

## **A Review of Poverty Studies, Drivers and Redressive Strategies in Southern Africa**

By

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The review, starts by making a brief reference to the geo-political environment as well as demographic characteristics underlying the socio-economic situation and the crisis of poverty in SADC. The review adopted a descriptive approach and content-analysis of documentary sources, garnered from various institutions in South Africa and at the SADC Headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana, as well as electronic/web-based information, and direct conversational interviews with some development actors/officials. The review describes and classifies some earlier studies on poverty in SADC, essentially reviewing the scholar's main/core contribution and how it illuminates our understanding of the subject-matter of poverty in SADC and its variegated nature. The review further brings out key issues and main drivers of poverty and vulnerability in SADC, first and second generation mechanisms adopted/or being adopted to address the growing challenges of poverty facing the region from the global/international approaches to regional/sub-regional, and to national/state levels. The review concludes by highlighting areas and issues/conditions considered as sine qua non to 'making poverty history' in SADC.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Southern Africa consists of the countries in the southernmost region of the continent of Africa defined by geography and geo-politics of Southern African Development Community [SADC] the sub-regional

body founded in 1992. The region is the most racially and ethnically diverse in Africa. Though predominantly African, yet for reasons of colonialism and labour migration, it has large populations of Indian origin, Europeans, 'coloureds', natives/indigenous groups. Indeed Southern Africa is a multicultural and multilingual melting point. The SADC is made up of 14 members with a total population of 210 million, [about 30% of all Africans], at different stages of development, but predominantly underdeveloped<sup>1</sup>. In spite of the economic imbalances amongst its Member States and the relatively small size of the market (only comparable to Belgium or Norway), in the African context SADC's aggregate GDP of USD 226.1 billion is more than double that of Economic Community of West Africa States [ECOWAS], and equivalent to more than half the aggregate GDP of Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) as at 2002.

After several decades of political and military confrontation and unrest, marked by declining economy and social instability, Southern Africa is now experiencing a great deal of political stability, which can lead to economic recovery. The achievement of political independence by SADC member states, which started in the early 1960s, was finally completed with the attainment of independence of Namibia in 1990 and the end of South African *apartheid* regime in 1994. The recent achievement of peace in Angola is another positive step towards greater political stability in the region. The positive developments in DRC are also encouraging and increase the prospects for more effective cooperation and integration of the SADC region. While it is hoped that the political and economic meltdown in Zimbabwe will be arrested before it spills over into a major regional catastrophe.

During the 1990s, most SADC member states adopted multi-party systems of government, characterized by regular, free and fair elections [SADC, 2003]. Thus, creating an enabling environment regarded as so crucial for poverty alleviation/reduction by means of intra-regional integration and international co-operation. Because, though the region is relatively more developed than others on the continent, the

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<sup>1</sup> SADC Member states are; Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Others include; Namibia - since 31 March 1990 (since independence), South Africa - since 30 August 1994, Mauritius- since 28 August 1995, Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC] - since 8 September 1997, Madagascar - since 18 August 2005. Seychelles had also previously been a member of SADC from 8 September 1997 until 1 July 2004. Seychelles rejoined/came back to the organization on 15 August 2007.

SADC incorporates some of the poorest countries in the world, with the proportion of those living on less than US \$1/US\$2 a day averaging about 40% for the region as a whole.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept, which can be defined both in income and more directly, in non-income terms. Underlying the concept of poverty is the notion that individuals or households whose incomes or consumption lie below some socially predetermined level are poor or living in poverty. In the World Development Report [World Bank:1990] poverty is defined as the *inability to attain a minimum standard of living measured in terms of basic consumption needs or income required to satisfy them*'''. The Zimbabwe Central Statistical Office [1998] defines poverty as the inability to attain a level of well being constituting a realistic minimum as defined by society'', while in the Poverty Assessment Survey Study [PASS 1996],it is defined as *''the inability to afford a defined basket of consumption items[food & non-food] which are necessary to sustain life''* [Chimugira, 2003]

Generally, in the literature, three perspectives to the definition of poverty exist: These are the *income* perspective, the *basic needs* perspective, and the *capability* perspective. The income perspective posits that a person is poor if, and only her/his income level is below the defined poverty line e.g. US\$1 a day/US\$2 a day<sup>2</sup>. The basic needs perspective defines poverty as a deprivation of material requirements for minimally acceptable fulfillment of human needs, including food. The capability perspective explains that poverty represents the absence of capability to function. Thus, poverty is considered as *state of insufficient purchasing power to meet minimum consumption needs; it is accompanied by inadequate access to health services and related public goods*. These two insufficiencies lead to the poor having shorter life expectancy, as well as being more prone to disease and disability than the average person in the society where they live[ADB,1991]. In other words poverty should be conceptualized as a *multidimensional web of deprivation resulting in living conditions that lie below some minimum standard* [SADC, 2008]

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<sup>2</sup> The International poverty line, the US\$1 a day standard is measured at 1985 international prices and adjusted to local currency using purchasing power parities [PPP].This standard is said to typify the poverty lines in low-income countries. But the international poverty line set at US\$1 a day in 1985 terms, has been recalculated in 1993 PPP terms at about US\$1.08[approximately] US\$2 a day.

