

Consequences of Rural Poverty in Relation to the Urban Squatter Problem in Lusaka*

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ABSTRACT

This paper will look at the consequences of rapid urbanisation on rural development with particular reference to the squatter problem in Lusaka. The major underlying assumption is that interventions to alter the conditions of the urban poor have exacerbated the deteriorating lifestyle of rural dwellers. Urbanisation is seen as having occurred obversely to rural development and, to some extent, reflecting the same effect as that depicted in dependency theories which seek to explain the relationship between developed and undeveloped countries. Accordingly, the under-development that exists in some parts of the world is the creation of Western industrial growth which could not have occurred without the conditioning of a periphery from which economic surplus was extracted and necessary raw materials secured. As depicted in the relationship of undeveloped areas of the world with developed countries, urban development has been based on an exploitative relationship with the rural countryside. Human resources, rural production and national finance have been used to sustain cities and towns.

Dependency theories do not adequately portray the relationship between the development of urban areas and the underdeveloped rural countryside within a national boundary. An historical understanding of events is also necessary to comprehend the relationship between national needs and demands, and the ensuing social response. This paper will also look at the underdeveloped process within a historical context.

Introduction

Unlike many countries South of the Sahara, Zambia has a large and relatively stable urban population. Historically the growth and development of urban areas have been at the expense of rural areas. The resource needs of the towns and cities, combined with political power exercised by the urban elite, have resulted in imbalanced development.

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History of The Urbanisation process in Zambia and its impact on rural areas

The Zambian urban experience has many unique features quite distinguishable from that which has occurred in other African countries. Towns and cities are a 20th century phenomenon. Although 'agrotowns' such as Chief Kazembe's capital in Luapula existed prior to European settlement, urban areas in the modern sense were creations of British colonialism. The colonialists established towns in agricultural and mining districts along the line-of-rail, which runs from Livingstone in the South to Ndola in the North of the country, for purposes of economic exploitation as well as providing a rudimentary infrastructure for colonial administration. Towns away from the main rail thoroughfare have been post-independence creations and serve as bomas and provincial centre for hinterland areas.

Urbanisation of the indigenous population of Zambia has roots in the economic interest of early colonialists. Cheap, exploitable labour was needed to mine the mineral wealth of the colony for shipment to feed the industries of Europe. Also needed was labour to work on the European owned farms that produced food to feed the settler population and to a limited extent the African population. These farms were situated almost exclusively along the line-of-rail because the settlers tended to cluster together in strategic areas. Hence, the commercial farms were located near by to facilitate easy transportation of produce to these markets.

In the early stages of colonialism the African population was unwilling to engage in an economic relationship with the settlers, that is a relationship which would require them to exchange their labour for cash¹. Such a system was alien to traditional values and irrelevant to existing needs. The African way of life revolved around social relationships and social exchanges. Traditionally, in a typical rural community the person with whom a local inhabitant was willing or prepared to co-operate in economic matters was a fellow kinsmen, a co-villager or a person with whom he/she shared social bonds. Working for others was done in the context of social obligation and not solely for personal gain.

The settlers, operating by a different set of values, had to resort to coercion in order to achieve their objectives. A head tax was levied which forced rural Africans to come to the towns to earn money to pay this enforced levy. This event initiated a wasteful and inefficient system of labour migration that was labelled as circulatory. It required men to leave their homes at key periods to search for work that was directly beneficial to themselves or their families. It was wasteful from the expenditure of time and energy in long journeys; inefficient partly because the labour was not effectively attached to industrial enterprises, and partly because the rural economy was seriously weakened.

Moreover, the culture of the rural areas began to be eroded through the migratory process as a result of the importation of alien cultural values, especially the introduction of money economy which was premised on economic relationships. The economic relationship tended to alienate the participants in the exchange process encouraging them to focus on egoistical concerns.²

By 1929 taxation alone was no longer required as an inducement for migration (Heisler, 1974). The market economy had already begun to penetrate the rural areas, creating a demand for the consumer goods brought back from the towns such as bicycles, enamelware, cloth and Western-style clothing. Many of the male youth were excited by the prospects of town life, regaling over the tales brought back by returning migrant workers. Doubtlessly many of these youths saw migration as both an adventure and a chance to acquire the material goods which could enhance their status in the village (Colson, 1958 and Powdermaker, 1962).

