



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

Focus: climate change and the economy

The economy of Zambia relies heavily on mining and agriculture.

The mining industry is a sector that has diminishing returns meaning that the resources we are extracting from the ground cannot be replaced. On the other hand, the agriculture sector can be an alternative to mining – if given support by the government. Unlike mining, it is not a diminishing asset.

The agriculture sector is the sector that is mostly dependent on rainfall. There is a need to invest in the agriculture sector through the promotion of irrigation so that farmers are not so dependent on rain which limits crop production.

The rivers are slowly drying up and this is leading to the diminishing fish species and a loss of income for fishermen.

When crops are lost from droughts and other disasters, farmers aren't able to harvest enough food and that means they lose money and the country may experience food shortages

The Weekly Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

The Problem: Climate Change and the Economy

Zambia has experienced extreme climatic events ranging from droughts and floods. One of the worst droughts was in 1991. The dependence of the country on rain made this problem even worse as many farmers had not been educated on the advantages of irrigation.

Zambia has not only suffered droughts but also floods. The floods that Zambia has experienced have mostly led to the destruction of bridges and roads this has made it more difficult for the farmers during these periods to get their produce to market.

In the past, severe floods in Zambia have led to destruction of crops this has caused the food security to be threatened.

Floods and droughts do not only affect the agriculture sector but other industries, too, such as the manufacturing sector. The power generation in this country is hydro meaning that it is dependent on water. When there are severe droughts there is less electricity generated. This causes industries such as the mines to produce less minerals leading to less revenue collected by the government leading to reduced incomes and to a loss of jobs.

Climate change is seriously causing damage to the economy. For one thing, making it easier for diseases to spread - - leading to deaths of many people who could be contributing to the development of the country.

As you can see, droughts and floods, brought on by climate change, can cause ripple effects throughout Zambia's economy

Activities for Journalists

Use your radio station to help your community understand how climate change affects economic development in this country.

Many of the bulletins that have been written have looked at how we can deal with climate change.

Irrigation is one of the ways that can be used to reduce the impact of climate change. Irrigation enables farmers to grow crops throughout the year with fewer difficulties. For instance, when the rainy season ends in March, irrigation can be used to grow another cycle of crops that can enable the farmer to harvest two to three times in a year.

Building canals is another way that floods can be controlled. Projects such as the Pilot Program on Climate Resilience will enable communities to mitigate some of these effects. The PPCR is designed for the communities to create their own projects that will benefit them. This is the largest adaptation program happening in Zambia with funding from the World Bank, Africa Development Bank and the International Finance Corporation. Canals will not only reduce the impact of floods, but can be used for irrigation purposes – thus increasing food security.

The planting of trees is one of the other initiatives that should be continuously promoted through programs such as the REDD+ project. REDD+ stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and it promotes conservation and the sustainable management of forests. There is a need to educate communities about having trees around their communities and the benefits that come with them such

as cleaner air, enriching the soil and of course, if they are fruit trees – they provide food.

There is a need to promote agriculture that is sustainable such as organic and conservation farming techniques. They should be promoted in communities so that soil fertility is not lost.

The mining sector is causing degradation of the environment. The government needs to hold mining companies accountable for the damage caused to the environment through taxes and penalties. The mines must also dispose of waste in ways that do less harm to humans and the environment. In many cases, mining firms, throughout the world, dispose of toxic waste in rivers and other streams. (www.zieminstitute.org).

Interview some farmers from your community and ask them how climate change has affected their livelihoods.

Talk to a local agricultural extension worker to find out what can be done to minimize the effects of climate change.

Are any NGOs working in your community on climate change issues? If so, what are they doing to help mitigate the effects of climate change?

Working with a local NGO or the local forestry department, take part in a tree-planting program in your community – and promote it as a way to help rivers and streams remain healthy so that people are healthy, too.

Useful Link

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