushi, and the Jesuit Missionaries blamed the authorities whose war policies compelled villagers to be enlisted as carriers.⁸⁷

The war also had its repercussion on missionary initiatives against poverty. As a policy, the government had ordered that all German and Austrian nationals should have their names registered with the administrators. Furthermore, they had to surrender all weapons to the government. This was because of the strained relations between the Germans and Austrians with that of the British. This had an implication for the Polish

Priests of Chingombe Jesuit Mission in Mkushi, who were suspected of being pro-German. The surrendering of weapons left the mission station and the surrounding villages completely defenceless against dangerous wild animals – lions, leopards and others. These animals not only posed danger to the missionaries, but also to the local Africans. Moreover, elephants, antelopes, wild pigs and others which caused so much havoc in the gardens, continued with their activities completely unhindered. Africans had to bear the consequences. Crops were eaten up in the 1916/1917 season. The war further cut off donations from the BSACo to the mission.⁸⁸ This resulted in the mission failing to fulfill its obligations to the starving local communities.

The Great Depression, 1929-1933

As noted earlier, the 1920s recorded some prosperity for some communities in Central Province. However, this period was overtaken by several economic crises which not only affected Central Province but other parts of the country too. One such economic disaster was the Great Depression. The crisis began in 1929 in the United States.⁸⁹ In Northern Rhodesia, the impact was felt in February 1931 when Bwana Mkumbwa mine was forced to close and development work at Chambishi and Kansanshi was abandoned.⁹⁰ Broken Hill mine was equally shaken though not closed. Roan antelope mine too continued with operations. This was a period when the copper price fell on the world market.

This development had disastrous effects on Africans. And like Thandikile Mvusi argues, the depression really disturbed the Africans,⁹¹ as it curtailed what Siamwiza terms an “anti-poverty survival strategy – labour migration.”⁹² Those who had been in employment lost their jobs and had to be repatriated to their villages. Those who wished

to go to urban centres to look for employment, running away from rural poverty, could not do so, as there were no jobs. The situation was quite serious in Central Province. In Mumbwa, for example, many Chiefs complained of reduced income through remittances as many people could not find work. Chiefs Kabulwebulwe and Kampengela complained during an Indaba thus:

People often go out to work and find none. People cannot find work and come back with no money. The government must help them to get money.⁹³

During the period of the depression, people in Mumbwa were so impoverished that the little money they earned could not help them to pay tax nor buy clothes.⁹⁴

The Lala were seriously affected considering that they had responded to labour migration more favourably than many other ethnic groups in the province. This suggests that Mkushi and Serenje areas experienced the pangs of the depression more. Many men had to be repatriated to their villages without any compensation or relief. They were not prepared for the sudden change and not ready to go back to villages where they would find no food. So most returned migrants had to depend on the hospitality of their village kin for food and shelter.

In 1933, Chief Chibale of Serenje complained of an increased number of destitutes in his chieftdom as a result of the returned migrants.⁹⁵ The depression affected many sectors – education, health, agriculture and others. Grants to schools were reduced or stopped. Salaries for government workers were reduced, like was the case in agriculture where wages dropped from 7s 6d per month in 1931 to 5s in 1933.⁹⁶ This created poverty. Therefore people who could be said to have been impoverished were the returned migrants who had no fields, no shelter and no food.

We would therefore argue that for Central Province, particularly among the Lala, labour migration had reached an “expiry period” during the depression. It was no longer a ‘magnate’ to good fortune.

The Second World War and Poverty

A similar trend occurred during the Second World War. From about 1937 to the time the war broke out in 1939, farmers had suffered from a run of bad seasons coupled with the effects of the Great Depression of 1929-1932. Meanwhile, when the war broke out implements became very expensive, to the extent that some European farmers could not afford to buy them. The situation was worse for Africans whose agricultural production dropped.⁹⁷

In Mumbwa large numbers of people joined as carriers and fighters. This was due to war sensitisation carried out by the authorities. Chiefs Moono, Chibuluma, Mulendema and Kabulwebulwe were praised for averting the rumours of war amongst their people. Chief Moono himself gave out five of his sons as volunteers for the war.⁹⁸ Among the Lala many were also enlisted for the war and they did very well, as recorded:

The Lala attained high ranks as company sergeants, majors and senior NCOs. All these men had many experiences in different countries and when they come home, they should benefit their fellow Lala by what they have seen and learned.⁹⁹

Much as the carriers and fighters could have brought new knowledge and experiences, the fact remained that villages had been impoverished. For instance, in 1940 Mkushi and Serenje districts experienced acute famine¹⁰⁰. The situation was worse in Serenje where in 1942 it was reported that food shortages and starvation had become a permanent feature.¹⁰¹ In Chief Chamuka’s area, some Lenje villages recorded high levels of food shortages. The absence of men was attributed as the main cause.¹⁰² In 1943,

villages in Chiefs Kabulwebulwe, Moono and Shakumbila exhibited a similar trend. Small harvests were noted due to small areas of cultivation.¹⁰³ This was also attributed to shortage of manpower which had been drawn to the war.

The First and Second World Wars contributed much to the creation of poverty, among the people of Central Province. This was in addition to other forces that had already imposed themselves on the local people. The wars also damaged the status of women. Women who normally should have remained in villages attending to their usual chores were made to carry and cook for men. In the main community life was disrupted. The situation was worse among the Lala where women usually had their own fields in addition to the household fields. By being enlisted for the war, together with their children, who normally helped in the fields, there could be no worse effect than that of poverty for the Lala communities.

Land Issues and Poverty

Problems of land began soon after the BSACo assumed control of the Zambian territory.¹⁰⁴ With regard to the Central Province, the Native Lenje Reserve was created in 1926. The Lenje Reserve had an area of 67 000 square miles, of which 2000 square miles was covered by the Lukanga swamp. The population of the area was 32,679, a density of 7.6 per square mile.¹⁰⁵ The cattle population was 1200, with heavy tsetse fly presence.¹⁰⁶ Another Native Reserve was the one in Mkushi District created in 1921. The population density had been about 9000 people occupying an area of more than 3000 square miles. With the creation of the reserves, land for Africans was reduced to 1400 square miles, thereby doubling the density of population.¹⁰⁷ This development invariably deprived Africans of land for cultivation and other economic activities. This was a man-created

'disaster' in the new colonial political economy which sent households into poverty. In the tour report of February 1936, for example, the District Commissioner for Broken Hill, reported serious congestion in the eastern portion of the Lenje Reserve. Congestion was mainly due to the infertility of the land and lack of water.¹⁰⁸

A similar situation arose in the Mkushi Reserve and in the Luano-Lala Reserve. The reserves had an acute shortage of land and timber. This was because the Commissioners over-looked an important aspect when demarcating the reserves - the cultural and traditional agricultural practices. For the Lala and Swaka, timber formed the core of their agricultural system-*chitemene* system of cultivation. This system required large portions of forests to be cut and burned. Such a practice was not workable in the reserves. For Mkushi, the situation was worsened by the immigration of the Lala from Serenje beginning in the 1890s through the 1920s.¹⁰⁹ The movement had been triggered by shortage of land arising from degeneration of forests due to *chitemene* farming practices. This increased food shortages. In 1935 for instance, most areas in Mkushi reserve like Chitina, Maoma, Chikupili and Shaiwila, experienced food shortages due to reduced acreage.¹¹⁰ In 1940 the central portion of Luano reserve, between Mkushi and Kampoko river systems, a considerable number of people were reported foraging in the Luano valley due to reduced food production, owing to shortage of land.¹¹¹

Through the creation of Native Reserves, the natives of Central Province particularly the Lenje, Lala and Swaka, lost their entitlement. Their access to land, a means of production was significantly reduced. The Lenje, also lost their cattle through inadequate pastureland and water, while the Luano-Lala and Swaka lost cattle through

the tsetse fly. Therefore lost both direct and exchange entitlement was lost. This made the people poor.

The Watch Tower Movement and Poverty

Between 1925 and 1935, Central Province experienced poverty due to the influence of the Watch Tower Movement. The doctrine of this movement had very adverse effects on the productivity of the local African communities. The movement inculcated rebellion and despondence against authority in villagers. The movement was led by a man known as Tomo Nyirenda, commonly called 'Mwanaleza' from Malawi. Mwanaleza claimed to have been sent by God to clean the areas. "I have come to baptize the people and to pick out weeds from good seed," Mwanaleza claimed.¹¹² The areas most affected by the movement were Broken Hill, Mkushi and Serenje.¹¹³ Mumbwa was not so much affected by the movement as the Chiefs were alert and reported the activities to government authorities.¹¹⁴

The movement's activities were disruptive. In 1931 Chief Kabamba of Serenje appealed for an end in the activities of the movement, as it had brought a lot of destabilisation in the villages. This was worse in Kanoneshya village where people began disobeying the Chief's orders to work in their gardens.¹¹⁵ Father Semienski of Chingombe also lamented in 1932, at the negative and unproductive impact of the movement. He wrote that, "large sections of Central Province have been taken by the Watch Tower Storm which has affected not only the work of Africans but also that of Christian missions."¹¹⁶ And at Tomo's trial in 1933 in Ndola, a witness testified as follows:

A man came to Chondoka's village in cold weather, when grain was ripe. We were called to Chondoka's. It was ordered that we should all go there. Any one who did not come would be called a witch. People were in the gardens and they

were called out ... we were told not to go away. Any one who did would be a witch. This was the time we had to keep birds from crops.¹¹⁷

The testimony further helps explain the magnitude of disruption the Watch Tower Movement caused in the production of food among the people. The situation was aggravated by the recruitment of young people into the movement. By brainwashing and indoctrinating them with unproductive ideals, it meant further loss of manpower and the only expected result was increased poverty in villages. Poverty was further accentuated by the fact that during that time people were already experiencing difficulties pertaining to land alienation and economic recession.

Initiatives against Poverty, 1890-1945

Between 1890 and 1945, poverty initiatives in Central Province showed some change. In addition to the pre-colonial survival strategies, there developed a new kind of initiative. This was institutionalised initiative which was two fold; short term relief effort and long term effort. The missionaries and government were the key players in the latter type of initiative. In this subsection therefore, we shall consider individual initiatives and institutionalised initiatives as were exhibited in Central Province during the period in question.

Individual initiatives

The commonest form of survival during acute food shortages was foraging. In Central Province, particularly Kabwe rural, foraging provided the basis of survival during the 1922-23 famine.¹¹⁸ However, even this failed to meet sufficient nutritional needs of the people as even wild fruits failed to yield in large quantities. Sources therefore noted an increased number of scurvy cases in the province. The disease, whose symptoms include the swelling of legs is caused by lack of vitamin C in the body due to insufficient

fruit and vegetable intake.¹¹⁹ Such a situation in Central Province indicates the absence of 'famine' foods – roots, tubers, fruits and vegetables at the time. And Siamwiza argues that cases of scurvy clearly suggest that, foraging as a survival strategy failed to serve the people in the province in the 1922-23 hunger period.¹²⁰ It is significant to note how strategies that people were traditionally accustomed to failed to contain hunger and poverty in the province.

In 1937, due to heavy early rains, Kaffir corn rotted in Chief Chipeco's area. The acute food shortage was contained by men, women and children resorting to wild apples.¹²¹ A similar situation occurred in Chief Kafinda's area in Serenje. Due to animal raiding, the villages had no food and they resorted to eating **mpundu**, a wild fruit.¹²² And in 1940, the Luano Lala survived on foraging in the Luano valley.¹²³ Foraging saved people from hunger.

Sometimes villagers beat the hunger situation through buying food from neighbours who had plenty, from previous seasons. In early September of 1922, people in Mumbwa were reported to be buying grain from their neighbours who had it in abundance.¹²⁴ This averted the situation which could have been disastrous. In 1939, in Chief Kabulwebulwe's area in Mumbwa, 32 villages complained of poor harvest. Many villagers survived by buying food from their 'richer' neighbours in Chief Kabengela.¹²⁵ In Serenje, between 1937 and 1939, villagers in Chief Kafinda's area were reported to be buying food from the Belgian Congo.¹²⁶ It is again significant to note the trend in entitlement. Even in times of hunger and starvation there were communities holding the means of survival from which the starving sought relief.

So, like was the case during the pre-colonial era, households in Central Province continued with their traditional short-term survival strategies when they were faced with a crisis, especially when their crops failed due to bad weather or animal raids. What is significant is that even in the era of industrialisation, indigenous survival strategies proved valuable to the people.

Institutionalised Initiatives

In this section we shall consider the provisions made for impoverished Africans by mainly institutions especially Christian missionaries and the colonial government. The provisions went beyond merely meeting the basic needs for survival during hard times. They involved preventing poverty and uplifting the living standards of the Africans.

a) Missionary initiatives

Missionary activities in Africa, and indeed Zambia, predated the colonial presence. From about 1890, in Central Province, missionaries endeavoured to empower the people through the provision of western education and medical care.

One of the early missionary efforts in poverty alleviation in Central Province was that of the United Free Church of Scotland. The mission was established in 1906 at Chitambo in Serenje.¹²⁷ In 1907, Malcom Moffat opened a school, which by 1910 had expanded with about 21 teachers.¹²⁸ A dispensary was also established in 1908 with the help of Dr. Brown to provide health care. During the years 1913 and 1914, small pox and leprosy were very prevalent in the area. The mission was able to fight the epidemics. In addition, the mission taught agriculture and animal husbandry to the local communities. This was to help the Lala adopt new and scientific methods of food production which

ensured high yields. In agriculture, the local people were taught the use of animal manure and crop rotation. This enabled them to learn how to maintain soil fertility. In 1907, the mission made available 5 cows, 13 heifers, 16 calves, 6 bullocks and 26 oxen.¹²⁹ The oxen became very useful as a means of transport among the people, and so easing difficulties in travelling and taking produce to selling points.

In the 1930s the mission began to organise bigger schools which would draw learners from various village schools. These were called Central schools. The first one was built in 1933 at Muchinka's, then followed by Kasuko and Nakatambo. By 1945 impressive literacy and educational levels were noted among many Lala. Most of the educated found work as clerks, teachers, carpenters and so forth.¹³⁰ This empowered the people to live better lives and avert poverty. However, women still lagged behind in education, due to cultural inclinations.

Another significant missionary activity was that of the Universities Mission to Central African (UMCA) at Fiwila in Mkushi. The mission was established by Father Hewitt in 1918. The first works of the mission involved the provision of relief food to the Chiefs and surrounding villages.¹³¹ By 1924, educational and medical work was begun. In 1928 a large hospital was established. Patients included lepers and so a "village of mercy" was set up for them. Here they were fed, clothed and given medical care. From 1936-1947, for example, villagers were taught carpentry and brick laying. Women and older girls were also taught domestic nutrition. This was to enhance hygienic standards and good diet among Africans.¹³² By 1943, there were 19 mission schools with 491 male and 337 female students.¹³³ The mission undoubtedly had great

impact on the people of Mkushi by helping alleviate poverty through the provision of education and health care.

