



Wednesday, 14th January 2009

PRESS STATEMENT

INCREASE BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TOWARDS POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMS (PRPs) IN THE 2009 NATIONAL BUDGET

The Eastern Province Program Management Team (EPPMT) of the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) is delighted by Parliament opening speech delivered to the nation by His Excellence the President of the Republic of Zambia because of their emphasis and prioritisation of the Poverty Reduction Programs.

Additionally, the CSPR - EPPMT wishes to recognize Government's PRPs initiatives through such programs as the Social Cash Transfer under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, The National Fertilizer Support Program (NFSP) and the Food Security Pack (FSP) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO) and many other such programs.

During 2008, the EPPMT commissioned an Impact Assessment of the Fertiliser support Program in Chipata and Lundazi Districts. Major findings were that very few of the targeted beneficiaries obtained inputs during the 2007/2008 agriculture season. It was also discovered that the same small-scale farmers have been benefiting from the Program without graduating. This trend has denied a chance for other small scale farmers to benefit from the program.

It is therefore against this background that the CSPR - EPPMT is urging the Government not to merely mention these priorities but to make financial and human resources commitments towards the attainment priorities through the 2009 National Budget.

The identification of the beneficiaries, the monitoring mechanism and the graduation guidelines must be well devised to avoid the current situation of allocating resources to non targeted beneficiaries and to curb the allocation of these resources to the same beneficiaries every year.

Realizing that these initiatives are time bound and may phase out sooner or later, we appeal to Government to devise initiatives, programs and/or policies aimed at fostering diversification.

Doing this will uplift the social and economical well-being **all** Zambians.

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