## POVERTY IN SADC: A LITERATURE ANALYSIS

Despite some differences amongst development theorist and policy-makers there are some widely shared consensus and agreement on the concept of poverty, the measurement and recipe for poverty alleviation. Hence there are obviously a number of studies on poverty in SADC which can be broadly classified into four main groups: [i] conceptual, [ii]causal, [iii] curative, and the [iv]consequential.

The *conceptual literature* preeminently seeks to address the definition of poverty and the limitations or challenges it poses. An example of this is, Wiseman Magasela [2006] which notes that the definition of poverty impacts upon the outcomes of studies on poverty and recipe for its alleviation. Magasela further explores ‘what has become common and conventional practice in research on poverty in South Africa, how it is conceptualized, defined and measured’. It firstly recognizes that poverty is a contested political concept and that conceptualization thereof, definitions of poverty, explanation thereof and policies designed to address it are all interlinked in a specific relationship. Magasela concludes by probing how the definitions of poverty correspond to the values, vision and socio-economic rights outlined in the South African Constitution [Magasela, 2006].

Haroon Borat [2000] also utilizes a class of poverty measures to determine the potential cost to the fiscus, in 1995 rands, of alleviating poverty in South Africa. The study yields detailed baseline estimates of what, free of all additional costs, is required of the state to reduce poverty in society. Results show that a creative combination of individual and household level data can be most informative in formulating appropriate policy interventions. It also highlights the centrality of the labour market and individual earnings in understanding poverty. Fidelis Mtatikolo and Robert Mabele [1999] in their study outlines the notion and measurement of poverty and the initiatives in poverty alleviation in Tanzania at the policy or strategic, as well as operational levels. The study highlights a conceptual framework for the fight against poverty, and offers some recommendations on developing a policy and operational framework for consolidating the fight against poverty.

As part of their poverty conceptualization project Murry Leibbrandt and Ingrid Woolard [1999], tests the robustness of provincial poverty rankings in South Africa against changes in measurement methodology. They use the concept of a poverty critical range in place of a single poverty line and distribution-

sensitive decomposable poverty measures, to re-examine provincial poverty. . The study by Abdalla A Hamdok [1999] provides a brief analysis and documentation of the experience of a specific Poverty Assessment Study (PAS) in focusing on the geographic distribution of poverty, gender and poverty perceptions, by providing an analysis on poverty related issues and their policy relevance. Hamdok introduces the concept of 'juvenisation and feminization' of poverty as it had been noticed that there has been greater incidence of poverty among children and female-headed households.

*The causal literature* seeks to explore and explain the causes of poverty in SADC. An example of this is the study by Jack W van Holst Pellekaan and Teresa Hartnett [1997] which listed eight causes of poverty in Sub-Sahara Africa [SSA], and further looking at what the poor perceive as their most urgent needs. They also compare poverty in Sub Sahara Africa with other regions, and discuss characteristics of poverty, with graphs of welfare indicators for rural and urban areas. Alex Zinanga [1996] seem to argue that rapidly growing population may be one of the causes of impoverishment in SADC, but further points out that the main population problem in the SADC region is not of large number or overcrowding but one of a rapidly growing population. Zinanga argued that on average economic growth is barely above high population growth rates experienced in the region and with such weak economies the rapid population growth acts as an impediment to sustainable economic development. However, Zinanga suggest that since the benefits of fertility reduction are long term, economic interventions to cope with immediate problems should also be intensified.

The *Curative* studies tend to provide panacea for the phenomenon of poverty, describing the efforts of states and non-state actors as well as the mechanisms in the process. Examples includes, Boyboy Motloun and Ronald Mears [2002], which reports on some of the main findings concerning effective methods for combating poverty in South Africa, arguing that the very high unemployment rate is the main cause of poverty in South Africa. They further discusses poverty theories, analyses the record of poverty in South Africa and makes suggestions to reduce poverty, and concludes that the creation of more labour-intensive employment would provide the best solution to the reduction of unemployment, and poverty in South Africa.