Other missionary activities included those of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. These entered Northern Rhodesia from Southern Rhodesia in 1909, and started evangelical work among the Swaka of Luano valley.¹³⁴ By 1913, mission-education work had spread to the Lenje in Chief Chamuka's area at Chipembi. However, the locals had initially resisted the work of the mission. By 1931, the Wesleyan Methodist Church had established schools at Shamputa village in Chief Chipepo's area and at Nambala and Shamatombwe area in Mumbwa.¹³⁵ In their schools the Wesleyans encouraged agricultural lessons and other survival skills. They also employed local people. This created employment which further helped alleviate the suffering of Africans as they were able to buy food stuffs they lacked.

The Jesuit fathers also contributed greatly towards alleviating the suffering of the local people. They established a mission station at Chingombe in Mkushi in June 1914. Father Felician Czarlinski was the pioneer of the station.¹³⁶ The Jesuits spread their activities not only to areas in Mkushi, but also to those among the Lenje in Broken Hill. Apart from providing relief food to starving villagers in times of famine, the Jesuits also wanted to improve African moral and social values. So they worked towards eliminating traditions which were viewed as immoral and counter productive. They also encouraged the people to build decent huts as opposed to the old pole and dagga huts. Therefore, the local people were trained in construction and carpentry.¹³⁷ But the more the Africans learnt these skills, the more they left for urban areas. In 1925 for example, it was reported that more Africans from Chingombe were leaving for Broken Hill where they

were lured by higher wages.¹³⁸ However, the situation also suggests the mission's ability to empower people. The skills they were taught enabled them to overcome poverty.

During the 1918 influenza epidemic, a number of villagers from many parts of Mkushi sought treatment at the hospital. Earlier reports had indicated a high infant mortality rate, but with the presence of the missionaries this was checked.¹³⁹ Serious bouts of malaria in 1927 were also dealt with. In 1933, to meet the recurring bouts of famine among the Swaka and Lala communities, the Jesuits set up welfare societies in various villages. The people were also encouraged to contribute money or offer free labour while the mission supplied grain, mealie meal and some necessary tools.¹⁴⁰ However, at times the mission provided relief without conditions like was the case in 1943 in Chembe and Kafusha villages of Chief Chamuka where the villagers were starving and the Jesuits provided free food.¹⁴¹

The Jesuits also opened a number of schools in various places. For example in 1915, a school was opened at Kabalakata village near Chingombe. The school catered for both boys and girls and went up to Standard II. In 1919 another school was opened at Katetaula village. By 1920, there were ten schools within Chingombe area which included Masongo, Mboroma, Chitimbo and Chikwasha.¹⁴² In Chief Chipepo's area, earlier attempts to open a school by the Jesuits had met with resistance. However, by 1925, due to the developments that the Chief had seen in other areas, he decided to request for a school and the Jesuits put up one. Other three schools were opened at Chikonkoto, Shipangula and Likutula in Chief Chamuka's area. The mission went further in educational initiatives by setting up a teacher training college at Mpima in Broken Hill in 1925.¹⁴³

The curriculum for the Jesuits emphasised religion, agriculture, hygiene and tree planting as earlier noted. They were also particular on the provision of education for girls as they believed that if a higher number of girls were imparted with knowledge, early marriages and uncontrolled pregnancies would be avoided.¹⁴⁴ Early marriages and unwanted pregnancies impoverished families. Therefore, it could be argued that by stressing education for girls, the Jesuits were actually working against poverty.

Through provision of relief, medical care, education and life skills, the missionaries contributed to the alleviation of poverty in the province. Missionary initiative came as a helpful institution to the people of Central Province.

(b) Government Initiatives

The role of every government in poverty alleviation is crucial.¹⁴⁵ As regards Central Province between 1890 and 1945, the government, notwithstanding some shortcomings, exhibited effort in ensuring poverty among Africans was alleviated. This was done directly or indirectly by the government delegating the role to other stakeholders like the Native Authorities, the District Councils or the Christian missionaries. Through its officials – the District Commissioners and Provincial Commissioners, the government was well informed of conditions in villages and any progress made. So government had information on starving villagers or on bad weather or any adversity affecting villagers.

During the 1913 – 14 period for example, food conditions were bad in many parts of the country. Chiefs in Central Province appealed for food. The BSACo was able to give out relief to them. This was however, in the hope that the following season would be favourable and people able to produce in abundance.¹⁴⁶ In the 1930-31 rainy season,

due to insufficient rain, crops failed in Chief Chamuka in Kabwe. The Chief also asked for relief from the government. The government responded by sending 201 bags through the Native Authority. The people however were to pay for the grain.¹⁴⁷ This was one way of making households more responsible. Europeans were inculcating an attitude of hard work and responsibility in the Africans. This would help them overcome the attitude of self-pity and laziness.¹⁴⁸ In 1934, as a way of relieving Africans from hunger and starvation, the government relaxed game laws. Africans were allowed to hunt until the situation had normalised.¹⁴⁹ This could have been coupled with the realisation of the injustices concerning land alienation. However, Siamwiza notes that relief was denied to the people of Luano valley. This was because authorities thought the people would still have sufficiency through forest fruits and roots. Relief was nonetheless later provided.¹⁵⁰

Other government initiatives included finding suitable markets for African produce. In 1937 for example, arrangements were made with Weiner and Company in collaboration with a transport company – Thatcher and Hobson, to open three buying stations along the Great North Road in Serenje. The Africans were informed about the arrangement which was aimed at encouraging increased production of maize. For the first year the response was very encouraging throughout Serenje save for Chief Muchinka's area.¹⁵¹ A similar attempt was made in 1942 to set up an organisation to buy surplus produce from the Africans in Serenje to avoid wastage. Serenje District Council took up the initiative and bought the produce. In addition seeds for beans, maize and groundnuts were distributed to the people in villages around Muchinka, Muchinda and Livingstone Memorial for planting.¹⁵² This was to encourage villagers to grow more

food and prevent hunger and poverty in the process. These initiatives were encouraged in many parts of the province.

The government also had a system of village *capitaos*. These would go around villages ensuring that productive activities such as cultivation, hut building, school attendance and so forth, were carried out. They also ensured that sanitary conditions in villages were up to the expected standards.¹⁵³ Each time an official was on tour, village *capitaos* would accompany him. In 1937 for example, a District Commissioner touring Chief Muchinda's area noticed the poor state of huts. He immediately ordered the chief to tell the people to improve the construction before his next tour.¹⁵⁴ Similar sentiments were expressed in Chief Kafinda, where many huts were in a poor state.¹⁵⁵ This explains the concern government had for the welfare of the people. In 1939, for instance, Chiefs in Mumbwa were praised for carrying out orders to build houses and maintaining clean surroundings.¹⁵⁶ In Chief Kaindu's area the District Commissioner was overwhelmed with the improved conditions and he wrote the following:

There is noticeable improvement in villages. Some villages had rows of mango, paw paw and mulberry trees planted. A real attempt at some scheme of "town planning" is evident which is pleasant change from the old haphazard method of sitting huts. The villagers appear to be taking some pride in the appearance of their huts.¹⁵⁷

This suggests a marked shift in the way poverty was viewed by the local Africans. The growing of fruit trees was a sure way of supplementing their diets with vitamin C and an attempt to moving away from foraging in times of crisis. Such improvement in the way of living of Africans explains government commitment towards the removal of misery and squalid conditions. This was a positive initiative in poverty alleviation.

Government also sought to improve communication for the Africans through the construction of good roads and erection of bridges. This would enable people transport

produce to markets more easily than before. In 1937, in Serenje, a road called Musoko, 37 miles long, was constructed. Other roads included Chibale road, 29 miles, Muchinda road, 21 miles and Kafinda road, 43 miles long.¹⁵⁸ From Mkushi a road was to be built to link up with Broken Hill. In Broken Hill a number of roads were constructed by 1942. For example, a road from Chamuka village to Broken Hill necessitating a bridge over Mwembeshi river was made. Another one from Chief Chipepo's village to Broken Hill, and two others were to be constructed one running from Kasavasa to Nyama siding and another one from the railway at Chisamba to Chipembi.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, Native Authorities also facilitated the acquisition of scotch carts. The carts were made at Chisamba while the wheels were obtained from Morogoro in Tanganyika.¹⁶⁰ This helped Africans transport their produce to selling points. Improved transport system was crucial in combating poverty. In times of crisis, food would easily be acquired from one area and transported to another. In times of abundance, food easily reached the marketing points. This was what the government attempted to do; to ease transport needs for Africans thereby helping to curb their poverty.

The areas of health and education also received attention of the colonial government. Most of the initiatives which were demonstrated in the area before 1923 were made by missionaries. Before 1923 the BSACo was more interested in commercial ventures. Education and health services for the Africans might have proved costly and a liability for the company. However, when the British government took over the territory in 1924, it saw the need to provide these services. The crown government realised that the panacea for poverty was western education and good health for Africans. In 1925, the first education policy was introduced in British Tropical Africa. Among other things,

the policy helped create the sub-department of Native Education.¹⁶¹ Through this sub department, the government helped missionaries by subsidising African education.¹⁶²

Apart from supporting mission education the government also set up primary schools in various parts of the country including Central Province. In 1939, it was noted that although missionaries were doing their best, African education in Central Province lagged behind. In Chief Mungule's area a school was set up.¹⁶³ In the same year Chitankwa school was established in Serenje.¹⁶⁴ In Mumbwa in the same year, a school was constructed in Chief Shakumbila's area.¹⁶⁵ Other schools were in Chiefs Chibuluma, Kabulwebulwe, Kashinka and Moono. In Chief Kabulwebulwe's area, there were more than 17 pupils though the difficulty was getting parents to pay the two shillings annual fees.¹⁶⁶ In Mkushi by 1940, in addition to Fiwila, there was Lumonsho, Chipilingu and Kanyenshya schools.¹⁶⁷ School attendance was enforced by the compulsory ruling that all children between the ages of 13 and 19 should be in school. Any village where children were seen to be missing school would have their parents punished by the Chief or other authorities.¹⁶⁸ This shows how serious the government was in its attempt to eradicate ignorance, a critical factor in poverty creation.

As regards the provision of health care, almost the same pattern was followed. Government assisted missionaries through grants and loans. In other cases the government set up dispensaries. In 1936 for example, a dispensary was set up at Chibale in Serenje. This helped the Africans with the muscular problem locally known as '*muwamba*,' also called "Serenje sickness" which had left many Africans and European travellers crippled. The disease was also very common around Kanona area and was one reason that stimulated the authorities to have the *Boma* shifted from Kanona to the

present day Ibolelo site.¹⁶⁹ Apart from this disease, diarrhoea, dysentery, cough and fever constantly menaced the people. The establishment of the dispensary therefore, was a great relief to the Africans. Another dispensary was constructed at Malambanyama in Chief Chipepo's area in the same year. This was prompted by the large number of lepers and patients suffering from elephantiasis. The presence of these ailments had contributed greatly to reduced production of food in the area.¹⁷⁰ Therefore, the dispensary helped solve the problem by reducing the number of victims through treatment and preventive measures. Furthermore, nutrition lessons were conducted at the dispensary, to make people aware of appropriate diets. Such initiatives helped to alleviate poverty in the area.

In Mumbwa, in Chief Kabulwebulwe, a dispensary was also constructed in 1939. Many local people appreciated its services. During the first two weeks of September it dealt with 60 patients.¹⁷¹ In the same year another dispensary was set up at Lunchu in Mkushi, but the Africans were sceptical about it. They shunned it and only had to be persuaded into using it.¹⁷² Lunchu communities considered the dispensary as a death trap for Africans.¹⁷³ So while in some areas Africans appreciated European initiatives in alleviating poverty, in other areas they did not. The differences in attitude indicate that in some areas, Africans were more critical and analytical to European policies, while in others, they were not. The less critical groups therefore tended to be more favoured by Europeans and so their areas developed faster than those of the more critical ones.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have argued that natural disasters were still crucial in the creation of poverty in Central Province between 1890 and 1945. But we have also noted the emergence of new agents. These constituted the off shoots of the industrialisation

process-the First World War, Second World War and the Great Depression. New categories of the poor emerged. To conjuctural poverty was added structural poverty. We have also noted a shift in the definition of poverty, from being defined merely in terms of food needs, to being defined in a way that encompassed new western goods and services. During this period, poverty began to be perceived in the eyes of westerners. Local survival strategies continued as a means of sustaining African lives during crises; but institutionalised strategies sponsored by missionaries and the colonial government also emerged. Missionaries and the colonial state not only provided relief, but also new skills, knowledge and medical care. In this way an attempt was made at poverty alleviation.

END NOTES

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- ¹⁷ NAZ/SEC2/624/SEC/NAT/362: Tour Reports, Mkushi 1940-41, Report No. 2 Annex (iv).
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CHAPTER THREE

POVERTY IN THE POST-WAR ERA, 1946-1964

Introduction

During the post war era, poverty continued to menace the people of Central Province. Natural factors and human factors continued to play a crucial role in the creation of poverty of the period. The conjuctural poor were therefore those who lacked food, clothing and without access to education and health care. There was no major shift in the causes of poverty. But there was a shift in the degree and extent of the prevalence of poverty.

Initiatives against poverty continued at local and institutional levels in more or less the same way as in the previous era discussed in chapter two. However, there was a marked improvement in state intervention with regard to institutional measures against poverty. While missionaries continued to supplement government effort in the provision of social services, health and education, government took a more prominent role in the area than it had done before. This chapter will therefore attempt to show these trends in the poverty pattern of the 1946-1964 era. A variety of factors were responsible for the poverty in Central Province after the Second World War. However, drought, floods and animal raids remained prevalent between 1946 and 1964.

Natural Factors

Natural causes continued to be prevalent in the creation of poverty after the Second World War. During the 1947 – 1948 season for example, many villages in Serenje, especially in Chief Mailo's area complained of poor harvest due to excessive rains. Some households had lost the entire crop and had to live by begging.¹ The same complaint was noted for some areas particularly in Lunchu in Mkushi where maize had failed completely. People were worried as to

where to get their food from.² Meanwhile, villagers in the Luano valley complained of extensive damage done to their crops by elephants. The entire maize and rice crops were destroyed just at maturity by the animals. People were making frantic efforts to save their only surviving kaffir corn.³ The situation of animal raiding was so serious that the District Commissioner had to appeal for an elephant hunter from the Department of Game. He wrote thus:

An elephant hunter is required in this area. Elephants do considerable damage to crops apart from what they do to the road (sic). These elephants should be shot out on the principle that any wild animal, which is a danger to life or property, should be treated as vermin and there can be no adequate reason for protecting them at the expense of local inhabitants⁴.

