Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: To what extent is the goal of national ownership being achieved?

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Declaration of Originality

The research for this dissertation was carried out through the School of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg from February 2008 to November 2009.

The author hereby declares that the content of this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary, is her work, and that the thesis has not been submitted simultaneously, or in any form for any degree or diploma to any other University. Where use has been made of the work of others it is duly acknowledged in the text.

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Contents

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Acronyms

CSOs – Civil society organizations

CSPR – Civil Society for Poverty Reduction

DDCC – District Development Coordinating Committee

FBOs – Faith Based Organizations

FNDP – Fifth National Development Plan

FRELIMO – The Liberation Front of Mozambique

GNI – Gross National Income

HIPC – Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative

IFIs – International Financial Institutions

IMF – International Monetary Fund

I-PRSP – Interim –Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

LDC – Least Developed Countries

MDG – Mozambique Debt Group

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MEJN – Malawi Economic Justice Network

MPRSP – Malawian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

NGOs – Non-governmental organizations

NSGRP – National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty

PARPA – Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty

PEMD – Planning and Economic Management Department

PO – Poverty Observatories

PRS – Poverty Reduction Strategy

RENAMO – Mozambican National Resistance

SADC – Southern African Development Community

SAHRC – South African Human Rights Commission

SAPs – Structural Adjustment Programs

TASOET – Tanzanian Social and Economic Trust

TCDD – Tanzanian Coalition on Debt and Development

TB – Tuberculosis

TS – Technical Secretariat

TWGs – Thematic Working Groups

UDFP – United Democratic Front Party

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

Abstract

The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process is an initiative by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and various Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) deal with poverty. It is in some sense an updated and improved version of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that were implemented in the 1980s. This study examines one of the central aspects of the PRS process which is national ownership that is expected to be achieved by means of the participation of various interested groups and individuals in the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRS Paper). These would include: non – governmental organizations, civil society organizations, faith based organizations, academics, women's groups, academics and members from the private sector. National ownership of the formulation of the RPS Paper is examined by looking at 4 country studies, namely, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia.

Chapter One: Introduction

It is estimated that 1.9 billion people live in absolute poverty[1]. Absolute poverty is a term used to define the state of poverty in which income is insufficient for maintaining a minimum standard of living. According to the World Bank, people who live on less than a dollar a day, that is, below the poverty line, are classified as absolutely poor[2].

The majority of the absolute poor reside in developing and third world countries. While there is no universal definition of a developing country, generally, the term is used to describe the low level of material well-being as well as the standard of living in a country[3]. Some developing countries are more industrialized than others and so the standard of living varies. In most cases, a feature of a developing country would be its weak infrastructure. For instance, roads are not well maintained and neither are basic institutions such as schools and hospitals, which are kept in a very poor state. There is also a lack of adequate housing and people resort to living in slums where they are exposed to illness and disease. There can be many reasons for these weaknesses, including weak leadership, corruption, and/or a turbulent and violent past in which the effects have damaged or crippled a country's economy to the extent that it is unable to provide for its citizens.

Most developing countries are situated in the global South, most notably, South America, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The poorest of the poor reside in these countries, some of which are known as Least Developed Countries (LDC) or Third World Countries. An LDC is a country with a very low per capita income. The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations uses three criteria which identifies an LDC. This includes: 1) A low income gross domestic product; 2) Human resource weaknesses such as health, nutrition and adult illiteracy; and 3) Economic vulnerability such as the instability of agricultural production as well as the instability of exports of goods and services[4]. A developed country on the other hand, not only has a far better

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[1] World Bank Poverty Figures: What do they mean?
http://www.stwr.org/globalization/world-bank-poverty-figures-what-do-they-mean.html
[2] Ibid
[3] Developing Countries
http://en.mimi.hu/business/developing_countries.html
[4] UN. What are the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)? – www.un.org

state of basic infrastructure but also has a good welfare system in place where education and healthcare are easily accessible. In the global North, countries such as Canada, the United States of America, and some parts of Europe, including the United Kingdom are regarded as developed countries. While there may be poor people that reside in these countries, the levels of poverty are lower because the state is governed in such a way that governments are able to provide for their citizens. In developing countries, however, people are not as fortunate. They suffer both financial and social setbacks. In terms of financial setbacks, unemployment rates are high because there are scarce opportunities due to the lack of industrial and agricultural development. In some poor countries there is abundant arable land however, the lack of skill, resources and acumen in farming prevents people from taking advantage of what the land has to offer. There is also a high rate of illiteracy in developing countries. As a result most people are at a disadvantage because they often resort to casual or informal labour, and earn a very basic wage. Socially, gender inequality is rife in these countries, where men have preference over women for jobs.

Health is a major problem in developing countries. There are many illnesses and diseases that people are vulnerable to due to the poor health and living conditions. For example, Tuberculosis (TB) is a highly infectious disease when left untreated. People with low immune systems are susceptible to it and in many poverty stricken areas the disease is easily spread. There is also a high incidence of cholera in poor countries, where proper sanitation systems are lacking or not well maintained. For instance, in Zimbabwe due to its political crisis and collapse of the state, infrastructure has been neglected and as a result there was an outbreak of cholera which has already caused the death of approximately 4000 people[5]. Malaria has contributed to a significant number of deaths in sub-Saharan Africa as well. For instance, in Zambia, it is estimated that 50 000 adults die of Malaria annually[6]. There is also an extremely high rate of HIV/Aids in poor countries. People are unable to cope with this illness because they cannot access or afford the medication that is available. As a result they cannot work, many adults die at a very young age and their young are left to take care of themselves. In

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[5] ZIMBABWE: Cholera returns and kills five, so far.
http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=86661
[6] In-Depth: Killer Number One: The fight against malaria.
http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=10&ReportId=58010&Country=Yes

Swaziland the average life expectancy of an adult is 34 years. Approximately 30% of Swazi children have lost either one or both parents[7]. As a result some households are headed by children who cannot attend school because they have families to take care of.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), most commonly the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), have stepped in to assist developing countries by lending them money to reorganize their economies. Established in 1944, the aim of the IMF has been to simplify the trading process so that international trade could take place without any restrictions. It also sought to stabilize the international monetary system by creating an exchange rate so that countries could buy goods and services from each other[8]. The World Bank was also established in 1944 with a purpose of providing loans to countries for development and reconstruction. During the late 1960s, the World Bank focused on poverty alleviation and began lending money to poorer countries. The IMF and World Bank have worked together over the years to assist poor countries in a way that would enable them to achieve sustainable economic growth and raise the standard of living.

During the 1960s and 1970s the IMF and World Bank lent excessively to Third World countries when the value of the dollar fell. However when the value of the dollar increased together with the interest rate, Third World countries were unable to pay back the money. This is explained in detail in chapter two. As a result, a debt crisis ensued. The IMF and World Bank thereafter assisted countries to adjust their economic programmes so that monies owed could be paid back. For instance, during the 1980s and 1990s, Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were carried out in developing countries. SAPs were specifically aimed at assisting a country to pay back its debt owed to these financial institutions. The SAPs were enforced and developing countries at the time had no choice but to follow these programmes to reduce their debt. These programmes were designed to promote the liberalization of trade and investment policies, which meant a free market enterprise, open to competition, but at the same time there were cutbacks in social spending[9]. In due course, these

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[7] IRIN: Giving orphans "some time of real childhood". http://allafrica.com/stories/200802200857.html .
[8] What is the IMF? - http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/exrp/what.htm
[9] Jauch, H. 1999. Structural Adjustment Programmes: Their origin and international experiences. p 3
http://www.larri.com.na/papers/SAPS.doc

programmes bankrupted local industries, driving some countries even further into debt and its people even further into poverty. It can be argued that the SAPs were aimed at favouring developed countries who at the time were trading across the globe and were benefiting from a free market system. Developing countries were unable to cope or compete with these new trade developments as their economies were not developed enough. As a result industries closed, unemployment rates increased, and with no welfare systems in place, the majority of people lived below the poverty line.

In 1996, a new initiative came into place. This was called the Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC). Developing countries owe around $2 trillion to the IMF and World Bank[10]. The HIPC initiative looked at ways in which all the creditors could work together and assist the developing countries to develop programmes that would reduce the levels of debt. The HIPC initiative also addressed the reduction of poverty in which money would go towards improving the infrastructure and economy of a country.

In 2000, in order to assist with the HIPC initiative, the World Bank introduced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as a wider initiative, to be implemented in developing countries. The eight goals listed below are expected to be achieved by 2015[11]:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

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[10]100% Debt Relief for Developing Countries Now a Distant Possibility. 6 February 2005
http://www.stormfront.org/forum/sitemap/index.php/t-183350.html
[11]About the MDGs: Basics- What are the Millennium Development Goals.
http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml

Therefore, the HIPC initiative set out to relieve countries of their debt and the MDGs came in to assist these countries to focus their poverty alleviation programmes in accordance with the eight goals listed above.

As part of the HIPC initiative, in which the implementation of structural reforms would see the reduction of debt, the IMF and World Bank introduced the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process. The purpose of this process is to enable a country to create and improve domestic policies and programmes of all sectors in order to bring about better social, political and economic development. This in effect is expected to reduce the levels of poverty in a country. Each country develops its own strategy enabling it to identify and define its own priorities and development areas. This strategy first has to be documented in a paper called the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRS Paper). The PRS Paper outlines the priorities to which governments are going to pay specific attention in order to reduce the levels of poverty. In addition, the PRS Paper has to stipulate the ways and means in which these priorities are to be addressed. An important pre-requisite has to be met in order for the PRS Paper to be approved: that of 'national ownership'. This means that while the initiative has to be led by the government, all sectors of society have to make a contribution to the formulation of the PRS Paper. These can include civil society organizations, academics, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government officials, religious groups and anybody else who represents people at the grass roots levels, and who are the most affected by poverty.

National ownership is the driving force of the PRS Paper. This means that the document has to be developed by both state and non-state actors and be reflective of their ideas and input. National ownership aims to generate acceptance and support of the document by the majority of people who are expected to benefit from this process. More importantly, national ownership promotes public participation in which various stakeholders are able to voice their opinions and have an influence in the formulation of the document. In this way, the decision making process becomes a 'bottom up' approach. This means that the process has to start from the grass roots level and the decisions made should (to an extent) be reflected in the national policies and programmes. This is in contrast to the 'top down' approach, where the government is

responsible for all the decision making regarding government policies. When a national document is open to the public, there is usually a greater sense of transparency, first because people are involved in its construction and second because they can monitor the way in which programmes are being implemented and, more importantly, its outcomes. Because national ownership is so critical a component of the PRS Paper, the aim of this research is to determine the extent to which the goal of national ownership has been achieved in the formulation of the PRS Papers, by looking at specific country experiences.

Chapter two focuses on the causes of poverty and the role of the SAPs. The focal point of chapter three is a conceptual framework on 'ownership' and the importance of public participation. Chapter four consists of four case studies in which countries' experiences with the formulation of the PRS Paper are examined. Having analyzed the experiences of the formulation of the PRS Papers, this paper concludes by determining the extent to which national ownership has been achieved in each of the countries discussed.

It should be pointed out that much of the literature for this project is drawn from web-based sources. The reason for this it two fold: the PRS process is relatively new and thus literature is limited and it is also under- researched which adds to the scarcity of scholarly contributions.

In terms of the methodology which informs this project this is a qualitative study, which is not based on original empirical research as there is no need to create data. This research will be using existing data. The primary source of data will be the use of the actual PRS Papers which are already published. The secondary sources of material include the discourse on IMF/World Bank neo-liberalism which is the principle of economic liberalism, 'which hold that an unregulated free market and private sector are the engines for unrestricted growth, the benefits of which will trickle down from the owners of capital to the entire population'[12]. The principle of neo-liberalism is said to be in contrast to the new approaches being adopted by low-income countries to overcome poverty. The discourse of these approaches, in the form of the PRS Papers,

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[12] Welch, C. & Oringer, J. 1998. *Structural Adjustment Progams*. Interhemispheric Resource Center and Institute for Policy Studies. Vol 3(3) April 1998. p1

will determine the credibility of this initiative, and that is, the extent to which there has been a real shift away from neo-liberal agendas towards country-specific solutions.