Irene Tlhase & Tjiuai Kanguuehi [1996], reviews the situation of inequality that still exists in Namibia, and looks at sectoral strategies and policies to alleviate poverty. They contend that direct involvement of

the people through participatory democracy to address fundamental needs may be the only way to close the gap between politicians' views and expectations and aspirations of the people and achieve sustainable development.

Hazel Chinake [1997] proposes a broad, appropriate and practical strategic approach which aims to alleviate poverty in Zimbabwe through a reorientation of conventional development strategies, while Arne Bigsten & Steve Kayizzi-Mugerwa [1997] discusses the measures introduced during the era of structural adjustment and the extent to which they have generated private-sector led growth in Africa. The study further looks at growth and poverty reduction with emphasis on gender, social services and rural development. Ephraim W Chirwa, Evious K Zgovu & Peter M Mvula [2002] evaluates the efficacy of self-targeting in Malawi's public works programs (PWPs), by setting the wage offered below the official minimum wage, and identifies factors that influence the revealed positive impact of the program on the livelihoods of participants. They review the use of PWPs as a poverty alleviation strategy, describe the Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) and report the results of an econometric analysis of the factors determining participation, the extent of public works employment and the impact of the works programme on the social-economic status of participants.

Vusi Mashinini [2002] utilises the Lesotho Fund for Community Development as a case study of the role of micro-finance in alleviating poverty. The article takes stock of the activities of the LFCD nationwide, and interrogates the performance of the institution to date. It commends that the LFCD is an innovative attempt at financing rural development in Lesotho in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, it is argued that some issues are mandatory for sustainable financing of rural development for poverty alleviation in Lesotho. Abdullahi M Yahie [1996], states that *poverty projects* are one of the instruments that governments and donors can use to implement policies targeted to advance growth and improve access to education, health and other social services. The author present a list of examples of poverty projects, and then discusses the selection of these projects, targeting, prioritization and integration. The article also looks at Rapid Social Assessment (RSA), Participatory Project Design (PPD), design of projects, and institutional factors.

Alf Morten Jerve [2000] discusses pattern and trends in poverty, some five dimensions of policy against poverty viz; Economic growth strategies and potential impacts on poverty reduction, Empowerment and

participation, Social policy and poverty. Others include safety nets and equity, as well as debt relief and donor policies. While examining the role of the informal sector in alleviating urban poverty in Zimbabwe, Jotham Dhemba [1999] points out that poverty has increased in developing countries in recent years, which is evident within the growing cities. Dhemba further argues that, poverty alleviation strategies are needed to help the urban poor, and the role of the informal sector in reducing poverty is analyzed. This can be done through the extension of credit and training facilities, mobilization of non-governmental organizations and other agencies in urban poverty alleviation, and to put in place a coherent set of policies and institutions. Renois Mokate [1999] provides a framework within which anti-poverty strategies in South Africa can be integrated by local governments in their local economic development strategies. The study builds on existing studies by adding complementary dimensions to be considered in linking local economic development and poverty alleviation, and looks at the local economic development and poverty alleviation study undertaken by the Department of Provincial and Local Government which provides a framework for developing a municipal anti-poverty program at provincial and national level.

The *Consequential literature* focuses on impact and consequences of poverty as social phenomenon and effects of the anti-poverty policies of the state and non-state actors with reference to impacts on poverty alleviation and or poverty perpetration in SADC. Examples includes, Michael J Samson [2002] who explores how HIV/AIDS and other long-term chronic illnesses/opportunistic diseases together with extreme poverty affect households with children suffering from severe malnutrition. The study further examines the role of social security in supporting or failing to support these households as they cope with the impact of HIV/AIDS. The most consistent finding is the extent to which extremely poor households depend on remittances and social security. The article concludes that a universal income grant for all South Africans would address many of the problems identified in probing the question; can democracy consolidate in Africa amidst **poverty**? David J Simon [2002] seeks to link poverty and how bad economic conditions influences political participation in Zambia. In the seminal work by Kenneth Good [1999] the author reiterates that the historic position of the Basarwa, Bushmen or San in Botswana, is that of an underclass, and that their position has, nevertheless, been pivotal in development and state formation. The article then focuses on the impoverishment of the San, which was structured, comprehensive and long-term process caused by elite of economic and political power and the exploitation which they practiced. Good stresses the fact that cattle-owning economy has not

ameliorated the situation, but has strengthened the wealthy, which neglected or worsening the plight of the San.