We note a combination of poor weather conditions and animal raiding which devastated communities and threw people into hunger and poverty. Villagers resorted to mere food gathering and hunting. A similar situation arose in 1949 in Serenje, Mkushi and parts of Mumbwa and Kabwe rural. The areas recorded severe food shortages and large quantities of relief food were deemed necessary by the authorities.⁵ This had been caused by shortage of rain. In Chief Liteta's area, the yield was so low that only 5,000 bags of maize were produced during the 1949 – 1950 farming season in contrast to 15,000 bags produced during the previous good seasons.⁶ This entailed not only shortage of food in the area, but also scarcity of money, as very little or nothing of the produce could be sold. This meant loss in exchange entitlement and people could not afford to get other essentials or meet their financial obligations.⁷

Further catastrophies were noted in Mumbwa during the planting season of 1953 – 1954. Planting had to start only after the latter half of November due to late arrival of rains. This resulted in substantial crop failure in many areas of the district.⁸ In Serenje and Mkushi areas, however, food surplus was expected in many villages during the same season. Chiefs, nonetheless, expressed worry about animal raids, which were quite rampant in the district. On the Lukusashi River north of Chisomo, hippos had destroyed crops extensively. It was hoped,

however, that the situation would be arrested as a good number of villagers owned guns.⁹ During 1956 – 1957 season Mumbwa experienced erratic rains. The DC-noted in his report that with the exception of a few isolated areas, almost every area in the Sala suffered from the late arrival of rains. Subsequent heavy rainfall worsened the situation as the seed rotted and was being washed away.¹⁰ In Chief Liteta's area, kaffir corn and maize failed due to lack of rain. Villagers complained of insufficient water and pastures for their cattle.¹¹ Crops and animals were adversely affected and therefore the socio-economic livelihood of the people was severely reduced.

The tsetse fly was also quite prevalent in some parts of the province. This discouraged people from rearing cattle and other livestock. Cattle owning communities lost their cattle to trypanosomiasis. Meanwhile, wild game was still a menace. Wild pigs, hyenas and hippos all took turns in devouring crops. In fact, in 1956 Chibuye Mwando Village, which was most pestered by the creatures, moved to a new site.¹² The presence of wild game attracted the fly which affected their domesticated animals. Villagers suffered not only the loss of their animals because of the fly, but also their crops, which were devoured by game.

The North eastern parts of Serenje district equally remained infested with the tsetse fly throughout the 1950s. A dejected villager made the following remarks to the DCs entourage: "Here we can get nothing. If one tries to keep fowls or goats as soon as they are a dozen or two they start to die. There is not even a single animal that survives..."¹³ Equally affected by tsetse fly was the Sala area in Mumbwa. The villages mostly affected were those in Chiefs Mulendema, Chibuluma, Kaindu, Kabulwebulwe and Mumba. Although people were able to cultivate normally they faced the obstacle of not keeping livestock.¹⁴

In some instances, however, there is overwhelming evidence that human factors, by way of negative attitudes and rigid cultural traits, contributed greatly to the poverty of the province during the post war era. Thus natural causes would knit with human factors leading to devastating situations. The Lala of Serenje remained backward in agricultural techniques even by the late 1950s, due to retrogressive cultural traits and attitudes. Up to that period *chitemene* system of cultivation was the main stay technique among them. Much as it was able to yield good kaffir corn, it required large portions of land, which depleted forests. Further, in spite of the Lala having been exposed to animal draught power in the 1940s, very few villagers were willing to adopt it.¹⁵ By 1957 therefore, while the Kaonde, Ila and Lenje had long learnt to work oxen for cultivation, the Lala had not even learnt the use of cattle manure to fertilise their gardens.¹⁶ This encouraged continued destabilisation of villages, as they had to keep on shifting to new woodland areas for fertility. In most cases their cut out areas were small, only yielding minimal produce. Thus when compared to the Ila or Lenje who had learnt to fertilise their fields with cattle manure and able to till large portions of land using oxen, the Lala were more impoverished. Owing to this variance, small unstable and scattered settlements remained a characteristic feature of the Lala communities for many decades.¹⁷ This created poverty. Small settlements lacked security from raiding animals. This was worsened by the practice of having grain bins scattered all over the *fiteme* and kaffir corn gardens.¹⁸ This subjected the bins to attacks by animals. Here again we note how unchanging traditional practices created poverty in communities.

Labour Migration

Economic factors such as labour migration and government marketing policies were also critical in the creation of poverty in Central Province. Up to 1964 and beyond, labour migration

was one of the main causes of poverty in the province. The process drew many able-bodied men and women from the rural parts of the province leaving villages quite bereft of labour for agricultural activities. By 1952, for instance, 62.1 percent of taxable men in Mkushi district were away at work outside the province.¹⁹ In Serenje, Chief Kafinda's area, 62 percent of taxable men were away at work during the same period, leaving the chief complaining of poverty due to unavailability of labour.²⁰ Many people were engaged in various economic ventures in Lusaka and the Copperbelt.²¹ The majority were young men. DCs tour report of 1953 noted the figures as below:

		Men	Women	Children
1	At home in villages	353	501	847
2	At work in contact with villages	178	144	194
3	At work with no direct contact with villages	316	228	313
4	Average period spent away	2½ Years		

Source: NAZ/SEC2/SEC/NAT/362: Serenje Tour Report, 1953.

During the time the young men and women were absent from villages, only the old and the very young or disabled remained in villages. Even when they came back after two and half years, they went to live in urban centres, attracted by leisure and luxury that was found there. This meant low productivity for most villages and so hunger and sometimes famine became a common feature in many villages. This signified poverty for rural communities in Central Province.

In Chief Kabamba's area the number of labour migrants had increased tremendously by 1956. Out of 1,088 taxable men, 79.32 percent were known to be away at work. Within this figure, 39.52 percent were at work locally, within the province and 32.8 percent were at work outside the province but within the territory.²² Migration became a big menace to the villagers in

Serenje district to the extent that it began watering down developmental efforts that the colonial government was trying to put in place. For example, Area Training Centres had been set up in many districts to teach skills in bricklaying, agriculture and so forth. But in Serenje and Mkushi districts quite large numbers of men who had attended this training migrated to the Copperbelt. Bricklaying was known to be first choice and had a ready market on the line of rail. This deprived villages not only of the manual labour force but also of the skilled men who should have been putting up good infrastructure in villages. The District Commissioner touring Mkushi in 1953 wrote the following:

It seems certain that all the better elements of the population have gone to seek their fortune in towns, leaving an inert, unimaginative remnant behind them. To this remnant the idea of launching out into the unknown of leaving the security of the village is almost unattractive particularly if it is associated with the thought of hard work.²³

The result of all this was inadequate food supplies and many villages were dilapidated. In Chingombe area, by 1955, out of 2,720 men, 1,014 were away to work in towns and women complained of too much work for them due to the absence of men. Food production, in spite of missionary effort to encourage people to produce more, was still low due to scarcity of labour.²⁴

Labour statistics for Mumbwa and Kabwe rural were not available during time of research, but oral sources generally indicated a lower response of the people to labour migration during the post war era. This could be attributed to the lucrative agricultural activities that people had taken to. The interest was enhanced by the fact that agricultural technology had very much taken shape in the areas especially with the arrival of the Shona farmers from Southern Rhodesia in the mid 1950s.²⁵ These farmers seem to have had an overwhelming influence on the Kaonde, Ila, Lenje and Swaka people in terms of new agricultural knowledge. The result was a noticeable curtail, as regards the movement of people seeking employment in urban areas.²⁶

Apart from the Shona influence, the Lenje and the other groups in Kabwe rural as well as Mumbwa, seem to have responded well to new agricultural schemes introduced by the colonial government after the second world war in 1948. They also responded well to new marketing arrangements that had been put in place despite the unfair conditions for Africans in relation to those of Europeans.²⁷

Therefore, while labour migration continued to play a critical role in the creation of poverty among the Lala from the late 1940s through the 1960s and beyond, the reverse was true for the Lenje, Swaka, Ila and Kaonde people. These had adapted to new changes and developments.

Marketing

During seasons of plenty, the people exchanged their surplus produce for cash or other essential items. They did this in order to attain their exchange entitlement to enable them have cash to buy other items or meet other financial obligations. Trade in agricultural produce empowered households with cash and ensured food security. Before and during the Second World War, Native authorities or Local councils arranged to purchase produce from producers. This was meant to encourage Africans to produce more food. In 1942 the government set up buying depots in Central Province.²⁸ In this way, prosperity levels of the people were raised, but a reverse situation was observed after the Second World War when cultivators could not find market to sell their excess produce. The 1952 – 1953 season, for example, was notably good for farmers in Mumbwa. But it was overtaken by factors of marketing. Many African farmers complained of lack of facilities for selling surplus stocks of maize. European farmers would only buy limited amounts.²⁹ Meanwhile inadequate storage facilities in the villages for bagged

maize led to considerable deterioration of the grain. The District Commissioner commented thus:

It is felt that the present position is not at all satisfactory and if arrangements could be made in future to stabilise the position by means of buying contracts to specific agents the change would lead to an all round improvement. Locally a bag is sold at 24/- and sold in Lusaka by Europeans at 41/- per bag. This gives Africans no advantage either.³⁰

A situation such as this denied people their exchange entitlement. Most farmers in Central Province as was reported later, had difficulties in raising money to buy farming inputs for the following farming season.³¹ They also had difficulties in obtaining other food requirements let alone in meeting family obligations.³²

In Serenje a similar impression was created during the 1953 – 1954 farming season. In Chief Kafinda's area, which recorded food surplus, people could not find an adequate market. Although some maize was sold at the *Boma*, much remained unsold. The chief and his people appealed for the establishment of more buying depots on the Mukuku road and possibly at Chitambo, which could buy other produce such as beans and groundnuts.³³ The situation was worsened in 1957 when the Olomani Chitambo food depot was closed due to operational problems.³⁴ The development left many farmers desperate. Most villagers around Chitambo complained of having lost a good amount of produce to wastage, as they could not sell it.³⁵ Failure to find a market for their produce, not only discouraged but deprived peasants of a livelihood.

We would therefore argue that between 1946 and 1964 one of the factors that precipitated poverty in Central Province, even in times of plenty was government's failure to provide adequate markets for the people. So during this time the poor were those who could not find a market for their produce. In this respect many groups throughout the province were adversely affected.

Government Initiatives Against Poverty

The subsection will concentrate on the initiatives put in place by the Crown and Federal government to avert poverty among Africans in Central Province. After the war, copper industry continued to enjoy high demand. This meant copper production or the mining industry facilitated the demand for labour from rural areas. At the same time, food requirements in the urban centres increased due to increased labour force. Agricultural production in some parts of the country such as Southern Province therefore was on the increase. Other areas like Mkushi and Serenje in Central Province, however, remained labour reservoirs with not much improved agriculture as most able-bodied men and women continued flocking to towns.³⁶ Secondly, there was growing urbanisation as people opted to move to urban areas where life seemed to be more lucrative and pleasant.³⁷ Thirdly, the formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland had implications for Central Province. Therefore in considering government initiatives against poverty in Central Province between 1946 and 1964, the discussion takes into account these developments.

After the Second World War, in order to avert the suffering of the Africans, the colonial office in London appointed G. F. Clay as a Joint Development Advisor. This was with particular regard to the development of agriculture, health and other development areas in Northern Rhodesia.³⁸ The major task for the post war government was to change people's productive power into producing higher yields and also to attain a change over from subsistence agriculture to the production of cash crops. This called for a marked change in the farming system and the acceptance of improved methods of agriculture and raising of livestock. The general practice had been that in many rural areas, especially in Serenje, animal husbandry had been poor. Crop yield had also been far below that of Europeans. In short, in Northern Rhodesia while a European could produce 17 bags of maize per acre, an African could on average only produce 3 bags. This was attributed to poor agricultural methods and unutilised agricultural technology.³⁹

The problem that had to be dealt with therefore was how to make an African an efficient producer. It was, however, believed that this could be done through improved health and education aimed at making the young villager aware of better things and dissatisfied with his existing state. It was hoped once such was done the economic and social status of the African peasant producer could be raised. A proposal was therefore made to bring up Development Teams and African staff in rural areas such as in Eastern Province, Southern Province, Central Province and Northern Province.⁴⁰ Rural Agricultural Assistants were to be increased from 200 to 400 per province. In addition, central village schools, clinics, dispensaries and Jeans supervisors were to be established. Agricultural schemes also were to be started with Area Teams comprising rural Assistants Demonstrators and Supervisors. Villagers were to be taught modern agricultural skills.⁴¹

Peasant Farming Schemes

In 1948, peasant farming schemes were established in Central, Eastern and Southern Provinces. This was in response to the recommendations of the Clay Report as well as an attempt to respond to the change of Native Trustland order in Council promulgated in October 1947. At the same time it was perceived as a post war expedient to overcome serious poverty in reserves.⁴² The Tonga of Southern Province had already adopted such schemes by the 1920s. For instance, in 1929, the Tonga had produced 107, 865 bags out of 295,685 bags of maize in Northern Rhodesia. The yield was doubled in 1936 and 1937.⁴³

The schemes of 1948 were also partly in response to the growing food demands on the Copperbelt due to increased copper production. Southern Province alone had failed to meet the maize demands. Therefore, by establishing the farming schemes in other areas, food supply for the Copperbelt was assured. In the peasant schemes the government tried to stimulate

subsistence cultivators to grow maize, sorghum and beans for sale, using new methods of cultivation. Young and able-bodied men were targeted as a way of dissuading them from migration,⁴⁴ notwithstanding the reluctance with which many villages in Serenje accepted them. Middle aged men claimed they were too old for the exercise. Younger men claimed there was little in villages to attract them.⁴⁵

The schemes were established in Broken Hill, Mumbwa, Mkushi and Serenje districts. With regard to Serenje, the scheme was particularly important as the area faced a serious problem of deforestation due to *chitemene*. Therefore, techniques of animal manure and knowledge of crop rotation were taught to the local people. It was hoped that under the system of crop rotation some 8 to 20 acres would yield food crop, especially with the integrated use of cattle. In this way, there would be sufficient food not only for family subsistence but also for sale. The 1948 schemes in Serenje were established at Nchimishi in Milembo area of Chief Chibale and another one was established at Musola in Chief Muchinka's area. It was hoped that initially the schemes would evolve around the nucleus of about fifty farmers with various non-farming specialists such as carpenters, blacksmiths and storekeepers. They were to become centres of community development.⁴⁶

The Nchimishi scheme adopted the plough and the use of animal manure. During the early 1950s, the scheme performed well and a good deal of produce was sold to depots. The area attracted a number of traders from the Copperbelt. Cattle density also increased.⁴⁷ This suggests that during this period the Lala of Chief Chibale, through the Nchimishi scheme, enjoyed some prosperity. This was confirmed in the mid 1950s when many village producers under the scheme were noted to be enjoying a good measure of wealth, as they were able to produce much food for

sale especially with the coming of a Teacher Training College at Serenje Boma. Many villagers bought bicycles, radios, gramophones and sewing machines.⁴⁸

The late 1950's, however, showed a substantial decline in the Nchimishi scheme. Three main reasons were attributed to the failure. Firstly, Seur notes that in the 1950s and late 1960s, the tendency was that those practising cultivation by plough and had become prosperous, began to slowly detach themselves from the rest of the community. They set up their own settlements. This was either due to conflicts arising out of suspicion of witchcraft or feelings of superiority.⁴⁹ This was in itself retrogressive as it was frustrating the very essence of the scheme which had aimed at development. By detaching themselves from the communities, the prosperous peasant farmers were denying their poor 'brothers' and 'sisters' a chance to prosper too. "This is one reason most Lalas do not prosper. They have no spirit of unity. Everyone wants to be recognised as the only one that matters,"⁵⁰ said Kunda Lutamanya.