Chapter Two: Background to and Origin of the PRS Process

2.1 A History of Poverty in Developing Countries

To understand fully how the PRS process came about, we need to look first at the history of poverty. A historical cause of Africa's poverty is, firstly, rooted in the legacy of colonialism. Nearly all of Africa and Asia were colonized by the British, French, Spanish and Portuguese empires. One of the main reasons for the colonization of territories was to generate income. Colonies were used to provide raw materials for trade and to serve as markets for finished products. As a result there was an extraction of wealth that benefited the colonial empires as the profits that were generated did not go back into the expansion and development of the majority of people residing in the colony.

A second cause of poverty is 'odious debt'. A debt is odious when money is borrowed by a government, but that money is not spent in the interests of the people, and the lender is aware of this[13]. This mostly occurred during the post–colonial era when there was a change in government, especially in cases where colonial governments were replaced by military and despotic governments who used the borrowed funds to empower their regimes, and the institutions which lent this money were aware of this. When funds are lent to corrupt and illegitimate governments the burden of debt rests with the new government that has taken its place. However, there is now legislation in place to rectify this. In 1927, Alexander Sack, a professor in law, shaped the way in which odious debts are dealt with[14]. His doctrine explained that when a new government is in place, it has to prove that the money borrowed from the previous regime did not serve the interests of the public and that the creditor was aware of this. In turn, the lender has to show that the funds did in fact benefit the people if it wants its money back. An example is that of South Africa in which the government at the time borrowed $18 billion to maintain apartheid, and which the new South African government had to pay back. There have been groups that have campaigned against these debts and a South African NGO, Khulumani, filed a lawsuit in 2002 against 21 multinational corporations and international banks for its role in supporting the

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[13] Adams, P. What are odious debts?
http://www.odiousdebts.org/odiousdebts/index.cfm?DSP=subcontent&AreaID=3
[14] Ibid

apartheid state[15]. The case is still ongoing. Corrupt and illegitimate leaders have benefited greatly as a result of odious debt. For example, the former president of the DRC, Mobutu Sese Seko 'accumulated massive wealth through the diversion of borrowed funds, foreign aid, and revenues from the state-owned mineral companies'[16]. His personal assets in the mid-1980s amounted to $4 billion. Much of this wealth could have been invested back into the country.

Thirdly, mismanaged spending and lending by the West in the 1960s and 1970s contributed to Africa's poverty crisis. During this time, the debt crisis had reached its peak. This was largely due to the oil crisis. The oil crisis occurred in the 1960s when the US government printed more dollars as it had spent more than it earned. The value of the dollar fell. This was disastrous for the oil-producing countries whose oil was priced in dollars. As a result they made less money on their exports so they raised their prices, making more money which they deposited in Western Banks. However, when the interest rate fell, Western Banks were faced with a financial crisis, so they lent money to Third World countries[17]. These governments borrowed heavily due to the low interest rates as they needed this money for development and the rising cost of oil. Disaster struck when Third World countries were not earning profits on their cash crops, such as copper, coffee, tea, cotton and cocoa because other countries were producing the same crops and prices fell. When the interest rate rose, together with the cost of oil, Third World countries were in a financial trap. They were earning very little on their exports and paying much more on their loans and imports. These countries had to borrow more money to pay off the interest alone. As it stands, some of the lowest income countries in the world are heavily indebted, owing around $250 billion[18], and are unable to pay it back. Debt repayments drain the economies of developing countries and are also seen as a 'mechanism of transferring wealth from the South to

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[15] Mail and Guardian. Multinationals named in apartheid lawsuit. 12 November 2002
http://www.khulumani.net/ny-lawsuit/222-lawsuit-overview.html
[16] Africa's Debt: Who Owes Whom?. James K. Boyce and Léonce Ndikumana
http://www.odiousdebts.org/odiousdebts/index.cfm?DSP=content&ContentID=7129
[17] Jubilee 2000. *How it all began: Causes of the debt crisis*
   http://www.jubileeresearch.org/analysis/reports/beginners_guide/began.htm.
[18] What is the HIPC initiative? David Rickseker
http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/faq/faq_docs/HIPC.shtml

the North'[19], because any monies or any profits made are immediately paid off towards the debt. Not enough of this money goes back into the country concerned.

2.2 Structural Adjustment Programmes

There have been attempts by the IFIs to intervene, aiming to restructure policies so as to enable countries to pay back their debt. During the 1980s and 1990s Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were implemented. A fundamental aspect of the SAPs was that debts had to be paid back in hard currency and in order for that to happen, there had to be an increase in exports. Countries had to produce goods that would be sold to industrialized countries. Furthermore, the macroeconomic policies of a country had to be adjusted in such a way that a liberalization of the market was required. This meant that there had to be a free movement of capital and national markets had to be open to international competition. However, these macroeconomic policies also required severe reductions in government spending and employment, higher interest rates, currency devaluation, lower real wages, sale of government enterprises and reduced tariffs as well as cut backs in social spending. 'SAPs are a pre-requisite for acquiring loans from the two lending organs [IMF and World Bank] because neither will lend money to countries that do not follow some kind of SAP'[20], therefore, governments had no choice but to comply with these conditions. SAPs were neo-liberal in nature, which is based on a belief that the transfer of the economy from the public to the private sector would improve the efficiency of the government and improve the economy of the country.

An effect of the SAPs was that local industries were bankrupted, the dependency on food imports was increased, social services were devastated and the gap between rich and poor widened. One of the weaknesses of the SAPs is that they 'are largely imposed on developing countries without sufficient input from the very sectors of society that will be subjected to them. Sometimes SAPs are imposed despite overt opposition'[21]. SAPs were in essence forced onto governments of developing countries. They had no

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[19] Jauch, H. 1999. Structural Adjustment Programmes: Their origin and international experiences. p2
http://www.larri.com.na/papers/SAPS.doc
[20]Jere-Mwiindilila, P. The effects of structural adjustment on women in Zambia. Vol 44(2) June 1994
Faith, economics and Africa.
 http://www.warc.ch/pc/rw942.02.html
[21]Welch, C. & Oringer, J. 1998. *Structural Adjustment Progams*. Interhemispheric Resource Center and
Institute for Policy Studies. Vol 3(3) April 1998.

choice but to change their economic policies to suit the IMF and World Bank. People in developing countries were badly affected by the SAPs. As a result of privatization, the cost of living was expensive as the price of basic commodities such as food and fuel had increased, and furthermore, many people were unemployed as industries closed. This further increased the number of poor people in many of these countries.

2.3 HIPC and the MDGs

In 1996, the HIPC initiative was introduced. This initiative is an agreement among official creditors which is designed to help the poorest, most heavily indebted countries escape from unsustainable debt. Multilateral (IMF and World Bank), bilateral (a country) and commercial (banks and corporations) creditors will work together to assist developing countries with their development priorities. The HIPC initiative is such that the IMF and World Bank will relieve a country of its debt, provided that the country formulates strategies aimed at reducing poverty. What this means is that the gains from debt relief should benefit poor people therefore all debts reduced should go towards poverty reduction. In order to reduce poverty, there has to be an investment in health, education and social needs.

In September 2000, a Millennium Summit was held in which 147 heads of state from both rich and poor countries signed the Millennium Declaration to end extreme poverty. This is a commitment by both poor and rich nations. The eight goals identified are the major challenges facing poor countries and cover a wide array of development and health issues. They are interrelated because the success or failure of one of the goals will have an impact on one of the other goals. For instance, if Goal 6, that is, combating HIV/Aids and Malaria, is not met, this would contribute to the increase of the child mortality rate (Goal 4). Most of the MDGs are very people centered as they focus specifically on nutrition, education and health. These are the minimum requirements necessary to overcome poverty.

2.4 Introduction of the PRSPs

The PRS process is the link between debt relief and poverty reduction as this process is meant to bring about cohesion that will meet both the 2015 goals and structural reforms to reduce poverty as part of the HIPC initiative. In order to meet the challenges

of debt relief and poverty reduction, the PRS process is aimed at promoting economic, social and political growth by dealing with a wide range of issues from human capital development to good governance. Existing structures have to be reformed for this to occur and the PRS process has to be implemented within two years. Countries seeking assistance from the World Bank and IMF have to produce a framework to address these issues in the form of a PRS Paper. The PRS Paper outlines the measures to reduce poverty, that is, it is a national plan of action. The major features of the PRS Paper are expected to include, '…an analytical and comprehensive framework, integrating macro-economic, structural, sectoral and social considerations and laying out a set of poverty reduction measures and policies'[22]. What this means is that the PRS Paper has to be a very detailed document addressing those aspects specific to poverty and underdevelopment. This includes the macroeconomic factors, which is how to manage the economy better; structural factors which entail improving administration and government departments as well as making them more transparent and accountable; improving the sectoral issues such as health, education, employment and agriculture, and finally, social factors which address how the poor can benefit from these reforms and changes. A typical PRS Paper will include the following:

1) The poverty challenges facing the country, for example, challenges in education, illiteracy and infrastructure.

2) An overview of the consultation process that occurred in formulating the PRS Paper, that is, describing the workshops or discussion groups that were carried out as well as those involved.

3) A framework of the strategy. This involves an illustration of the ongoing reforms that are underway as well as a commitment to ensure that the goals are achieved.

4) The strategy itself relating to the various areas that will be looked at such as human capital development, good governance and cross-cutting issues such as HIV/Aids, and how the specific broad outcomes, goals and targets will be achieved.

5) The way in which the implementation will be carried out and the way in which the strategy will be monitored and evaluated, as well as financed.

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[22] UNDP's engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Policy Note: August 2002.
http://mdgr.undp.sk/PAPERS/UNDP's%20engagement%20in%20PRSP.pdf

There are five guiding principles of the PRS Paper. Firstly, it has to be a country driven process. Governments have to initiate the process ensuring broad participation that promotes country ownership. Secondly, it has to be results oriented, that is, in order for the strategy to be effective, the poor and where they live must be identified and programmes that are implemented must benefit the poor. Thirdly, the PRS Paper has to be comprehensive, meaning that one way to overcome poverty is to integrate 'institutional, structural and sectoral interventions into a consistent macroeconomic framework'[23]. This entails integrating the economic and social dimensions into one national plan. Therefore, institutions have to work together and the national budget has to accommodate this. Fourth, it has to be partnership oriented. It is expected that the various partners of development, which include donors, governments, parliaments and both domestic and international CSOs create partnerships to ensure the success of this strategy. Finally, it has to have a long term perspective. In order for poverty reduction to be achieved institutional changes and capacity building efforts have to occur consistently over time.

2.5 National Ownership and Broad Participation

The PRS Paper has to be nationally owned: all sectors of society have to mobilize and establish their own poverty reduction approaches. The benefits of opening the decision making process up to the public is to promote an opportunity to influence policy as well as share control of policies that will be implemented. Furthermore, through this process information is exchanged and this increases the transparency of decision making.

National ownership contains the key element of broad participation. This is important because broad participation can result in the building of national consensus about poverty reduction. 'Through a national participatory process, country ownership guarantees the representation of a broader spectrum of views including those of civil society'[24]. In this way, democracy can be deepened as this approach could increase the transparency of decision-making and could also improve government accountability to

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[23] IMF, *Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers- Operational Issues*
http://www.imf.org/external/np/pdr/prsp/poverty1.htm
[24] Imboela, B.L. 2005. 'Poverty Reduction in Zambia: A Conceptual Analysis of the Zambian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper'. Bulletin of Science, Technology and Society, vol 25(5) October 2005, p 435-445. Sage Publications. p436

the people. Participation allows stakeholders to influence and share control over various issues, such as policy making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services. While the poor are often the last sectors of society that are involved in any process, they are the most affected, and when they are involved, this brings about more voices to the process, which could lead to more action. Although there has been no specific stipulation as to who should participate, under the IMF and World Bank guidelines, it is expected that, apart from government officials, other members and groups in society are expected to participate in this process. This includes non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, faith based organizations, academics, youth groups and women's groups. A deeper understanding of national ownership and broad participation is dealt with in chapter three.