Concurrently, there was the beginning concern over the depletion of males in rural areas. Public policy in early Northern Rhodesia had attempted to encourage industrialisation without urbanisation (Heisler, 1974:5). A key social goal was to encourage a balanced sexual ratio in the rural peasant societies and a shortage of women in the urban areas, thereby making it imperative for men to return home in order to enjoy normal family life. This condition attempted to obtain conflicting aims:

- a. To 'civilise' the African by encouraging him to adopt European attitudes, but at the same time to maintain tradition values and, to some extent, traditional ways of living;
- b. To promote private enterprise and thereby promote European interests, but to protect the African from the evils of urbanisation; and
- c. To make the colonies finance the provision of public services but at the same time to achieve a standard of welfare "equitable" to that provided in England (MacPherson, 1982:33-72).

In early Northern Rhodesia there was an attempt to obtain industrialisation without urbanisation. Hence, there was concern about the degree of migration taking place and the resultant impacts.

The response to these concerns led to the 1929 Employment of Native Ordinance which was designed to control the migratory process. This ordinance established an 'institutional' housing policy, making employers responsible for the housing of their employees. African urban residents had to be employed in order to be entitled to accommodation and loss of job meant not only eviction from employer-provided housing but, more importantly, eviction from the urban areas.

Although the Employment of Native Ordinance was later amended in the 1940s to liberalise the influx of Africans into urban communities so as to stabilize employment in key industries, the overall assumption remained throughout the colonial era that the African worker was in town for only a limited period. He would return to the village at the end of his productive period. The type of housing constructed for 'stabilised' labour exemplified this assumption.

In Lusaka under the African Housing Ordinance of 1948 two municipal townships were constructed for the black population, Matero and Chilenje. Noticeably, these houses were built for a small nuclear family and were inadequate in size for the fulfilment of familial obligations and responsibilities demanded by African culture. The houses were even too small to accommodate the older children of the inhabitants, forcing them to live in the village or alternative accommodations.

With independence in 1964 the restrictions on the movement of Africans were lifted to accommodate the rights and freedom enshrined in the new constitution. However, the removal of these restrictions opened the door for large scale migration into the towns and cities. The urban growth rates for Zambia between 1963 and 1969 were among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa ranging from 4.2 to 13.4 per cent (CSO, 1984a). By 1980, over 43% of Zambia's population was estimated to be living in urban areas (CSO, 1984b).

Housing in the city

Lusaka, the capital and the largest city in Zambia, has experienced a phenomenal increase in population during the past 35 years. In 1950 the population was estimated to be 50 000, increasing to 123 000 by 1963 (CSO, 1984a). By 1974 the city's population was estimated to be 401 000, growing to 538 000 (Rakodi, 1983: 18). Along with Copperbelt province, Lusaka has been one of the fastest growing areas in Zambia.

Such rapid growth has created problems, especially in the area of housing. "When employment opportunities kept pace with Lusaka's population growth, housing did not. Only about 10 000 new houses were built in Lusaka during the first ten years after independence. With an unprecedented growth of urban population squatter settlements mushroomed on the periphery of the city. In the mid 1970s, 55% of Lusaka's population was living in squatter areas, compared to only 15 and 9 per cent in Kitwe and Ndola" (CSO, 1984a:54).

Facing a situation in which over half of the city's population was living in illegal areas, both the national government and local authorities felt impelled to act. The choices of action available were:

1. To raze the illegal areas and force the residents to find alternative accommodations that were in keeping with city regulations.

2. To intensify investment in site-and-service schemes, encouraging low-income urbanites to construct affordable but approved, standardised houses.
3. To construct low and medium cost housing for rental to low-income workers.
4. To upgrade and legalise the existing squatter areas, but to restrict the influx of new settlers.

