



The international civil society organizations working in Zambia: Contribution and challenges faced in helping the poor and the marginalized communities in Zambia

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Abstract

With contemporary issues Zambia faces, ranging from Economic, political, healthy related or environmental, the government has a tough mandate to provide social services to every citizen in the country. To help with this problem, an aggregate of organizations called Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) like Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), collectively known as the Civil Society come in to complement in the provision of these social services using local and international Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The civil society is a complementary player to the government (Public Sector) and the Private Sector filling in the gaps where both the private and public sectors have not managed to adequately provide the social services, which creates communities to be isolated, marginalized and even become poor.

This paper will analyze the Civil society in Zambia with emphasis on the international Civil society organizations (CSOs). Example of notable international CSOs in Zambia are, the International Community of the Red Cross (ICRC), World Vision, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Renew, Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB), UN-Habitat, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), WaterAid, Care International, just to mention a few.

This research will outline the contribution made by the international CSOs in Zambia towards the wellbeing of the poor and marginalized members of the society and the challenges they face as they care out these humanitarian aid.

Keywords: civil society (CS), Sector, Non-Governmental organization (NGO), Community Based Organization (CBO), Faith Based Organization (FBO), Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation

Introduction

The definition of the civil society has been defined by many scholars in different ways worldwide. It is normally referred to as the "third sector" of the economy which collectively utilizes activities from the citizens towards the advocacy of human rights (Firman *et al.*, 2018) ^[8]. The bottom line lies on its nature as being an array of non-profit and non-governmental organizations which are present in the public domain of every country, expressing their values and interests towards their members based on religious, cultural, ethical or on philanthropic basis (Blansky and Fields, 2019) ^[3].

The civil society can also belong to a political space where voluntary organizations and associations interact with the citizens especially the poor, marginalized towards improving their social life (Mulonda *et al.*, 2018) ^[13]. Towards national cohesion and development, the civil society is an important sector in every economy. In countries blessed with stability and peace, the gap in the economy which is untouched by the private and public (government) sectors is filled by the civil society. On the contrary, unstable countries with conflict, poverty and other negative externalities, the civil society plays a very crucial role by providing services which normally are supposed to be provided by the businesses and the government. This helps in laying a base towards reconciliation.

The organizations which make up the civil society are not part of the government. They get funding from international donors, governments and other well-wishers to run these organizations worldwide. In Zambia, we have local and international Civil Society organizations that fill in the gaps where the public and private sector ends. The organizations may include universities and schools, churches, hospitals and not for profit businesses. Civil society organizations (CSOs) carry a complex and comprehensive mandate especially in developing countries in systems to do with aid delivery (Meja, 2011) ^[12].

The organizations in the Civil Society Sector are either Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and many other. These organization help to create social value by helping and empowering of the poor and the marginalized members of our society. They help in upholding behavior and social norms by being advocates towards human rights, lobbying,

Civil society is a kind of social entrepreneurship or social capital venture which includes a whole range of formal, informal, private individual, groups which have an objective of bettering the societies they are serving. Civil societies help with giving people the fundamental human rights by providing for them what the public and private sector can't provide in terms of social services like clean water, education, health etc. which local and international CSOs do in Zambia.

The civil society also helps mount pressure on governments by lobbying and democratizing politics to improve public service deliverance and the promotion of the rule of law. This challenges and undermines the government status quo causing a lot of challenges to CSOs who find themselves lobby for such. These pressures the CSOs pose to the government are faced by almost all government who have a vibrant civil society. Notable examples of a CSO called Survival International pushed the government of Botswana over the displacement of the Bushmen from their traditional land so that they could mine diamonds, which is an infringement on their land rights (Winters, 2019) ^[25].

This research will outline the main players in the international CSOs who are complementing the Zambia government to help with communities around the country with the provision of social services. The importance of the civil society will be outlined with the challenges they face as they operate in Zambia. Recommendations will then be made to relevant stakeholders and the government.