Chapter 3: A Concept of Public Participation

3.1 Understanding the term Ownership

The word 'ownership' features predominantly in the discourse of the PRS process. This term sets the groundwork for how the PRS process has to be approached, that is, the initiatives that are to be carried out so that the input by all sectors of society is reflected within the PRS Paper.

In the context of the PRS process, the term 'ownership' does not have a universal definition. It is defined differently by various stakeholders. There are three ways in which ownership has been defined. Firstly, the IMF defines ownership, 'as a willing assumption of responsibility for a programme of policies based on an understanding that the programme is achievable and is in the country's best interests'[25]. Reading between the lines, this means that a government should recognize and willingly take responsibility for a programme as it would be in the country's best interests. A shortcoming of this definition is that there is no indication of who actually writes the programmes and who decides what is in the best interests of the country. Furthermore this definition also suggests that it is not necessarily government that designs such programmes. It is a subjective definition in favour of the IFIs as it could be interpreted that the IFIs are in control of the programme. This definition may also suit any financial institution as this would give these institutions the opportunity to dictate the terms of programmes and policies that are to be implemented.

Secondly, some non-governmental and civil society organizations take ownership to mean '… authorship of a programme of policy actions with the country and thus policy being added and decisions taken at the country level with at least full government participation and ideally parliament and civil society participation too'[26]. A key point is that programmes are made by those within the country, suggesting no external interference. This definition identifies the role players in decision making however, this definition fails to indicate who exactly is in control. Words such as 'at least' and

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[25] Wood, A. 2004. 'One step forward, two steps back: Ownership, PRSPs and IFI conditionality'. United Kingdom: World Vision International. P34.
[26] Ibid

'ideally' are mere suggestions and are too vague as this definition fails to point out who ought to have final responsibility and accountability for a programme.

A third possible definition of ownership is, 'the effective exercise of a government's authority over development policies and activities, including those that rely entirely or partially on external resources. For governments, this means articulating the national development agenda and establishing authoritative policies and strategies'[27]. This is a more useful definition as it emphasizes the role of governments in that they are the main sector responsible for developing and implementing policies. Furthermore ownership defined this way does not exclude the involvement of other actors since the support of external resources is welcomed. This could include the support of the IFIs as well as that of civil society organizations, but essentially the process has to be government led.

3.2 A Theory of Public Participation

As national ownership extends itself to other groups, a requirement is public participation, which can be interpreted in many ways and can serve different functions. For instance, people participate in a programme to provide information or to influence a decision. The factors that guide public participation include diversity, inclusivity, transparency, flexibility, accessibility, and accountability. The elements of trust, commitment and respect also enhance public participation and the process has to be integrative, which means that the outcome of participatory processes has to be integrated into mainstream policies and services[28].

According to Sherry Arnstein[29], there are different levels of participation that range from citizen power to manipulation. The best form of participation is 'citizen power' where people participate but also have control over the resources used. The next level is 'delegated power' in which the government leads the process but people are given some powers to make decisions. 'Partnerships' refers to the process where people influence the decision making process but the government still takes responsibility for

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[27] Glossary of Statistical Terms. *http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=7238*
[28] Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation
http://www.thedplg.gov.za/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=23
[29] Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969, pp. 216-224
http://www.partnerships.org.uk/part/arn.htm

that decision. 'Placation' is the process in which the community is asked for advice. 'Consultation' is a common form of participation in which people comment on a project by means of meetings or surveys. 'Informing' is the means whereby people are merely informed about a project. 'Therapy' is the form of participation where people are told about what has already been decided. The lowest form of participation is 'manipulation' in which the presence of various groups and individuals is required to further an agenda. The level of participation to be applied would depend on who is driving the particular programme and what they expect from it. For this reason, the level of participation will vary.

3.3 Ownership and Public Participation

Ownership aims to serve various functions which include acceptance, national leadership and responsibility. More importantly, it is linked to the level of public participation that is determined in a process.

Firstly, ownership serves to guarantee acceptance of an idea. From an IMF perspective, its focus has changed in the sense that IFIs are not imposing a reform on a country but rather offering advice on policy change so that these reforms would not be resisted[30]. In this way, a government is more willing to accept what is being offered. From a civil society perspective, when the people of a country are given the opportunity to 'own' a programme, there is a sense of belonging and they will be more likely to make decisions in support of that programme. In this way they are accepting the document. This is the desired effect of ownership, that by accepting the document, people will support it. Furthermore, the decision making process of the programme and its outcomes are most likely to generate interest in its citizens.

Secondly, ownership reflects national leadership. National leadership comes into play when there is political will evident in the implementation of developmental strategies. Political will is the commitment by a government to promote good governance. This is associated with larger growth rates and incomes for the poor through the initiatives by government. Without political will and leadership from government leaders,

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[30] Wood, A. 2004. 'One step forward, two steps back: Ownership, PRSPs and IFI conditionality'. United Kingdom: World Vision International. P35.

development initiatives are bound to fail because the product lacks an indigenous quality and may thus be seen as a foreign imposition. Furthermore, a government loses credibility because these initiatives are not put forward by leaders for whom people have voted, and who are the ones that are supposed to be doing this in the first place. 'The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers…is becoming the framework through which national leadership over development priorities is exercised and implemented. These planning documents are evolving into vehicles for coordinating bilateral and multilateral support around a nationally owned agenda'[31]. The PRS Papers are the means by which government is able to implement strategies, despite the PRS process being an IFI initiative. This move has redefined the relationship between government and financial donors, with government in control with the support from the IFIs.

Third, national ownership attaches a sense of responsibility. Ownership creates dialogue between the different actors, that is, recipients, donors and public beneficiaries. In this way partnerships are created and the different actors take on different responsibilities. For instance, donors are responsible for funding, and advising on policies but are not supposed to interfere. The government has a responsibility to lead the process and encourage participation as well as implement the policies. Public participants have a responsibility to participate in the process and monitor programmes. With responsibility comes accountability. Having identified who is in control makes it easier to establish who will be responsible for carrying out policies and programmes. Regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategies, governments are expected to be in control, and therefore it would be their responsibility to ensure effective implementation of the strategies. If they fail to do so, citizens are able to hold them accountable.

While there are many ways to interpret the meaning of 'ownership' a common factor is participation and within this context, broad participation. Broad participation is one of the main conditions attached to the formulation of the PRS Papers. There are two ways to interpret this new, bold approach. Firstly, the PRS process has become the new way that donors are interacting with recipient countries, and secondly, there are many attributes to participation that is hoped to be achieved in the PRS process.

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[31] UNDG. 2008. 'Response to the Changing Aid Environment. Washington: United Nations.

According to IMF and World Bank guidelines, broad participation is described as the involvement of a broad spectrum of government as possible, which also extends itself to parliament; the inclusion of a wide range of civil society participants and other stakeholders so as to represent the views of the poor as well as the participation of key donors and multilateral institutions[32]. There is no specification as to who civil society participants ought to be. Ideally, for broad participation to be meaningful, candidates who are likely to participate include: people in poor communities and their associations because they are the most affected by poverty; central governments who are in charge of developing and implementing national policies; local government personnel because they are in a position to determine local policies that go towards achieving national policies; civil society organizations representing poor sectors because they communicate with communities and are able to provide information to help develop strategies; academic researchers and analysts who are experts at providing information and analysis; politicians and political parties who represent communities and who are able to include the feedback of their constituents within a programme; the media which is important in any programme because awareness can be created through various means such as television, radio and newspapers; and donor agencies who are the major financial contributors.

What does participation aim to achieve? A benefit of public participation is that it deepens democracy in the sense that 'it can increase the transparency of decision making, improve government accountability to the people, and as a result, increase the overall governance and economic efficiency of developmental activities'[33]. Furthermore, participation allows stakeholders to influence and share control over various issues, such as policy making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services.

Another important attribute of participation is that it is believed to help achieve poverty reduction outcomes. This occurs when there is a combined effort between a strong state and a strong society. The outcome of this is that '…networks of intermediary

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[32]Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers--Operational Issues: December 10, 1999
http://www.imf.org/external/np/pdr/prsp/poverty1.htm
[33] Workshop Agenda, Choices and Voices at a macro level: Participation in Country Owned Poverty Reduction Strategies, April 3-5 2001.

associations act as a counterweight to vested interests, promote institutional accountability among states and markets, channel information to decision-makers…'[34]. Having a presence of mediators between the state and its citizens is beneficial and, where there exists a good relationship between the state and society, a social contract may emerge between a government and its citizens. A government is placed in control to take care of the state with the support of its citizenry.

A third attribute to consider is that public participation, as a form of deliberative democracy[35], gives citizens the opportunity to enter the public sphere where they can deliberate about public problems and solutions. 'The public sphere can generate opportunities for forming, refining and revising preferences through discourse that takes multiple perspectives into account and orient itself towards mutual understanding and common action'[36]. Simply, the public sector creates the arena in which individuals and/or associations discuss different ideas and reform them so that these ideas are acceptable to all. But this can only occur in an open society. 'Inclusive and objective public deliberation is feasible only through channels that are not completely captured by states or markets'[37]. Therefore, participation of society thrives in a democracy as this form of government considers the views and opinions of its people. The concepts of national leadership, acceptance, responsibility and broad participation are interlinked and complement each other as they all aim to serve a common goal as they are the qualities that promote ownership.

3.4 Public Participation and Civil Society

Broad participation extends itself to civil society. One cannot speak of participation without looking at the dynamics of civil society because essentially when we speak of participation we refer to the involvement of civil society. Civil society organizations are the ones that are expected to deliberate in participatory processes.

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[34] Edwards, M. 2004. 'Civil Society'. Cambridge: Polity Press. p13
[35] Deliberative democracy occurs when citizens converse with one another about relevant issues and thereafter 'reflect and think critically about the options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions and understandings'.
[36] Civic Dictionary. 'Deliberative Democracy'
 http://www.cpn.org/tools/dictionary/deliberate.html
[37] Edwards, M. 2004. 'Civil Society'. Cambridge: Polity Press. p58.

One way of defining civil society is as 'the sphere of institutions, organizations and individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests'[38]. Another way of defining civil society is by referring to it as 'the interlinking arena where private interests meet public concerns and both are mutually structured in a public sphere with its own rules'[39]. Common to both definitions is that emphasis is placed on the link between the economy, the state and the citizen. This reinforces the point that broad participation helps produce poverty reduction outcomes. Formal and informal associations such as non-governmental organizations, faith based organizations, and community based organizations are necessary because they play an important role in the social and political life of the country and it is generally accepted that they are one of the main foundations of democracy. Their participation in the social and political areas creates both transparency and accountability of the government to its people by means of educating citizens on what to expect from their government.

In the last decade, civil society has moved to the centre of the international stage. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the end of Communism had an impact (to an extent) on the rise of civil society organizations. Although some civil society organizations became part of the government, the change to a democratic government created opportunities. Groups and individuals took advantage of this by creating non–governmental organizations and civil society organizations that campaigned for various causes such as human rights, environmental rights, and animal rights. Secondly, there was dissatisfaction with the ways in which a government conducted its economy. As countries began trading on a global scale, civil society organizations have made their impact. They have introduced the concept of 'microcredit'. This is where women in developing countries are given small loans to help them start a business. This has been successful in countries such as Mozambique, India and South Africa as it has created a form of income generation. A third reason is that as NGOs began to rise rapidly on a global stage, NGOs began to form locally as a form of solidarity[40]. For example, there is a common objective between Amnesty International and the South African Human

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[38] Annheier, H.K. 2004. 'Civil society: Measurement, Evaluation, Policy'. CIVICUS: United Kingdom. p22
[39] Roniger, L. 1998. 'Civil society, patronage and Democracy in Alexander, J.C. (ed) Real Civil Societies: Dilemmas of Institutionalisation. London: Sage Publications. p67
[40] Edwards, M. 2004. 'Civil Society'. Cambridge: Polity Press. p2

Rights Commission (SAHRC). Both organizations ensure that human rights are not violated. But while Amnesty International focuses on the universal declaration of human rights, the SAHRC's specific goal is to ensure that the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution is upheld.