The latter three alternatives were taken with Lusaka District Council (LDC) engaged in a combination of methods to deal with the housing crisis. The Site-and-Services scheme had been initiated during the First National Development Plan (FNDP) and was aimed at easing the housing shortage by providing loans to low income persons who had been residents in Lusaka for at least three years. This programme was financed by the central government and LDC, and was aimed at reducing the housing shortage especially among squatter residents. Rental units were also constructed to ease the housing crisis. The target population for the latter programme was primarily civil servants.

Neither the Site-and-Service scheme or rental programme adequately met the needs of Lusaka residents. The number of rural migrants pouring into Lusaka during the late 1960s and early 70s outstripped efforts to establish decent accommodations for all. A policy to recognize and upgrade selected squatter areas was incorporated into the Second National Development Plan (SNDP) and the work initiated in 1974. The overall broad objectives of the upgrading project were (UPD 1974):

1. To improve the standard of living of people in lower income groups in Lusaka by improving their standard of housing at minimum cost; increasing household incomes; increasing household saving and assets; increasing the availability of educational opportunities and health services; and increasing the accessibility of the population to City-wide urban services and employment opportunities.
2. To implement the concept of Participatory Democracy on a neighbourhood level by involving residents in decisions related to the future development of the areas in which they live; involving the residents in the process of development both on a mutual and self-help basis; and to develop a strong sense of community.
3. To develop a set of housing strategies which can be used to provide the urban low-income population with access to adequate housing by developing a set of housing strategies affordable to the residents and to the city.

The squatter upgrading project went beyond simple housing improvement and the granting of legal status to the residents of unauthorised areas, but to the

provision of basic physical and social infrastructure to households in the major squatter settlements. Public sanitation was improved through the establishment of individual or communal water taps and sewage facilities, community facilities such as primary schools, community centres, clinics and markets were sited in the selected areas. The overall impact was to reassert a definite bias towards urban development substantively and symbolically. The substantive investment in urban housing tied-up money that could have been involved in rural development, and symbolically it expressed to urban residents the correctness of their decision to migrate to the city where the government tended to be more sympathetic to their needs.

The institutional housing practice also has continued after independence creating a contradictory situation in terms of the country's aspirations. Most of the standardised housing in the urban areas is still provided through institutions with urban workers being primarily housed by their employers. The majority of the owner-occupied houses are located in squatter areas or site-and-service schemes. It has been estimated that a substantial portion of Lusaka's population still live in squatter areas. These are people who are marginally employed, unemployed or unaccommodated by their employers.

This situation arises from the assumption that most urban residents will eventually return to their rural villages. So, there are attempts to make the urban dwellers comfortable during their productive years but encourage them to return to the village upon retirement. Such logic has produced a housing crisis in Zambia. It is suggested that Lusaka as well as many of the other urbanised areas have a large and permanent urban core who have no intention of returning to the rural areas. As observed earlier, even if forced to live in the squatter compounds they would have the opportunity to obtain a better standard of living than is possible in the rural countryside. Since a comprehensive housing policy does not exist, encouraging owner occupied housing, many retiring urban workers move from their institutional homes to rent or construct houses in the squatter areas.

Rural development

Since independence considerable attention has been focused on the disparities between rural and urban areas. In all three of the National Development Plans there have been declarations of the intent to rectify inequalities and to ensure economic and social justice between rural and urban populations. The Third National Development Plan (TNDP) identified the need to improve low rural incomes, making them comparable with the urban average; to halt the continuing deterioration in rural-urban terms of trade; and to reverse the decline in rural services which have contributed to depressed levels of living (GRZ. 1979).

However, planned change had little impact and, for many rural dwellers, their standard of living continues to decline. The 1974/75 National Household Budget Survey revealed that average incomes in urban areas were 3.5 times higher than rural areas (CSO, 1948:57). Moreover, about 95 percent of rural households had incomes lower than the average squatter. In light of this overwhelming disparity it is not surprising that many rural inhabitants sought to migrate to a more comfortable and promising area. It appears that Todaro's theory of rural-urban migration might be applied to understand the migration process in Zambia.