Literature Review

Zambia is home to both local and international Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that continuously interact and work together for the betterment of the poor and the marginalized society in Zambia. A civil society according to CIVICUS (2020) ^[4] is an area beyond family boundaries, outside the public sector (or the state), and the general environment basically the market which is created using actions that are collective through individuals, companies and other nations towards the advancement of interests shared by these players. A dynamic social economy with a thriving civil society breeds a Social Entrepreneurship culture (Eynaud, 2015) ^[7]. With a huge society engagement, the development of social

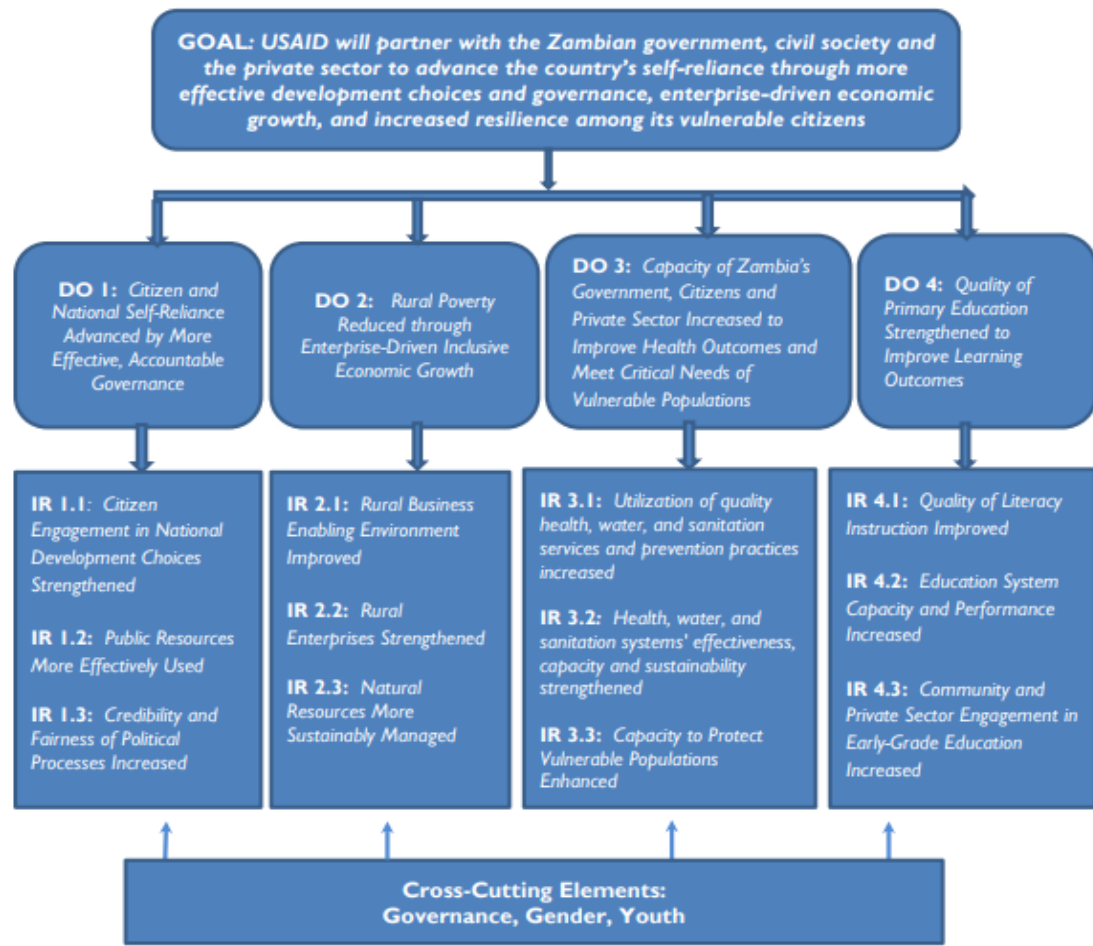
enterprises thrives. Current and past social and societal challenges have been solved through social enterprises. Social entrepreneurs are capable of engaging with communities and be able to provide solutions that are long term in nature towards persisting social and economic problems around the globe. Social innovations into solving societal problems are what Social Entrepreneurship is rooted in. This makes Civil Society and Social Entrepreneurship work hand in hand. Since Social Entrepreneurs aims at gaining social value, they work on not gaining personal profit. They combine their social mission passion using a business-like image. In Zambia, Social Entrepreneurs like Care international is working using the hub and spoke model, where they develop distribution networks that channels the provision of good quality medicines to the communities in rural Zambia. It trains health care volunteers and equip them with entrepreneurial skills to keep on helping the communities.

