

Africa Should Give Birth

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Introduction

Debates on whether improved economic conditions for individual and households leads to lower birth rates hence controlled population growth have ended in agreements. The European continent, Asia tigers and emerging economies are a good example of agreement on this debate. However there is less agreement to the debate that lower birth rates contributes to economic development and help individuals and families to escape from poverty¹ The question here is why do parents bear children? And why do they need one, two, three, or even ten children? *Sinding. S, (2000)* notes that if parents perceive children as good in and of themselves and are willing to forego other forms of consumption for the sake of having a large number of children it is hard to make them have a few children. It is here we find majority of the Kenyans and parents who their sole purpose of working tirelessly is to see their children not 'child' be prosperous.

Scarcity of resources relative to human wants give rise to the struggle of man; sustenance and efforts by him to promote his well being². This makes man to be creative and seek solutions on problem of scarcity which relates to what commodities are to be produced, how they will be distributed and what resources are needed to produce the commodities.

Governments in third world countries Kenya included are faced with the problem of balancing between taking care of the needs of citizens and investments in areas to spur economic growth and development. The recurrent budget and spending on social needs-education, health, recreational facilities takes up 90% of total revenue in the countries hence they need to borrow to finance capital expenditures.

These governments have come up with policies to ensure that a balance is achieved .One such policy is **family planning**. Together with the development partners the third world countries have rolled out massive campaigns about family planning which is seen as the ultimate solution to slow economic growth and development in third world countries.

These paper wishes to show:

- i) Family planning is not a panacea to slow economic growth in the third world countries and alleviation of poverty, diseases and ignorance.
- ii) Agricultural revolution is the engine to the wagon that will take us to the promised land of economic prosperity like Malaysia, china and Singapore.
- iii) Third world countries should develop their own ideologies and dissuade themselves from the theories of modernizations imperialism and democracy that we don't understand.

A) Family Planning is Not a Panacea to Slow Economic Growth and Development in Third World

Every birth brings a mouth to feed but also safe pair of hands to work –grows the food it requires³ this birth needs to have sufficient food, training, natural resources and protection. These are the condition the birth will need for it to be safe pair of hands to work. These conditions are to be provided by parents, the government and the community at large.

When the child is born the parents need to have been told that the birth is a source of joy and avenue for longevity of life and not an extra burden. The notion of unplanned pregnancy and spirited campaigns on family planning has led to increase in a number of abortions and street families as parents sees these birth as extra burdens and not source of joy and safe pair of hands to work and increase productivity of the family, community and the country.

The developed countries in the world today are facing a serious problem of ageing population, increased burden of old age dependants and decreasing number of young stars joining the work force. This is as a result of improved economic conditions for individuals and households which led to lower birth rates. This is the way to go for third world countries to improve the economic conditions for individuals and households then let the population be controlled naturally.

A closer study of the Kenya urban population and the elite society we see the trend of one child or two children policy taking root. It is also rooted that couples are even going for scientific conception methods to determine the sex of the child. They want a boy and a girl and the family is complete. These children are then brought up and taken care of by the 'aunties' who become their role models. The parents are busy 'hustling' for the family, the mother shows up at night only to find the children asleep, her, tired dozes off on the couch. The husband is late in the office and has to meet friends for 'nyamachoma' arrives in the wee hours, to much displeasure of the wife. This is the middle class family in the 21st century Kenya. The question is, is it worth it?

This kind of family breeds agreed, untrustworthy, impulse buying, indulgence leading to a balkanized society of haves and have not's. When the children become youth they have not mastered the tenets of life hood and they love the grandiose and think everything in life is as easy as they get it from their parents.

As they man up and woman up the little stress they get they can't handle it as the parents were not there for them, they resort to friends for advice and doing things their on way leading to use of drugs, violence and demanding appealing of some sections of laws whether written or customs to conform to their 'weak, sweet' and failed lives.

These are children who have burnt down schools demanding to wear miniskirts, come to school in their own suitable attires, demand for their own type of routine, syllabus and other liberties they don't need to enjoy at their age. They are the same children who will form illegal gangs because they feel it's heroic.

The child above is from two child policy the governments in Africa is advocating for and if all families go this way then expect a way ward and lawlessness' society where family morals are ignored.

The number of children in a family does not matter Perce. The ability of the family to raise the children and producing well round person should be the emphasis. These calls for the government, development partners, parents and the planners to direct their energies, resources, education towards strengthening the values of the family and the community rather than condemning birth of children which is a natural right and a gift from God.