"In essence, the theory assumes that members of the labour force, both actual and potential, compare their expected incomes for a given time horizon in the urban sector (i.e. the difference between returns and costs of migration) with prevailing average rural incomes and migrate if the former exceeds the latter" (Todaro, 1983:238).

The theory postulates that migration is stimulated primarily by rational economic considerations of relative benefits and costs, and that the decision to leave a rural environment and move to an urban one is based on expected gain. Although Todaro focuses on financial gains as a result of increased opportunities, other benefits might also be considered. Urban living conditions have been significantly better than that for most of the rural population. Social infrastructure in the form of education, health and welfare services was inadequately provided in rural communities. For many years, the social services have been directed at meeting needs and solving urban problems, while community development was the preferred approach in rural areas, urging people to engage in programmes of self-help to improve their lives and to increase productivity.

The social and economic structures which Zambia inherited at the time of independence have conditioned the distinct strategies of development employed in the rural and urban areas. The FNDP and SNDP were distinctly oriented towards a form of economic development that promoted urban industrial growth. Since independence the country has been heavily dependent on the copper industry as its major source of revenue. Attempts have been to rectify this dependency by advocating balanced and simultaneous development in all sectors. But the FNDP and SNDP allocated massive investments to the mining and industrial sectors, using the argument that such investment would generate high economic growth rates which in turn would eliminate poverty, provide employment on a large scale and contribute to redressing the inherited regional imbalances (Ollowa, 1977:5). It was assumed that a 'trickle down' effect would occur, resulting in the bridging of the income distribution gap between rural and urban sectors.

The TNDP, formulated during the decline in the copper industry and

escalation of urban-growth related problems, re-emphasized the need for rural development. It also advocated the need to redress the disparities and imbalances between and within regions. By doing so, attention was focused on a remarkable feature in Zambia's development, that is, the high degree of income inequality within the rural areas. In most developing countries rural inequality is markedly less than in urban areas. However, in Zambia there are distinct regional differences . . . so much that the rural areas have been divided into more developed, less developed and peripheral areas (ILO, 1981: Chapter 6). The divisions recognize differences in ecology, farming systems, population density, resources, accessibility to services and the strength or weaknesses of individual households.

In terms of resources and facilities, Central and Southern provinces along with parts of the Eastern province constitute the more developed rural areas. The Central and Southern Provinces astride the line-of-rail and have benefitted from the close proximity to early sites of development. The more developed areas of the Eastern Province are either situated close to towns or feature concentrations of population in fertile farming communities. Also in the more developed line-of-rail rural areas the population concentration is more balanced displaying the characteristics of an evenly shaped population pyramid, indicating less and well-balanced outward migration (NCSR, 1978:10).

The less developed areas of Western, Northwestern, Luapula provinces, Ndola rural and other parts of Eastern province are either more distant from the line-of-rail or have population patterns not conducive to agricultural development. A 1975 survey found that the less developed areas had a higher ratio of dependents, both children and persons over 49, to active adults (ILO, 1981:13) and the majority of subsistence farming households are in the less developed areas.

The peripheral areas are the most remote in Zambia and are the furthest away from main transportation and communications links. Because of their remoteness, these areas lacked the basic social and economic infrastructure to improve their condition. In this category are some of the poorest and weakest households, with many existing on the barest subsistence, and trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty.

Rural development in Zambia has been largely premised on the need and desire to react to the historical conditions of colonisation, early development efforts and their resulting inequalities. The country has long followed the patterns of development initiated by her former colonisers. The result has been the deterioration in rural levels of living. Assessing the disparate opportunities existing in the two types of environments, many Zambians have migrated to urban communities on the basis of perceived opportunities for social mobility and a higher standard of living.

The interplay between rural and urban development

It has long been recognised that the relationship between rural and urban areas is symbiotic. Even the colonialists recognised this relationship and sought to avoid damaging the rural socio-economic system irrevocably through the depletion of human resources. The planners and policy-makers of the 1960s and early 70s thought that rural development might be stimulated through the percolation downward of the benefits of industrial growth and progress. Concurrent with the latter thinking was the assistance provided by international agencies of development such as the World Bank.

