

## CHAPTER 7

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND THE WAY FORWARD

The doctoral thesis: *A theological-ethical framework for economic development: the case of Zambia* was divided into seven chapters namely:

- ❑ chapter one – introduction;
- ❑ chapter two – economics: a review of definitions and perspectives;
- ❑ chapter three – historical overview of economic development in Zambia;
- ❑ chapter four – the church as an institution: a historical survey of its response to economic development in Zambia;
- ❑ chapter five – the normative basis of a theological-ethical framework;
- ❑ chapter six – an evaluation of economic development programmes and guidelines for churches' participation in economic development in Zambia; and
- ❑ chapter seven – summary, conclusion, recommendations and the way forward.

Chapter one mainly discussed the problem statement and put forth the main argument and point of departure. It argued that beginning from scarcity as a point of departure for economic development has contributed to the compromisation of social and environmental imperatives both on global and local levels. This was the research problem which was evaluated from a theological-ethical standpoint in relation to the specific context of Zambia as the case study. It further argued about the need for theological ethics to provide a socially-sensitive and environment-friendly point of departure for economic development as an alternative for the notion of scarcity. Background and rationale, research objectives, methodology, structure of chapters, literature review, and study relevance were also presented.

Chapter two reviewed some of the main definitions and perspectives in economics. This was in order to establish the main root which runs through the science of economics and thus, seek a viable entry point for Christian theology to make its contributions. It was observed that the notion of scarcity defines the rules of economics and is used as a point of departure in solving the problem of relative scarcity. It underpins economic development, economic systems, and sustainable development. Nonetheless, its inadequacy was highlighted with the view to point to the need for a new point of departure. Under this chapter, issues of etymology, secular and Christian views, were also presented.

Chapter three was an attempt to illustrate how, from the standpoint of the notion of scarcity, relative scarcity has been dealt with within the specific context of Zambia. It took a historical approach to the issue in order to show clearly how the economy has evolved in the period 1964 to 1999. During this period, Zambia failed to solve the problem of relative scarcity. Besides, during this period, the adherence to the notion of scarcity as a point of departure contributed to the undermining of social and environmental imperatives mainly through market exclusion of people and gradual environmental harm. The main issues discussed were: visions of a reconstructed Zambia – a brief statement, political liberation, independence and decolonisation – setting the context for nation-building and economic development, economic development in the early post-independence era: 1964-1976, economic slide of the mid 1970s to 1979, structural adjustment in the 1980s: an overview, and structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation in the 1990s: a brief presentation.

Chapter four was also an attempt to illustrate the response of Zambian churches to economic development. It argued that Zambian churches employed their pastoral and social tasks within a context which was defined by the ethos of scarcity. However, the Zambian churches are slowly coming of age in their moral response to economic development. They are no longer content with ethical and prophetic approaches to moral discourse. They are slowly trying to balance this with the policy approach, that is, they are trying to see how they can understand economic policy in order to influence the outcome of policy actions. This transition is being led by the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia. In addi-

tion, this chapter explored the historical background to the post-independence church in Zambia.

Chapter five spelt out clearly what ought to be the normative basis, that is, the moral foundation, upon which a theological-ethical framework for economic development ought to be based. It argued that Christian theology (including ethics) does have something to offer to the current debate on economic development through its insights and perspectives. These insights and perspectives include moral criteria from both Christian theology and shared human experience which can be explicated within the philosophy of stewardship as a general framework for economic development. Its main point was that there is every need to make a transition from scarcity to stewardship as an alternative point of departure for economic development. It is the ethic of stewardship which ensures that community, the environment, and a sustainable future are preserved. Human beings as those persons who have been given authority to rule over all what God has given to them should decide what is good for sake of the human family and the entire created order. It was strongly emphasized that not only should stewardship be seen as a point of departure, but as a model as well. In addition, a checklist of a set of principles was included.

Chapter six, firstly discussed stewardship principles which were developed in chapter five. They were discussed in the light of the economy as a whole and specific economic development programmes (nationalisation and privatisation) which were selected for illustrative purposes. An evaluation of these programmes reveals that even though one could see some traces of stewardship in the way they were implemented, much more needed to be done. Zambia can achieve this when it changes its philosophy of economic operation from scarcity to stewardship and when it implements its economic programmes with meticulous care. This approach will help her ensure that social and environmental objectives are sustained over a long period of time. Secondly, it highlighted the fact that Zambian churches should themselves be a model of the new way of thinking and living. They can do this by appropriating the philosophy of stewardship within their ecclesial structures. This ecclesial appropriation should not just end within ecclesial structures, but be extended to their local businesses, government and society at large. They have to

be instruments of new values which respect human life and the environment in the human quest for adequate economic development.

