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Urban Family's Economic Welfare in Seychelles

Introduction

The story of urban families trying to support themselves on a low income and a scarce food supply has become the story of almost sixty percent of the world's population. Many countries have become comfortable with the small economic impact that these families produce. If eighty percent of a country's population is middle class, it isn't hard to forget about the other twenty percent. It is stated that the "economic vulnerability of citizens is a governmental problem", and should be fixed by implementing policies that promote urban families stability within the economy. If the government doesn't provide the best resources, technology, and or support for these families then who will?

How do I ensure that my family's economic welfare is protected by the government? When a mother asks this question to the governmental figures in her small yet politically strong country, what will their answer be? Would it be wrong to lie about the economic status of the country or would it be right to tell her that the government has had no concern for her family or other family's like hers? Within small nations that have cases like these, urban families are overlooked in many aspects. Food security, natural resources, and economic welfare of citizens are the rising problems within small countries. The most important factor presented here is to prevent and resolve conflict within the economy, promote a government that establishes democracy in public institutions, and to create laws that help citizens to become stronger within their social and economic environment.

Life in Seychelles

The "typical" urban family in Seychelles is considered small compared to other African countries. Ranging from around four to six people on average, "women are the heads" of each household. Marriage has not been a popular idea in Seychelles which causes most families to consist of children born out of wedlock. Seychelles is a proximately Catholic nation with a small percentage of various other religions. Music, dance, literature, and visual art have created the foundation for Seychellois culture throughout the years. Different ethnicities have added to the culture that Seychelles holds as of today.

English, French, Chinese, and Indian foods complete the diets in which most Seychellois eat. These foods range in varieties of fruits, vegetables, fish, and spices. Fish, being a major trade product, has become a very important factor in the diets of each citizen. In 1981 a system of free education became available to all children between the grades of one to nine. About ninety-two percent of the population over age fifteen is literate, and the literacy rate of school-aged children has risen to well over ninety-eight percent. Each school in Seychelles not only provides the basic fundamentals of math, reading, science, and social studies, but it provides a particular skill for students to learn; these include gardening, cooking, housekeeping, and livestock-raising. Students then come out of school knowing how to provide for themselves. The income of family members ranges from \$20,000-\$40,000 a year; the majority of jobs in each household range from tourism, fishing, manufacturing, to construction. Out of a population of 82,247 there are 32,382 people in the workforce. The remaining groups of people outside of the majority workforce are either in self owned jobs or are unemployed.

Fifteen percent of employment within Seychelles has come from the tourism sector. Obtaining jobs from abroad countries is hard for many emigrants. There are plenty job offerings in accounting and banking sections of tourism. The quality of life in Seychelles is pretty fair. The landscaping and quality of farmland is good although it is run very differently than the typical western style society. Some basic products and necessities provided in a larger scale area are not able to be produced in Seychelles. The cost of living in Seychelles is very high compared to the income being obtained. The barriers in improving income and access to nutritious foods are the limitation on global trade that Seychelles has with other nations as well as diversifying the business to world to self owned employers and entrepreneurs. Creating a balance between social live and the working world has been important to Seychelles citizens since the day of its independence.

Seychelles Background

Seychelles, which consist of various islands along the Indian Ocean, became independent in 1976 and is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Over the first decade of independence within Seychelles, governmental power was controlled by many nations. This created an imbalance in the economic strategies for the country. Since then, the government has strived to “better service the citizens and become more responsible for the rights of others.” They have been working toward controlling an economic balance for the country.

Seychelles lacks the ability to connect with major trade sources because of its area of location. By being so far away from many large unions, Seychelles can not be provided with the same amount of resources and trade access as other countries. This causes the local market to become slightly smaller; the amount of imports as well as exports decreases as a whole. By not being exposed to the new technology of surrounding nations, they are limited at best. Compared to other countries Seychelles is considered to be fairly new. Seychelles is still working to develop policies that will help better their economy.

Government Policies and Responsibilities

The government of Seychelles is responsible for the protection and establishment of all citizens’ rights. By having a large majority within a small country, the visibility of issues with the minority becomes unnoticed. These issues include a problems with “food and job security, economic equality”, and creating a healthy environment for all.

By not having government policies in effect, urban families are not able to produce enough money to buy the foods they need to support themselves. The need for creating these policies is to ensure that all citizens, not just a select few, are protected by the government in providing a healthy lifestyle. Policies such as an increase in job security, expanding markets to wider varieties of products, and policies that give opportunities for increase in salary should be implemented to help these families. This situation is not as severe as most countries, due to the fact that most of the population is not affected by it. Yet, the few families that are affected by this have yet to be helped. About eighty percent of all citizens receive a reasonable income to support their family.

The one of the largest economic sectors in Seychelles is the Touring Business. The touring segment of Seychelles is not controlled by the government has no ties back to federal capital. The government has no control over the jobs within the tourist segment, which account for more than fifty percent of Seychelles working population. The rest of the working

population includes farmers and self laborers. The lack of governmental control in this area eliminates the working people in this segment to become subject to lack of resources.

Problem 1: The Environment and Natural Resources

Within Seychelles all citizens do not have the same access to natural resources, jobs, or food sources. These trends are measured by the percentage of poverty, the governmental employment agency, and food security policies. The studies that were produced over the years to the present have shown a small decrease in unemployment, and minimal rises in the access to natural resources and food sources. Because of “the government changing policies within Seychelles”, the situation of urban families is changing as well as the environmental awareness.