Secondly, it is believed the scheme failed because women were marginalised. The women were never given instructions in agriculture. The only knowledge they received was that of domestic science. Meanwhile, the men folk could not carry out instructions the way they were expected to. They needed to be reminded and encouraged by their women folk who unfortunately did not have the necessary knowledge on the operations of the scheme nor on crop and animal management. Whenever men sold their produce they pocketed the money and used it on less useful things. This brought conflicts in families and affected the productive capacity of the households.⁵¹ This scenario is similar to what Muntemba alludes to in her study of Kabwe Rural District. She argues that in both colonial and post colonial governments men were favoured as producers; and for reasons of equating man to the breadwinner concept, men

controlled the technology, new knowledge and produce.⁵² This marginalisation of women adversely affected the social and economic life of communities.

Thirdly, Seur notes negative attitudes towards government initiatives as having been at play. Some people felt by being part of the scheme, others perceived them as slaves of the government (*Abasha babuteko*). Some opted to break off from the scheme and be their own masters, known as “*basulutani*.”⁵³ This obviated antagonism and conflicts in the Nchimishi community. Zeal and commitment were consequently lost. All the factors militated against progress and so the Nchimishi scheme collapsed.

The Musola farming scheme also in Serenje district, failed almost in the same way. Between 1949 and 1951 the scheme was doing very well, with many members of the scheme enjoying some prosperity. By 1952, there was social differentiation as people in the scheme were able to afford goods like bicycles, blankets and good clothes.⁵⁴ There was no starvation in the villages. Moreover, farming implements such as ploughs were also accessible. In terms of economic and social status, the Musola inhabitants, both men and women were described as much improved.⁵⁵ However, by 1954, performance went down and the economic state of people became unsatisfactory. The number of men in the scheme was noted to have dwindled. Only men and women who had the experience of having lived on the line of rail remained in the scheme. It would appear success of a project had much to do with good exposure. In the 1954-harvest season, only small quantities of millet were produced. Farmers suddenly became quite poor. Some of them began to depend on gifts from relatives.⁵⁶ Commenting on the Musola Scheme, the District Commissioner attributed the failure to poor attitudes of the people. He wrote thus:

Musola farm has been a problem for some time – largely because of the attitude of farmers. They have been a discontented group and it has been extremely difficult at times to keep them up to the

mark with their farm work. The failure of their crops this year can be partly attributed to laziness and absenteeism at farms when hard work was most necessary.⁵⁷

Other agricultural schemes established in Serenje between 1951 and 1955 included one at Chililabombwe in Milembo and another at Lumpampa. In both areas, extension and veterinary services were intensified. At Mailo and Chisomo demonstration lessons were conducted to encourage farmers to grow a variety of crops like tobacco, cassava and cotton. To help the people of the district further, the Department of Agriculture established a Lake at Lukusashi in 1953. Four breeding ponds and three production ponds were built.⁵⁸ Other fishponds were initiated in schools and villages. This was in line with the programme of African Rural Development, which emphasised the importance of promoting the natural development of society.⁵⁹ But the success of the programme was dependent on the willingness of the local people themselves, to assist in raising the standards.

Many primary schools in rural areas therefore were used as centres for community development activities such as agriculture courses, demonstration and so forth. Among the schools used this way included Chitambo Mission, and Chipembi Secondary School in Kabwe rural. Such schools had a double purpose-to teach the children and parents about fish farming and to assist with relish problems.⁶⁰ In this way government was moving towards alleviating the poverty of the people.

In Mumbwa, the Lutale Farming Scheme was noted to be doing fine by 1954. The scheme involved villages in Chiefs Mulendema, Chibuluma and Mumba. The main objectives of this scheme were two fold. First, to facilitate the evacuation of people from the tsetse infested areas lying to the west of the Lutale River. Secondly, to form a barrier against further encroachment by the tsetse fly eastwards from the Lutale.⁶¹ In this way, it was hoped people's productive capacity would be enhanced. They would cultivate freely without the menace of

sleeping sickness and would also be able to keep their cattle, which were an important social and economic asset. But this had to call for the cooperation of the people, which the Lutale people displayed. In the schemes, maize and cotton were the main crops emphasised.

In spite of problems government initiatives faced, in some areas results were good. In 1948 for example, following the introduction of the schemes, many people took to farming in Lenje land. The following harvest season showed marked progress in the yields. In Chief Liteta's area 18,000 bags of maize were produced, while in Chief Chipepo's area 5,000 bags were recorded. From other Chiefdoms 7,000 bags were recorded.⁶² By 1950, many Lenje villagers had achieved high maize production as shown below:

Chief Liteta's area	18,000 bags
Chief Mungule's area	14,000 bags
Chief Chipepo's area	5,000 bags
Chief Chitanda's area	1,000 bags
TOTAL	38,000 bags

Source: NAZ/KDA 1: Broken Hill Note Book Vol. III, 1902 – 1962.

Clearly the schemes were yielding good results. Farmers on their customarily held lands, used improved methods and received cash bonuses per acre a year. The bonus was paid out of the African Farming Improvement Fund.⁶³ In 1956 the Agriculture Department expanded its activities and services steadily since the first agriculture station was opened at Keembe at 1952. Four agriculture stations were now operational: Keembe in Chief Liteta, Muchinje in Chief Mungule, Muswishi in Chief Chamuka and Chilimboyi in Chief Chipepo.⁶⁴

The 1956-harvest season therefore recorded 83,591 bags sold by Africans to the Maize Control Board. There were 199 registered improved farmers in Kabwe rural district including 22

peasant farmers in two peasant-farming blocks at Keembe and Mwachisompola both in Chief Liteta's country.⁶⁵ The improved farming scheme progressed well save for Chief Mungule's area where politically conscious Africans were opposed to it as they thought the scheme would lead to European settlement in the Native Reserve. This was reminiscent of the attitudes of the people in the Nchimishi scheme in Serenje. But the District Commissioner attributed such attitude to fear on the part of the people whom he said skeptical anything new.⁶⁶ We note how wrong attitudes frustrated progressive government efforts and so perpetuated poverty situation in communities. The situation however, improved in 1963, due to the presence of a large number of African farmers from Southern Rhodesia. The Lenje copied some attitudes and generally set to work.⁶⁷

Government initiatives were not just limited to the establishment of Agricultural schemes. They also included other services. For example veterinary services for the improvement of livestock were provided to local people. Therefore in 1959, owing to enhanced veterinary services, a marked increase of livestock in Mumbwa district was noted. The figures were:

Bulls	—	390	Goats	—	221
Cows	—	11,646	Calves	—	5,993
Oxen	—	10,132	Donkeys	—	124

Source: NAZI/KTJ 3/1 Vol. II: Mumbwa District Note Book, 1899-1959.

The increased number of livestock had a corresponding effect on the number of farm related implements. For instance, records showed that in the same year, 1959, there were 902 ploughs, 24 tractors, 6 mills and 875 ox-carts.⁶⁸ This was clear evidence of economic prosperity for the people of Mumbwa. The situation was made even better with the arrival of black settlers from Southern Rhodesia in the mid 1950s as already alluded to. The new settlers encouraged the

local Sala, Ila as well as the Kaonde, in the process. Thus coupled with favourable government development plans, the result was prosperity for the area, not only in terms of food but also in other material items. A report of 1959 indicated, a tremendous improvement in the social and material life of the Sala. They were able to afford payment of school fees for their children and able to dress their women well. Their school showed marked improvement because the local people had been able to contribute towards its renovation, contrary to earlier impecuniary situations that had been inherent in the community.

In response to poor marketing arrangements during the post war period, government decided to buy local produce. For example, in 1946, government bought local Serenje beans through the Department of Public Works (PWD), and also through the Civil Supplies Department, which was the main body charged with such responsibility. As regards the PWD, it bought beans to feed its workers involved in public works such as road construction and other related works. PWD bought beans at 16/6d per bag while the Civil Supplies Department bought at £15 per ton. In this way it was felt poverty in the area would be alleviated.⁶⁹ Buying depots were also established at the *Boma*, Buchele and Pensulo in 1956. Villagers were expected to take advantage of this facility and boost the growing of maize, kaffir corn, millet, groundnuts, peas, sweet potatoes and tomatoes. The price paid per Debby was 7/6, allowing a substantial profit.⁷⁰ Time and again the agriculture Kapasu stressed in every village the need for increased production particularly that there was to be a new market at the new teachers' college at the *Boma*. By the end of 1959, in spite of the prevailing indifferent attitudes of the people in Chief Kabamba's area, there was a total of 57 farms which according to the District Commissioner was a marked progress.⁷¹ In Mumbwa, market centres were similarly established at Nangoma, Nambala and Lutale by 1960. A number of farmers were able to responded postively to the

creation of new market. They sold between 2,000 – 3,000 bags of maize between 1960 and 1963.⁷² In Kabwe rural too, market centres were established in Chamuka and Liteta areas. Some local farmers, took advantage of the presence of white farmers in Chisamba area and sold their produce to them. This trend was quite common between 1960 and 1964,⁷³ and it enhanced prosperity of Africans.

So while it is true that the Europeans underplayed the African market system as evidenced in the maize and cattle control ordinances of 1936,⁷⁴ it can also be argued that the government, after the Second World War, provided Africans with a fair deal. At least Africans were provided with marketing facilities through which they could earn cash. This was an important step towards poverty alleviation among African communities. With regard to the same, Alfred Mufwempa, a farmer in Mumbwa commented as follows:

The colonial government had good policies, especially when it came to marketing produce. People were never disappointed as we are today. The policies really helped them get involved in agricultural ventures.⁷⁵

Rural Development in Villages

As part of rural development policy, the government embarked on a programme to encourage villagers to develop their own areas. The programme was intended to start at the lowest ring of the ladder within the village instead of being imposed upon them from above. The plan was to improve every sphere of activity apart from that of agriculture. The activities ranged from building of houses and childcare to contour ridging and vegetable gardens.⁷⁶ Development centres were put in place in various chiefdoms throughout the province in 1956. The major objective was to develop local industries. In Mumbwa for instance, Bee Keeping was encouraged and beehives were set up in Chief Kabulwebulwe and Shangantombwe's areas.⁷⁷ In Serenje, the fishing industry was to be established at Lusiwasi. The cattle industry was also improved.⁷⁸

To ensure success of these activities *Kapasus* were involved. These used to compel people to work. In other cases they gave talks on a particular subject. For example, an Agricultural *Kapasu* called Musambo, on a 1956 tour, talked of the need for food production, planting of fruit trees and cultivation of European vegetables in the villages of Chief Kabamba. This was to encourage crop diversification and help people move away from unproductive traditional practices.⁷⁹

By the end of 1957 tremendous progress had been noted in a number of villages of the province. In Mumbwa, the areas in Chiefs Shakumbila, Moono and Mulendema had a considerable number of Kimberley brick houses. Villagers were also commended for exhibiting much cleanliness. Women were described as dressing extra-ordinarily well.⁸⁰ This suggested some prosperity and development in the area. A similar situation was noted in Chief Kafinda of Serenje, where Kimberley brick houses had become a common feature. The District Commissioner described individuals in the chieftdom in 1958, as “making serious attempts to improve their lot.”⁸¹ Some areas close to government centres (**Bomas**) had no alternative but to copy the existing life styles at the centres. As one report noted of Chief Kabamba’s area:

Chief Kabamba’s area benefits to a large extent by proximity of the Boma. Model villages carefully laid out and with a well built farrow nearby and it is clear that some ‘go-ahead’ people do copy much of what they see at the Boma including gardens of flowering shrubs before their houses.⁸²

Road Construction

Other initiatives by colonial government were seen in the area of road construction and rehabilitation works. This was to enhance transportation of produce to market centres. Road construction and rehabilitation had been an on-going process from the 1930s. Therefore between 1948 and 1956 in Kabwe rural, a number of roads were either constructed or rehabilitated to improve communication. For example, a road was built from Chief Chipepo’s Lukali farm to

Lukanga River, a stretch of 40 miles. Another road was built from Chief Chamuka to Chipembi Mission, branching off to Mulungushi. Between 1955 and 1956, a new road joined Mukubwe area with Mpongwe Mission in the Ndola Rural District and connected with the Copperbelt to the north, and to the Great North Road near Kashitu to the east.⁸³ This was important as it ensured a smooth movement of produce and farming inputs to selling points or to farmers, in good time.

Water Development

Water development was another area, which received much attention from the colonial government. After the Second World War, the government took serious initiatives in the provision of water for people of Central Province. In 1937 for instance, there was a report of acute problems of water in Kabwe rural Chiefs Liteta and Chamuka areas of Kabwe. The report had indicated a very gloomy picture of the situation. It read as follows:

...Water shortage does result in some real hardship and is a definite factor in holding back the progress of people. The women can be seen and were in fact seen, sitting shivering over little fires before dawn waiting their turn to draw water. To fill one fairly small pot of water often waiting for a very long time for sufficient water to collect even for that The cattle have to be taken away long distances to water. As a result, unauthorised shabby little settlements of two or three people grow up every year around these cattle watering places. Moreover, as the people can only bathe and wash their clothes after a half day's walk to a distant stream and back to the village, they remain very largely unwashed which must have an adverse effect on their health.⁸⁴

Therefore, between 1946 and 1964 dams were built in a number of areas in the province. For instance, a dam built at Kafusha in Chief Liteta's area in the 1950s to ease water problems and to foster the cattle industry in Lenje land. Between 1951 and 1955 several dams were built in Serenje, at Lumpampa, Chililabombwe, Kamboke and Lusiwasi.⁸⁵ This was not just meant to meet domestic water requirements but also to enhance the cattle and fish industry. Between 1954 and 1960, following complaints in a number of villages in Mumbwa, concerning insufficient water supply, the government embarked on well digging. The only condition given

to the people was their provision of labour.⁸⁶ Here Africans were viewed as equal and active participants in alleviating their suffering and poverty in line with rural development policy. Later reports indicated that almost every village in the areas of Chiefs Mulendema, Chibuluma, Mumba and Shakumbila had good water sources.⁸⁷ Meanwhile earth dams were also constructed across the Nangoma River between 1953 and 1956.⁸⁸ This gave the people of the area further advantage in terms of water sources and so minimised suffering for both people and animals. By 1964, villages in Nalubanda area in Chief Shakumbila expressed satisfaction at the presence of water wells.⁸⁹

Health and Education

During the post war period, as a way of enhancing good health as well as disseminating new knowledge among African communities, the government beefed up its initiatives in education and health. Thus in 1947, a leprosiuim was set up at Liteta in Kabwe rural, and in 1948 a rural hospital was built at Serenje *Boma*.⁹⁰ In 1953, two more dispensaries were built in Serenje one at Chibale and another at Chisomo. Medical personnel and medicines were provided and a Medical Officer was to inspect them regularly. The two dispensaries in Serenje were in addition to the mission hospital at Chitambo, which the government aided through grants.