The parent organization responsible for CSOs in Zambia is the Zambian Council for Social Development (ZCSD). This organization is supported and funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP is an international organization present in about 170 territories and countries in the world which helps countries like Zambia develop institutions and partnerships, strong policies and skills in order to their progress to be sustained.

Zambia is a host to about 12000 CSOs which are either local or international. A lot of international CSOs are present in the Civil Society in Zambia. They work in collaboration with the government, private sector and the local CSOs towards helping communities. The following are international CSOs playing a very crucial role in the Zambian Civil society space:

United States agency for international Development (USAID)

This is an international organization that leads humanitarian and international development in order to reduce poverty, strengthen good governance and democracy, save lives, and help nations in need progress with its people with assistance beyond this help. USAID promotes global health, support in creating stability globally, provide assistance towards humanitarian aid, catalyze partnership and innovation and also above all be able to empower girls and women. It is present in over 100 countries around the globe. This organization works on behave of the people of America in reaching out towards dignity and prosperity for the vulnerable around the world when hunger, crisis, diseases, poverty, abuse of rights rob the opportunities on people. The United States Agency for international Development (USAID) has a long history with the Zambian government, especially in community development. The most notable development between the Zambia and USAID was on the establishment of a strategy called the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) between USAID/Zambia for the period 2019-2024 (USAID, 2019) ^[16] which took into operation in July 2019. This strategy is aimed at ending Zambia's needs towards assistance on development issues as it goes on a roadmap of self-reliance. CDCS has the goal statement to be achieved through the Development Objectives (DO) and the result in the Intermediate Results (IR) as outlined in the figure below



Source: USAID (2019)

Fig 1: The Results framework of the CDSC 2019-2024 – Zambia

This helps the communities in addressing issues while taking action towards community needs. These may be environmental to culture, social to economic which helps in rebuilding systems that left the marginalized, isolated, the poor with much help. The USAID has put in a lot of help in Zambia especially in the area of poverty reduction in rural areas, helping create practices towards sustaining our environment, water and sanitation and education. Zambia has had very good relationship with the US government especially after the new president was sworn in August 2021. The new president H.E. Mr. Hakainde Hichilema during his visit to the United States to attend the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), had meetings with the government to discuss the economic and democratic reforms. Among the positive outcomes, the USAID administration gave an addition of \$18.5 million to the Zambian government in addition to the existing funding the US Governments provides to Zambia. USAID administrator also announced a further \$1.2 million help to Zambia towards boosting the new dawn towards promoting democracy in the country (USAID, 2021). Towards the response towards the pandemic, USAID a further give Zambia \$6.7 million through the American rescue plan to help strengthen the response to the pandemic. The US government, the USAID has helped Zambia towards vaccinations, outreach, vaccine delivery and covid-19. the USAID ahs helped Zambia towards the fight against HIV/AIDS which remains a high priority for the CDCS. USAID has helped the government with funds to boost public health at provincial, national and community level. It has

helped Zambia in the HIV/AIDS programs like the acquiring of the antiretroviral treatment (ARV) countrywide. It has helped towards addressing gender-based violence and offered services and care to the vulnerable and orphans.

Water Aid International

This is a non-governmental organization (NGO) which is working internationally with its headquarters in the United Kingdom (UK). This international NGO focuses on the provision of clean water, hygiene and sanitation by providing reliable toilets to the poor and the marginalized communities. It supports the government, local CSOs to enhance their capacity towards the delivery of clean water and an advocate towards the role of clean water. WaterAid has partnered with Zambia for a while now in the civil society sector towards the attained of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of WASH for people excluded, marginalized and living in poverty. Zambia has recently developed the Country Programme Strategy (CPS) between WaterAid and Zambia for the period 2016-2021. the recognition of WASH as not being a privilege but as a right is what is core to this NGO. This organization are centered towards the engagement of the public, creating campaigns to create people driven initiatives. WASH is a recognized by the Zambian government to be key towards human development and as embedded in the National Development Goals and national strategies as the country focuses towards Vision 2030. This NGO works under the Ministry of Mines, Energy, and water Development and well as the Ministry of Local Government and Housing.