In small countries, housekeeping is considered to be overlooked. In Africa many people are not subject to a healthy environment which influences their social welfare. Seychelles on the other hand deals with their environment in a different way; they have been able to take note of other larger countries that have made efforts to preserve the environment and have scoffed them through their own methods. Excluding natural disasters such as tsunamis, the environment is being protected by governmental policies. These policies create standards and boundaries in which areas must uphold.

The welfare of citizens can't possibly be protected if first the wellbeing of the countries natural resources is not intact. The problem of preserving natural resources then leads to the production and distribution of food.

Problem 2: Food Security

Food Security is one of the most important and critical issues within the world today. The lack of land causes a low supply of food which can be made. The low amount of food then doesn't attend to the demand aspect of the food. These three factors then contribute to the food security problems in the world. In developing countries, food security is worse because of the limitations in variety of what foods can be produced. When cash crops are the leading trade factors for a country the types of food that are able to be produced is not nutritional. Developed countries tend to have slightly different problems such as the types of food that can be produced, the problem of finding new ways to produce food, and securing the trade relationships between other countries.

The increase in the productivity of family farmers can improve the food security throughout Seychelles. The numerous business transactions between trading crops with other countries takes away from the amount of food left for each citizen. The supply and demand rate for produce is beginning to way out. By increasing the production of each farm can ultimately create a surplus in supplies that will meet the demand levels.

Many farms in Seychelles' have tried to expand their production through various methods; all have failed. It will take government efforts to help regulate these farms and give funding to those where it is needed the most. The rising cost in seeds and farm equipment makes it hard for those small family farms to produce all that is needed. Each family can add to low food supply.

The main food product within Seychelles is fish. The fish market is the biggest food business within Seychelles and supplies most of its produce to trade exports. Because the majority of the fish market is used towards exports in trade the amount of produce available to the country then decreases. This decrease creates a reliance on other nations and the weight of being vulnerable on the area of food security.

Solution 1: Limiting Citizens' Vulnerability

In today's society, it is crucial to create strong unions in small countries to ensure that each citizen's views are being represented. The lack of these unions creates major dilemmas throughout the government as well as the economy. Small unions distributed throughout the entire country will help to equalize the impact that each group has on the economy. Many citizens can be easily controlled by the government when they have little say in what the government does. When a small percentage of the population disagrees with the majority, they are overlooked. Lastly, the ultimate goal is to limit the vulnerability of urban families and increasing economic welfare.

By limiting the vulnerability of urban families, you then increase the amount of income and food available. These families accomplish this increase by implementing government officials that work in their favor to make sure their needs are met. The unions will be voted on just as all government offices are. The group of officials will regulate meetings with the heads of the country regularly to check on statistics and the living status of all minorities. The urban families will finally be spoken for. Other minority groups such as woman, the poor and small farmers have different vulnerabilities.

In Seychelles, women are considered to be the heads of the households. This is different than many other countries seeing that the man is usually the one who provides for the family. Women are not considered minorities because single family homes are common throughout Seychelles. The ratio of men to women is a constant problem for many governmental groups. Most people believe that by bringing up that ratio to at least an equal amount of men to women each family will become more stable in the workplace, community, and social economy.

A way to increase the ratio of men to women is to promote the idea of a wholesome family. Seychelles is lacking of strong family systems at home. Most women have children out of wed lock which decreases the amount of possible children they will have. At a rate of around 115 babies being born each year the population of Seychelles only grows at 1%. In addition to promoting marriage there are not equalized opportunities for men to move up in the society due to the heavy weight that society has on women. If the society could grow to put men back on as the bread winners and the government opens up more jobs then the ratio will increase. The next issue that presents itself is the urban poor living well in Seychelles.

The urban poor are due to the lack of government money to support jobs. By creating more governmentally funded jobs this class of citizens can be eliminated. Federally funded jobs and businesses can not only help the citizens, but it can increase the global relationships between other countries and Seychelles; therefore, these jobs expand the boundaries of trade and add to Seychelles' economic stature. Federally funded farms can improve on food security as well as the productivity of family farmers.

Conclusion

In the year 2008 many economic crisis have occurred which have caused many countries to try and get a hold of natural resources, protect their country's' environment, and fix all diplomatic problems caused by globalization and trade factors. Seychelles has made many efforts in the past to address these issues, but have not solved them all. Citizens of Seychelles have numerous opportunities for enhancement in education, medical needs, and the chance to receive jobs; but these things alone aren't enough. After those three factors were provided the question presented is what next to do? Each citizen does not have the access to a country that accepts private owned farms and businesses. The idea of land being used for crops and the spreading of natural resources is not thought of. The expansions of diplomatic initiatives that provide a sound government that brings these ideas to life are not being created. These problems are becoming more commonly spread through the entire world than solutions are being created to fix them.

By expanding the resources available to urban families, the minority of citizens without work can start to survive in a developed country. The problems in urban family households can be addressed by allowing the private sector to guarantee federally funded job opportunities. The support in the field of education has created an opening in the promising future of Seychelles. With better educated people, the globalization of trade, and becoming more involved in decreasing the struggles that urban families have, Seychelles can bloom into a humble yet economically stable country and single handedly make a step towards addressing food security issues throughout the world.

The limitation of natural resources, the boundaries of global trade and the government's role on protecting citizen's social and economic status throughout Seychelles have taken seniority over all other matters. The world's position on decreased food supply and the nations food security efforts must be addressed one country at a time. By creating a country that is environmentally aware, cares for the well being of the citizens depending on the times, and shows efforts in increasing production in agriculture, we can ultimately increase food security in an era of increased demand. Seychelles can be a model of the progress of a economically distressed nation.

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