In Mkushi, a dispensary was constructed at Chalata and Chiwefwe in 1952. Each one had a member of staff. A Nursing Sister, L. Stephens from the *Boma* dispensary at Mkushi, would also pay occasional visits.⁹¹ In 1955 one dispensary was set up at Old Mkushi. Figures of attendance are shown below:

Out patients	<u>1928</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>
	34,386	52,140	43,476
In patients	13,350	13,529	15,042

Source: NAZ/KSM 4/1 Vol.1 Mkushi District Note Book, 1900 – 1962.

In general the figures are indicative of the fact that Africans were slowly learning to appreciate the value of Western medicine. By the late 1950s and early 1960s we note an increasingly large number of people seeking medical treatment. At Chisomo dispensary on the outskirts of Serenje, there was a notable improvement in the response of local people towards hospital treatment. In 1955 for example, there were 22 in-patients and 590 out-patients at the dispensary. In 1956, there were 55 in-patients and 789 out-patients.⁹² As more people attended treatment the health situation improved and so was the standard of living, as people could now attend to more productive activities without being disrupted. This was a step towards poverty reduction which also helped communities attain some measure of prosperity.

With regard to education services many schools continued being managed by missionaries, while the government ensured that the Africans received the necessary education. Between 1945 and 1947, the government embarked on mass literacy campaigns against illiteracy, throughout Northern Rhodesia. Village schools were also opened. For example, in Mkushi, during the same period there were four schools: one Upper, one Elementary and two Middle schools. Mumbwa, had one Upper school and two Middle schools. Serenje had three Central schools. Broken Hill had one Upper school and two Middle schools.⁹³ All these were fully supported by the government. In addition, grants and loans were given to mission schools such as Chipembi Girls' School (upper and secondary) in Kabwe rural, Mpima Seminary in Kabwe, Chingombe Mission in Mkushi and Msofu Seventh Day Adventist School in Mkushi.⁹⁴

Between 1950 and 1960 several schools opened in Serenje district. For instance, between 1951 and 1955, two Upper schools, four Middle schools and twenty Elementary schools, managed by missionaries were set up. In addition, new schools were built by the government at Mpelembe, Reuben Nuntaya, Mukapa, Kalunga, Kasuke, Mabonde and Kafinda during the same

period.⁹⁵ By 1956 there were schools at Kabamba and Chibale, and in many villages adult literacy classes were going on. By 1957 Chisomo and Kaombe primary schools were in existence in the Chisomo area.⁹⁶

In Mkushi area, Mboshya and Chikale schools managed by Chingombe Mission were in existence by 1954. Chief Mboshya was known to be exceptionally keen on education. This resulted in Mboshya School recording good attendance. Figures of attendance for 1954, for the two schools are shown below:

<u>Mboshya Central School</u>	<u>Enrolment</u>	75 boys	59 girls
	<u>Level</u>	Sub A to Standard II	
	<u>Attendance</u>	62 boys	48 girls
<u>Chikale School</u>	<u>Enrolment</u>	54 boys	59 girls
	<u>Attendance</u>	42 boys	46 girls

Source: NAZ/SEC2/624/SEC/NAT/362: Mkushi Tour Report, 1940 – 1955.

It is of interest to note a higher number of girls' attendance at Chikale School in Mkushi district. This could have been due to encouragement by Chief Mboshya and the missionaries. The employment of women helpers as domestic science teachers and literacy agents also impacted much on the girls of the area.⁹⁷

By 1960, there was a remarkable increase in school enrolment in Mkushi district. This was attributed to more schools being put up in the district. For example, one new school was opened in Chief Shaiwila in 1960 and school for standard three was started at the Mboshya.⁹⁸ Such developments were in themselves sufficient to entice children into school and so more children were able to benefit from western education.

Between 1955 and 1956 Kabwe rural had thirty-five schools. The policy of self-construction of necessary structures by the people themselves using pole and dagga materials facilitated the increase. Through this policy, government was required to contribute 90 percent of inputs such as building materials and money, when attendance was satisfactory. The local

people through their Native Authority were expected to contribute 10 percent of the inputs, towards brick buildings. This was also important in ensuring equal partnership. People had to be seen to contribute towards the improvement of their own standard of living. Later, to avoid the expense and difficult of maintaining thatched roofs and cheap structures burnt bricks and corrugated iron roofs were started at Kapiri Mposhi, Kapandula and Muntemba schools in Kabwe rural.⁹⁹

In spite of efforts to increase schools, the number of children in school in Central Province by 1963 remained low, partly because girls, who usually form the majority in communities, had not yet taken to the school system. Furthermore, most Africans were slow in adapting to new changes. So by 1964 rural Central Province had 50,540 primary school children; out of which 28,654 were boys and 21,886 were girls.¹⁰⁰

Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued that poverty in Central Province continued to be prevalent during the post war period. But we have also argued that while economic factors, such as labour migration continued to be significant in the creation of poverty during this period, other factors too, played a crucial role in the occurrence of the scourge. We have further argued that notwithstanding the myriad of problems with regard to poverty in the province during the period in question, the government played a vital role in reducing poverty in the province. This was done through the provision of developmental schemes such as rural development schemes, education, health, and agriculture. These initiatives not only ensured increased food security and well being of the people, but also helped improve living standards for communities thereby reducing prevalence of poverty.

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CHAPTER FOUR

POVERTY IN THE PERIOD AFTER INDEPENDENCE, 1965 - 2000

Introduction

The period 1965 – 2000 was one in which the affairs of the country were in the hands of Zambians themselves. In this chapter therefore, we argue that poverty in Central Province exhibited a marked shift in terms of factors that created it. While natural and economic factors continued to play a significant role in the creation of poverty, a new set of factors emerged during the period. Unstable government economic policies characterised by the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1985 and in 1992; and the HIV/AIDS pandemic first identified in Zambia in 1985, constituted a new but critical set of factors in poverty creation. We therefore argue that during the period 1985 – 2000, SAP and HIV/AIDS had more devastating effects on communities in Central Province than had ever been exerted by any other factor before. Further, we argue that it was during this period when women were placed in a more difficult position than had been the case before, due to the introduction of SAP and the advent of HIV/AIDS. A new category of the poor emerged during this era. To old men and women, were added widows and orphans. We also argue that initiatives against poverty took a corresponding change. While missionaries and the government continued as critical institutions in poverty alleviation, a new form of institution emerged during the period. This took the form of donor driven organisations generally referred to as Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Their role was to supplement government efforts in the fight against poverty and its off shoots.

Period of Economic Prosperity, 1965 - 1975

UNIP adopted a philosophy – philosophy of Humanism, coined by Kenneth Kaunda in the early 1960s. It was this philosophy, which guided policies of UNIP and the development of the country up to 1991. Humanism stipulated state control of enterprises and stressed man-centredness of society. Human beings were considered more valuable than any other thing in the creation of a just and equitable society. Through state control of enterprises and means of production, it was assumed exploitative tendencies would be minimised. In this way, the welfare of the people would be well catered for. The state would therefore intervene in market forces and other key areas to ensure sustainable development and reducing poverty in the process.¹

The main initiatives reflecting Humanism were the Mulungushi Economic Reforms of 1968 and 1969 when copper mines and many of the larger industrial and manufacturing enterprises were nationalised.² Under these economic reforms of 1969, the role of the state in the economy was expanded greatly. Under these measures, the process led to the creation of the Industrial Development Corporation (INDECO), Mining Development Corporation (MINDECO) and Financial Development Corporation (FINDECO). All these bodies were subsidiaries of the Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation (ZIMCO), an all embracing conglomerate.

The creation of parastatals, benefited both urban and rural areas. It was a strategy for eliminating poverty throughout the country. For example, under INDECO a number of rural industries were set up such as the Pineapple Canning Industry in Mwinilunga, a Battery Factory in Mansa, Cotton Ginneries in Chipata and Mumbwa. A Tea Scheme in Kawambwa, a Coffee Scheme in Kasama, a Banana Scheme in Kashikishi, a Mango Juice Factory in Mongu and a Bicycle Plant in Chipata.³

At the same time, FINDECO set up rural financial institutions like Agricultural Finance Company (AFC), Zambia State Insurance Corporation (ZSIC) and National Provident Fund. Loans and social security schemes were provided to urban and rural people. In a similar manner, two institutions, which were concerned with agricultural marketing the Grain Marketing Board and the Rural Marketing Board, were merged to form the National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBOARD) in 1969. The reorganisation was meant to improve marketing services in rural areas in terms of distribution of inputs as well as transportation and purchase of produce from points of production.⁴

Measures taken following independence in 1964, were a clear testimony of the UNIP government's commitment in ensuring that the poverty of the people was kept to minimum levels. Therefore the period between 1965 and 1975 was an era of prosperity for many regions in the country.⁵ Tax payments to the federal treasury had ceased at independence and so resources for development of both physical and social infrastructure were available.⁶ This stimulated the government into investing large sums of money in the construction of valuable infrastructure. Thus a national network of all weather roads and a new rail-link to Dar-es-Salaam were constructed. The government was also able to invest heavily in education and health services, such that by the late 1970s the country was able to achieve universal primary education. A network of health centres provided services within 15 Kilometres of 90 percent of the population. Both services were provided for free.⁷

With regard to Central Province therefore, food shortages and hunger were not rampant. Although some households in remote parts of the province complained of impecunuity, it was mainly due to long distances from *Boma* centres. But in terms of food security, dress, health care and education people were generally fairly catered for by the government.⁸ Mobile clinics and

the Flying Doctor Service were readily available to meet the needs of the rural populations. With regard to education there were many schools that had been set up in the province between 1965 and 1975 in addition to the already existing ones set up by the colonial government and the missionaries.⁹ we can therefore argue that between 1965 and 1975 poverty in many communities was kept to minimum levels.

One important initiative that seems to have facilitated improved conditions in the province and in many parts of rural Zambia was the introduction of co-operatives in 1969. This was when President Kaunda declared rural development a top priority.¹⁰ It was believed co-operative approach was the most effective solution to rural development, both as a way of life and as a means of curbing poverty. In cooperatives people could be involved in the production of crops such as maize, cotton, tobacco, groundnuts and so forth. They could also be engaged in animal and milk production. Through the Rural Development Corporation, the government would provide the co-operators with loans, which would be repaid at minimal interest rates. The motive was to encourage the majority of peasant households into the cash economy. In this way disparities between urban and rural areas would be reduced.¹¹ At the same time food security in rural households would be upheld and poverty would be minimised.

A number of schemes and co-operatives were therefore established between 1969 and 1975 in Central Province. There was for example, the Sasa Co-operative at Luombe in Serenje. The co-operative was involved in cattle rearing. Others within Serenje included the Bulila Co-operative in Chief Mailo's area and the Kampumba Co-operative, both dealing in crop production. There was also the Mulilima Tobacco Scheme which did very well up to the end of 1970. In this Co-operative mobile marketing services were available with permanent ones at Kabundi, Lumpampa, Kanona and Mulilima.¹² In Mkushi, there were also Co-operatives at

Luanshimba and Munsakamba. These were run by women and dealt in poultry. By 1975, the two Co-operatives were noted to be excelling and improving the quality of life for many village women. At Kapiri Mposhi too, there was a Women's co-operative in Chief Nkole's area.¹³ In Mumbwa, there were also a number of co-operatives and schemes, at Lutale, Shiabunji, Chibila and Munchabi which benefited from loans in the form of ploughs, oxen, harrows and fertilizer.¹⁴ In 1970, to boost export crop production from small-scale and medium-scale farmers in rural areas government introduced Tobacco Schemes at Chibwe and Munkonchi in Kabwe. Production of the crop was stimulated through attractive marketing arrangements, by the formation, in 1972, of the Tobacco Board of Zambia (TBZ).¹⁵ The move increased the availability of cash among the people of Chibwe and Mukonchi areas. In 1971 milk production schemes were started. This was to encourage small-scale farmers to improve livestock production through improved techniques. It was also aimed at meeting the dairy needs of the rural population. Dairy settlements were therefore established at Mukulaikwa in Mumbwa, at Lipiya in Serenje and at Mpima in Kabwe.¹⁶ In addition to these, at Keembe in Chibombo district, a Pig Scheme was established in 1971. This was government's intention to make the country self-sufficient in pork and pig products, while encouraging local people to embark on the initiative for their survival.¹⁷

During the 1970-76 period, therefore many small-scale farmers in rural Central Province prospered from the various initiatives put in place by UNIP. In Serenje for instance, the district council assessment report noted a tremendous increase in agricultural activity in many parts of the district. By 1975, 124,200 bags of maize were recorded as having been sold within a period of two years.¹⁸ The social and economic status of many villagers began to improve. Many villagers were able to construct brick houses especially in Mulilima, Kanona and Kabundi areas.

Destitutes in the district were very uncommon.¹⁹ Similar reports were noted in other areas. In Mukonchi for example, a number of people were noted to have acquired valuable property such as shops, cattle, Land Rovers and Vannets. Life greatly improved in Mukonchi area due to the Tobacco Scheme.²⁰

In Keembe area between 1974 and 1976, farmers flourished. This was evident from the assets they had acquired. Some pig farmers had managed to buy tractors or trucks while others opened shops and bars. Besides this, some farmers expanded their units in terms of breeding stock and pens without support from the government.²¹

Between 1974 and 1979 groups in the province did very well in up-lifting the standard of women and reducing their poverty. This was through such activities as food production, sewing, knitting and weaving. Through domestic science lessons, family diets improved greatly. Husbands were on record to have praised their wives for the general improvement in home management. In June 2004, Emelda Kamila of Kapiri Mposhi commented thus:

The initiative by the government to encourage women form clubs for farming and domestic was very good. We wish it could be done even today. Under UNIP we were really cared for, we were taught things, which made us run our homes well. We were exposed to ideas we never had known before.²²

The period 1965-1975 showed reduced poverty levels in Central Province. This was largely a result of the safety measures that had been put in place by the government. The various challenges the UNIP government faced at independence in 1964, stimulated it into taking economic measures meant to avert rural poverty. However, poverty existed in some households during the period under consideration but the scale of occurrence, relative to that discussed in the previous three chapters could be said to have been negligible.

Period of Economic Decline, 1975-1985

Despite the various initiatives the UNIP government had put in place to ensure economic growth and avert poverty in both urban and rural communities, the mid 1970s began to record an economic downturn. This was partly due to the rise in oil prices on the international market such that it became costly for the country to import oil. It was also the time when copper prices began to fall on the world market owing to reduced demand.²² Some scholars have also attributed the economic decline of the mid 1970s and the 1980s to failure by the UNIP government to manage the economy. They argue that more investments were made in the secondary industry than in the agricultural industry, which in actual fact should have been the backbone of the secondary industry.²⁴ As it were, the two were let to develop separately with no formal resonance. Therefore, when the secondary industry began to decline, the primary and agricultural industries were not able to support the secondary industry, since their outputs both in terms of produce and earnings were low.