In the 1960s World Bank lending had been for sectoral projects such as infrastructure and transport, and in the 1970s this was clarified with the support of urban-based infrastructural projects such as housing, transportation and land-use (World Bank, 1972 and 1975). As observed by Rakodi, World Bank interest in financing infrastructure and housing projects for the poor coincided with Zambia's interest in doing so, and with her beginning economic difficulties (Rakodi, 1983). Hence, the acceptability and correctness of national planning decisions were endorsed and supported by international finance. Intensified development in the urbanised industrial sector by providing supplementary social infrastructure was the perceived solution.

Lusaka, having the most desperate housing situation, was chosen for that experiment. Total cost of the project was estimated at K26,5m (US \$41,2m at June 1973 prices) of which 48,5 per cent was provided by the World Bank on loan and 51,5 per cent by the government with some assistance from UNICEF and the American Friends Service Committee (Pasteur, 1979:15). The project was implemented by a special unit, the Housing Project Unit, created within LDC.

The underlying reasons for such an investment in Lusaka hinges around two major assumptions: the role of urban centres and the degree of power concentrated therein, particularly among the low-income residents. Towns and cities have been seen as useful for 'processing' backward people into 'modern' economic, political and social structures and patterns of behaviour (Abu-Lughod and Hay, 1977 and Breese, 1977). This was the pattern of development in the West and it was assumed to be applicable in Third World societies. Urbanites were considered to be more cosmopolitan in outlook and attitudes, thus leading to behaviour that was perceived as more amenable to the institutions and structures that produce national economic growth and social development. On the other hand, rural dwellers were perceived as intransigent in behaviour as a result of traditional attitudes and limited opportunities for heterogenous social interaction that would encourage change. These ideas are not that far removed from conceptualisations of Africans by

the early colonialists whose intention were to 'civilise' them in order to promote social and economic development.

The squatter areas served as the portal of entry for rural migrants, providing them a cheap place to settle while acclimatising themselves to their new surroundings. Standardised housing in approved areas such as the rental units offered by LDC or site-and-service schemes had some of the same requirements attached as prevailed under the "Institutional Housing" policy . . . that is, the applicant had to be in gainful employment or able to demonstrate solvency. However, the intention was not to discourage migration to Lusaka as manpower was needed to fill employment opportunities, and urbanisation was seen as conducive to rapid economic growth and development. The authorities, recognising that suitable accommodation could not be provided for all, was tolerant of the spontaneous but illegal settlements springing up around the city.

There was also a degree of ambivalence about the role of the rural areas. Although rural development was championed in the transitional plan and FNDP it was more for humanitarian reasons because the majority of the population lived there. Government investment in the rural areas was targeted to selected areas, those deemed to be progressive and capable of benefitting from the inputs. It is not surprising that the overall impact of early investments into the rural sector resulted in benefitting the rural elites rather than the small-scale or peasant farmers (CSO, 1984:57). The criteria for investment was biased in that direction.

Power was another factor in the upgrading of illegal areas. The squatters represented real and potential sources of power to the party in office. Prior to the establishment of the single party system in 1972, the government majority party United National Independence Party (UNIP) had to campaign quite vigorously to win votes from its rival African National Congress (ANC). As the squatters comprised a substantial portion of the city's electorate, efforts were exerted to win their support. The squatters formed an alliance with the urban elite to improve their interests and welfare.

Although the rural population formed the majority, they were not as politically conscientious or organised as the urban minority. Zambia faced to some extent the "multiple society" phenomenon characteristic of many developing countries with a colonial past. Nash explains this phenomenon as "a nation in which the entire population is included into a single system of economic and political bond, but only a part of the population is fully aware of the national entity and participates significantly in its cultural or political life, or has control over resources and communications of nationwide scope and impact" (Nash, 1973). The urban population, being more cosmopolitan in outlook and visible to the regime, was able to manipulate the competition between the two political parties and wrest desired benefits to their advantage.