Tony Hawkins [2006], discusses the economic, political and security situation in Zimbabwe, and highlights the fact that the electorate, it seems, is willing to live, not just with economic and social deprivation, but to stand idly by and watch the progressive self-enrichment of a small elite. The study looks at the failure of land reform, emergency economic reforms and what the future holds and concludes that far from suffering from Zimbabwe's decline, SADC states, and others, are cashing in. Abdullahi M Yahie [1996] questions whether positive economic growth rates achieved through Structural Adjustment Programs, actually benefited the targeted poor, and reviews poverty alleviation program (social action programs) launched in Ghana, Uganda, Zambia and Malawi, to determine how these countries approached inequality and poverty, which problems they encountered and how training could change the situation. Graham Eele, Joseph Semboja, Servacious Likwelile, et al [2000] considers the prospects for the Tanzania in achieving the international development target, especially those relating to reductions in absolute poverty. The study indicates that economic growth, and in particular, growth in average household incomes, is the main driving force for poverty reduction. They point out that the extent to which poverty in Tanzania can be halved by 2015 depends on the initial choice of poverty line and the prospects for broad-based growth in the rural areas. Finally, Michael Bamberger [1996] identifies key issues in the formulation, planning, and management of targeted poverty alleviation programs, and stresses that the definition of poverty may differ from country to country. Bamberger also touches on NGO-government cooperation in poverty alleviation, the main factors affecting the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects, the role of the social sectors and dissimilarity in the approach to rural and urban poverty.

At this juncture it is important to note that the essence of the review is to attempt a comprehensive summary of conceptual clarification, causes and social-economic, geo-political, as well as histo-cultural drivers of poverty in SADC. From the earlier studies and scholarly enterprise reviewed, though there has been minimal consensus on the concept of poverty as a social phenomenon, yet enormous amount of energy has been devoted to its causes and manifestations. The studies reviewed earlier no doubt have also afforded us the opportunity of gleaning some critical drivers of poverty and role of actors in the

battle to make poverty history in SADC as elsewhere, even if the anti-poverty policies and mechanisms as well as the role of actors seem to be varied and extremely uncoordinated at the moment.

## **CRITICAL DRIVERS OF VULNERABILITY & POVERTY IN SADC**

It has become imperative at this juncture to argue that consequences of poverty often serve to reinforce the causes, leading to further impoverishment, thus making the causes-consequences-reinforcer/drivers of poverty almost a permanent chain or a vicious circle in a continuum. The following have been found to be either a cause or poverty perpetrating social phenomenon in Southern Africa.

**Political instability/civil conflict & bad governance:** Politically, the poor are the victims of bad governance reflected in: [i] unequal distribution of political power which has left the poor voiceless and powerless; [ii] corruption which wastes and diverts resources from activities that promote the interests of the poor; [iii] lack of transparency and accountability which has the same effects as corruption; and [iv] inefficient bureaucracies which do not promote the interests of the poor.

Human development and good governance are strongly related. SADC countries with good performance on Human Development Indicators are also generally tended to be well governed. The five leading democracies in the region, namely Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, and South Africa have the best HDIs in SADC. On the other hand, the years of political crisis in DRC and the political meltdown in Zimbabwe have created pools of poor citizenry within and outside the countries. The government of Zimbabwe faces a wide variety of difficult economic problems as it struggles with an unsustainable fiscal deficit, an overvalued official exchange rate, hyperinflation, and bare store shelves. Its 1998-2002 involvement in the war of the Democratic Republic of the Congo drained hundreds of millions of dollars from the economy. The government's land reform program, characterized by chaos and violence, has badly damaged the commercial farming sector, the traditional source of exports and foreign exchange and the provider of 400,000 jobs, turning Zimbabwe into a net importer of food products. Badly needed support from the IMF has been suspended because of the government's arrears on past loans and the government's unwillingness to enact reforms that would stabilize the economy. The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe routinely prints money to fund the budget deficit, causing the official annual inflation rate to

rise from 32% in 1998, to 133% in 2004, 585% in 2005, passed 1000% in 2006, and 26000% in November 2007.

**Corruption & Big Government Spending on Arms:** A major factor undermining opportunities for growth performance is the growing corruption affecting SADC. There is a mind-set, which pervades much 'entrepreneurial' and government/official activity that accepts manipulative and dishonest methods as normal. It is a problem associated with private investment, along with donor funds and public expenditures. It is endemic both in major abuse of public office and in the petty corruption within and around regular service provision [Greely & Jenkins, 2000]. Despite apparent commitment by some governments to tackle the issue, it is proving very difficult to undermine. The gravity of the problem can hardly be overestimated as it threatens to undermine the poverty alleviation policies and process in SADC countries. In South Africa, this has become a major hiccup towards effective service delivery. Again, consistent allocation of scarce national resources to less priority areas, which often decreases expenditure on vital socio-economic resources, will continue to serve a significant driver of poverty in SADC region. Big spending on military through several overt and covert arms deals are a major drain in SADC. For example, some recent data indicate that military expenditure in Angola at a time was 21% of GDP [UNDP, 2002]. This wrong economic decision often lead to debt burden, insufficient resources to enhance production of food, leading to scarcity & livelihood crisis, as well as the new energy crisis.