Action AID international

This is an international Non-governmental Organization (NGO) headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is present in about 45 countries world world including Zambia. Its fundamental objective is to work against injustice and tackle poverty problems among the marginalized and poor communities. ActionAid is a community-based organization (CBO) working with communities towards disaster response, land rights, climate justice, women's rights, economic and politics, agriculture and the right to food

In their 2018-2022 ActionAid/Zambia strategy paper (ActionAid, 2018)^[1], the commitment of ActionAid has been renewed towards gender equality, poverty eradication and social justice for all. It has focused its efforts towards creating a life of dignity focusing on the young and women. ActionAid has a strong belief that social justice is a critical ingredient towards a sustainable and equitable country like Zambia, as reported in their strategy report of 2018-2022. ActionAid, indicated that 40% Zambians are living in poverty, with most in the rural areas accounting for 80% of these living in abject poverty. The report also shows that women and their families further accounts to 60% of this extreme poverty. The 2013-2017 strategy put more emphasis on community projects, creating linkages to global and national efforts towards making the voice of the poor and marginalized heard. ActionAid has helped a lot of women led community groups around the country to help to reduce and eradicate poverty. The ActionAid Zambia has worked on empowering the economic and social wellbeing of women in all the ten provinces in Zambia, state accountability and civil participation. They have also strengthened in the communities securing climate justice and resilience.

World Vision international

World vision is yet another international Faith Based organization (FBO) working in the civil society sector in Zambia. World vision international has a universal focus of helping the most needful, vulnerable children to come out of poverty and be able to enjoy and experience the love and blessing of God, as the organization believes in God's love. World vision has been in Zambia in the civil society sector from 1981. It only operated three small projects in the communities in Mkushi district, Central province. To date, they have over forty (40) Area Development Programmes (ADPs) that are large which present in all the provinces of Zambia with a continued vision of putting the welfare of children at the core. Through the ADPs, the NGO has managed to intervene in areas bordering insecurities in food supply through education, infrastructure development, sanitation and water reticulation, agriculture, child protection and live hood. In doing so, this has helped to transform the communities of the poor, marginalized, vulnerable children and their families (World Vision, 2021)^[24]

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

This is one of the oldest NGO which was established in 1863. ICRC is in operation worldwide helping people especially those affected by armed violence and conflict and helps in the promotion of the rule of law in the quest of providing protection to war victims. Most of its mandate geminated in 1949 from the Geneva conventions. ICRC is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and is mainly through donation which are voluntary from governments and also from Red Crescent societies and National Red Cross.

In Zambia the ICRC began its works in 1950 as a branch of the red cross society of Britain. In 1966, the Zambian government through parliament act, formed the Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS). This is the one of the longest and biggest serving humanitarian NGO operating in Zambia. It is the sole mandated National Society to carry out the ICRC mandate and joined the Red Crescent Societies and International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC). Even if the Zambia Red Cross Society is a local NGO, it is more of an international organization for it is in the umbrella of the ICRC (The World bank, 2017).

The complementary services ZRCS is offering to the Zambian government in providing humanitarian services to the poor and marginalized community towards victims of disaster. It has helped a lot with things like the training towards the traditional first aid. The ZRCS has been helping and complementing the Zambian government towards poverty eradication programs, food security and nutrition, water and sanitation, environmental issues. Health and also with humanitarian issues like droughts situations in 1992, 2002 and 2020, 2014-2015 El Nino etc. the ZRCS is also complementing the government through the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) towards disaster issues and mitigation measures. The ZRCS has been a key player with regards to refugee work at the two biggest camps in Kaoma and Kalumbila. Before the country had many camps near the borders but now, they are closed remaining with the main two.

United Nations world food programme (UN-WFP)

The United Nations World Food Programme (UN-WFP) is the world's biggest food insecurity responder international NGO working to fight hunger around the globe.

The UN-WFP has been a strategy ally towards fighting towards the attainment of zero hunger by helping solve food insecurity in Zambia since 1967. Most Zambian to date are not able to meet their calorie requirements at the minimum level at about 48% of the population. This also leaves about 35% of the children to have stunted growth.

In the early 2011, Zambia earned the lower income level status but with over half of the Zambian population still leaving below the poverty bottom line. With the deteriorating economic conditions Zambia has experienced in the last decade, the government still struggles to alleviate poverty, provide sustainable social services, be able to curb malnutrition and hopeful bring the hunger levels to zero. Poverty and hunger are closely related as food insecurity is high among the poor. When food is accessible, available all the time, it means we are food secure as a nation (Mukuka and Singogo, 2020)^[14].