There is a need for development and investment in the basics that ensures a child grows and develops in to human resource:

- i) Nutrition
- ii) Education
- iii) Health
- iv) Protection against increase vulnerability.

For a country to develop economically, socially and politically. The above four basics must be gotten right then there will be no limit to the number of children a family should have.

Investments in the four basics, to get the optimum benefits and returns on the investments done, the countries needs to use the social intelligence reporting as proposed by *Isa Achoba et al. (2010)*. In their recommendations they note that the social intelligence reporting approach to social budgeting where the four basics fall will lead to: increasing treasury allocation to pro -child and woman friendly policies and also get information and facts if the allocations are working for intended group.

In third world countries parents choose to have smaller families when health condition improves because they no longer have to fear their babies will die. These will explain why in Kenya for example families in Nairobi leafy suburbs will have two or one child compared to four-six children in the slum areas. In addition, among the pastoralists' communities in Kenya, families have six up to ten children due to the threats the environment put on the survival of the children. From the forgoing then there is a need to invest in motherhood programmes, nutrition and reduction of child mortality rates and the population growth will be put in check.

The campaigns going on in Africa about woman empowerment are the best to put population in check when girls go to school they delay motherhood from 14-15 years to about 23-27 years and when motherhood sets in the girls are elite, and capable of producing healthier and smaller families.

The government in the third world countries therefore needs to invest in the above basics and increase funding in protection against vulnerability to ensure that the youths live up to maturity and are protected from harsh economic conditions like unemployment. They are socially protected from drugs, crime and sexually transmitted infections- **a healthy family is a healthy nation and a healthy economy.**

In conclusion, overemphasis on economic growth and development with disregard to betterment of citizens' life and attitudes towards child bearing and family is an exercise in futility. Former socialist countries like Belarus and Bulgaria's accelerated economic reforms has led to high adult male mortality due to cardiovascular diseases, accidents, suicides and murders this is due to stress and substance abuse which has been linked to unemployment⁴

This is the same thing being experienced in Kenya especially in urban areas. In fact in Kenya the men do not first kill themselves rather they kill the entire family. The man starts by killing the children then the wife and himself later.

This clearly shows children are being seen as a burden something that needs to change and the government has to set up measures to protect the children. Accelerated economic growth also can worsen poverty owing to increase income inequalities/ this growth become socially unstable leading to social stress and conflict detrimental to further growth for example: the past six years Kenyans economic growth has been steady but the income in equalities has widen leading to crippling industrial actions like the doctors, lecturers and nurses strikes which disrupted the smooth growth in those sectors.

The environment is not spared in quest for economic growth and development. We have seen massive plunder of forests and drying up of rivers leading to power outages and rationing. The Lake Victoria is choking in water hyacinth. This rapid environmental degradation poses a threats to people quality lives and standards of living and hence it will reduce economic productivity and the citizens when they will feel their life is in danger then we shall experience **baby boom** .Family planning therefore, if it should be done, let it help families space their children and not limit the number of children each family should have.

B) Agrarian Revolution is Key to Third World Countries Economic Prosperity

Third world countries especially those in Africa, year in year out, cry to the international community and the privileged class in their countries to help feed the starving populace. In Kenya for example, in 2012 we had the **Kenyans for Kenyan campaigns** led by corporate, artists, civil societies and the government .This donation helps to save the situation at hand but the question is for how long we shall feed the nation on donations? And are the donations eradicating hunger and improving the social economic condition of the population? Are these campaigns' a deliberate move by the cooperate world to redeem their image or better it to boost their super profits? These questions need answers.

The Maputo declaration urged that government in Africa should spend at least 10% of their budgets on agriculture. If this is being implemented, it is another area of research. However in Kenya in the 2011/2012 budget, agriculture was allocated 1.7% of 1.2 trillion budget and allocated 9% of 1.2 trillion budgets to teacher service commission (TSC) which is against the Maputo declaration. The question here is between TSC and the ministry of agriculture where should be more money/ resources be pumped? It is in the agriculture because the sector if well managed it will generate the more income than what TSC will give to the government in terms of taxes. The trickledown effect of agriculture is immense as compared to TSC.

Mweni .E (2006) notes that agriculture plays an essential and irreplaceable role in guaranteeing both food security and a source of income for two thirds of world's poor, it is also key in terms of affecting the provision of other social and environmental public goods. This is true as seen in the two regions of Makta and Ashkhabad these two regions are potato farming. The farming is subsidized by the Indian government through introduction of tube wells for irrigation programmes.