The emergence of civil society in Africa differs to that of its Western and European counterparts. Africa has a more complex, difficult history having had to overcome colonial rule, post-colonial independence and the transition to democracy. During colonial rule, indigenous people were not allowed to organize formally as there was an enormous amount of oppression by the colonizers. It was only after World War II that African associations were able to organize because the authorities had relaxed surveillance over them and thus began an organized solidarity challenge to colonial rule. During post–colonial rule when African leaders came into power they had little tolerance for opposition. The civil society that formed in resistance to colonial power had withered under the weight of political repression. But, over time, a source of solidarity along ethnic, tribal and clan lines began to form which gave rise to political expression. In the transition to democracy, there was increased tension due to state despotism, ethnic privileges as well as urgency for development. This led to an explosion of protest across the region. There were widespread calls for political change by students, workers, church groups, media and NGOs who challenged the authority of one-party, one man and military governments leading to regime change and the introduction of competitive party elections.

States were opposed to the involvement of civil society groups because at one time, they were seen as a force of resistance against the state. In countries where there has been some kind of political upheaval, civil society groups mobilized themselves to oppose undemocratic governments. For this reason many African governments remain suspicious about the motives of civil society organizations and are reluctant to open up the political space for substantive dialogue to take place. Furthermore, 'participation by itself does not directly eliminate poverty. Participation depends also in the levels of skills and knowledge as much as on the motivation'[41]. This has been a major setback

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[41] Atal, Y and Oyen, E.1996. 'Poverty and participation in civil society'. Proceedings of a UNESCO/CROP round table organized at the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, Denmark, March 1995. p22.

for civil society organizations in Africa as they experience severe capacity constraints, for instance, they lack resources that would enable them to become more skilled and knowledgeable in areas of national development. Civil society's limitations with resources, as well as a hesitancy of government to open dialogue with them have resulted in a further setback, a lack of information. 'For a participatory process to become meaningful, governments must release critical information ahead of local consultations so that discussions between public officials and non-state actors become constructive'[42]. Without information, no constructive, open debates can occur. The outcome of this is that no social consensus can take place.

The introduction of the Poverty Reduction Strategies has created the opportunity firstly, to reconcile those feelings between the state and civil society and secondly, for governments and members of society to participate in a programme that serves to benefit all. In order for civil society to participate effectively in the formulation of the PRS Papers, participation has to be institutionalized. This means that participation cannot be an informal approach; it has to be managed through parliament and has to be consistent and permanent. 'Participation is not a short term instrument that can be swiftly applied to raise the efficiency of development measures. The institutionalization of participation with the political processes of a country is a developmental goal in its own right'[43]. Legislation has to be put in place to safeguard the inclusion of non-governmental and civil society groups in the development process. In countries such as Uganda, Burkina Faso and Mauritania, participation is institutionalized. Consultations have not been limited to the PRS process only and dialogue is continuous. In Malawi, participation has not been institutionalized and the involvement of civil society has been fairly weak. Governments cannot consult with civil society when it is convenient; consultation and participation has to be an ongoing process. However, many stakeholders have come to realize the worth of these organizations, especially in low-income countries as they have a better relationship with the citizens than the state has. Therefore, civil society groups play a key role in the development process.

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[42] Edwards, M. 2004. 'Civil Society'. Cambridge: Polity Press. p25
[43] Eberlei, W. 2001. 'Institutionalised Participation in Processes Beyond the PRSP'. Duisburg: GTZInstitute for Development and Peace. p5

Finally, although it is an IMF and World Bank condition that participation of civil society is mandatory in the formulation of the PRS Papers, the IMF and World Bank are not unaware of the challenges of civil society organizations. Donors have assisted NGOs and other organizations to a considerable extent and some could say that the funding available is an incentive for governments to take more initiative and work better with civil society organizations so that the developmental priorities of the country are addressed.

3.5 Ownership and Conditionality

SAPs lacked ownership but imposed conditions. Poverty Reduction Strategies have ownership, but that is not to say that conditions should not be attached. In order to appreciate ownership, and what it stands for, attention has to be given to its connection to lending institutions and the conditions that they attach. First of all, development strategies are common to countries that have a high poverty level. These countries require the financial assistance from international institutions. But these institutions, together with granting financial aid also attach conditions, where they expect something in return. In any situation, be it political, economic or social, conditions will always be attached in an agreement between two or more parties. For instance:

> '…some form of conditionality exists in all borrower-lender relationships: key to the ability to borrow is the ability to pledge income back. The
> IMF must have assurances that it will be repaid, and this requires that it place conditions on its loans'[44].

Therefore attaching conditionality seems justified. If money is borrowed, it has to be paid back. Apart from reassurances of payment, conditionality serves five functions. Firstly, 'it is a tool to lever policy change'[45]. What this means is that a government has to change its policies in a way that will generate income so that the loans can be paid back. This is good because a government has to reorient its policies carefully towards economic growth and sustainable development. However, this can also be seen as a form of intimidation if a donor feels that policies are inadequate and a government has

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[44] Khan, M.S. & Sharma, S. 2003 'IMF Conditionality and Country Ownership of Adjustment Programs'. The World Bank Research Observer, vol 18 (2). p 228
[45] Wood, A. 2004. 'One step forward, two steps back: Ownership, PRSPs and IFI conditionality'. United Kingdom: World Vision International. p11

no choice but to change its policies. Secondly, '…it effectively defines the contractual agreement between lender and borrowers'[46]. This means that the lender and borrower enter into an agreement that is legally binding on both parties. This agreement safeguards both parties by stipulating the terms and conditions that they have to abide to. Failure to do so could have consequences in the sense that a country suffers a financial loss or the donor loses credibility. Third, conditionality serves 'as a commitment device'[47]. This means that a government is committed to implementing policies. Whether donors agree with policies that are implemented will always raise questions. However, this function serves to guarantee that policies are not just on paper but that they will be implemented. Fourth, it is a means of 'donor accountability'[48]. Money lent has to be money well spent. Donors have a duty to account for the money they lend because the monies they generate are from tax-payers in the developed countries. Therefore donors are accountable to these tax-payers and have to ensure that the money is put to good use. This is perhaps a reason why donors tend to dictate the terms and conditions which they feel would be appropriate for lending money. Fifth, and more recently, conditionality is an indication that donors are 'committed financially to supporting a home-grown development programme'[49]. Governments and donors are making a coordinated effort to work together on a process that stems from within a country and which are outcomes focused. This means that the focus is not just on the policy, but rather on what it aims to achieve. The PRS process and the HIPC initiative are such programmes. It can be deduced that while conditions are necessary, it is important to apply the right conditions.

While conditionality thus clearly serves multiple purposes, the substance of the conditionality imposed has been controversial, and has weakened the development process in poor countries. The reason for this is that countries could not adapt to what lending institutions were asking. As was mentioned in chapter two, the SAPs imposed harsh conditionalities. These policies were not conducive to the countries which implemented these programmes, the outcomes of which led to the further destruction of economies. To add insult to injury, governments were strongly opposed to SAPs but had no choice and therefore adhered to the programmes so that they could receive

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[46] Ibid
[47] Ibid, p12
[48] Ibid
[49] Ibid, p13

financial aid. Previously, IMF conditionality undermined country ownership. The design and implementation of programmes were not adaptable to countries. Another factor that contributed to the change in the terms of conditionality was a review of the World Bank's loan portfolio. Known as the 'Wapenhans Report', the review was critical of the World Bank's failure to enforce loan agreements. Furthermore, this report, 'in analyzing the unsatisfactory results of adjustment programmes, stressed the need for a stronger participation of social groups at all levels of the project cycle'[50]. For this reason, donors have changed their conditional requirements. The ownership aspect is clarified because it indicates who will be responsible for implementing programmes. The report has also indicated that the imposition of certain conditionalities is not the way to go. Programmes are successful when all sectors of society are part of the decision making process.

The introduction of the PRS Process and more specifically the formulation of the PRS Papers have afforded all parties the opportunity to work together. The IMF and World Bank have come to realize the importance of country ownership. The only way to correct economic problems is to generate a firm commitment by governments and other relevant stakeholders within a country.   It also reassures the IMF that money given is money well spent, an affirmation of 'its resources provided by conditionality'[51]. For this reason the IMF and World Bank have placed much emphasis on ownership in the sense that governments lead the process but other actors support and are involved in that process. The difference now is that the interaction and negotiation between the borrower and lender serves both parties rather than being in favour of one against the other.

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[50] Hein, W. 2001. '*Global Governance and the Evolution of a New Role of International Financial and Economic Institutions for Sub-Saharan Africa*'. DUI: Holland.p5
[51] Op cit Khan & Sharma, 2003:228

Chapter 4: Case Studies

Experiences of the PRS process and the formulation of the RPS Paper are explored in four countries, namely Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. In each case, the economic conditions are briefly mentioned, as well as an introduction of and background to the PRS process. In order to determine how well ownership has been achieved, specific attention is placed on the institutional structures that were established in addition to the participation of civil society organizations in the PRS process. This considers who dominated the process, and whether mechanisms were created in which civil society was able to participate effectively in the formulation of the PRS Paper.

4.1 Malawi

Malawi is among the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has a Gross National Income (GNI) of $170 per person and, according to World Bank poverty measures, is the sixth poorest country in the world[52]. Malawi's poverty levels are largely due to the country's political history. Firstly, prior to the 1960s Malawi was part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but in 1964 achieved independence. Dr Hastings Banda, a dictator declared himself 'President for Life' and ruled the country for 30 years. Banda's government proved to be extremely corrupt in the sense that it failed to provide services to the people but instead sought to promote the interests of a select few groups and individuals: Banda's government engaged in 'promoting a handful of non-agricultural private and parastatal businesses, and creating a small and highly educated middle class rather than expanding education and opportunity for the majority of citizens'[53]. This way of rule had devastating consequences possibly the most severe being that a majority of the people were left illiterate and uneducated.

The 1990s saw a change in the political system. In 1994, a multi-party system was introduced and elections were won by the United Democratic Front Party (UDFP), led by Dr Bakili Muluzi. Although the UDFP attempted to address some of the imbalances created by the previous government, this was largely unsuccessful. For instance,

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[52]Office of the President and Cabinet. 2005. 'Malawi HIV and Aids Monitoring and Evaluation Report' http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2006/2006_country_progress_report_malawi_en.pdf
[53] Ellis F.; Kutengule, M. and Nyasulu, A 2003. 'Livelihoods and Rural Poverty Reduction in Malawi'. World Development Vol. 31, No. 9, pp. 1495–1510. p 1497

Muluzi moved quickly to open the country's economy and also drafted a new constitution but, during his second term as President, corruption in the Cabinet became widespread. In February 2009, Muluzi was arrested and charged for allegedly stealing over $11 million of donor money and depositing it into his private account when he was President[54]. Malawi has always been given substantial aid, and these allegations explain why much of that money did not go towards development. In May 2004, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika was elected as President of Malawi. Although he was said to have been handpicked by Muluzi and was something of Muluzi's puppet, Mutharika's leadership differed from that of his predecessor. For instance, he took a stand against corruption by 'sidelining prominent UDFP figures as well as initiating investigations into their alleged misdemeanors'[55]. He established the Anti-Corruption Bureau to investigate members of the previous administration. Mutharika's rule improved the Malawian economy: during his term economic growth increased by 7% and in 2008, the country produced a surplus of 1.3 million tons of maize[56]. Most importantly, in terms of this research, he made the PRSP a priority.

4.1.1 Introduction of and background to the PRS Paper

The PRS process began in Malawi in 2000. In August that year, the Malawian government released the Interim-PRSP (I-PRSP). This document, like all other I-PRSPs, was intended to outline a road map for the development of the final PRSP and set the agenda as to what to expect in the final PRS paper, that is, the Malawian PRSP (MPRSP). The MPRSP was launched in 2002.