**Human & Natural Disasters:** Southern Africa is a disaster-prone region by virtue of its geographical location. Cyclones, droughts, famine, landslides and floods are all possible and actually occur from time to time. In 1992–93, the region's food security crisis was the result of an extreme global *El Niño*. Another major disaster was the 2000-2001 Mozambique flooding. Natural disasters have also caused widespread internal displacement in the SADC region, for example, cyclones in Madagascar, floods in Mozambique and volcanic eruptions like Karthala in the Comoros, prompting sudden mass movements to avoid danger. Flooding and cycles of cyclones have become common sources of displacement and death in SADC. In South Africa, the Western Cape regular drought and flooding has been linked to global warming, more so that 'only from April 2004 to 18 Jan 2005, there were 376 disasters-mostly fire & floods-affecting 12,351 families and displacing 52,283 with 45 deaths' [Afrol News, July 2008].

In Southern Africa, drought is the most important natural disaster in economic, social and environmental terms. The economies of the region are particularly susceptible because of their geographic position, the high proportion of people dependent on rain-fed agriculture for their livelihoods, and the strong links between agriculture and the rest of the economy [Buckland et al, 2000].

In SADC, Mozambique is definitely an example of one disaster-stressed state in Africa at the moment. Spencer Moore et al [2003] further illustrated this by noting that, as recent as February 2000, ‘Mozambique suffered its worst flooding in almost 50 years: 699 people died and hundreds of thousands were displaced. Over 49 countries and 30 international non-governmental organizations provided humanitarian assistance’ [Spencer Moore et al, 2003].

There was also the series of armory explosion in Mozambique, starting from the 1985 Malhazine armory explosion which killed 13 and injured over hundred [100], to the 2003 explosion at the Beira arms depot, killing three and destroying one hundred and thirty [130] houses, to the 2007 deadly arms depot explosions, which killed 119 and injured over 500 others [Banjo, forthcoming]. All these disasters have overtime resulted in forced migration, internal displacement and fostering persistent food insecurity. Though the impact of these human and natural disasters could have been mitigated through early warning and disaster-preparedness systems, but in many cases these measures were often either non-existent or failed to function properly [IRIN, 2006]. The accompanying destruction of natural resources has reduced productivity in agriculture, rangelands, forests, and fisheries and is exacerbated by the desperate survival strategies of the poor as well as inadequate and ineffective public policy on natural resources management.

**Unfavourable International Terms of Trade:** Domestic policies, central as they are, are not the only factors that determine the capacity to generate resources needed for rapid accumulation and the eradication of poverty. These also depend on external constraints and support. Given their structural weakness, the small size of their domestic markets and dependence on imports for capacity utilization and accumulation, the extent to which poor SADC countries can generate the required resources depends very much on how they can translate their unexploited natural resources and surplus labour into export earnings, imports and investment. However such countries continue to face significant trade barriers in their more affluent trading partners [UNCTAD, 2002]. In this respect, some recent initiatives,

including the Everything But Arms [EBA] and the African Growth Opportunities Act [AGOA] of the US are significant steps in the right direction. However, continued market protectionism perhaps constitutes the most important external impediments to resource mobilization in many SADC countries. Foreign trade plays an important role in the economies of SADC Member States. Trade data on SADC countries reveal a number of features. Firstly, trade is relatively a more important component of GDP in small countries like Lesotho and Swaziland than in large countries like South Africa. Total merchandise trade of the SADC increased between 1991 and 1998. The export trade for Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Namibia South Africa and Zambia is dominated by oil or mineral exports. The oil and mining industry plays a significant role as major foreign exchange earners and are a source of inputs to industrial development. While oil and mining ventures are capital intensive, they still generate substantial employment opportunities directly and indirectly through linkages with other supply and input sectors. In other countries, agriculture commodities dominate export trade. The bulk of imports of SADC countries are intermediate and capital goods. Only South Africa and Zimbabwe have significant capacity to produce such goods. Available data on the terms of trade show that most SADC member countries alongside with the majority of other African States have been experiencing a long-term decline in their terms of trade. This trend has been particularly persistent between 1980 and 2000.

**Negative Impacts of Structural Adjustment Program [SAP]:** Over the past two decades, in several countries the poor have been particularly adversely affected by the effects of structural adjustment measures/programs, such as:

- [i]Removal of agricultural input subsidies which have resulted in an increase in the cost of production;
- [ii]Privatization of state marketing corporations which has led to the closure of some of the markets that serves the poor;
- [iii]Retrenchments which have led to unemployment;
- [iv]Currency devaluations which have led to a marked increase in domestic prices of inputs and final products;
- [v]Liberalization of interest rate determination which has led to a marked increase in the interest rates at which the poor borrow money from financial institutions; and
- [v]Decontrol of maximum product prices, which has led to a sharp increase in prices.