The land in these regions are owned by Yadavs and Brahmins who have reaped the profits of the project which includes building of a highway, no citizen in the region go hungry, children go to school and the communities are now saving which has brought tremendous development in the regions.

The savings they note, has led to diversification and investment in agriculture related business including fertilizer and grocery shops. The savings also has enabled the youth to train and now they have government jobs.

Savings and credit societies have been formed and villagers' can now access credit and invest in farming. The gap between the rich and the poor has decreased tremendously. This kind of investments is needed in all third world countries if the much needed economic growth and development has to be achieved.

Agriculture revolution is needed. These means the following areas need investments and prudent management:

- i) Irrigation
- ii) Seed and fertilizer subsidies
- iii) Production subsidies/ value addition
- iv) Export subsidies
- v) Training and education to farmer
- vi) Appealing of all unfair trading and agricultural partnerships between third world countries and the developed nations.

The above six key areas have the key to make third world countries become developed. However the key is being hidden by the developed countries and the governments in third world countries due to skewed programmes and policies, corruption and application of foreign theories and ideologies which they don't understand and if they do the experts get employment and the countries gets nothing in return.

Back to Indian the region of Ashkhabad life is crumbling after year of agricultural boom because of the failure and malfunctioning of the irrigation schemes, this tells us clearly that, a well planned and maintained irrigation schemes will be a solution to perennial food shortage and reliance on food aid. In addition the agro based industries will emerge lead to industrialization .and if there is no such solution then we shall experience perennial food shortage and reliance on food aid.

In Kenya the ASAL communities who benefited from the Kenyans for Kenyans campaign's irrigation project implemented by the Kenya Red Cross are smiling their way to the bank with surplus groceries and enough to eat they no longer need food donations.

The agricultural revolution in third world countries cannot take off because of tight and discriminative policies given to them by the developed nations and the Britton wood institution, for example African governments are not allowed to give subsidies to their farmers while the European nations and America, subsidies for various agriculture commodities in their nations has been increasing.

These subsidized agricultural products suppress international markets prices making the African governments and citizens feeling the heat. The much publicized and emphasized export led strategies start to back fire as the prices fall the foreign reserve shrinks and the farmer who waited to reap from the exports is left hungry, poor depended on government which is also poor for help. A case study of tea farmer/coffee farmer in Kenya who has taken his acre of plot and planted the crop, given loans from the finance institutions, given farm input loans, tends the crops for two years harvest it and take to the buying Centre where a kilo will go for 13-15ksh. This is not the final price he/she will get during the payment of bonus. Now if the international market price falls the farmers' income will fall and he/she will be left poor.

These problems led to uprooting of tea and coffee plants in central and rift valley regions and in western province the small scale farmers have decided to sell their produce to middle men for quick cash as the waiting are more painful. Offiong D (1982): observed that third world countries which are least developed, are imprisoned by the **Yaoundé agreement** that made the African nations to be associated with the European Union. In this agreement the third world countries are suppliers of raw materials to the industrialized nations, cash crops are produced for them making workers in the producing countries dependent on wages and salaries determined by export prices and exchange rates leading to poor salaries and delayed payments.

This puts the citizens/ workers to live in squalors, their children drop out of school, they are malnourished and in addition the dejected workers take to alcoholism, prostitution and crime. The European Union has given quotas and tariffs to products likely to compete with products from the European countries that is, they import what they want. However, they export to poor countries what they want. This has led to killing of agro based industries in third world countries. In Kenya for example Kisumu cotton mills, rift valley textile just to mention a few.

This has killed development and made Kenyans and Africans depended on imports which are expensive hence depleting household incomes leading to lack of savings which makes the population to remain in the vicious cycle of poverty.

To achieve the agricultural revolution we are advancing here, the third world countries need to have a paradigm shift in agriculture. There is need for renewed energies and resources and attitude in this sector. I agree with Oduor Ong'wen(2006) who observed that the third world countries need to move away from export led growth strategies as advanced by the Briton wood institutions and world trade organization (W.T.O) to domestic demand led strategies (D.L.S) which will be tailored to our development needs and nature of our environment. The export led strategies (ELS) have subordinated human needs and rights to corporate greed and corporate profits. For example, in Kenya the sugar industry is at its death bed as the managers and C.E.Os in this sector implemented the ELS model in the sector where the farmer who is to be the king was seen as the slave and the factories as kings with the entry of private ownership of sugar companies sparked of a fierce rivalry as the private companies implemented the DD.L.S attracting more farmers. This explains why Mumias sugar, Nzoia and Muhoroni are nearly collapsing while Butali, West Kenya Kibos are flourishing in this region.