The main priority areas are outlined in the MPRSP. There are four strategic pillars. The first pillar centers around strategies that will promote sustainable pro-poor economic growth and structural transformation. This entails looking at the sources of pro-poor growth, and creating an enabling environment for economic growth. The second pillar focuses on strategies specific to human capital development. This includes strategies focused on education; the promotion of good nutrition; health and population; and technical, entrepreneurial, vocational education and training. The third pillar reflects

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[54] Banda, M. Malawi arrests former leader Muluzi over corruption.
http://www.reuters.com/article/companyNewsAndPR/idUSLQ45229920090226
[55] Tangiri, R & Dzimbiri, L.B. 2005. Africa Yearbook 2: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara. Brill: Nederlands. Pg 431.
[56] 'Malawi: the economy stupid'. May 8th 2009.
http://blogs.reuters.com/africanews/2009/05/08/malawi-the-economy-stupid/

strategies based on improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable. This means creating safety nets and improving disaster management. And the fourth pillar focuses on issues of good governance which essentially includes political will and mindset, security and access to justice and ensuring responsive and effective public institutions. Cross cutting issues are also highlighted in the document. These include HIV/Aids, Gender and Empowerment, the Environment, and Science and Technology[57]. Overall, all aspects pertaining to economic growth and human development are included in the MPRSP.

4.1.2 Institutional/Organizational structures of the MPRSP

In 2001, three committees were set up to manage the MPRSP. It is essential to make note of these committees because they reflect the way in which various groups and sectors of people interacted. The committees include: 1) the Ministerial Level Committee (which consists of Ministries), which led the process by guiding the way in which policies should be formulated; 2) the Steering Committee of Principal Secretaries which managed the PRS process; and 3) the Technical Committee, who carried out consultations. The Technical Committee consisted of 21 Working Groups. The Technical Committee was made up of representatives from the financial ministries such as the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of Malawi. The significance of this is that by aligning the PRS Paper alongside national budgets enables the way in which policies could be developed, in terms of how much money could be spent on a specific area. They were supported by Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) who were responsible for drafting the PRS Paper and were the most interactive groups as they were composed of people from various sectors: members of government, especially those from the finance ministry, parliament officials, CSOs, faith based communities, academics, employers' associations, and the donor community[58]. They identified the main areas of concern and drafted their contributions to reflect the focus on poverty. For instance, some civil society groups made recommendations about water and sanitation problems, of which

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[57] MPRSP, 2002: ii. http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/2002/mwi/01/
[58] IMF Country Report, 2003 'Malawi: Joint Staff Assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Progress Report, p5. http://imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.cfm?sk=16999.0

members of government were unaware[59]. In this way civil society groups made significant contributions to the document.

Reflecting on the institutional arrangements, the process appeared to be dominated by the government. For example, the Ministerial Committee essentially created the issues that needed to be addressed. But, the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Community Services, who interacts with civil society, was not part of the Ministerial Committee[60]. The Technical Committee was made up exclusively of the financial sector with highly qualified people from the macroeconomic sector[61]. The only avenue in which non-governmental members were present was in the Thematic Groups. While they made contributions there was no guarantee that these would be reflected in the final PRS Paper.

4.1.3 Civil Society's Participation in the MPRS Paper

The emergence of civil society in Malawi only took place in the1990s, and the main area of concern at the time was specifically related to human rights and good governance. This was a result of the political developments that were taking place. From Banda's dictatorship since the 1970s to a flawed government under President Muluzi, the activities of civil society were not welcomed by either of these regimes. Banda's government opposed demonstrations and dealt with strikes by banning these activities. Muluzi's government took the same approach when Muluzi attempted to amend the constitution so that he could run for a third presidential term.

As a result of being fairly young and inexperienced, specifically in the areas of policy reformation, CSOs are faced with several challenges. These include: 1) human capacity constraints, as many people are inadequately skilled or leave these organizations to work elsewhere; 2) developmental constraints where there is a lack of resources available to campaign effectively for various causes; and 3) civil society's relationship with members of government have in the past been weak. 'Their relationship with the

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[59]McGee R, 2002. *'Assessing participation in poverty reduction strategy papers: a desk based synthesis of experience in sub-Saharan Africa.'* Institute of Development Studies: England. p 52
[60] Afrodad, 2003. Prospects for Poverty Reduction in Malawi: A critical analysis of the PRSP process and outcomes. P16. Afrodad. PRSP Series, Malawi Report. April 2003.
[61] Ibid, p20

state is still characterized by fear, mistrust, suspicion and lack of transparency'[62]. This comes as no surprise given that civil society previously opposed the state. To this day, a culture of suspicion still exists between the state and civil society where there is trust and mistrust, conflict and cooperation. Additionally, 'inadequate ideological bases, dependence on external funding, poor management, low levels of professional expertise, and sheer inexperience on the part of the new organizations'[63] weaken civil society further and this can hamper their participation in an activity concerning the public. For instance civil society organisations have a weak understanding of the economic sectors. This is a major setback because the PRS Paper has been drafted alongside the national budgets. If civil society organisations are unable to comprehend the coordination of the policies and the monies allocated then they are unable to contribute significantly in the process.

In 2000, when the PRS process began, it created an opportunity for civil society to participate in the formulation of a national paper. The Joint Staffs of the IMF and World Bank, in their assessment of the MPRS Paper, described the process as highly participatory. Consultations at the district level took place and these were attended by many groups of people such as traditional authorities, members of parliament, ward councillors, political leaders of various parties, district chief executives and their staff members, local NGOs and some ordinary citizens representing the voices of the poor. The Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN) led the participation process on behalf of civil society. It is an umbrella organization made up of representatives from churches, academia, NGOs, trade unions, professional associations and the media. The MEJN made a difference to the process. Firstly, the Drafting Team of the PRS Paper was limited to government officers who were part of the Technical Committee. However, pressure was placed by the MEJN, so that the Drafting Team would be open to members of civil society. Secondly, they were instrumental in extending the process by six months so that they could have an increased level of participation in the process. Third, MEJN ensured that members of civil society were included in the TWGs and other committees such as the Drafting Committee and Technical Committee when the process was opened to the public. These committees presented the PRS Papers to the donors, and this allowed them to be present when the PRS Papers were commented on.

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[62] Ibid, p13
[63] Ibid

Finally, the MEJN created awareness of the PRS Paper through advertisements. In addition, they carried out extensive consultations, and arising from these, the MEJN produced a document called the 'PRSP-Findings to Date'. Included in this document was a survey known as the 'Poverty Priority Expenditures'. The findings from this survey were included in the MPRS Paper. For instance, there was a cut back in State expenses and more money was put toward roads and other infrastructure. Therefore, not only were these findings reflected in the PRS Paper, but it made a real difference to the way money was being spent.

Falk and Eberlei illustrate the requirements that non–state actors need to ensure effective participation. These include, '…comprehensive and timely access to relevant information; sufficient resources; time and space to disseminate information, critically reflect draft policies and develop independent positions…'[64]. These are standard, yet important requirements that civil society organisations would need in order to participate effectively in the formulation of the PRS Paper.

Samuel Wangwe[65] identified a significant number of weaknesses that have been encountered in the Malawian experience. Firstly, there was a weak flow of information. For instance, there was inadequate information between the various committees. Many civil society organizations (CSOs) could not attend meetings because they were not adequately notified. 'Information about meetings was often received late, and access to a number of government documents was limited by a practice of confidentiality'[66]. As a result of not being adequately informed, CSOs did not have enough time to consult with people at the grassroots level, and they were not fully prepared. Secondly, CSOs experienced various challenges such as understanding the relationship between the PRS process and HIPC. They were also not well organized when district consultations were carried out. Thirdly, it has been discovered that, 'very few women, NGOs and church representatives were made aware of the consultations process'[67]. This does raise doubts about representation and considering that 'Gender and Empowerment' is listed as a priority in the PRS Paper, one wonders

[64] Falk, G and Eberlie, W. 2003. *Civil society involvement in PRS processes. The gap between claims and reality*, in PRSP- prospects and limits of civil society involvement. Berlin:VENRO. P6
[65] Wangwe, S. 2002: The PRSP Process in Malawi: Second Meeting of the African Learning Group on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP-LG). 18-21 November 2002 Brussels, Belgium
[66] Ibid: 9
[67] Op cit McGee, 2002:51

how serious that priority is. Fourth, during the consultation phase of the PRS process, presentations were made by Ministry and other government officials who merely shared information rather than consult with the public. Looking at the degree of participation, what should have been a process of consultation, was instead replaced by a lower form of participation, that is, a process of 'informing'. As such, the processes did not truly reflect participation but rather information sharing. Furthermore, CSOs were excluded from most of the Committees which were all dominated by the government. Finally, a disadvantage that civil society faces is that participation is not institutionalized in Malawi. This means that government had no obligation to work with civil society on national strategies. Initially, donors were influential in mobilizing CSOs to participate in the PRS process. For example, 'Oxfam provided the initial funding for the workshop and a consultant to assist with the civil society advocacy'[68]. It seems as though the initial push had to come from the donors to encourage civil society groups to participate in the process.

Although civil society organisations experienced weaknesses in the participation of the PRS process, what is important is that a relationship between them and the government has emerged, especially with the MEJN who appear to be the most interactive in the PRS process.

4. 2 Mozambique

In 1914 Mozambique was colonized by the Portuguese. In the early 1960s the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) was formed to fight against Portuguese colonialism, a fight which lasted for more than ten years, led by Eduardo Mondlane. In 1974, the country achieved independence and was led by FRELIMO, a military party, who established a one party state. An armed rebel movement known as the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) formed in resistance to FRELIMO and a civil war erupted between these two groups. There were devastating consequences of this war, namely, the infrastructure had weakened, there was a mass exodus of Portuguese nationals and the economy collapsed. In1992, war and unrest eventually came to an end, however, more than one million people were killed and approximately five million people had sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

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[68]Op cit Afrodad, 2003:24

In 1990 Mozambique became a multi-party democracy. The country has been moving towards recovery since then. Although there has been significant economic growth, and the country is a multi-party democracy, Mozambique continues to be one of the poorest in the world. More than 70% of the population lives in absolute poverty[69]. There is a significant amount of industrial development in the Southern province of Maputo, however, it is in the central and northern parts of the country where the majority of poor people are situated, and as they are out of reach, have not benefited from the economic growth. The agricultural sector is one of Mozambique's main areas of concern. Agriculture, which is the country's main source of income and accounts for 80% of its exports, has made a significant contribution to economic growth[70]. The country has abundant arable land, but a major challenge is that 'most poor people live in subsistence farming households, with limited access to markets, and the marketing infrastructure is greatly underdeveloped'[71].

4.2.1 Introduction of and background to the PRSP

Mozambique's approach to the PRS process has differed from other countries, as the government had already developed a framework in 1999 to address poverty reduction. This document was known as the 'Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty' (PARPA), and was used as an I-PRS Paper and published in 2001. The full PRSP (PARPA 2001-2005) was finalized in March 2001 and endorsed by the Boards of the IMF and World Bank later that year. For the purposes of this paper, this document will be referred to as PARPA I. In 2006 Mozambique published its second generation PRSP, PARPA II, which was approved by the Council of Ministers on 2 May 2006 and formally launched on 23 June 2006.

In reviewing the content of both PARPA I and II, it appears that the priority areas are fundamentally similar. The fundamental areas of action in PARPA I were very broad in that they looked at areas such as: education; health; infrastructure (specifically

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[69]UNGEI. Mozambique: Background
 http://www.ungei.org/infobycountry/mozambique.html
[70] FCO. Sub Saharan Africa. Mozambique. 2009
 http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/mozambique?profile=all
[71] Jensen, H.T & Tarp, F 2004. 'On the Choice of Appropriate Development Strategy: Insights gained from CGE Modelling of the Mozambican Economy'. Journal of African Economies. 13(3) pp446-478. p 448.

roads, energy, and water); agriculture and rural development; good governance; legality and justice; and macroeconomic and financial policies. In PARPA II, while there were similarities in terms of human capital development, it differed from PARPA I in the sense that, 'its priorities include greater integration of the national economy and an increase in productivity'[72]. This meant that these priorities had become part of the national budget, and were not seen as a separate project to the ideas of the national plan. Secondly, amendments were made in PARPA II to implement systems that would improve and strengthen the financial systems and the country's fiscal policies to ensure that PRS priorities could be met.