Some analysts have attributed the economic failure to Zambia's involvement in the liberation wars in Southern Africa. According to Bonnick, President Kaunda plunged the country into long wars of liberation at the expense of his own people.²⁵ Other analysts attribute the problem to economic mismanagement. Selfish politicians plundered whatever resources were meant for poverty alleviation.²⁶ Baylies and Szeftel note the abuse of office in the 1970s by two cabinet ministers and a former minister, two ministers of state and a number of senior civil servants in connection with the embezzlement of funds meant for Southern and Central Provinces. The funds were under the scheme of 'African Farming Improvement Fund' created in the late 1960s, for the purpose of financing and improving African peasant agriculture through loans and provision of infrastructure. The high level political figures took advantage of this and

gave themselves large loans from the funds. In some cases they purchased farms without advertising the availability of such loans.²⁷ Noting the Chief Justice's verdict, Baylies and Szeftel extracted the following:

They had descended like locusts on a fund to which none of them had contributed and from which morally they should plainly be excluded... the ordinary peasant African farmer for whom loans were really intended and whose contributions formed the funds was completely disregarded in favour of the horde of privileged persons in public office.²⁸

Such attitude exhibited by the political fiat could therefore be said to have contributed much to the creation of poverty in rural areas. The period between 1975 and 1985 was also characterised by high export and import deficits with falling export prices and rising import prices. There was a high deficit in the balance of payments exacerbating the economic crisis. There was heavy borrowing and a high external debt.²⁹ The impact on the rural areas was profound and far-reaching. This destabilised many social and economic ventures in Central Province.

By the late 1970s it was evidently clear that most of the initiatives put in place by government in Central Province, between 1965 and 1975, had started showing some contraction. By 1980, most Schemes and Co-operatives had failed. In Serenje for example, the Malila Regrouping Scheme established in 1973, had disintegrated by 1983. A similar situation applied to the Mulilima, Katikulula, Bulila and Kabundi Schemes.³⁰ Lack of continued support by the government in the area of transport, marketing and provision of financial assistance was said to have been the major contributing factor for the negative development.³¹ The result was withdrawal of commitment by many people who felt were employees rather than participants in the Co-operatives and Schemes. Ultimately in many places the situation was that of retrogression to poverty levels of the 1920s.³²

In Mukonchi and Luanshimba areas in Kabwe rural, tobacco production which up to 1981 had been under the management of the TBZ, was on a marked decline by 1984. This was

among other things, due to insufficient number of tractors and the late delivery of inputs emanating from lack of government support.³³ At Mpima Dairy Scheme, the period 1982-84 noted a severe drop in milk production due to erratic supply of stock feeds. The other problem was the inability of the AFC to give loans to farmers.³⁴ At Keembe Pig Scheme performance went down between 1977 and 1984. The number of farmers also reduced drastically. People were noted to be struggling to feed their families. Some of the machinery they had acquired previously was non operational. Some shops had either closed down or were on the verge of collapse.³⁵

The situation in most parts of rural Zambia deteriorated further by the mid 1980s. It was worsened by NAMBOARD's failure to meet the needs of farmers. The organisation had actually been widely criticised for excessive operational costs most of which stemmed from maize and fertiliser pricing and subsidies determined by government.³⁶ In 1979 for example, subsidies on agriculture through NAMBOARD exceeded K100 million, which was 19 percent of the total government recurrent spending. The government responded by withdrawing the Boards' monopoly over food marketing in 1980 and allowing Provincial Corporative Unions (PCUs) to market crops and inputs within the provinces.³⁷

However, the new marketing structure proved more costly. Most PCUs were not able to manage their new role. Thus by 1983, they were in financial crisis. By mid 1984 the debts owed to NAMBOARD by the PCUs were 77 percent of the total debt owed to the organisation. This placed the organisation into deep financial difficulties such that during the 1988-89 farming season farmers could not be paid cash. Instead they received promissory notes as a form of deferred payment.³⁸ This placed many farmers in Central Province in a precarious position. In Mumbwa, business went down, as farmers had no money for shopping. Bar owners complained

of reduced patronage during this period.³⁹ Some Zimbabwean farmers were contemplating leaving for their home country where the economy was at its peak.⁴⁰ In Mukonchi, Chibwe and Luanshimba areas in Kabwe, farmers complained of having been reduced to paupers by the government. Their tobacco could not sell due to operational difficulties faced by TBZ. Then their cotton could not be bought in good time because of the problems Lint Company (LINTCO) was facing and their maize for which they could only receive deferred payments.⁴¹ This made it very difficult for them to meet their financial obligations like buying essentials such as soap, cooking oil, school uniforms and so forth. The situation was the same in Mkushi and Serenje. On some European farms in Mkushi, workers had to be laid off due to reduced income. This resulted into more suffering for many villagers.⁴² In Serenje the promissory notes made the UNIP government very unpopular. People began calling for the removal of Kaunda whom they said had overstayed in power and so had taken the suffering of the people for granted.⁴³

The poverty situation was also exacerbated by the droughts of 1983/84 and 1985/86 farming seasons during which time farmers lost a substantial quantity of crop. Apart from this, it was worsened by the economic measures of 1985 when the government introduced Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), under the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.⁴⁴ The overall impact was reduced subsidies on fertiliser and other agricultural inputs and late delivery of inputs so that planting was never on time. Marketing was liberalised such that private businessmen were also allowed to buy maize from farmers and they exploited them greatly.⁴⁵ While farmers invested so much in their activity, the businessmen bought the produce at very low prices, resulting in immense losses for peasant farmers. These uncalculated measures eventually led to the closure of NAMBOARD by the end of the 1980s, bringing total chaos to the agricultural sector.

In short whatever measures the government had taken to offset the economic slumber of the late 1970s and 1980s brought no meaningful results. The ultimate result was the loss of popularity by UNIP and President Kaunda. This subsequently led to the removal from power of Kaunda and his party by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). Therefore, we can argue that mismanagement of development programmes became crucial in the creation of poverty in Central Province between 1975 and the late 1980s.

Impact of Structural Adjustment Programme, 1992 - 2000

1991 marked the beginning of the Third Republic under the MMD led by Fredrick Chiluba. When the MMD assumed power the economic performance of the country was at alarmingly low levels. Unemployment was high and stood at 24.9 percent. Many children were stunted - about 12 percent of the population. Life expectancy was about 50; 67 percent of the population lived in poverty.⁴⁶

To save the situation in 1992, the MMD promptly embarked on economic reforms, which included the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). This had been tried by the UNIP government but had not yielded any positive results. For the MMD, however, SAP was the surest way of creating micro-economic stability in the economy. Thus the government embarked on serious execution of SAP measures. Measures taken included liberalisation of trade, prices, interest and foreign exchange rates, removal of subsidies, privatisation of industries, reduction in public expenditure, public sector reforms and liberalisation of marketing and pricing of agricultural produce.⁴⁷ It was hoped that the full implementation of SAP would put the Zambian economy on the path to economic development, by way of arresting economic decline and restoring growth in the long term. Standard of living for all Zambians would then improve.⁴⁸

During the early phase of the programme, government implemented stringent monetary controls aimed at reducing the high inflation levels. These measures however, led to high interest rates, which in turn restricted borrowing for recapitalisation and output expansion. The overall result was low levels of investment and high unemployment.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, privatisation of firms and enterprises, previously owned by the state, resulted in the closure of several entities. According to the MMD, privatisation would improve efficiency by forestalling competition among various business and commercial entities. At the same time, it was envisaged an “enabling business and commercial environment” to attract foreign investment would be created.⁵⁰ However, this turned out to be different in reality. Many companies or firms went under. Among them were, Zambia Airways (ZA), Zambia Consumers Buying Corporation (ZCBC), Kapiri Glass Products (KGP), United Bus Company of Zambia (UBZ), Nitrogen Chemicals of Zambia (NCZ), Mulungushi Textiles of Zambia (MTZ), Kafue Textiles of Zambia (KTZ) and many others.⁵¹

There was massive reduction in job opportunities and several jobs were lost through retrenchments. This had untold socio-economic impact on both the urban and rural populations of the country. Central Province was particularly affected, by returned retrenchees. In many parts of the province, there were indications of people having left urban centres for villages. People had no better option but to go to villages since life without employment in town became unbearable. So between 1992 and 1996, in Central Province, 57 percent of the people were noted to have moved from urban to rural areas.⁵² Meanwhile, these returned workers could not take much meaningful development to the villages. Most people who left for villages after losing their jobs lived in misery and depression. They could not afford to pay fees for their children at school, and medical fees at local hospitals. Their situation was worsened by government’s

introduction of cost sharing measures in the education and health sectors.⁵³ On retrenchments

Emelda Kamila of Chief Nkole in Kapiri Mposhi District lamented. She said:

When companies closed down, people had no choice but to come home. But many were not used to this type of life... they became destitutes. Others became ill and died. Their wives and children suffered the most.... In some cases divorces resulted. This was common with men who were married from other regions of the country. Their wives left and went back to town. Some people had bought houses in towns, when life became unbearably hard, they sold them with a view to investing in agriculture in their villages. But due to bad weather and uncertain marketing arrangements they found themselves reduced to complete poverty.⁵⁴

The problem of job losses reduced the chances of investment in Central Province. People, who previously had remitted money to their relatives to be invested in farming or other ventures were unable to do so during the 1992-2000 period. Therefore, people who had relied heavily on their children or other relatives working in town, for gifts and other pecuniary benefits lost out and were thrown into more serious poverty. The loss of jobs for their children and other kinsmen entailed a loss in livelihood for villagers. Therefore the poor during this period were those who had lost their jobs in towns and returned to villages and those villagers who had previously depended on their kinsmen in employment but could no longer do so.

In 1996 for example, 697,000 persons, who represented 74 percent of the total population of Central Province, were poor. The highest incidence of poverty being in Serenje district where 93.2 percent of the population were poor.⁵⁵ Job losses accounted for part of the problem and many people from urban areas entered the district without much economic activity.⁵⁶ Kabwe rural district had equally a high number of poor people partly because of the closure of Kapiri Glass Products and Kabwe Mine in 1994. There was also a temporary closure of Mulungushi Textiles of Zambia, which had faced serious liquidity problems between 1993 and 1995. Most of the people who had depended on these firms directly or indirectly therefore, suffered conjunctural poverty. About 215,000 people with a poverty incidence of 76.0 percent lived in misery. Kabwe urban suffered 58 percent poverty incidence and turned out to be the lowest.

The explanation given by authorities was that many retrenchees and retirees opted to settle on the outskirts of Kabwe town where very little economic activity actually took place.⁵⁷

It is of interest to note how poverty was able to change its geographical position in the 1990s. It moved from urban areas to rural areas adding to higher levels of poverty in the villages in the process. The whole situation beginning 1992-2000 was reminiscent of that which occurred during the period of the Great Depression of 1929-1933, when many Africans had lost their jobs in the mines. They retreated to their villages and most of them were thrown into poverty. They looked up to their kinsmen for food and other forms of livelihood. The 1992-2000 situation was similar, but more devastating. The reason being that villages at the time, were also affected by the SAP policies especially through weak marketing arrangements and other forms of disasters such as the HIV/AIDS scourge which was taking serious strides on local communities.

Subsidies on agricultural inputs had been withdrawn at the end of 1992. Marketing arrangements on maize and other produce also had been liberalised as part of the SAP package. Private traders were therefore encouraged to play the lead, and market-based pricing, characterised maize marketing.⁵⁸ The arrangement had serious repercussions for farmers. Producers gambled as regards the time and place to sell their maize and other produce. They had to wait for a time when prices were higher. Meanwhile, they needed cash and so “briefcase businessmen” as the private buyers came to be commonly known, took advantage of the situation and bought maize from them very cheaply. In most cases farmers lost out.

In Serenje the incidence of poverty increased during the 1992-2000 period. Poor marketing arrangements played a significant role in this.⁵⁹ The situation was worsened by the drought of 1991/1992 and 1994/1995 farming seasons.⁶⁰ People were thrown into real poverty

with those who had enjoyed some measure of prosperity even in the ailing 'UNIP economy' being rendered completely poor and those who had been poor during the same period being rendered destitutes.⁶¹

In Mumbwa, the scenario was the same. The closure of secondary manufacturing processes like Mulungushi Textiles of Zambia and Kafue Textiles also frustrated cotton farmers in Mumbwa. This was a double tragedy for the farmers who had already lost their maize market. The closure of textiles factories meant a reduced demand for cotton. Such development obviated loss of prosperity for the farmers who had relied much on cotton growing for their livelihood. The situation was worsened by the inflow of imported second hand clothes (**salaula**) and cheaper textile products from other countries. Because of this situation, many farmers in Mumbwa, Mukonchi and Chibwe farming areas in Kabwe, complained of having been worse off in the 1990s than they had been before. Stephen Mulebwa of Chief Mulendema in Mumbwa, complained of having lost a huge sum of money, which he had hoped to realise through the sale of his cotton during the 1992/93 season. He also acknowledged the fact that the period had been rough for most cotton farmers. He attributed the problem to the MMD government, which he accused of lacking care for the well being of the people. He expressed regret at having ushered into power a government, which was out to impoverishing people.⁶² This by and large, would suggest that people in rural Central Province did not appreciate the implementation of SAP.

Meanwhile, the government did very little in terms of infrastructural support in agriculture after 1991. Storage facilities in many parts of the province were in a state of dilapidation, as they lay idle without produce being stored there. The Natuseko Silo bins in Kabwe for instance, were in 1993 known to be only harbouring rats instead of maize.⁶³ Meanwhile, in many parts of the province, maize remained uncollected or unsold and farmers did

not know what to do with it, as was the case at Mulilima and Kanona depots in Serenje. Roads were also known to have been in a poor state between 1992 and 2000, rendering transportation of inputs to farmers a difficult venture. Places like Reuben, Masunga Lupiya and Katongo, were noted to be inaccessible and farmers had difficulties in transporting their produce to market places, let alone their inputs from Serenje to their villages. The valley area of Chisomo and Kabansa could not receive agricultural inputs and agricultural extension staff due to remoteness and bad road network.⁶⁴ The result was low yields, escalating food shortages and poverty in the areas.