Domestic demands led strategies put human needs and rights as well as sustainability at the Centre of economic, political and social relations. When Then the minister of agriculture hon.William Ruto was at the helm of the ministry the DDLS were implemented, this was seen in the revival of collapse irrigation schemes leading to food boom in these areas till there was a problem of storage. Fertilizer was subsidized and farmers increased production. This however was short lived due to political rivalry and bureaucracies in the government.

In Madagascar the food security and nutrition project of 1996 had tremendously achievements. It reduced malnutrition in target population by 50%. For third world countries to feed themselves and compete in world markets and reduce rural poverty, there is need to address the under investments in agriculture. There is need to abide by the Maputo declaration and invest the 10%of their budgets. A part from this, there is a need to break away from donor funded projects in agriculture which is helping the donors and not them.

For example most of third world countries are under in ordinate pressure from financial mandarins to borrow and finance economy's growth and development projects. They are forced to pay the debts in foreign currency and this makes the third world counties adopt the export growth strategies and hence they subordinates domestic priorities like feeding the people, giving them good health, investing in agriculture (food crops). They invest in expanding export cash crops which are thought will generate the hard currency. This flops as international market prices fluctuate under the export led growth strategy. Our natural resources are plundered, for example heavy deforestation, over fishing and excessive mineral exploitation to get the much needed foreign exchange.

As the third world countries concentrate on this, they forget that food crops are the best stepping stone to agrarian revolution as surplus in production leads to investment and growth of industries as the case was in Egypt and Mesopotamia during early civilization period and Britain and USA in the 1750s -1850s during the agrarian revolution which set as a stage for scientific and technological inventions and growth of economies and superpowers.

As advanced in this paper, there is need for third world countries to invest and stimulate agrarian revolution. The obstacles identified in this chapter need to be eliminated through a zealous and careful approach. The domestic demand led strategies should be implemented and the agrarian revolution will be on course.

The third world countries need to do the following in order to sustain the agrarian revolutions:

- i) Nature and protect natural resources with zeal which include forests and rivers as they will provide the much needed water, for irrigation silt and manure for prosperous farming.
- ii) Enter into agreements that are out to support agriculture and bring the benefits to the citizens and not a few corporate and individuals.
- iii) Eliminate/reduce appetites for loans and grants that do not fit in their policies design to stimulate and sustain agrarian revolution.
- iv) Invest in food crops and diversify the staple food crop as this will help the countries have food security and thus the households will have disposable incomes which will be invested and hence dismantle the vicious cycle of poverty.
- v) There is need to have a strong political support in agriculture in terms of providing funding even in a tight fiscal situation and monetary the utilization of monies and resources invested.
- vi) Educating the citizens on importance of agriculture and its integrals part in their lives especially the youth and women who provide bulk of labor and markets for the agricultural sector.

In conclusion .history shows that if it was not for farming, then the world today would not be the way it is. The most magnificent, amazing inventions, discoveries started during the early agriculture period and advanced during agrarian revolution therefore the third world countries need to borrow a leaf from this piece of history.

C) Independent Ideologies and Development Theories Key to 3rd World Countries Economic Growth and Development

Since the advent of colonialism and up to this 21st century, the third world countries are still stuck in the modernization development paradigm which seeks to maximize on immediate concerns to the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth. Imperialism brought to these countries a state of dependency and feeling of inferiority. However, as the citizen of this countries interacted with the rest of the world during the major world wars, through travels and education there was renewed hope of independence and self governance. This was witness especially in colonies in the 1950s-1960s when the wave of nationalism and independence swept across the continent.

After the independence the question that was not answered was which way forward? The issue of independence was not well defined. Did it mean mixing our pre-colonial lifestyles and the acquired life style from colonial masters? Was it elimination of colonial masters? Did it mean return to our original lifestyle?

This state of confusion left a vacuum in these countries and how the vacuum has been filled has determined the level of development, poverty, diseases, ignorance eradication and the quality of life in african countries respectively. Leaders who took over from the colonial masters had under gone the European system of education and trained in matters of economy, sociology and political sciences. These key areas were aimed at enabling these leaders to continue legacy the European had left. However after taking the reins of power these leaders were caught up in the fierce battle between the capitalists (USA) and communists (USSR) which also influenced which ideologies and economy policies, theories were suitable for development in their countries.