Also, because of their organisation and visibility there was more emphasis on the participation of the urban population in the implementation of programmes to improve their welfare. This was done as a political expediency exemplifying another indication of the acquiescence to the perceived power of the squatters. Rakodi categorises the degree of participation in the upgrading process as consultative and limited to the implementation stage of the project. "Its purpose was to facilitate speedy implementation and reduce costs by informing residents of the proposals, gaining their support for upgrading and mobilising the individual labour and financial resources regarded as complementary to government inputs" (Rakodi, 1983:29).

Participatory democracy was also advocated for rural areas as it was seen as a way of integrating these areas into national development. To this effect the Village Productivity and Ward Development Committees were created to structure and strengthen grass-roots participation. Administratively these structures served as the basic units of local administration and were responsible for a number of functions ranging from maintenance of law and order to the promotion of economic development through self-help endeavours. However, the VPCs and WDCs were unable to generate the degree of participation obtained in the urban communities. They lacked the resources available in the urban areas to make them effective, and despite decentralisation, the power and authority for planning, the preparation of the development budget and plan implementation for rural areas do not reside with the local level development committee but still remains at the centre (Ollowa, 1977: 26). The idea for this form of participatory democracy was good in principle but it originated from Lusaka and could only be supported by inputs from Lusaka which would defeat the entire purpose of decision-making and implementation at the grass-roots level.

Integration of rural and urban concerns

The migration to urban areas has slowed down considerably in the 1980s with most of the migration being opportunistic, based on hopes rather than guarantees of employment. Urban dwellers no longer enjoy the overwhelmingly higher standard of living that once differentiated them from their rural brothers and sisters. Inflation has pushed up prices rapidly with wages unable to meet the accelerating costs. Food subsidies once provided by the party and its government to urban wage earners have been removed. This is compounded by the ever-present shortage of essential commodities like sugar, bread, soap and cooking oil. The shortages have been most apparent in state shops and other approved licensed establishments. The illegal market has flourished resulting in some commodities being increased by 100 percent (PIC, 1985-86).

The rural areas are increasingly perceived as the solution to both urban congestion and the declining state of the economy. A reversal in policy priorities is taking place where rural areas are targeted for major investment. There is also recognition of previous mistakes, primarily that urbanisation does not necessarily encourage rapid industrialisation but rather rapid and sometimes careless depletion of human and natural resources.

A recent publication entitled *The National Conservation Strategy for Zambia* articulated some of the troublesome issues that are increasingly demanding attention. "What will be the economic effect on town and townspeople as the copper industry declines in importance? How will this interact with the separate problems of growing numbers of people, and the increasing scarcity and cost of food and fuel in town markets" (IUCN 1984:37). All of these issues are linked to the dependency of urban systems on resources such as energy, water and food from rural areas. But as noted previously in this paper little attention has been focused on this aspect of national development. It has been the reverse . . . that is, urban development could promote rural development.

But in refocussing attention on rural development there is a danger of repeating some of the same mistakes. A basic needs approach is now being advocated to eradicate past inequities and to assure that all Zambians enjoy a minimum standard of living. Hopkins categorises basic needs as the following (Hopkins, 1985:80):

1. Basic consumption needs, which includes fundamental items such as food, clothing and shelter.
2. Basic services, which involves education, health, and clean water.
3. Participation, which is based on one's right to be involved in making and implementing decisions which affect one's own development. Participation is usually interpreted to include economic activities through employment.

While this approach is realistic in light of the present circumstances its implementation is at risk. Basic needs for all in Zambia cannot be satisfied without the redistribution of power and services enjoyed by the few, ie the urban minority. For instance the ILO report on basic needs in Zambia highlighted the disparities between rural and urban areas. (ILO, 1981:XXI). The following picture seen in Table I emerged.