In the 2019 Human Development Index, Zambia ranked 143 out of 189 making the country among the highest food insecure countries in the world.

Even if at national level, the government exceeds the national requirements, food is still a problem in Zambia. The small-scale farmers who rely on season rainfall are so vulnerable from having limited access to accessing finance, sustainable markets, high cost of fertilizers which affects the households negatively and increases the food insecurity in Zambia.

Methodology

The researcher engaged with a few key people running international CSOs in Zambia to gain a more understanding of how CSOs operate using indirect or direct observations.

This research approach is called Empirical research approach. Mismeasured phenomena and observations were used during this research. The research also used secondary data (Martins *et al.*, 2018) ^[11], collected from government data bases like the Zambia Statistical Agency (ZSA) website. Secondary data is data which was collected by other researchers for other similar purpose. This data was collected the internet from peer reviewed journals, working papers and CSOs final country reports.

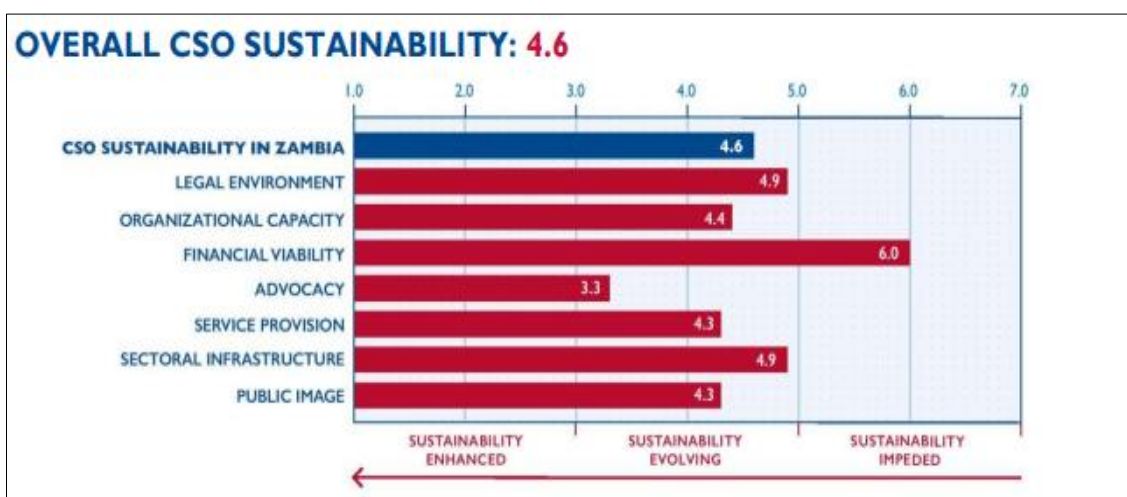
Finding and Analysis

The relationship between CSOs and the government is coupled with hidden and overt tensions with hostility in some cases, as seen when handling some issues regarding this sector. This has been observed over time with regards to different political regimes and how they see the CSOs and their contributions. A growing influence of this sector has been seen all over the country especially rural communities with evidence of schools built, clinics, boreholes and community centres donated by these CSOs like World vision, USAID, WaterAid etc. when it comes to the delivery of social services such as health, water and sanitation, education etc., the relationship between the government and the CSOs is very good as the government is actually being assisted. A lot of CSOs seen to campaign and lobbying on issue concerning freedom of association, the rule of law, land rights to mention a few have seen a lot of resistance from the government of Zambia which saw some NGOs being deregistered and just vanished especially after amending the NGO act (Dupuy, 2019) ^[5]. Most international CSOs operating in Zambia had to adjust to restrictions on regulation to maintain a cordial relation with the government (Dupuy and Prakash, 2021) ^[6] especially in 2009 when a new law regulating NGOs was

passed which created a restriction on the civil space in the country. The NGO Act was made effective in 2014 when there was change of government (Jana *et al.*, 2019) ^[10] which they defended not to be implemented when they were in opposition. Further the civil space was characterized by violet threats, arrests, surveillance in 2018 when government starting persecuting civil society activists (Frontline Defenders, 2018) ^[9]

From the research, it is discovered that Zambia in the past 10 years has suffered from constitutional crisis which has weakened government institutions as the country was turning into authoritarian rule. It was also discovered the past government failed to distinguish between their political party, the Patriotic Front (PF) issues and the government. This brought a lot of conflicting interests such as both Human defenders, civil society and the opposition was put in one basket. This made civil society suffer too in the civil space of Zambia. The Zambian government needs to create mechanisms towards institutionalization participation of citizen towards decision making other than through political parties and elections. The system needs to be decentralized.