**Landlessness & Restricted Access by Majority to Agro-based activities:** Inadequate physical assets, such as land caused by the absence of land reform, which would give land users the opportunity to establish legal or traditional tenure rights and give the landless poor access to land through redistribution policies. Closely associated with the issue of access to land is the problem of landmines/antipersonnel mines with reference to Angola and Mozambique. In Mozambique antipersonnel mines were laid both by FRELIMO & RENAMO rebel forces across Mozambique until the war ended in 1992.

Mines have the most frequent impact on agricultural lands [464 communities, 950,000 persons, 369 sq. kilometers; Roads [231 communities, 369,000 persons; and non-agricultural land used for hunting, /gathering fire woods, and other economic/cultural activities[180 communities, 291,000 persons, 137 sq kilometers. Blocked access to drinking water [55 communities and 87,000 persons]. The foregoing directly impacted on access to land for agro-allied purposes and further complicates the poverty phenomenon in DRC, Namibia, Mozambique and Angola. The seriousness of the mine crisis extracted \$17 million for Mozambique and \$14.7 million for Angola from donors who thought that access to land for productive engagement cannot be achieved without massive mine clearance program as part of post-conflict rehabilitation programs in Mozambique and Angola [Human Rights Watch, 2001].

**Unemployment:** Inadequate access to employment opportunities, which results from geographical isolation of the poor, low saving rate, low domestic investment, and a pattern of growth that does not generate large enough increases in employment opportunities for the poor. Employment levels and labour productivity trends in the region are generally low. Although it is difficult to quantify the employment levels due to lack of data, available information indicates that there has been a general decline in formal sector employment in the majority of Member States. The low employment levels in the region are largely due to a combination of factors leading to low levels of economic growth. These include distortions in factor prices and the short-term negative effects of structural adjustment programs. The use of capital-intensive techniques of production in some sectors of the economy that have the potential for employment generation has further aggravated the unemployment problem. As a consequence, a large proportion of the growing labour force is absorbed in the informal sector, which currently is characterized by low levels of incomes and underemployment. The youth and women are the most affected by unemployment and underemployment.

With regard to productivity, available figures show that labour productivity during the mid 90s increased by an average of 1.3 percent per annum in the SADC region. The net effect of high levels of unemployment and low levels of productivity is an increase in levels of poverty. These above-mentioned employment and productivity trends have serious implications for the efficient utilization of the region's human resources and the overall competitiveness in the global economy and market.

**Excessive Restriction on the Informal Sector:** The informal economy is defined here as consisting of those economic units and workers [both professional and non-professionals] who engage in commercial activities outside of the realm of the formally established mechanisms for the conduct of such activities. Included in such activities are the manufacture and production inputs and spare parts, the sale/exchange of hard currency at black market rates, the food vendor, fashion designers, 'saloonists'/hair dressers & related unregistered artisans. Though this sector represents a major source of economic activities and employment in SADC, it has enjoyed little support from government and international funding agencies. In terms of employment, jobs are created cheaply and large numbers of individuals would be employed if support is offered to this sector, more so that some city and country-specific estimates of the contribution to employment indicates as high as 60% in Zimbabwe and Swaziland. Again women comprise about 60% of the informal sector in SADC. Given the current importance and potential of the informal sector as a source of economic growth and employment, most restriction on the sector should also be eliminated so that it can flourish and reverse the trend of poverty in the region.

**Lack of Access to Credit Facility:** Closely complementing the above as poverty driver in SADC is the lack of provision of credit for the poor to successfully engage in income generation and self-reliant activities. The poor are denied, [for not being credit-worthy, excessive paper work, long waiting period and corruption] of access to credit to finance their small-scale enterprises and farming activities that generate employment and income, and enhance household food security. Apart from lack of adequate capital assets, the rates of return on the physical, human and social capital of the poor are generally low due to low physical productivity and low prices for their goods and services, which are the by-products of: (i) Inefficient use and management of scarce capital assets as defined above; (ii) Unequal economic power between the rich and the poor within their countries and between their countries and rich states, both of which work to the disadvantage of the poor who have little control over the determination of the prices of their goods and services; (iii) Limited economic opportunities characterized by small domestic

markets for goods and services and lack of avenues for productive paid-and self-employment; and (iv) Climate change and desertification, soil erosion and degradation, water pollution and scarcity, and depletion of forests and other natural resources caused by inappropriate agricultural practices, urban development and growth of population.