4.2.2 Institutional/Organizational structures

In PARPA I, the Ministry of Planning and Finance led the PRS process. The Macroeconomic Programming Unit within the Ministry was established to interact with civil society. The institutional framework in PARPA I illustrated the planning system which was largely led by the Ministry. There were no additional institutions or structures that enabled other actors to influence the policy making process. From this point of view the document had in every respect been produced by the government. In PARPA II however, the institutional arrangements were more open to the public. For instance, thematic working groups were created comprising representatives from government, civil society and international partners. The Technical Secretariat (TS), which was made up of government officials, was in regular contact with representatives of civil society as a means of consultation. This indicates that the degree of participation was low as there was only information sharing by the government. National and provincial Poverty Observatories (PO) had been established as a 'forum for dialogue between government, donors and civil society on the design and direction of the country's social and economic policies'[73]. Their core function was to monitor the progress and performance of the PARPA II. The POs were established by the government in 2003 and the main objective was to ensure that adequate data and information was disseminated to all its members, which included the government, civil society organizations and international development partners.

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[72] Republic of Mozambique. 2006 : Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper : Economic and Social Plan (PARPA II) 2005. IMF Country Report 05/312. p1
[73] Valy, B. 2008. 'Development Mozambique: An overly civil society'. http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43148

4.2.3 Civil Society's Participation

The level of consultation by civil society groups that led to the formulation of the PARPA documents differed as the process was more open and inclusive in PARPA II than in PARPA I. In PARPA I extensive consultations took place with specific stakeholder groups including donors, the private sector, the media, civil society organizations and community leaders. They were given the opportunity to discuss drafts of the full PRSP. A network called the Mozambique Debt Group (MDG) was established and made up of mainly national and Maputo based NGOs. Any contributions made by civil society were channeled through this network. An example of the input provided was that at a meeting in December 2000, NGOs focused on community based projects as well as securing funding for these projects[74].

Participation of civil society in PARPA I was not very effective for several reasons. Firstly, the way in which Mozambique's government viewed the concept of participation raised doubts about a broad participation process. According to McGee, the government's perception of participation amounted to 'information dissemination and consultation on prepared drafts rather than any more far reaching involvement by non-government actors'[75]. What this implies is that government officials prepared drafts of the document and presented these to the public for comment. This clearly fell short of being an exercise that required the participation of civil society actors. Consultation and participation are two different concepts. Consultation is a process that involves information sharing, with no guarantee that the views of civil society would be reflected in the final PARPA. In a participatory process civil society expects to influence the decision- making process, and in a sense have more delegated power. In Mozambique's case, members of civil society were not part of the drafting process, however, it appears that government was satisfied that by merely keeping civil society informed, this constituted participation.

Secondly, civil society actors were of the opinion that the government was only willing to include other actors in the PRS process, and this was purely for keeping the IFIs happy. '…many CSOs….were dissatisfied with the degree of consultation and

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[74] Falck, H and Landfald, K. 2003. 'Mozambique'. Development Policy Review, 2003, 21(2) p234-252. p 242

[75] McGee, R. 2000. 'A synthesis of experience with participatory approaches to policy design, implementation and monitoring'. Institute of Development Studies: Brighton. p 56

suspected the Government of Mozambique of listening for the purposes of appeasing the IFIs, without any intention of incorporating the opinions of those considered'[76]. While CSOs have a right to feel dissatisfied, it has to be borne in mind that PARPA I came at a time when the country had just overcome a war and the government's overriding concern was with maintaining political stability and promoting reconciliation and national unity'[77].Therefore, it was perhaps too early to begin consulting with civil society when the nation was in such disarray. Members among civil society also needed time to gain momentum and start working with each other before they could work together with the government towards national strategies.

Thirdly, Mozambican civil society seems to be suffering from 'participation fatigue'. This is a case where the public, 'having been repeatedly disillusioned under the previous socialist regime by consultations, meetings and promises that never produced tangible outcomes'[78], is skeptical about this new strategy. As a result, there was low participation of civil society in the preparation of the I-PRSP, and civil society was unable to have much impact on the content of the document.

Fourthly, both the government and civil society organizations lacked the resources to carry out an effective participatory process. The government had to invest in strengthening the economy and building the nation. It is understandable then that the government could only share information, given that the PARPA I had to be finalized in two years. Civil society was faced with its own capacity constraints which included financial constraints as well as lack of knowledge and experience in such areas. Had there been a higher degree of participation at the time of the PARPA I, there is no guarantee that civil society organizations could have participated effectively.

Finally, seminars attended by CSOs were based mostly in Maputo, and awareness by civil society in other provinces was low. '…no popular version has been produced, nor translations of key messages into local languages'. The consequence was that majority of the Mozambican people were unaware of the PRS Paper, and therefore, they could not make valuable contributions to an important document that they didn't even know

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[76] Ibid
[77] Ibid, p 54
[78] Ibid, p 56

existed. However, the Mozambican Debt Group, dissatisfied with insufficient consultation and dissemination, ran its own seminar. The attempt was good in the sense that NGOs were brought together but projects were focused too much on community based projects and not part of a national plan. For instance, NGOs from the Niassa and Zambezia areas were more focused on securing funding for community based projects and were unable to deal with macro plans and policy advocacy[79]. This suggests that civil society organizations were limited in their ability to engage in macro planning at the time of the PARPA I. Civil society organizations did not have much influence on the content of the PARPA I. A 'Poverty Assessment' that was carried out, stressed the need for female education but this was barely mentioned in PARPA I[80]. It has to be added though that PARPA I did indicate, 'the need for greater clarity in future on how the state and civil society should be represented in consultative processes'[81]. This is an indication that the government acknowledged that its relationship with civil society needed to be improved.

There appears to be better organization and structure of the participatory process of PARPA II. First of all, the formulation of the document involved two phases. The first phase was the drafting of PARPA II, where the key issues were identified and categorized into three pillars: 1) governance, 2) human capital development and 3) economic development. The drafting was done with the assistance of the 3rd Poverty Observatory (PO) which was held in August 2005. During phase two, the thematic working groups were required to 'produce documents and materials needed to facilitate the task of drafting the preliminary version of PARPA II'[82]. At the 4th PO, which was held in November 2005, the draft PARPA, consisting of the reports from the thematic working group, contributions from various stakeholders as well as the provincial and national POs, were studied and finalized to become the PARPA II.

The G20, an umbrella organization, consisting of over 400 civil society organizations, were instrumental in the PO forums. The G20 produced a poverty report in 2004. This document identified the main causes of poverty in the four main areas, which were; Human Capital, Social Capital, Economy and Governance and presented findings in

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[79] Op cit Falck et al, 2003: 242
[80] Op cit McGee, 2002:58
[81] Op cit McGee, 2000:56
[82] Republic of Mozambique. 2006 : Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper : Economic and Social Plan 2005. IMF Country Report 05/312. p6

these areas. For example, where Human Capital is concerned, a survey undertaken by the G20 found that disease and low levels of education were the main causes of poverty amongst people[83]. The report also extensively identified the problems that poor people faced as a result of these causes. These findings were presented at the PO and were used when PARPA II was formulated. Furthermore, the PO also assisted CSOs to consult better with their constituencies. 'Civil society is now able to carry out extensive meetings throughout the country, a long and expensive process, which is supported by the Observatory'[84]. The PO has been regarded as a success and has even won favour on a regional scale '…to the extent that at the International Consultative Conference on Poverty and Development held in Mauritius…the Southern African Development Community (SADC) decided to set up a Regional Poverty Observatory'[85]. The SADC developed its own PO similar to that of Mozambique. There was better ownership of the PARPA II as the degree of participation was higher, unlike in PARPA I where there was no effective participation. In PARPA I, the timing was not right because civil society and the government were not at that point able to work together, but through the PARPA II process, they were able to learn from those mistakes and do it right the second time around.

4.3 Tanzania

Tanzania, previously called Tanganyika, is made up of the mainland as well as the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and other smaller islands. The country is socially diverse with about 125 ethnic groups[86]. In the late 1800s Tanzania was colonized by Germany and thereafter Britain. In 1961 the country achieved independence. From 1962, the country had effectively operated under a one party system, and was led by Julius Nyerere for approximately 20 years. He introduced the concept of 'Ujamaa', which is 'a concept of self-reliance that theoretically offered an equitable distribution of national resources…' [87]. This was a socialist way of life where 'Ujamaa' villages were

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[83] RAP Annual Poverty Report 2004 'Fighting the causes of poverty'.
http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000947/index.php
[84] Op cit PARPA II, 2006:6
[85]Valy, 2008. 'Development Mozambique: An overly civil society'.
http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43148
[86] FCO. Sub Saharan Africa. Tanzania. 2009
http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/tanzania?profile=all
[87] Rupiya M.; Lwehabura, J. and Le Roux, L. 2006. ·Civil Security Relations in Tanzania Investigating the Relationship Between the State, Security Services and Civil Society'. p2
http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/MONO128FULLPDF.PDF

established and people engaged in agricultural activity. The Ujamaa system was successful for a while as it increased agricultural output and Tanzania became one of the largest agricultural exporters in Africa. However, in 1978, Uganda, under the rule of Idi Amin, invaded Tanzania. As a result of this war, and a six year drought that followed, the country's resources were severely strained, and by the 1980s the country faced an economic crisis. The inflation rate increased to 30% and there was a shortage of hard currency and basic commodities[88]. In 1985 Nyerere retired and was succeeded by Ali Hassan Mwinyi. He started a gradual process of economic liberalisation and democratic reform. He supported a free market enterprise and transformed the political system from a one party to a multiparty system. In 1995 Benjamin Mkapa came into power, and he pursued a number of key economic reforms such as the privatization of state firms, as well as ongoing improvements to the weak infrastructure system.

Since the late 1990s Tanzania has had a steady GDP growth as well as a low inflation rate. Agriculture is the main source of income and contributes 42% of the GDP as well as 80% of employment[89]. A problem that affects the agricultural sector is that while major crops are marketed through official channels large amounts of produce do not reach the market. 'Poor pricing and unreliable cash flow to farmers continue to frustrate the agricultural sector'[90]. Furthermore the economy has failed to address the needs of ordinary citizens with regards to healthcare, education, employment and poverty reduction. Corruption is described as endemic, as is HIV/Aids. Over twelve million people live below the poverty line[91].

4.3.1 Introduction of and Background to the PRSP
Tanzania has had two PRS processes. In December 2000, the Boards of the IMF and World Bank endorsed the first PRS Paper. In February 2005, the second PRS Paper, that is, 'the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty' (NSGRP) was approved by the government. The NSGRP is better known by its Swahili term 'Mkukutha'.

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[88] Ibid
[89] FCO. Sub Saharan Africa. Tanzania. 2009
http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/tanzania?profile=all
[90]United Republic of Tanzania, November 2007.
http://www.creditguarantee.co.za/Country%20Reports/Tanzania-%20November%202007-%20Profile.pdf
[91] FCO. Sub Saharan Africa. Tanzania. 2009
http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/tanzania?profile=all

The content of the Mkukutha document appears more substantial than that of the first PRS Paper. For instance, there were two broad areas addressed in the first PRS Paper. The first area included: 1) sustaining macroeconomic stability; 2) rural sector development and export growth; and 3) private sector development. The second area of concern focused on human capabilities, survival and well-being which addresses matters pertaining to a) education, b) health, c) social well-being d) vulnerability and e) the environment[92]. The shortcoming of this was that it was too broad. For example, the strategy for education in the PRS Paper 1 stipulated the rate of enrolment that the country aimed to achieve, that is, 'raise gross primary school enrolment to 85%[93]. The PRS Paper failed to indicate how to improve the enrolment rate.

In the Mkukutha, priorities were far more outlined. The goals to be achieved were put into three specific clusters. Cluster 1: looked at the growth of the economy and reduction in income-poverty. Attention was paid to issues such as food availability, reducing poverty of men and women in rural and urban areas and the provision of energy to consumers. Cluster 2: focused on the improvement of the quality of life and social well-being. Cluster 3: featured matters of governance and accountability. This looked at the rule of law, accountability of leaders and peace, stability, national unity and social cohesion[94]. Unlike in the first PRS Paper, gender, disability and the year in which aims are to be achieved are considered in the Mkukutha. For instance, 'increased gross and net enrolment of boys and girls, including children with disabilities in primary schools from 90.5% in 2004 to 99% in 2010'[95] are stipulated in the document. The difference in content clearly shows that the second process was more considerate towards the needs of the poor. For example, it distinguished between poverty in the rural and urban areas. This difference can be attributed to the participatory process that took place in the formulation of the Mkukutha, discussed below.