Through the global civil society Alliance of CSOs worldwide which is dedicated on upholding civil societies and citizen action worldwide called CIVICUS, Zambia participates in the CSO sustainability project. from the 2020 report, the Zambian environment continued to worsen towards the sustainability of the CSOs in the country. The overall CSO sustainability index in Zambia stood at 4.6 which shows that it was evolving, clearly indicating that its not enhanced. Other parameters in the research shows that Zambia impeded development in this sector especially towards their financial viability as shown in Figure 1 below.



Source: USAID (2020) ^[18]

Fig 2: Overall CSOs Sustainability Zambia 2020

All the parameters towards the viability of CSOs which are benchmarked on global standards where far from being enhanced. This is also attributed to the political situation the former Patriotic Front (PF) government created which continued to deteriorate the working conditions of these civil organizations in Zambia. The PF government pushed the public towards hardships, as households suffered from ever increasing commodity prices. With the drought experienced in most years, this was made worse towards the general

public. These prevailing conditions had a lot of impacts on the civil societies in the country. This made small and large CSOs difficult to operate, retention of qualified personal was a challenge, meeting CSOs financial obligations like sponsoring their projects in the communities, outreach Programmes, paying taxes and the covid-19 pandemic worsen things too. The analysis per measurable component is as follows

Legal environment

The Zambia legal environment was close to 5 (4.9) which shows that over a stretch from 2015 to 2019, the legal environment was unchanged but not very conducive as a country as shown below as it was close to being impeded. It was noted that most CSOs registered with the register of societies and others with PACRA. Most rural CSOs had problems with legal registration as they needed to go to mostly provincial capital to fill in the documents which further imposed financial stress to them. The Zambian civil space still kept on deteriorating especially towards the public order act. This act was selective, favoring the ones siding with the PF government. This saw civil society members and activists arrested citing that they unlawfully assembled. These legal aspects affected many CSOs that operate in the issues bordering on political, accountability and finance of public funds and general governance.

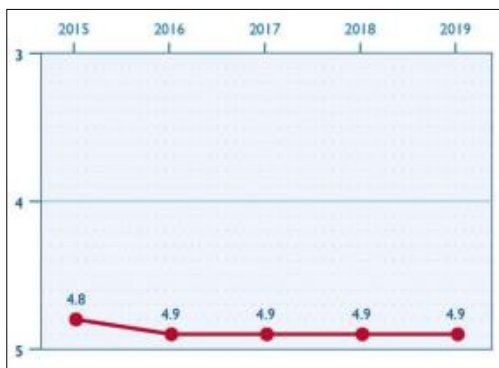


Fig 3: Legal environment in Zambia

Organizational capacity stood at 4.4

Many CSOs across the country, rural or urban struggled to keep up with the organizational capacities. This trend has been persistent since 2015. This is attributed to low financial support from the government or the funding institutions. Most CSOs reduced on the outreach services countrywide due to the inadequacy of resources.

Most organizations found operations very difficult to coordinate especially during the peak if the covid-19 pandemic. Most local CSOs found operations very difficult due to reduced funding, withdraw from donors towards these institutions.