**Persistence of The ‘rural economy’:** This is characterized by low physical productivity, which is also the result of the use of unimproved technology the reasons for which include:[i]-Inadequate promotion of appropriate indigenous technology; [ii]-Lack of access to modern technology due to high cost and restrictions on the use of patented technology,[iii]-Inability to make effective use of modern technology because of lack of knowledge and due to illiteracy;[iv]Inadequate access to the means of supporting rural development in poor districts/provinces, which is also caused by a preference for high potential areas and urban bias in the design of development program:[v]Inadequate access to markets for goods and services that the poor can sell. This is caused by poor’s often remote geographical location, inadequate or non-existent of rural roads, ineffective communications, and the small volume and seasonality of the Poor’s labour services and production. Another causative factor is the low endowment of human capital: This result from inadequate access to education, health, sanitation and domestic water services, caused by inequitable social services delivery and resulting in the inability of the poor to live a healthy life and, therefore, take advantage of employment opportunities.

**Lack of & unintended consequences of social safety nets:** While they have good intentions, existing social safety nets throughout SADC have several shortfalls that render them ineffective and to the extent that some have been perceived as indirect drivers of poverty. The controversial *child grant* in South Africa which is meant to alleviate the burden of poorest of the poor mothers is a case in point. Other problems associated with social safety nets in SADC include, lack of proper coordination, thus not reaching the poorest households, who are the intended beneficiaries. Secondly, they are so often characterized by small, uncoordinated and duplicative grant/transfers programmes. Thirdly, they are often characterized by high cost of transfer to households, due to operational inefficiencies and corruption. Fourth, even if they reach intended targeted group, they often fail to lead to sustainable poverty reduction. Lastly, transfers are often insufficient in both amount and coverage, implying insignificant impact on poverty reduction [BIDPA, 2007].

**Social Problems:** These include violent crime, drug, murders, child/human trafficking, absentee fatherhood/single parenting, alcoholism on the part of both gender, and teenage pregnancy: The impact that violence has had in the region is enormous and is no less a contributor to impoverishment in SADC. Wars, violent crime, domestic abuse especially on women and children and substance abuse related violence have had devastating effects on the region. Violence and alcohol-induced road accidents is one of the major causes of both mortality and morbidity in the region. In addition to those that have died many still bare the physical and psychological scars of violence and road fatalities/injuries. The immense social and personal cost is matched by financial toll it takes, measured by the extent to which it is draining the health budget of the states, and the capacity of those affected to create wealth.

Closely associated is the common practice of early marriage and teenage motherhood which perpetuates poverty .Because this impact negatively of the educational and economic potential of these ‘baby mothers’. In addition to dropping out of school, the situation gets complicated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with young people being the group that is increasingly affected. Adolescent fertility rate in SADC ranges from 42% 1000 live birth in Mauritius to 221 per 1000 live births in the DRC [SADC, 2000].

**Women Impoverishment & Disempowerment:** Colonial policies which forbade African women from moving freely into the cities ensured an immense pool of free labour in rural areas, which made the migration system work. Buttressed by an ancient African patriarchy which defined women as male property within family and household structures, the colonial state extends patriarchal control over African women through a combination of various legal and cultural mechanisms. Southern African women were forbidden access to paid employment well into the 1950s, when black men began to move out of domestic service and into masculine occupation like the construction industry, manufacturing and transportation [SADC, 1998].

Socially, the poor are subject to norms, values and customary practices that disadvantage women and other groups economically, socially and politically or lead to their exclusion and powerlessness. These norms and values include: [i] Socio-economic stratifications where women are not valued as much as men; [ii] Inequitable and oppressive social relations concerning gender; and [iii] Large families, which overburden women. Although increasing attention has been given to women’s issues through activism,

women's demand for land, legal protection, and assured bodily integrity, recognition of their personhood in the legal and judicial systems, economic and property entitlements, and participation in decision making remain unmet [SADC,2000].

**HIV/AIDS:** At the beginning of the new millennium about 40 million were estimated to have been infected with HIV/AIDS, and 28 million had already died of the disease. The number of people infected is likely to reach 100million [cumulatively] by 2010 if a massive response does not take effect immediately [UNAIDS June 2000]. It has been projected that, without progress in prevention and treatment, an assuming constant risk levels, the lifetime likelihood of an AIDS death for a 15-year old boy is 50% in Kenya, 60% in Zambia, nearly 70% in South Africa and nearly 90% in Botswana. The impact of HIV/AIDS is unique because AIDS kills adults in the prime of their lives, thus depriving families, communities, and the entire nation of their young and most productive people. Adding to an already heavy disease burden in poor SADC, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is deepening and spreading poverty, reversing human development, worsening gender inequalities, eroding the capacity of governments to provide essential services, reducing labour productivity, and hampering pro-poor growth [UNDP,2000].