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[92] Tanzanian PRSP, 2000 p14-18: http://www.imf.org/external/NP/prsp/2000/tza/02/100100.pdf
[93] Ibid, p 19
[94] United Republic of Tanzania 2006. 'National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction (NSGRP)'. IMF Country Report 06/142. p 36
[95] Ibid, p 42

4.3.2 Institutional Structures

Various institutional structures were established in 2000, each with a specific function towards formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating both the first PRS Paper and the Mkukutha. For example; 1) the Technical Working Groups were established to manage the data collection, analysis, consultation and drafting of the documents as part of formulating the document. The Technical Working Groups were made up of various stakeholders both governmental and non-governmental. They worked together to gain information and conduct the consultation process. The National Poverty Monitoring Steering Committee was established to provide guidance and oversight of poverty monitoring activities. Representatives included members from government departments, development partners, CSOs, academic institutions and faith groups. This is significant because monitoring the PRS programmes was open to a number of stakeholders, making the process more transparent and open to criticism. Overall, members of civil society featured at most of the Committees, making the entire process inclusive. When the Mkukutha was formulated, a change in the structure was that the Ministry of Planning, Economy and Empowerment led the process. This suggested that the government of Tanzania realized the importance of incorporating the PRS plans into the national budget.

4.3.3 CSO participation in the PRS Paper

Some good attempts were made in ensuring that there was participation in the first PRS process. For example, the consultation phase of the document included the establishment of zonal workshops where representatives of the poor at village level were present. Furthermore, the consultation process was organised by various groups, namely, the Tanzanian Social and Economic Trust (TASOET), the Tanzanian Coalition on Debt and Development (TCDD) and Oxfam. The TCDD were instrumental in disseminating information and also held a workshop that called for contributions on how information could be disseminated. Access to information is a key component as it enables people to make decisions based on the information given. In this way it would seem that this was the intention to allow stakeholders this opportunity. Curran also reaffirms the initiatives in bringing awareness of the process to the people. She states that CSOs made use of television and radio productions to get the message across throughout the country as well as producing popular materials on

the PRS Paper which were distributed[96]. The outcome of the participatory process of the PRS Paper was that Tanzania's civil society came together and mobilized around the PRS Paper in a supportive and positive way. The PRS process strengthened the links between CSOs in the North and South and enabled greater information sharing.

While information sharing is good, it is not enough to bring about effective participation. Curran illustrates that CSOs had very little impact on the content of the PRS paper and that the process was very rushed[97]. CSO involvement and impact on the outcome of the process have been very limited. Inadequate background to and understanding of the PRS Paper limited stakeholders' participation. CSOs lacked access to key documents and adequate mechanisms to provide feedback, and inadequate capacity of several CSOs to engage in policy dialogue[98]. This does question the quality of the information that was disseminated because while there was awareness of the process it does appear that information required to promote actual decision making was lacking. As civil society organizations were neither part of any decision-making and nor did they influence the content of the PRS Paper, it can be argued that the process lacked effective participation.

There was much greater involvement in the formulation of the Mkukutha. Curran highlights some of these activities. The government led the consultation process. Stakeholder groups were invited to participate in discussions surrounding the priority areas of the document. Network organizations such as the NGO Policy Forum, TCDD and Tanzania Gender Networking Programme coordinated their members to participate in the consultations that were held at the national and district levels[99]. The significance of renaming the document Mkukutha, its Swahili term, was the government's attempt at making it more nationally owned. The intention was to familiarise people with the document in the local language so that the people of Tanzania could understand and respond to it.

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[96] Curran, Z. 2006. 'Civil society participation in the PRSPs: the role of evidence and the impact on policy choices.' PPA Synthesis Study. p 11. http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0002121/index.php.
[97] Ibid, p 9
[98] Op cit United Republic of Tanzania, 2006:18
[99] Op cit Curran, 2006:9

The Mkukutha document also described the participatory process. The consultation process began in October 2003 and ended in November 2004. Workshops were established at district level where all sectors of society were invited to participate. Information was communicated by means of workshops, seminars, radio programmes, television broadcasts, fliers, interviews and music. A special questionnaire was prepared and circulated throughout the country[100]. This questionnaire looked for recommendations on what issues should be incorporated into the Mkukutha, as well as the main causes of poverty. There were a wide variety of concerns that were raised at these workshops, for example, the lack of credit facilities for small businesses as well as problems in the rural areas in terms of long distances to water sources, schools and markets. When the draft was finalised these comments were considered and included in the Mkukutha.

The consultation process of the Mkukutha was not rushed as it ran for an entire year. The number of activities and contributions made by stakeholders other than government officials indicates a far better participatory process 'CSOs were actively included in the revision process and contributed to meetings, committees and working groups'[101]. More importantly, the government created the environment by promoting civil society involvement. They invited stakeholders to participate and held workshops at all levels to gain perspectives from different levels of society. Furthermore, the Mkukutha was more outcomes focused, in the sense that the document addressed economic growth and the reduction of poverty. The first PRS Paper was more focused on debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC). Also, participation was institutionalised in Tanzania, by means of civil society's membership on the steering committee and in the technical working groups.

A few minor problems were encountered in the Mkukutha document, namely, that reports were not broadly disseminated and that CSOs were still establishing themselves as partners in local government. However, the relationship between the government and civil society should get better over time. Irrespective of this however, the effort made by these groups is an indication that they are prepared to work together to achieve better policies, not only for the country, but for its people as well.

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[100] Ibid
[101] Op cit Curran, 2006:9

4.4 Zambia

Zambia had been a British colony since the late 1800s and at that time was known at Northern Rhodesia. The country became the Republic of Zambia when it gained independence in 1964. After independence the country was first led by Dr Kenneth Kaunda, who at the end of 1972 declared Zambia a one party state and banned all other political parties. He also adopted an ideology of African socialism similar to that of Julius Nyerere. As a result, private companies were incorporated into state owned enterprises. Copper was the main source of income, however, the price of copper fell dramatically in the 1970s and thus, the economy declined. The state owned enterprises faced severe debt. Zambia resorted to taking loans from the IMF and World Bank in order to deal with the copper crisis. Previously one of the richest countries in the world, Zambia was becoming one of the poorest. According to the UNDP's 2007 Human Development Index, the country ranks amongst the lowest at 165 out of 177 countries[102].

In addition to the copper crisis, which led to Zambia's economic downfall, political turmoil also contributed to the country's underdeveloped state. During the 1980s and early 1990s strikes and riots took place as a result of one party rule, the declining economy and the rise in food prices. Kaunda then lifted the ban on political parties and introduced a multi party democracy. In 1991 Frederick Chiluba became president and liberalised the economy by privatising state owned enterprises. Several coups took place to overthrow him but they were unsuccessful.

The declining economy and effects of political turmoil contributed to extreme poverty in Zambia. Approximately two thirds of Zambian people live in poverty and the country's rate of infant mortality is among the highest in the world together with one of the highest rates of HIV infection[103]. Zambia is also one of the most highly urbanized countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Over one third of the country's twelve million people are concentrated in a few urban zones. Mass urbanisation in cities that are not adequately developed has negative effects as this results in the development of

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[102] FCO. Sub Saharan. Zambia. 2009
http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/zambia?profile=all
[103] Zambia : Background Note - http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2359.htm

slums where people endure poor living conditions, as well as crime and unemployment. Mass urbanisation also has an effect on the environment, causing water and air pollution as well as the destruction of natural habitats.

4.4.1 Introduction of and Background to the PRSP

As with Mozambique and Tanzania, Zambia had two PRS processes. The first draft of the PRS paper was released in 2001 and the final draft was approved by the IMF and World Bank in May 2002. After its two year implementation period was over, the second generation PRS paper was approved in 2006. This PRS paper is better known as the 'Fifth National Development Plan' (FNDP).

There is not much difference in the content between the two PRS Papers. This suggests that at the outset, the priorities were well established since no changes were required. The issues addressed were very priority specific and contained 10 chapters, namely agriculture, industry, tourism, mining, education, health, water and sanitation, energy, transport, communication, roads, and various cross cutting issues such as HIV/Aids, Gender and the Environment.

4.4.2 Institutional Structures

There were many institutional structures that were established, each with a very detailed role set out in the first PRS Paper. For instance, the Planning and Economic Management Department (PEMD) was responsible for coordinating the national strategic planning process of the Poverty Reduction Strategy as well as implementing the strategy. The Working Groups were responsible for producing submissions that influenced the content of the paper. This is important to note for two reasons. Firstly, Working Groups are made up of a wide range of stakeholders, which include CSOs, NGOs, faith based organizations (FBOs), academics, and which in the case of Zambia, established the main priorities to be addressed. Secondly, the issues addressed remained the same for both PRS papers which can indicate that the process worked well amongst stakeholders in determining how these priority areas needed to work.

In addition to the institutions established by the first PRS process, for the FNDP there were four more institutional structures. Amongst these included the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC) that considered and approved the

district plans that were developed through a consultative process. The DDCC produced a report that outlined the priorities of various sectors, for instance, agriculture, the social sectors and various cross cutting issues. This report also outlined strategies specific to district development. For example, a strategy to be used specific to gender development included, 'facilitating the participation of women and girls in entrepreneurship and income generating activities'[104]. These strategies were then included in the FNDP.

4.4.3 CSO participation in the PRS

Zambian civil society participated in the process in a manner that was welcomed by the government. The way in which the PRS process was carried out is different from that of any other country. The reason for this is that there were two processes that ran parallel to each other towards formulating the PRS Paper.

First, there was the government led process which began by holding awareness seminars. One seminar was held specifically for senior government officials. Mwinga[105] illustrates that sharing of information as well as the understanding of programmes is generally inadequate amongst government officials. A seminar was held specifically for ministers and senior parliamentarians and one seminar held for general stakeholders. The hosting of these seminars confirmed that government officials lacked awareness of such processes and these seminars were a means to remedy this situation. From these seminars, eight thematic groups were established, namely, the Macroeconomic, Agriculture, Mining, Health, Education, Industry, Tourism and Manufacturing thematic groups. These thematic groups were composed of a variety of stakeholders which included members of government, business people, academics, churches, NGOs, professional associations and donors who assisted in preparing the document. Over a duration of six months, weekly meetings were held in which early drafts were produced. In addition, workshops were organized to discuss specific themes. Consultations were also carried out in each province, with the purposes of determining the poverty needs of the region. The first draft of the PRS Paper was presented at a national summit, which took place over three days in October

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[104] Namwala District Development Plan 2006-2010. p 25
www.namwala.com/visit_namwala.php
[105] Mwinga, M. 2002. Civil Society and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process in Zambia. Service Centre for Development Cooperation. April 2002.

2001, and which was attended by 'hundreds of participants'[106]. Inputs gathered from stakeholder workshops and comments submitted by donors were incorporated into the document by the working groups, to become the revised document. Bearing in mind that this was a government led process, the initiatives appear very open. The many workshops that were held suggest that members of government created opportunities to ensure that civil society was able to comment on drafts.

Second, there was the civil society led process. Civil society groups formed an umbrella organisation called the 'Civil Society for Poverty Reduction' (CSPR) in October 2000. The purpose of this was to 'complement government efforts to ensure wider ownership'[107]. The CSPR operated on two levels. First, there were representatives in each of the government's working groups as well as in the provincial consultations that were held. Secondly, the CSPR held consultative group meetings and provincial hearings[108]. The CSPR established its own ten working groups, similar to those in the government led process. These working groups did not see themselves as opposing the official working groups, but rather as a complement to the working groups set up by the government. The emphasis on being complementary indicates the intention of civil society to assist and gather more input from communities and provide this as information towards the official draft document. After consultations in the different provinces, the CSPR produced a document called the 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Zambia: A Civil Society Perspective'. This was a very detailed document outlining all the areas that needed to be addressed regarding poverty. This was launched and presented to the Government in July 2001. The findings made in this document were used in the government's PRS Paper. It was also a representation of the input by civil society.