In fact, food shortages became rampant in Central Province in 1996. 40 percent of the people were on record as having lived under very difficult conditions. In Chief Serenje's areas of Kabundi and Mabonde, people would go for months looking for food. This was attributed mainly to lack of fertiliser, which people could not access because of high prices and transportation difficulties.⁶⁵ A similar situation was evident in Chief Chipepo's area in Kabwe rural. Villagers complained of starvation and inability to send their children to school due to low yields experienced in the 1994/95 seasons, which they largely attributed to lack of inputs.⁶⁶ In Mumbwa area, the local Sala and Kaonde people were said to have intensified their fishing and hunting activities to escape hunger and starvation brought about by what they considered as an attempt to starve them.⁶⁷

The absence of smallholder credit institutions also contributed to the poverty of the people in the province during the SAP era. Unlike the 1980s when major efforts were made by the government to provide credit to small-scale farmers, the 1990s gave none of such. The Zambia Cooperative Federation (ZCF), Credit Union and Savings Association (CUSA) and Lima Bank, which the UNIP government had created to help rural farmers,⁶⁸ had by 1994 become non

operational. The ability of these institutions to recover loans had been undermined significantly by persistent droughts, which eroded the farmers' resource base.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, the liberalised marketing policy led to loss of control by these institutions over farmers. Previously, debts would be recovered centrally through NAMBOARD or Cooperative Unions. This time it became difficult since all transactions were private and so farmers would escape repayment thereby destabilising the lending institutions, which in the final analysis, folded up.⁷⁰

The situation affected many farmers in Central Province most adversely as a lacuna for financial support was created. This could also explain why during the 1995/96 season, Central Province was not among the highest food producers like Eastern and North-Western Provinces.⁷¹ By 1998 therefore, farmers who had survived the harsh economic times, in Serenje and parts of Kabwe rural came to an economic stalemate. Those with agricultural implements such as tractors and other forms of machinery, acquired during the days of UNIP, could no longer afford to maintain them. Most of them broke down permanently and farmers had to rely on hired machinery or hired labour, which subsequently led to low production levels⁷² and so poverty set in. In short, the people of the province experienced poverty in terms of lack of food, reduced income and loss of assets during the period under consideration. The situation was worse for the Lala of Serenje who in the mid 1990s experienced the disappearance of the caterpillar, an important source of income. This was caused by the degeneration of the *Mutondo* (*Julbernalina paniculata*) and *Mutobo* (*Isobertlinna Angolesis*) trees. The degeneration had been caused by careless cutting of trees by the local people.⁷³

Extension and veterinary services were also inadequate for farmers during the 1990s. These services were lacking in most villages of the province. Between 1993 and 1994 for example, only 19 percent (14,030) farmers in the province received advice from extension

services.⁷⁴ The major problems officers complained about were: inadequate transport, considering the long distances, insufficient funding and lack of protective clothing such as gum boots, and camping equipment, stationery and so forth. This was attributed to the strict cash budget system, that the government was pursuing, as part of SAP.⁷⁵

Livestock production was equally affected by inadequate veterinary services. While livestock, cattle in particular, was an important asset in Mumbwa, in Mkushi and other parts of Central Province there was a marked drop in numbers.⁷⁶ Musonda Chunga, District Commissioner for Serenje, spoke of having lost a substantial herd of cattle during the 1992/94 periods. Lack of equipment and poor government funding to the Veterinary Department accounted for the problems.⁷⁷ Considering the significance of livestock to food production, in terms of provision of draught power, animal manure and as a source of additional income, the drop meant serious impoverishment for the people in the province.

So between 1992 and 2000, the conjuncturely impoverished in Central Province were those who failed to sell their produce; those who had lost their jobs; those who had lost their livestock and those who could not recover from natural calamities such as drought. This factor resonated with the government's policy of SAP which caused severe pain and stress among the communities in Central Province.

Structural Adjustment, Education and Health

The effects of SAP were also felt in education and health sectors. The education sector witnessed subdued expansion. The explanation for this was the new policy initiatives – liberalised market economy characterised by privatisation and the re-introduction of user service fees as a cost-sharing measure.⁷⁸ Parents were too poor to send children to school. In some cases

children themselves opted to do other things, which would generate income for their families. Thus between 1990 and 2000 literacy levels of people between the ages of 5 and 14 years and between 15 and 24 years including those of adults for both urban and rural Central Province, dropped from 56.2 to 55.8, and 78.8 to 71.1 percent respectively.⁷⁹ School attendance and school enrolment followed a similar pattern, with more males than females attending school. In most parts of Central Province, there was an increasing trend of girls getting married early as a hedge against poverty. In other words, seeing the hardships in their parents' homes, girls opted to lead independent lives where husbands would provide for them. Parents also were only too willing to shed off some of the children.

In Mumbwa for example, between 1996 and 2000 the numbers of school children especially girls were very low. It was noted 70 percent of the children either spent more time looking for food or their parents had married them off. It had to take the intervention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in conjunction with the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) to convince the local people to stop the practice.⁸⁰ In Mkushi's Munsakamba and Katuba areas early marriages were noted by teachers as having been a major drawback in education. Most girls had got married just to escape poverty from their homes.⁸¹ In Serenje, around Kabeta, Mutale and Masunga areas, early marriages were known to be an important means of survival too. Parents married off girls not only as a relief but also a means of acquiring labour from the in-laws. According to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) survey between 1993 and 1999, out of the girls who entered Grade one, only one or two would end up in Grade seven. Sala Simbeye once an untrained teacher at Kabeta, experienced how a Grade Three (3) girl in 1995 was married off at the economic pleasure of parents.⁸²

With regard to health, Health Reforms seemed to have had positive impact countrywide. On average, life expectancy at birth seemed to have improved greatly. Infant mortality rate to some extent had reduced. A number of urban and rural health centres were established during the period the MMD had taken over power. Notwithstanding this, adult mortality rate seemed to have been on the increase.⁸³ This was attributed to abstinence from attending treatment at health centres. Thus even simple ailments such as fever or diarrhoea would claim people's lives. Only 45 percent consulted health centres. 55 percent never consulted health centres. They either sought self-treatment or none at all.⁸⁴ It was observed that people shunned hospital treatment because of economic hardships. The introduction of user fees at health centres barred many sick villagers from seeking treatment. Most villagers complained of lacking money since their crops had either failed or if at all there was a successful yield, then they could not manage to sell their crops. They had also lost their animals, so they claimed they could not afford to pay for medical treatment. One villager in Chibombo had this to say:

The new government of 1991 was clearly not interested in people. In fact if it had a way out, it would have exterminated all the poor people so as to be left with only the rich.... It had denied us food and money and as if that was not enough, it made learning and health unreachable...⁸⁵

Such remarks came in the wake of the harsh economic policies that the new government had put in place. Coupled with the existing misery carried over from the previous government, the SAP measures worsened the people's situation in Central Province. There had been hope that when the new government came to power, things would be better.

Survival Initiatives

Trade became the means of survival although even this was not reliable as people were failing to buy items by cash. Most opted to get items by credit, which placed those engaged in trade activities in a difficult position. Therefore in most parts of Central Province 'food for

work' became a common survival strategy during the 1990s. Food for work was a government approved programme which paid persons in the form of food (mealie meal, cooking oil, beans and so forth) for taking part in public works which included ventures like road rehabilitation, or construction of schools, health centres, digging of wells or fishponds and others, meant for the benefit of local communities.⁸⁶ Many villagers were able to survive this way.

Another form of survival in the 1990s noted through surveys was that of getting assistance from better off households. This could be within the same villages or even from other villages. This was a form of begging. Families in Central Province were renowned for this form of survival. Most Mkushi and Serenje villagers with large families sent some members of their families to relatives.⁸⁷ The trend was rampant in Serenje and Mkushi during the 1990's when divorce cases were noted to have been on the increase. The explanation for this was that it was a strategy for men to escape from the responsibility of looking for food and other material requirements for the families. By divorcing, children would remain with their mothers, who would fend for them.⁸⁸ We therefore note an added burden on the women. To beat the crisis, women in most cases ended up engaging in illicit activities such as beer brewing and prostitution.⁸⁹

As a natural survival check, some families reduced food intake or number of meals per day. They supplemented their meals with fruits such as mango, *mpundu* and *masuku*.⁹⁰ This was not a very ideal way of living, but in the crisis of the 1990's this was one of the most appropriate ways to survive the poverty of the time. And in Mumbwa, Chief Shakumbila's area during the 1994 drought people resorted to killing mice which they would sell to passers by from town.⁹¹ While collection of fruit and hunting of small animals has always been a practice of many rural communities, such a practice in the 1990 was intensified due to food shortages.

It should be noted here that towards the end of the twentieth century primitive methods of survival still lingered among the communities of Central Province. This would only explain the extent and degree of the poverty in the area.

Government Safety Measures

Despite the harsh economic and social climate that characterised the reign of the MMD government between 1992 and 2000, several attempts were made to assist people against poverty. Through the Agricultural Department, the government in 1996, initiated the Fertiliser Support Programme (FSP) whose main objective was to provide fertiliser and seeds to small-scale farmers. Many small-scale households in Serenje and Mumbwa benefited.⁹² Another project under the programme was the restocking of animals such as donkeys and cattle to offset the losses of livestock due to draught and disease. The restocking was aimed at enhancing draught power in place of hoe cultivation. Farming implements such as rippers, harrows and others were also provided to some selected households.

Under Rural Investment Fund, infrastructural development was commenced. Some roads, bridges, storage sheds were attended to. This was in response to the complaints of the people with regard to poor rural infrastructure.⁹³ Fish ponds and mono pumps were also put up in almost all districts of the province, but due to lack of maintenance most of the mono pumps had broken down by 2000. The Food Security Pack Programme (FSPP) was also embarked upon in 1997. The programme was run by the Department of Community and Social Services and it targeted female headed homes. Here people were encouraged to produce three types of food crops- a cereal, a legume and a root crop. This was to ensure food security in homes and also ensure cash flow through the sell of excess produce.⁹⁴ The government provided inputs such as fertiliser, maize seed, groundnuts and soya beans. The project succeeded in Mumbwa district where people responded very well. In Serenje and Mkushi some households sold the seed and the

fertiliser to their prosperous neighbours and so the project flopped. Therefore, misery among the concerned households continued with many hovering around government workers' homes begging for food and clothes.⁹⁵

The government also embarked on the construction and rehabilitation of schools, hospitals and health centres throughout the country between 1992 and 2000. This was done in partnership with donor agencies. Among them were the African Development Bank (ADB), the Micro Project Unit and the Zambia Social Investment Fund (ZAMSIF). The projects saw a complete refurbishment of infrastructure, which had during the UNIP era been intensely run down. Schools were therefore furnished with new pupils' desks, teachers' tables and chairs. Books were supplied and teachers' houses and bore holes were also put up. Health centres were also restocked with medicines. In Central Province a number of schools and health centres had been refurbished by 2000. According to many teachers and medical personnel interviewed during the research, this was one area in which the MMD had scored highly. The only hindrance was the introduction of user fees, which many villagers could not afford owing to the prevalent poverty levels.

The fact that the government put in place all these measures showed that it was concerned with the well being of the people contrary to the perceptions of many villagers who felt neglected. The government was trying to lessen or reduce the poverty levels of many households.

Initiatives by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) 1991 – 2000

From the 1920s to the 1970s, Missionaries formed the main institution that supplemented government efforts towards poverty alleviation in the Province. This was in the area of

agriculture, health and education. In the 1980s poverty alleviation took a new turn as new forms of institutions came into existence. These institutions, which came to be widely known as Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) became prominent in the 1990s. Their prominence was due to what the government termed as “Partners in Development” under the policy of liberalisation of the economy. Most of the NGOs therefore came in through donor funding that the Government received. Some, however, were formed locally but sought donor funding from abroad.

With regard to Central Province, a few organisations were quite involved in the area of poverty alleviation during the 1992 – 2000 period. One such organisation was the Helfer International. The organisation originated from Germany and was established in Serenje in 1985. The aim of the organisation was to enhance livestock production among the local Lala population. This followed an appeal from Chiefs Mailo and Muchinka to the government to enable people breed animals for draught power, milk and beef. Initially the project started in 1990 in Chief Kabamba’s through the ‘Chanikila Project’. The project dealt in goats and through the ‘Pass on the Gift Concept’ it spread to other areas. Under the concept when an animal reproduced, the young ones would be passed on to another person, while the original owner retained the parent animals.⁹⁶ The pattern would go on until a larger community owned animals. Apart from goats, cattle were also introduced under the same concept.

Through Helfer International projects, villages in Chiefs Kabamba and Mailo were, in 1998, able to own cattle for their beef and milk requirements. Apart from that, people were able to engage some animals in draught power and so eased cultivation. In some cases animals were used in trade. In all these cases, poverty for the people was alleviated and so making the lives of the people much more comfortable than before.

Another organisation actively involved in the province was the Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM). This organisation operated in conjunction with the Department of Community and Social Services. The major aim of the organisation has been to reduce incidence of hunger and undernourishment arising from food shortages in communities. So, to help overcome such problems, the organisation gave seed of various crops, maize, groundnuts, beans, sorghum and others to villagers, particularly those that appeared to be very vulnerable to starvation. Fertiliser was also distributed. After harvest, villagers retained much of the produce. They would only be expected to pay back in kind very minimally. For example, for a 50 kilogram bag of maize, one would be expected to pay back only 2a 10 kilogram bag of maize. The same applied to other crops. This was almost interest free form of aid, because whatever the villagers paid back was taken to other hunger stricken communities. So the problem of lack of inputs and that of hunger in communities was to some extent resolved.⁹⁷ In this way incidences of poverty were reduced. PAM projects worked well in Mumbwa, Kabwe rural and Mkushi. In Kapiri Mposhi and Serenje, some villagers were unfaithful. They refused to pay back the expected amount of produce. In a few cases in Kapiri Mposhi, Nkole area, men sold off the inputs for beer.⁹⁸

Another prominent organisation that worked in Central Province between 1990 and 2000 was the Development Aid from People to People (DAPP). The organisation originated from the United States. It was formed following the World Summit that took place in New York in 1990. At the summit it had been estimated that hundred million children would die world wide from malnutrition and preventable diseases by the year 2000 if nothing was done to improve the situation. The organisation's headquarters in Zambia was in Solwezi at Mumena. In Zambia, DAPP got involved in alleviating the suffering of the people arising out of the economic

difficulties of the 1990s in health, education and nutrition.⁹⁹ In Central Province, DAPP centres were in Mkushi, Serenje and Chibombo where a children's town was established. In Mkushi and Serenje, the target was to reach out to a total of 3,000 families each, while in Chibombo the target was to reach out 2,800 families. This was to ensure the families were healthy and had enough to eat. At the same time they had to live in decent shelter and receive reasonable education. In short, the objectives were set to on empower the people with regard to the improvement of their living conditions.

Between 1992 and 2000, DAPP was able to assist many households in Chibombo, Serenje and Mkushi. Many children, especially orphans were sponsored for primary and secondary school education. Others were found jobs. This was in the wake of many parents and guardians failing to afford school requirements.¹⁰⁰ With the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, there turned out to be many orphans and widows in the province. DAPP helped solve this problem by providing small loans to groups of widowed women and some orphans of reasonable age. In Serenje these loans were given to women at Chimupati, Lumpampa, Kankoso and Mbaswa.¹⁰¹ These were to enable them engage in poultry and also to buy seed and fertiliser for crop cultivation. This was a way of uplifting the status of women.