Chapter seven simply summarises, concludes, recommends, and points to the way forward. So far, the academic journey has been rigorous and tiresome. Time to show the main findings, to urge on official bodies, and share the vision for a more humane and sustainable future, has come.

In conclusion, the main finding of this research is that making the notion of scarcity a point of departure for economic development has contributed to human and social dislocation on the one hand and to environmental degradation on the other hand. In spite of the material progress that has been brought into being by scarcity-guided economic systems, especially the free market economy, this has been done at the very expense of human life and the environment. This ought not to be like this. Certainly, the notion of scarcity ought to be replaced by a society-enhancing and environment-friendly point of departure for economic development. And that point of departure is stewardship. It is not only a point of departure, but a model for economic development. It ought to define rules of economics so that social and environmental imperatives are entrenched in economic systems.

The ball is in the hands of humans. They have to decide to be good stewards of the resources of the earth for the sake of the human family and non-humans. They can no longer pretend that all is well. Something must be done so that all humans might have access to life-sustaining mechanisms and that the entire environment might continue to give life, beauty, and serenity to the entire created order. Therefore, it is the ethic of stewardship rather than the notion of scarcity which ensures inclusive, responsible, and accountable living and thinking for all by all. This ethic should inform economic theory and practice if human suffering and environmental degradation are to be arrested significantly.

In the light of the foregoing, the following recommendations are made for the specific context of Zambia:

- to ensure environmental sustainability in Zambia, it is recommended that: the legal framework be strengthened in order to begin to deal with both persons and companies who destroy and pollute the environment – both punitive and motivational measures should be used; the ECZ be empowered to do its constitutional work on behalf of the nation through a total overhaul to include the following: extensive and intensive scientific and technical training (covering all the relevant sectors of ecology), infrastructural and facility expansion (including state of the art information technology accessories and top of the range computers), improved terms and conditions of service to attract the best scientific minds and expanded and modernised laboratory institutions;
- to strengthen democracy and to ensure that government accounts for its activities in the national household, it is recommended that: legal bodies such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Human Rights Commission be appointed by an independent body and be answerable to parliament; presidents of all opposition parties (limited in number by national consensus and by law) be members of parliament as ex-officio members, and cabinet be appointed outside parliament;
- to strengthen the informal sector (the *utuntemba* economy), it is recommended that a constitutional body be appointed by government to look into issues of basic informal sector needs such as training, technical know-how, business structures, financial sourcing, and investment; and
- to effectively deal with the problem of unemployment in Zambia, it is recommended that the activities of NSSN be overhauled completely to enable it take a holistic approach to the problem including: joint problem-solving partnerships with NGOs, churches, and the private sector.

The way forward for a viable economic vision is clear: *the changing of life-styles and mindsets towards a more inclusive and sustainable economic future*. In this regard, Zambia churches, Christian and other like-minded economists have a valid contribution to make.

Zambian churches should continue to mature their moral approach to economic development by maintaining a balance between all modes of moral discourse (narrative, ethical, prophetic, and policy). They should not only seek to be narrators, ethicists, and prophets of Biblical morality, but seek also to understand the role of policy in nation-building and economic development. They ought to be willing to participate in policy through many opportunities accorded to them by businesses, the state and society at large. Through their participation, decisions with a moral perspective will be made by official bodies for the benefit of all citizens and the environment.

The philosophy of stewardship – based on the Biblical principles – has been developed. It is now incumbent upon Christian economists and other like-minded economists to develop this into a feasible framework for economic life. Their assignment includes the transformation of macro and micro economics from the criteria of scarcity to the criteria of stewardship. Issues such as taxation, investment, monetary and fiscal policy, and balance of payment, should all be analysed from the standpoint of this framework and be concretised. It is a difficult task, but worth trying. There is no other time to do it than now. Churches and other social groups of goodwill will certainly support such an intellectual and practical assignment aimed at social and environmental wholeness.

Human beings, the world over, are aching for a time of peace, fulfilment, prosperity, health, and sustainability. They are tired of economic systems which harm them and degrade their environments. They want to be valued, respected, motivated, and sustained within human households. Their quest for adequate economic development lies in the realisation of stewardship as the basis of the development process. It is stewardship which can ensure that moral imperatives – social, environmental and otherwise – are protected. Humans – in business, in government and in society at large – should rise together and chart the way forward towards global and local economies which respect human life and the environment. This movement, as already noted, involves change of mind, soul, and body and human structures for the sake of all humans and non-humans.

Therefore, “change, change, change” encouraged by conscientious groups and people is the way forward for a stewardship-guided society of human beings who seek adequate economic development.