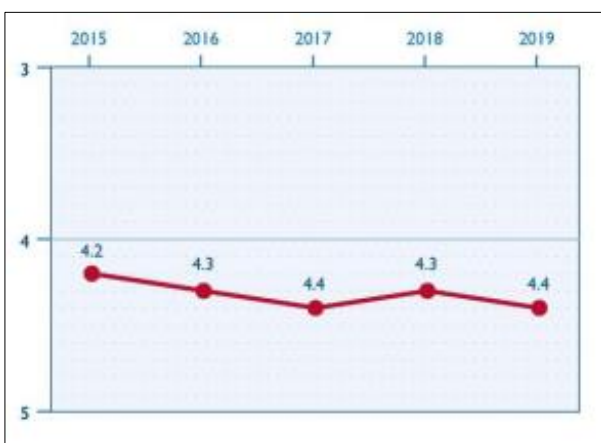


Fig 4: Organizational capacity in Zambia

Viability Financially for the country was at 6.0

The financial position of most CSOs in the country showed a deterioration in a row as seen in the table below. Many projects were not undertaken by these CSOs. Most of this is attributed towards poor funding, general economic conditions and a general drop in funding from the donors from the international market as funding locally seemed very unavailable. The most funding was got through the European Union towards CSOs involved in gender-based violence and justice. Other partners have been World vision, BBC Media house to mention just a few. Most of the local FBOs and CBOs got funding from church Aid from Norway, from German through the German Agency for International Corporation. International CSO such as World Vision, Water Aid provided funding for CSOs in the service sector. Mostly, CSOs got funding towards programs rather than institutional aid. (USAID, 2020) ^[18]



Fig 5

Advocacy for Zambia 3.3

Level of advocacy is well towards well advocated for. From 2015 to date, the level of advocacy improved year by year. The CSOs engaged actively in health care, education, climate change, water and sanitation to mention a few.

USAID country report

From the CDSC reports of 2011-2019, the USAID Zambia's commitment towards self-reliance has a relative score compared to other countries in the low to medium income bracket receiving help from USAID. The biggest concern from the part of the CDSC is the growing level of corruption which has infiltrated senior government level. This has robbed the government of natural resources like timber (Mukula), restricted private investments and this has led the government to go into huge debt that further pushes away the dream of self-reliance. From the new dawn government, a promise towards an improvement in accountability by being transparent, decentralization and improved measures towards curbing corruption.

WaterAid country report

From the **WaterAid report**, there is so much duplication of work and wastage with poor coordination towards the work with this NGO. WaterAid is supervised under two ministries: The Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Local government. The overall water sector is under ministry of mines while the water supply and sanitation for rural areas is under the ministry of local government. This creates a lot of problems

when it comes to decision making matters. Despite the importance of clean water and sanitation, this sector gets little funding from the government with budget allocations reducing year in year out (WaterAid, 2016) ^[22]. This NGO continues to struggle and work in difficult conditions despite its crucial contribution towards providing clean water to the marginalized and poor. Some challenges include poor infrastructure like roads to access the sites, information asymmetry and greatly affected by decentralized slow pace. This program is also affected by the passiveness and limited engagement of the communities towards working with them. They suffer a lot of cross sector collaboration which is weak. The government clearly overlooks the high level of poverty to access to WASH. The WASH initiative in Zambia was free, but since initiate towards cost sharing started, it has impacted greatly on the communities to access WASH. This has caused the communities to resort to the traditional ways of getting water from the wells and using the bush as the toilet than using constructed pit latrines. Even with the social cash transfers which seems to be universal, the WASH program is not included, and the communities get disadvantaged because if the social cash transfers are not available.

ActionAid Country report

From the ActionAid/Zambia Strategy plans of 2013-2017 and so far in the 2018-2022 strategy reports, the NGO has learnt past lesson the past strategy of 2013- 2017 which are; Working in collaboration with other CSOs and development actors on common issues is very beneficial towards a collaborative synergy as they engage government towards an improved delivery of the public service.

Believing in the young people, by giving them leadership roles, supporting and building capacity in them to be able to be heard.

Much strength is acquired through advocacy rooted in community involved, so that the communities own the processes and a high level of engagement will be observed. This will make government realize the importance of communities. Also be rooted in the community as made ActionAid Zambia see first hand information towards the poverty levels. This creates a real need to address the inequalities towards the marginalized and the poor and the extent at which women bear most of these burdens is realized by being present in the community.

CSOs investing in research so that their influence is real time and UpToDate all the time. This will allow them to continuously review their strategy with clarity of purpose. With us kind of practice, improvement towards the provision and delivery of public goods will be optimized.

It has also been discovered that the gap between the poor and the rich in Zambia has continued to grow. The Gini coefficient for Zambia was 0.60 in 2010, 0.69 in 2017 (Bhorat et al., 2017; ActionAid, 2018) ^[2, 1] and according to the world bank's shared and poverty report for 2020, Zambia was ranked 3rd country in the world with the highest income inequality (World Bank, 2020) ^[23]. This is far much higher than the entire African average of 0.43. ActionAid continues to give the mining sector a lot of pressure towards asking the government to look at the investors and the way they are treating the Zambians. ActionAid further believes that the Zambians must be full beneficiary of the copper processed but the women and their children continue to be exploited due to lack of proper enforcement of a lot of pieces in the legislation on mineral and mines development.