The two ideologies: capitalism and communism had common feature-**modernization theory**. These theories admonish the poor societies to imitate them all the way and they would acquire a leap in to 21st century. *Offiong .D. (1982)*.this is the theory that African countries and third world countries at large adopted at independence and it has had little or less impacts on the desired goals of being like the developed nations.

This modernization theory adopted by African government has led to a few individuals n society benefiting, while the rest wallow in poverty. *Offiong .D. (1982)* observed that the modernization theory fits the dependency model as advanced by Fernando Henrique who links those who are beneficiaries of development with those makes the decisions. A closer look at the third world countries, billions of shillings have been pumped in to project aimed at modernizing them. These billions are inform of grants, loans and bilateral aid. What has happened, years later the countries are still asking more and there is no or less modernization going on in the countries rather it may be happening to leaders leading to modernization programmes in the third world countries.

This is because the crucial economic decisions are made not by the countries that are being developed but by the foreigners whose interest are carefully safeguarded. The former colonial masters and the super power use this economic power to buy political power in the 3rd world countries and impose what they believe will modernize them instead of looking at the countries internal systems, environment and the needs. This clash of alien economic and political principles and domestic ideologies and Africa's oneness, has led to destruction of both the economy and policy of dependant countries.

For example in Malawi when the late president Mbingu WA Mutharika took office, citizens were starving. The president through ministry of agriculture embarked on program to subsidize agriculture and give incentives to farmers. In four years Malawi was a bread basket in the southern region exporting food to neighbors. Then there came a clash, the money Mutharika used was from the bilateral aid. This angered the international financial institutions which advised him to abandon the programme. He refused and what followed the institution refused to fund the country and these led to its downfall. The question here is, was Mutharika wrong or right?

Whoever pays the piper calls the music these is the best description we can give to the relations between third world countries and the developed world and as long as we do not have the power to decide what is good for us and refuse to bent our own rules and principles, then the vision we have for industrialized countries before the end of this century will be a pipedream. There is need for governments in Africa to carefully develop their own economic, social and political systems.

We are not saying they go into isolation, no! Since independence we have done a lot of mistakes and a lot of good things. Let the governments learn from their mistakes and boost their right ideologies they have at hand.

In Kenya since 2003-2012 we have had the tremendous developments in terms of education, agriculture, infrastructure, public/private partnerships, manufacturing among others. The leadership of the retiring president Kibaki has done quite well. This was achieved through partners who mean well for Kenya. This explains why Kenya leaned east and as opposed to the West as it has been the tradition. Domestic economic solutions were implemented for example; the economic stimulus package implemented by the then finance minister, hon. Uhuru Kenyatta (now the president of Kenya) was a brilliant idea and a home grown solution to Kenya's economy after the devastating effects of 2007 post election violence. Increased tax collection and sealing loopholes for tax evasion, revival of key sectors e.g. irrigation, compulsory schooling and infrastructural development –roads, electricity generation and distribution among others, were the hall mark of this home grown solution.

Experts are needed in developing theories, policies and ideologies that a country needs to succeed and be modern as envisioned by the developed world. The question we need to ask is: are these experts going to exercise epoche-develop the ideologies without infusing foreign ideas and producing developed nations palatable theories? Are they ready to explain however painful it will be to third world governments the truth about the whole process of overhauling the economic, political and social systems that have not worked in the past?

We the citizen of the third world countries would like to see our governments undertaking development and growing the country's wealth, the way China, India, Brazil and South Africa are doing. The courage of Cuba, Singapore, Malaysia and Venezuela should be replicated here in Africa for us to be modernized as the developed world needs. The question third world country needs to ask are, should the primary goal of farming be food security or production for exchange? Do we live to eat or we eat to live? What is good life/ what do we mean when we say a country is developed? Is poverty in minds or in practice? These questions will provide a base for development of independent theories and policies that will make them leap into the 22nd century as developed nations.

Conclusion

As discussed there is need for re-assessment of third world policies and development models they are implementing. They also need to be carefully on what they borrow from other countries that are developed. Policies skewed towards helping the financially loaded countries should be avoided. The countries also need to have a bargaining power and learn to remain firm and stick to the path they believe will take them to prosperity. The inferiority complex needs to be abolished and let's be strong like Cuba, Venezuela and China. Agricultural revolution will be key to modernity, and family planning should be used to space families and not limit the number of children per family.

End Notes

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