TABLE I
Basic Needs Profile in Zambia*

	Rural	Urban
Population Distribution (%)	57	43
Basic Consumption Needs		
1. Nutrition		
Per capital calorie consumption	1 357	2 047
2. Housing		
Made of Sun-dried brick walling or better (% of all housing)	36	87
Having good thatch or better roofing (% of all housing)	20	89

Basic Services		Rural	Urban
1.	Health Facilities		
	Population within 12 km radius of health centres (%)	68	92
2.	Access to clean water (%)	60	90
3.	Sanitation (sewage disposal)		
	Dwellings with flush toilets or aqua privies (%)	5	52
	Pit-latrines (%)	34	39
	No sewage disposal (%)	61	9
Economic Profile			
1.	Average annual per capita income (in Kwacha)	74	255
2.	Labour force distribution (%)	40	59,6

* The above table is adopted from data presented by the Central Statistics Office and the ILO study (CSO, 1984:8-30 and ILO, 1981:XXI).

The role of the urban elite has been described in the development literature as dominating social policy and ensuring that social provisions are discriminatorily disseminated in their favour (Lipton, 1977; Castells, 1979; and Markovitz, 1979). This group has been described as people from the civil service, dominant party machinery, and parastatals, and are depicted as heirs to the colonial administration. However, in terms of income opportunity, service accessibility and higher standards of living this classification would cover a wider spectrum of people, including those in the low income groups and the unemployed. The urban poor have formed a coalition with the elite and pressurised for the maintenance of benefits and services formerly provided or heavily subsidised by the government.

Food subsidies provide an example of the biased distribution of services in the country. During the 1960s and early 70s essential commodities were heavily subsidised but because of an inadequate transportation network and lack of cash income, the subsidies were enjoyed almost exclusively by urban residents. People in the rural areas had to produce and process their own food, and if able to produce a surplus, sell it at low market prices. Hence, the unfavourable balance of trade between rural and urban communities. When the government decided to remove the subsidies, as they were seen as inimical to economic progress, there was hue and cry in the towns and cities. The current economic situation has not been conducive for the re-introduction of food subsidies. However, there is considerable pressure from urbanites to do so.

Power will also have to be effectively shared with rural dwellers. Structural changes such as decentralization of administrative authority will have to occur so that grass-roots decision-making can become a reality. People are more likely to engage in self-help activities if the objectives reflect their wishes and desires. Too often, policy is made in Lusaka with rural people exhorted to

implement without sufficiently understanding the purpose or desired effect.

The village re-grouping exercise is an example of the latter. Kay identified two main objectives of the village re-grouping exercise (Kay, 1967):

1. To improve standards of living of the rural population by resettling them into selected areas;
2. To diversify and strengthen the national economy.

The first of the preceding objectives was aimed at changing the way of life so as to improve the material conditions of the people; whereas, the second objective was economic, i.e. the production of wealth. However, these objectives did not adequately take into consideration certain inherent realities about Zambian rural life. Firstly, the pattern of population distribution and density evolved in terms of the land usage and land carrying capacity. "Rural Africans are multifarious and must have a wide range of materials most of which are derived from the land. To live well . . . the villager must have access to and rights to use a large complement of natural resources. Partly because of low levels of productivity and the scarcity and restricted occurrence of particular resources, each household requires access to land rights in a wide area" (Kay, 1967:45).

Sometimes areas chosen for resettlement did not take these issues into consideration but assumed that the intransigence of villagers was due to other reasons. Secondly, the inputs promised to the resettled people were not always forthcoming or at the time expected. People were promised social services in the form of clinics, schools, improved housing, etc. if they settled in groups of at least twenty households. But as Ollowa (1977:24) points out many promises were unfilled leaving an embittered population.

Thirdly, many villagers still engage in social exchanges in the fulfilment of their needs and, consequently, resist engaging in mutual aid activities with people that they do not share cultural or kinship bonds with. There have been cases in which villagers, resettled in selected areas, have resented having to operate under a headman with whom they have had no traditional links. Hence, there is need for a more innovative solution to rural improvement. Plans and programmes should not be imposed because they are seen as logical from a technocratic view. Participatory democracy should be fully supported at grass-roots level, allowing rural dwellers to fully engage in power sharing with the urban elites.