World Vision Country report

From World vision Annual reports and most recently the 2020 annual report, world vision had the year 2020 as the most challenging year ever due to the covid-19 pandemic which affected the poor and marginalized communities even more badly due to lack of facilities and early interventions. Even though it was a challenging year, World vision refurbished 230 bores, drilled 400 new boreholes and provide various water systems to many communities around schools, health facilities and in communities. This was estimated to have a total of over 200, 000 people across the country who benefited from this provision of water services. Also, during times of drought, seed and food rations was provided to 13 districts in the country. All this was done in collaboration with the United Nations agents like USAID, the Zambian government and the involved of subcontracted local CSOs. World Vision supported efforts the government in reducing child mortality and maternal rates through the provision of increased access towards health services for the mothers, their newly born babies and further to children below the age of five.

Zambia Red Cross Society

The ZRCS is challenges towards its funding. It depended on the external funding and Zambia too has been closing some embassies which were donor to the society like Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. The society also has suffered a lot of competition from other CSOs who are not connected to the government like them. The ZRCS has had a lot of hiccups especially towards the community support where volunteers normally pull off. It continued having problems with spill over problems from Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi and Zimbabwe. This has caused a lot of strain to the ZRCS towards its operations (ZRCS, 2017) In order for Zambia to ensure food security, action is needed from different approach which may include the governance towards food systems needs to be well coordinated, responsible and inclusive investments in the rural agricultural sector. The government must put more effort in implementing a meaningful education system, improving the social protection to curb hunger and poverty.

Conclusion and Research Recommendations

Conclusion

Creating a civil society that is vibrant is an essential mix towards social, economic and political development of an economy of a developing country like Zambia. With a diverse international CSOs operating in Zambia, the civil society space must be made conducive so that they flourish and perform to their level best with their intervention towards providing social services and practicing social entrepreneurship as they interact with the communities. In this sector, transparency, no political interference and the promotion of democracy is key to make this sector flourish. Lessons need to learnt from the past ten years which suppressed the civil society and treated like opposition when it came to issues of governance. A good relationship needs to created with the host countries through their embassies. The Zambia NGO act needs to be revised for it contains clauses that are fraught which creates discrimination with a particular government ruling as seen when PF came into power in 2014. Otherwise, this makes CSOs look like government department extensions instead of them being independent and effective developmental partners. Honest and open dialogues

need to be conducted between the government and Civil society so that they share the same vision than have conflicting approaches towards fight against inequality. This was seen with the past government where the money meant for the social cash transfers was used for other purposes, other than the intended purpose resulting in the government failing to account for the money. These social transfers are a very big ingredient towards the helping the marginalized and poor in our community. This creates a huge burden to the civil society who will seem to be doing nothing. The government through the responsible ministry need to follow up the activities of these CSOs in our communities to ensure that they are doing the intended job and respecting our cultural and the communities at hand. They must be strategic mutuality towards the deliverance and collaboration in the civil sector between the government, private and civil society.

Recommendations

The government needs to develop prudent, open and clear NGO act which will enable the CSOs operate without intimidation and political interference.

The international CSOs should be given a threshold of how much local CSOs involvement they need to provide to enable our local CSOs grow and be able to compete with the international organization in the Zambian civil space. The government need to adequately fund the local CSOs in order to conduct its mandate well

The importance of the civil society should be well elaborated with programs running on local media to make the community be fully engaged and cooperate when volunteers are requested towards certain projects

With the growing covid-19 pandemic, the government needs to come up with mechanisms to ensure that outreach is effective and efficient.

The business environment part of the civil sector needs to be coordinated well with the private sector. The communities need to be well guided as they take off with the community projects. The integration between the civil and the private sector is very important

Decentralization is key towards working with the civil society. This makes work easier from district level going up. The building capacity and empowering of youths and children needs to be enhanced as these are the agents of change.

The coordination of the works of the civil society and the alignment with the SDGs needs to constantly tabled between all stakeholders and the government in order to work towards attaining them.

Self-reliance should be key to the communities as they are getting the help from the civil society. The communities need to be well educated with other stakeholders on the importance of self-reliance and autonomy once they have been empowered. The government need to also embed this with vocational schooling for communities to enhance their skills as they interact with the CSOs.

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