

Friday, 6th February, 2009

PRESS STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CSPR North Western Province Position on 2009 Budget

CSPR North-Western Province Programme Management Team (NWPPMT) wish to state that we are happy with the social focused outline in which the 2009 budget was presented. We wish to further state that the provision of the Monitoring and Evaluation component by the Ministry of Finance in order to let government be accountable to its people as well as provide transparency, is a very much welcomed initiative. We believe Public Private Partnership can easily be developed if there is transparency as well as accountability in the way government and donor Funds are used.

As CSPR NWPPMT we are indeed happy that the government has allocated funds for the construction of two hospitals in Mufumbwe and Lumwana areas respectively.

However, CSPR NWPPMT continues to shudder at the current situation in Solwezi. CSPR NWPPMT would like to take this opportunity to remind provincial administration to consider submitting in the 2010 budget funds for rehabilitation of the existing social services in Solwezi which cannot meet the high demand of influx of people seeking jobs as well as business opportunities on the mines. The state of Solwezi General Hospital leaves much to be desired. The only clinic in Solwezi is too small and covers a catchment area good enough to be called district. Local community members come from as far as Kandemba, Zambia, Kyawama and Kazomba compounds. The queues that are found there are alarming. CSPR NWPPMT will this year continue to advocate for the rehabilitation and expansion of the Solwezi General Hospital as the current one does not suffice to be called one.

Under education we as CSPR continue to note with much shame the poor results recorded at grade 12 level in the province. It is good to note that there is an allocation for the recruitment of 5,000 teachers this year. However for Northwestern Province the situation goes beyond the number of recruited teachers and will therefore continue to seek engagement with other stakeholders as to see how best to address the situation. There is need for the recruitment of teachers to be met with adequate teaching aid, housing and infrastructure. A combination of these is what guarantees quality of education, as opposed to merely quantity in terms of enrolment.

Under agriculture, we are pleased to note that there has been an increase of 37 % in this very important sector. Agriculture remains the cornerstone of every development. The direction

that the government has taken in this regard cannot go unappreciated. The waving of taxes from key agricultural inputs will indeed reduce the costs of agriculture production and encourage more farming. As CCSR NWPPMT we hope to see a change in our province as local farmers take a great leap towards this opportunity that has presented itself to us. We urge government to devise means of credit support to small scale farmers to ensure that they too benefit from the agriculture equipment, otherwise the incentive may only benefit commercial farmers. We as NWPPMT will continue monitoring the situation to ensure the targeted farmers are the actual beneficiaries in the agriculture sector especially through the Fertiliser Support Programme and Food Security Pack, among others. We feel this sector is key to ensuring sustainable food security in our country. We are confident that if efficiently implemented, North-Western Province will not only be the new Copperbelt, but also maximize its potential to become the national food basket.

The Auditor General's report 2007 which explicitly states the purchasing of furniture and administration from Poverty Reduction Program funds in Solwezi cannot go unnoticed. As CCSR NWPPMT we wish to encourage the incoming Permanent Secretary of NW Province, Dr Mambwe, to take decisive punitive measures regarding the misallocations and set precedence that will positively affect the poor in society.

As CCSR NWPPMT we note with displeasure on the failure by some councilors to account for four hundred Million ZMK Constituency Development Funds.

CCSR in Northwestern Province recognizes the global economic changes that are at play and as CCSR we also see a challenge due to the impact that this will have on the poverty levels. It is without doubt that we foresee a challenge awakening on the government, donors, chiefs, CSO's as well as the community members themselves.

As CCSR NWPPMT we will continue to support and supplement government efforts towards the attainment of the vision 2030, through strict adherence to the FNDP. We however will not hesitate to give an outcry to issues that concern the welfare of the ordinary citizens. As CCSR we continue to provide platforms for civic engagements with various stakeholders to come on board to give their voice of different issues that affect us in Northwestern Province.

Our vision for Zambia is to see Zambians accessing all basic needs. In this regard our prime interest as NWPPMT lies in the social sector issues such as health, education, agriculture and water and sanitation.

It takes concerted effort and political Will from the very heart of Central Government to the unknown Zambian Citizen at the grass root level, to achieve the outlined goals of diversification and pro-poor growth.

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Chairperson,

North-Western Province Programme Management Team(PPMT)