Conclusion

The consequences of rural poverty in relation to urban development are complex and multifarious. Initially forced migration was used to promote a form of economic development that was beneficial to only the colonisers. However, forced migration later became unnecessary as many rural dwellers began to perceive socio-economic opportunities in the towns. By 1930, the

colonial administrators found it necessary to introduce measures to control the settlement of Africans in urban areas.

Upon independence, the restrictions on the movements of the African population were removed. Subsequently, there was a mass movement of people into towns in search of employment opportunities and improved conditions of living. Concurrent with this was the popular belief that socio-economic development was tied to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation; hence, social policy was biased towards the provision of services to what was considered to be the 'productive' sector in society.

The rural areas have been largely neglected partly due to earlier conceptualisations of development and partly as a result of the duality existing in the Zambian economy. On one hand there is an urbanised enclave based on copper exportation and a small but vigorous manufacturing sector. On the other there is a largely undeveloped peasant sector that serves to provide human as well as other resources to the urban enclave.

Zambia of the 1980s has been characterised as a country under pressure (ILO, 1981:XXV). During the last decade, the economy has run into increasing difficulty, leading to an inability to promote and sustain the social objectives and programmes identified in the various national and regional development plans. Many of the projects initiated during the late 1980s and early 1970s have fallen upon hard times due to inadequate financial inputs. The rural areas have been hardest hit by this turn of events. To maintain acceptable standards in existing programmes heavy investments are required and since most of these programmes are situated in urban or peri-urban areas the rural country-side will continue to suffer at the expense of urban needs.

Discussion point

Development in Zambia has been influenced by the desire for economic growth moderated by humanitarian goals and environmental considerations. Humanism, the country's national philosophy has tempered the development process by moderating economic 'rationality' with welfare priorities. This has taken place in an environment markedly divided geographically.

The concentration of people into a few areas has obviously had an impact on the quality of life for the overall population as well as influencing the prioritisation of development objectives. The rapid growth of line-of-rail areas led to a deterioration of levels of living in those communities in remote areas of the country, although this was not by callous design but in accord with current ideas on development.

To correct the imbalance commitments have been made in the various development plans to improve the conditions of the rural inhabitants. But at the level of implementation this has featured more as thought than deed.

Throughout the 1960s and 70s the outlying provinces were robbed of productive manpower while at the same time urged to produce more to feed the towns. The cities, particularly Lusaka, were assisted in receiving and accommodating the rural migrants. The provision of social infrastructure in the squatter compound, which acted as staging posts for the new arrivals, assisted them to regularise their position and to permanently settle into the city.

A more invidious impact of urbanisation in Zambia has been the evergrowing dependency of the overall population on the government for the satisfaction of functions and services previously performed within the context of the family or community. In the cities and towns people have limited opportunities and resources to totally provide for themselves, and much of their activities are regulated and controlled in order to promote the welfare of the overall population. For example in towns the siting and construction of housing is regulated so as to not endanger the health and welfare of others. In the rural areas this is more of an individual choice, regulated only by community taboos and practices.

Because of governmental interference in people's way of life, there is more and more acquiescence in terms of individual responsibilities and obligations. In exchange for control over aspects of personal welfare, townspeople have gained various goods and services. On the other hand, rural people must engage in self-help and provide for themselves. But rural people are demanding the goods and services provided to the towns. Self-help is perceived as inadequate to obtain the standard of living prevalent in urban areas. Hence, the increasing pressure on government to take urban services to the rural areas.

It would be unfair and unrealistic to imply that urban development can only take place at the expense of rural development. However, attempts should be made to avoid an either-or situation. A creative solution will have to be formulated so that there is balance and so that social justice, equity and progress obtains.

Footnotes

1. For a discussion on economic and social exchange in Africa see Elizabeth Colson's "Trade and Wealth Among the Tonga" in *Markets in Africa* (1962) P J Bohannan and G Dalton (eds); and Guy Hunter's *The New Societies of Tropical Africa* (1966).
2. For a descriptive analysis of economic and social exchanges see David Watson, *Caring For Strangers* (1980).

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