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[106] IMF Country Report, 'Zambia 2002: The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Joint Staff Assessment'. p 2. www.imf.org/External/NP/jsa/2002/zmb/eng/050902.PDF
[107] Waldenhof, B. 2005. *The Participation of Civil Society : Potential for fighting poverty and challenging neopatrimonial practices* in Eberlie, W; Meyns, P. &Mutesa, F (ed) 'Poverty Reduction in a Political Trap: The process and neopatrimonialism in Zambia'. Zambia: UNZA Press. p145
[108] ECA,2002:16. Economic Commission for Africa. 2002. 'Second Meeting of the African Learning Group on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: The PRSP Process in Zambia. 18-21 November 2002. Brussels, Belgium

While some weaknesses were identified[109], it did not seriously hamper the way in which the document was formulated. For instance civil society groups felt that they had limited access to vital information and documents. 'CSPR was not able to get a copy of the second draft of the PRSP from the Government'[110]. Secondly, civil society's participation only lasted until the first draft of the PRS Paper which indicates that they had no representation at other committees and thus felt isolated from the process. Furthermore, it was felt that their suggestions and input would not be reflected in the final PRS Paper. However, that was not to be the case. At a national summit it was discovered that 80% of the suggestions had been incorporated into the draft PRS Paper[111]. A survey was taken to assess and evaluate the PRS process in Zambia. Questionnaires were handed out to those who attended PRS meetings. It was discovered that the PRS process greatly strengthened the consensus among CSOs and government. Furthermore, 80% of responses by civil society indicated that the PRS concept was understood and embraced by civil society[112]. The paper produced by the CSPR was used in the PRS paper, which indicated that civil society did influence the content of the PRS paper. This was an achievement that other countries were unable to match.

In the FNDP, CSPR continued its activities to ensure that civil society contributed to the document. Civil society was invited to a consultative meeting held by government in April 2005. A national inception workshop was held in July 2005 where over 200 civil society representatives participated. It was here that the thematic groups were revived together with provincial groups. They conducted analyses of the different sectors based on civil society consultative meetings with the communities and other groups. At a consensus building workshop, civil society groups presented their papers, and these were compiled into a document called 'A Fifth National Development Plan for Zambia: 2006-2010-A Civil Society Perspective'. The participation of civil society groups in the participation of the FNDP process is very similar to the first PRS process and the document compiled by civil society was presented to the government. When the government released the draft FNDP in July, civil society analysed the draft. At a

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[109] Folscher, A. 2004. The Design, Process and Achievements of Zambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. DFID Zambia. P25
[110] Ibid, p 18
[111] IMF and IDA, 2002. 'ZAMBIA: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper-Joint Staff Assessment'. P3 www.imf.org/External/NP/jsa/2002/zmb/eng/050902.PDF
[112] Op cit Mwinga, 2002:35

civil society indaba held that same month, civil society responded to the draft and comments were presented at a Government National Stakeholders Workshop[113]. These comments included a critical analysis specific to the way in which policies were developed for the various sectors[114]. Comments were also made regarding the financing, implementation and monitoring of the FNDP. Effective participation is the process where stakeholders influence and share control in policy making and which is an important step towards achieving national ownership. The Zambian civil society did exactly this. The parallel approach used by the CSPR was an effective way in which information was generated and which was also able to influence the content of both the PRS Paper and the FNDP.

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[113] CSPR, 2006. 'Influencing Poverty Reduction Strategies and National Development Plans. A Zambian Civil Society experience'. A paper by Ms Ivy Mutwale, presented at a SARPN Workshop on PRSPs 20th to 21st November 2006.
[114] The National Stakeholder Meeting for the 5th National Development Plan. http://www.cspr.org.zm/press24-07-06.html

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This research has investigated the importance of national ownership and its function in the PRS process, specifically the PRS Paper. National ownership is best defined as the involvement of a wide range of actors in an activity which is led by the government. The functions of national ownership are that it creates acceptance of an idea, reflects national leadership and also attaches a sense of responsibility. Closely linked to national ownership is public participation, which is the inclusion of a wide range of non state actors, such as CSO, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, academics and members from the private sector. Furthermore, public participation depends on the degree of participation that is applied. The public participate more effectively in a process when they are able to influence the decision making process of an activity, a lower degree of participation occurs when civil society are merely kept informed of a process. The benefits of having the PRS process opened to the public is that these sectors are able to influence and share control in the decision-making of the PRS Paper. The PRS Paper is a national plan to reduce poverty and increase economic growth and therefore needs to reflect the views of all sectors, especially poor people who are the most affected.

Formal and informal mechanisms have been put in place to enable civil society to participate in the PRS process. A formal approach has been for the government to hold a series of consultations at different levels, that is, nationally, regionally and locally. At these consultations, CSOs 'are invited to contribute inputs to analyzing poverty and prioritizing public actions'[115]. Therefore, civil society organizations are given an opportunity to convey their understanding of what poverty means, and to suggest how best to address poverty concerns. National consultations that were held were general in scope whereas regional, zonal and district consultations focused on more local issues. In some cases, governments contracted civil society organizations to facilitate workshops because CSO networks in rural areas were much stronger.

The informal methods include the use of local surveys, where villagers were asked for their input by means of television, radio and newspaper announcements[116]. This is a

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[115] Op cit McGee, 2002: 8
[116] Stewart, F and Wang, M. 2003. 'Do PRSPs Empower Poor Countries and Disempower the World, or it is the Other way Around?' QEH Working Paper series 108: Oxford. p13

common method and very useful as society at large has access to such means and these informal methods are an effective way of creating awareness of the PRS process.

There are some positive and negative outcomes of the Poverty Reduction Strategies. On the positive side, structural reforms took place within the government departments. For instance, the Ministry of Planning and Finance underwent reforms in each country in order for the PRS process to be effective. Apart from the Ministries of Planning and Finance, other structures tasked with formulating, implementing and monitoring and evaluating the PRS Paper was established. This includes structures such as Thematic Working Groups, Monitoring Committees, Steering Committees, as well as a Secretariat, each with its own function. For instance, in all countries developing a PRS Paper, the Ministry of Finance is in charge of coordinating the national strategic planning process and responsible for the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the PRS process. The Secretariat's role is to provide logistics and documentation as well as the coordination of activities. The Technical Committee coordinates and spearheads the preparation of the PRS Papers through a consultative process with various stakeholders. The Thematic Working Groups were established specifically to enable civil society groups to participate in the PRS process. These are just a few of the structures that were established to get the process in motion.

A major criticism of the PRS process and the PRS Paper, are their similarities to the SAPs. Introduced by the IMF and World Bank in the 1970s, the SAPs failed because the conditions that the IMF and World Bank imposed were not suitable for Third World countries at the time. Privatization of state firms, and cut backs in social spending only increased the levels of debt and poverty. The SAPs also had a negative impact on various sectors. For example in the educational sector school fees increased to levels which many poor people could not afford, and there was also a drop in the standard of education due to the lack of facilities and the decreasing number of teachers. As a result this increased the illiteracy rate in developing countries[117]. In comparing the PRS Papers to SAPs, what has been observed is that firstly, with regards to the participation of civil society, in some cases, many groups were left out of the process, for example, parliamentarians, trade unions, women's groups and

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[117] Op cit Jauch, 1999:5

marginalized groups were not present. Furthermore, for those groups that were included, the process was described as just a formality.

> 'What is said at consultations is perceived by participants to have disappeared into a black box where Ministry of Finance officials equipped with donor supported technical assistance and budgetary information, not available to the public, write a plan which little reflects their inputs'[118].

This quote could be describing SAPs although it is actually about the PRS process. This implies that civil society was misled into believing that their input was considered. Other setbacks of the consultation phase was that draft documents given to CSOs for feedback were usually given at the last minute, or within time limits that did not allow them to consult with their own constituencies.

Secondly, the policies are described as being neo-liberal. There was an 'emphasis on growth at the expense of redistribution, the requirement that public goods and services like the supply of electricity and drinking water are privatized …'[119]. While neo-liberal policies are a specific trait of SAPs, the reality of most poor countries is that governments cannot afford or cope with maintaining basic service enterprises. For this reason privatization has become an option.

Despite the flaws of both the PRS process and the PRS Paper, the idea itself has been noted as positive. 'The idea of the PRSP, once adopted as the framework for HIPC, came rapidly to be seen as having the potential to be the overarching country-level policy document to serve as a framework to guide all concessional development flows'[120]. In support of this statement it can be said that at one stage the PRS Paper was a supplement to HIPC, but with time developed a life of its own. Furthermore the PRS Papers 'provide an opportunity to address some critical problems in both the governance of poor countries and the institutional framework of development

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[118] Ibid, p 8
[119] Hermele, K. 2005. 'The Poverty Reduction Strategies: A survey of the literature'. Sweden: Forum Syd. p 9
[120] Piron, L and Evans, H. 2004. 'Politics and the PRSP Approach Synthesis Paper'. Working Paper 237. ODI: United Kingdom. p 3

assistance'[121]. This means that the PRS idea goes beyond poverty reduction as it also focuses on the performances of institutions, relationships with foreign donors and the way in which a country is governed.

5.1 Has national ownership been achieved in the formulation of the PRS Paper?

In the case of Malawi, the process lacked effective participation. Although civil society groups participated, many weaknesses were experienced. Firstly, there was a weak flow of information and as a result CSOs were unable to prepare and/or consult adequately with the public. Secondly, very few women, NGOs and church representatives were made aware of the consultation process which indicates that the process excluded many groups. Thirdly, consultations were carried out but only as a form of information sharing and no comments were taken or considered. This means that the degree of participation was very low. Finally, the formulation of the PRS Paper was mostly controlled by the Ministries and government officials: therefore, the process fell short of proper national ownership.

In the cases of Mozambique and Tanzania, there are a number of similarities. Firstly, they each had two PRS processes. Secondly, in the first round, participation was not effective because the PRS process was rushed and civil society organisations did not have much influence in the content of the PRS Papers. Thirdly, the degree of public participation varied. In both countries, there was a low level of participation for the first PRS Paper. In Mozambique, the government saw consultation as a means of participation and in Tanzania while there was plenty of information sharing there was no real decision making by members of civil society. In the second round however, the degree of public participation was much higher. For instance, in Mozambique, the establishment of the Poverty Observatories was a platform where all sectors of society commented and contributed to the document. In Tanzania, workshops were held over a year to enable people to comment on drafts and these were reflected in the final document. National ownership was further enhanced in the second round of the PRS process by means of government willingness and cooperation. The ministries responsible for the PRS process created an environment by hosting workshops so that

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[121] Op cit Imboela, 2005: 436

interested groups and individuals could participate in the process. National ownership, to an extent, was achieved in both Mozambique and Tanzania.

Zambia has been the exceptional case where, from the outset, participation was effective. The CSPR made a significant contribution to the PRS document by establishing a parallel process. The representation of civil society at the different committees ensured that that input was considered. The same initiatives took place for the second PRS Paper. Not only were the initiatives of the CSPR effective, these initiatives were also welcomed by the government. This reflects a good working relationship between the government and civil society organisations. National ownership was achieved in both the PRS Paper and the FNDP.

Although conditionality is a contentious issue, one thing is for certain: conditions are necessary and will be attached to any agreement between two or more parties. The conditions that were attached during the SAPs clearly did not work. However, a condition in the form of national ownership is a good condition. Country ownership promotes the views of different social groups of the country. This means that members such civil society organizations, women's groups and academics are given an opportunity to contribute to a national initiative which makes the process a country initiative. Furthermore, the participatory process has contributed greater transparency and has also improved the policy dialogue between governments and a broad range of stakeholders on poverty related issues.

This research has shown that the process differs in different contexts. More importantly, it has shown that national ownership can be – and indeed has been – achieved, in the case of Zambia and less so in Mozambique and Tanzania. We therefore need to follow the lead of these countries so as to learn from them and ensure that the PRS process and strategies themselves, do not suffer the same fate as the SAPs, so we can have a real hope or strategy of getting the developing world out of poverty rather than deeper into it.

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