In Chibombo, particularly Malambanyama area, DAPP got involved in environmental Education. By 1999, it was observed the entire of Chibombo District was becoming more deforested due to charcoal burning. Meanwhile, more and more people who had been retrenched or retired in the early 1990s settled in the area to farm, worsening the situation. DAPP therefore, embarked on community sensitisation and tree planting. People were taught the value of maintaining their environment. 50 family groups were organised to make village nurseries for tree planting. Apart from this exercise, water wells were dug and villagers were also encouraged

to dig pit latrines to curb epidemics such as cholera and dysentery. With regard to the funding of projects, DAPP, worked closely with donors like United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) International Foundation for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Canada Fund and PAM.¹⁰² By 2000, there was evidence of improvement in the lives of the people reached out by DAPP in Chibombo.

Similar impressions could be said of Mkushi where by in 1998, women around Katuba, Munsakamba and Kasala-makanga areas were noted to be doing well in both poultry and vegetable growing and selling. It was further noted that these women had shown marked reduction in depending upon their relatives for survival.¹⁰³

In Mumbwa, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was also much active in ensuring poverty in communities was averted. Its major involvement was in the area of sensitising parents on the value of girl-children. Through BESSIP, and other related programmes in the Ministry of Education, ILO was able to sponsor 300 girl-children to school in 1999.¹⁰⁴ This included both primary and secondary school. The exercise was stimulated by the reports of early marriages among girls in Mumbwa. Most early marriages, as earlier alluded to, came in the wake of hard economic times being faced by parents and guardians. Thus by sponsoring girls to school, ILO was not only waning the impact of SAP in the immediate term, but also safeguarding the future of the girls. These would eventually get educated and become professionals and relatives would fall back on them for help. Poverty would have been reduced for the communities in this way.

In 2000 another organisation, which was a project under CARE International, known as "Strengthening Community Partnerships for the Empowerment of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children" (SCOPE OVC) was established in Serenje. The organisation's headquarters for the

province was in Kabwe. The major objective was to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS, which to a large extent was believed to have been exacerbated by the harsh economic climate prevailing in the 1990s. The organisation was also supported by Family Health International through funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).¹⁰⁵

Among its several activities, SCOPE OVC aimed at capacity building of communities and to reach children within their households. Further, it was to assist households take positive action to improve the well being of women and children. And in conjunction with other institutions such as the Ministry of Education Department of Social Welfare and World Vision International, SCOPE OVC in 2000 was able to fund a number of projects in Serenje. Some of the projects included the Ibolelo OVC Club, which benefited from a loan of K42,211,000, the Teta Women's Club benefited K24,000,000, Miloso Women's Club benefited K27,035,000, and Serenje Orphans and Widows Assistance Club (SOWAC) benefited K39,520,000.¹⁰⁶

It is significant to note how in the 1990s women and children had become beneficiaries of poverty alleviation initiatives sponsored by NGOs. This can only be explained in terms of the severe social and economic hardships of the 1990s through the turn of the twenty-first century. The hardships left many women and children hopelessly vulnerable to the vagaries of poverty. It is therefore clear that between 1992 and 2000 that NGOs saved many poverty stricken people in Central Province. This was the time observers describe as the hardest era ever experienced in independent Zambia.¹⁰⁷

HIV/AIDS and Poverty, 1985 - 2000

HIV/AIDS has been widely known as having revolutionised the nature and prevalence of poverty in the last fifteen years of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁸ By 1993 an estimated 20 percent of

the entire population in Zambia was noted to be HIV positive.¹²¹ And according to UNICEF, by 1998 the number of orphans, most of whom were orphaned by AIDS, was 75,000 in Zambia.¹⁰⁹

The first AIDS case was reported in Zambia in 1985. Initially, the epidemic of HIV/AIDS cases was in urban areas. Soon however, it spread to all rural parts of the country.¹¹⁰ In the rural areas of the country such as those of Central Province, the rate of infection became very high during the 1990s mainly because of the movement of people from towns to villages.¹¹¹ Thus according to health records at Mumbwa District Hospital, between October 1993 and October 1998 about 491 known AIDS deaths had occurred. A further 131 cases were still alive but noted to be in bad health.¹¹² In other districts the trend was the same. In Serenje, for example, in December 2000 alone, there were 89 known cases of AIDS out of which 21 deaths were recorded.¹¹³ Figures from other districts in the province could not be obtained due to administrative problems. Health sources, however, were able to acknowledge an alarmingly increasing rate of the scourge through out the province. The problem was so serious in the province that by 2000, the province recorded as many as 67,000 orphans. Of this number, 90 percent had lost either their male or female parents while 10 percent had lost both parents. Most of the deaths were linked to HIV/AIDS.¹¹⁴

The devastating effects of HIV/AIDS on communities were its removal of a large middle-aged population from the communities. This was the population, which should have been supporting both children and feeble kinsmen. The scourge thus deprived rural communities of either the labour force essential for food production, or breadwinners living in urban centres and remitting money to villages. Writing on the impact of the disease, Alex de Waal observed the following:

HIV/AIDS impacted on every productive sector of life. The agriculture sector was greatly affected. The very fabric of African survival was eroded during the 1990s (sic) Rural Africans were known to be experts at surviving famine. Women knew exactly what wild grains; roots and

berries could be eaten as famine foods (sic). When there was no maize, families scattered their members over a wide area and called on distant relations for help when times got hard. But in the late 1980s to the early twenty-first century, this was changed; societies were faced with a new variant of famine. This was because AIDS attacked the very capacities that enabled people to resist famine. It killed young adults – the people whose labour was most needed. When the rains came, people had to work 16 hour a day, planting and weeding the crop. If that critical period was missed, the family starved. In an AIDS infected community, each working adult had to produce more to feed the same number of dependants – not just children but sick adults too. The burden of care for the victims could cripple a family. Many employees, private and public had withdrawn benefits. Town dwellers that fell sick went home to the village to pass their months to die and be buried. Children orphaned by AIDS were sent to the village to be cared for.¹¹⁵

De Waal's observation was very true for Central Province considering that the province comprises a large proportion of rural population dependent on subsistence agriculture. Thus the pervasive effect of the scourge lay in the fact that during the period of victims' sickness, there was contracted provision of labour, for agriculture and other productive ventures. The situation was worsened during peak times of hoeing, weeding and harvesting. The victims would not take part in such activities. And depending on the degree of sickness, they needed to be cared for by relatives, wives, husbands, uncles and so forth, depriving communities further of labour.

Esther Nyanga of Mulendema's area in Mumbwa, lamented how she had lost the entire farming season of 1992/93 nursing her husband who later died of suspected AIDS. She had to depend on gifts from well wishers the following season.¹¹⁶ Similarly, Charity Mwape of Serenje, Muchinka's area, complained of having spent much of the time in 1994 nursing her son, his wife and the child (Mrs. Mwape's grand child). All had been diagnosed with AIDS. They all died one after the other between November 1995 and January 1996, leaving her devastated.¹¹⁷ The two are only isolated cases out of the many cases that occurred in Central Province. They nonetheless suffice to signify the loss of time during the period of sickness or during the period the villagers were engaged in nursing the victims. The overall result was hunger and poverty for the people.

During the hard economic times as earlier alluded to, many people could not afford medical services and so stayed back even when they were ill. This in itself increased chances of early deaths from AIDS. Apart from this many families were starving and so under-nutrition and malnutrition accelerated the death rate. In Kapiri Mposhi, villagers confirmed having lost a number of people between 1994 and 1999 through HIV/AIDS. They attributed the many deaths not just to the scourge itself, but also to the poor living conditions that were prevalent at the time. Cletus Chiwala of Chief Nkole in Kapiri Mposhi had this to say:

People had no money as they could not cultivate large portions due to lack of fertiliser, they could not even sell the little produce that they had managed to harvest as there was no where to sell. At the same time, prices of essential commodities were beyond the reach of many villagers. So even the people who should under normal circumstances have lived longer had their lives shortened.¹¹⁸

It was a situation of poverty in rural communities.

An interesting phenomenon concerning AIDS that arose during the 1990s was that of victims migrating to villages in the critical stages of their illness. The situation was in many instances aggravated by the stigma that circumscribed AIDS in the 1990s. At that time, any person who was known to be infected would receive very little attention from friends or relatives. In the final analysis, most victims would end up in their home villages. The concept came to be known across the country as 'Kalaye Noko' (Go and bid your Mother Farewell).¹¹⁹ This was like a final destination to death. The whole process was very counter productive. Mostly it was women who had to take care of the sick, which meant loss in productive time since the task of nursing was overwhelmingly involving. Elizabeth Chipokwe of Chipepo commented thus:

AIDS, brought on an additional task. We had to fetch firewood and water. We had to ensure we prepared food at the same time attend to work in the fields...and now we have to tender patients both of our own (from within the village) and those forced upon us, those who leisured selfishly in towns never caring about us yet they expected us to care for them now. Our men folk do not seem to be any worried. They continue with their beer drinking...¹²⁰

It is significant to note the feminisation of poverty. Women, the essential producers of food in villages, were being further deprived of their livelihood by the additional role created by HIV/AIDS, thereby undermining their position. Gender dynamics were therefore crucial in so far as HIV/AIDS was concerned. By affecting the women adversely, poverty was created. And with regard to Central Province, the 1990s saw increased poverty because among other factors, women were undermined by being given more challenging roles, which robbed them of their productive potential.

HIV/AIDS devastated communities by robbing them of the top brass of society. Whatever category of people it took, they were those who in most cases were considered the backbone of particular communities. Some families lost dependable children and kinsmen. One woman, Jane Kunda Fitini of Mkushi, lost three of her children almost in a roll, beginning 1994 to 1996. She lost a daughter who had been married in Kabwe; a son working for the mines in Kitwe, and another son working as a Primary school teacher in Mkushi.¹²¹ The loss not only deprived her of children but also of material and financial support. She had to resort to begging from neighbors and relatives for food and other essentials.

By claiming lives of dependable children, AIDS was touching the helm of social security for families. In many African societies children form an essential element of social and economic security. People bear children in the hope that they would be looked after by them in old age. When they become adults, they send gifts or remit some money, which village communities can use. They become a major source of finance in rural investment. But in the 1990s this trend was completely reversed. The HIV/AIDS scourge eliminated the very source of prosperity and development. The result was an escalating increase in the number of the poor in most villages of Central Province.

Therefore from the 1990s to the beginning of the new millenium, the poor were those who were sick from the HIV/AIDS pandemic and those who lost their able-bodied kinsmen. We note in this category the aged, the widows and the orphans. This marked a complete transformation in the generation of poverty.

Conclusion

The chapter has discussed poverty in Central Province in the wake of changing political and socio-economic environment of Zambia. We have argued that while some factors that caused poverty in the previous eras continued to be a menace to communities in Central Province between 1965 and 2000, new factors, crucial in the creation of poverty, also emerged in the mid 1970s. Notable factors were the changing economic environment. The implementation of SAP by both UNIP in 1985 and the MMD in 1992, were critical in the formation of poverty in Central Province. The other critical factor was the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The impact of the two developments – SAP and HIV/AIDS was astounding as many once prosperous people were reduced to paupers. The chapter therefore argues that a new pattern of poverty had emerged in the province during the 1975 – 2000 period. The poor became those who had lost jobs, those who could not find a market for their produce and those who were terminally ill as well as those who had lost their able-bodied relatives through the vagaries of new economic policies and the HIV/AIDS scourge. Children, women and old men became the most vulnerable to the poverty of the era. We have further argued that the harsh economic and social environment, especially the presence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic completely eroded the social and economic status of women. During the AIDS era, women's productive potential was lost as they took on a new role; as care-providers for the AIDS victims. This completely destabilised their position as food producers.

We have also argued that in the face of changing patterns of poverty, initiatives to combat its prevalence, also showed a marked shift in the period 1992 – 2000. From institutional initiatives mainly dominated by missionaries in the previous eras, to new forms of institutions, such as NGOS. The 1990s saw the emergence of such organisations became critical, which in supplementing government efforts in poverty alleviation. NGOs scored successes as some impoverished communities were rescued from the shackles of poverty.

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CONCLUSION

This study has examined the changing trends of poverty in the Central Province of Zambia from about 1850 to 2000. Poverty in the province has undergone a marked socio-economic and political transformation from pre-colonial times to the post colonial era. The study, which focuses on conjuctural poverty in rural communities of the province, set out with five objectives. Firstly, to investigate the dynamics of poverty in Central Province. Secondly, to examine the measures taken by the government and non-governmental institutions to alleviate poverty in the province. Thirdly, to investigate gender dynamics of poverty. Fourthly, to investigate local people's response to poverty. Finally the study investigated HIV/AIDS and SAP dynamics in relation to poverty.

The central argument of the study is that, at every epoch in the life of the province poverty was prevalent; and that it was created by a variety of factors. These ranged from natural calamities to socio-economic factors. During the pre-colonial era for instance, natural factors such as droughts and socio-economic factors such as slave raids and internecine wars were the major factors behind the creation of poverty in the province.

During the colonial era, natural factors continued to haunt communities but new factors also emerged in the province. These were socio-economic factors such as the Great Depression, labour migration, the First World War and Second World War. Labour migration and the two world wars drew Africans from their rural communities for service in the industries or on the war front. In both cases, communities in the province were deprived of the essential labour force needed in food production. There was a severe reduction of agricultural activities and other economic ventures in communities. Ultimately poverty beset communities in the province. The Great Depression destabilised the rural communities of Central Province and created poverty.

In the post colonial era, the period after independence to the new millennium socio-economic and political factors characterised by economic mismanagement and SAP policies greatly contributed to the poverty of people in the province. Added to these was the HIV/AIDS pandemic which curbed lives of many productive and dependable kinsmen. The result was immense loss in the production of food. Poverty therefore became the main feature.

The study has also argued that categories of impoverished households varied from one community to another and from one epoch to another. For example, in one community poverty was due to loss of livestock through pestilences. In another it was due to loss of land or crops. In the pre-colonial era drought and epidemics reduced the communities to pauperisation. During the post colonial era, harsh economic policies largely rendered the communities poor. The study has also argued that the definition of poverty changed with passage of time. For instance, during the pre colonial era, poverty was mainly defined around food, water supplies, shelter and livestock. In the colonial and post colonial eras, poverty assumed an additional character. It began to be defined in association with clothing, health care and education.

The study has examined poverty-alleviation initiatives put in place to check poverty. These initiatives were characterised by evolving patterns. During the pre-colonial era, individual initiatives were prominent in combating poverty. During the colonial and post colonial eras, institutionalised forms of poverty alleviation emerged and complemented individual initiatives. Missionaries, governments and NGOs became critical actors in fighting poverty in the province.

With regard to HIV/AIDS and SAP dynamics in relation to poverty, the study has established that these had devastating effects on the socio-economic base of households

during the period 1985 – 2000. As a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, women assumed the role of care providers, at the expense of food production. And new category of the poor emerged. The poor became those who lost jobs and languished in villages; those who lost the market for their produce; the terminally ill and those who lost their dependable kinsfolk through the ravages of SAP policies and the AIDS scourge.

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