The SADC region faces a severe HIV and AIDS epidemic. The HIV and AIDS pandemic, by virtue of its magnitude, is the single greatest developmental and public health concern. UNAIDS has estimated that over **one million people** died of AIDS in the SADC region in 2001, cumulatively this brings the total number of deaths to **20million people** since the start of the epidemic.

The levels of infection in the individual countries have placed SADC on the top list of the most affected region in the world. Even though the 14 countries are at different levels of the maturity of the epidemic, all indicators point towards a severe state of the epidemic. Estimates of the severity of the epidemic using adult prevalence rates show that about 20 percent of the entire adult population aged 15 - 49 is currently infected in nine Southern African countries. These are Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Some worst countries have adult prevalence rates of over 40 percent.

Several factors have been noted to be contributing to the spread of the epidemic. These include poverty, gender inequality, intergenerational sex, illiteracy, stigma and discrimination, alcohol abuse and lack of communication about HIV and AIDS due to cultural barriers. The devastating impact of the pandemic continues to be felt at all levels of society within the region. The overall effect also continues to be reflected in the demographic structure of the population, with life expectancy dropping significantly to around 40 - 50 years, child and adult mortality rising and the number of orphans continuing to increase at an unprecedented rate [UNDP, 2000].

Apart from a significant decline in the labour force, there will be a younger, ill-qualified and inexperienced pool of human resources in the labour market. This is due to the fact that most HIV and AIDS victims are educated, skilled and enterprising and require long periods of training and skill acquisition. The negative impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is also being manifested in the following ways:

1. It is decreasing the productive capacity of all the sectors due to the loss of key personnel. This in turn is reducing the levels of tax revenues and thereby lowering the capacity of the public sector to effectively provide social services such as health, social welfare and education.
2. The decline in the productive capacity of the economy also leads to a decline in savings and investment rates and eventually the GDP growth rate.
3. It is reducing the productive capacity of agriculture, especially the subsistence agriculture sub-sector due to the loss of the economically active population.
4. The education sector is also affected due to lower rates of educational attainment and falling enrolment of children affected by HIV and AIDS, together with losses of education personnel.
5. Health care systems are overwhelmed with HIV and AIDS patients with the result that health workers are overburdened, health care costs are escalating and acute conditions are being "crowded out". Conditions such as tuberculosis (TB), which were almost being brought under control in the 1970s, have re-emerged as a result of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, further straining the overstretched health care systems.
6. The epidemic has also led to an increase in the number of orphans, street children and child-headed households [www.sadc.int/july,2008].

## ACTORS AND POVERTY REDUCTION POLICIES IN SADC

**International Approaches to Poverty in SADC:** The international community has always been interested in African affairs, with specific reference to the question of human development vis a vis poverty reduction. At a Social Summit [World Summit for Social Development, WSSD] in Copenhagen, the issue was placed at the top of the agenda. Following on from WSSD, in May 1996 the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] published *Shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> century* [OECD,1996], a policy paper which called for a global partnership to pursue a new development strategy with a focus on six key anti-poverty goals goals.

Also, the International Monetary Fund [IMF], the OECD, the UN and the World Bank co-authored a report entitled *A better world for all* [IMF, OECD, UN & The World Bank, 2000] which assess the progress made in combating poverty since 1990 and also outlines a common vision for the way forward to achieve poverty reduction goals by 2015. These goals have been further elaborated and promoted – through a remarkable consensus and commitment to poverty reduction from governments around the world-as the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] which see to reduce global absolute poverty by 50% by 2015 and reduce other forms of human deprivation<sup>3</sup>.

Flowing from the above, poverty reduction has become the prime objective of programs and operations of the international financial institutions [IFIs] in low-income countries. This appears to be a departure from their earlier emphasis on correcting macroeconomic imbalances and market distortions through stabilization and structural adjustment programs. Poverty reduction strategy papers [PRSPs] are the main documents defining the strategies to be pursued and prepared by the national authorities in developing countries with broad-based participation of civil-society organizations, stakeholders in enterprises/corporations and the poor. The Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility [ESAF] of the IMF has been replaced by the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility [PRGF], and the PSRPs have become an integral component of the Heavily Indebted Poor Country [HIPC] initiative and a precondition for

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<sup>3</sup> The declaration is an international agreement of 22 donors and 57 partner-country governments marks a significant set of commitments to improve aid effectiveness for the stated purpose of accelerating the achievements of the 2015 MDGs and reducing poverty and inequality.

access to the Poverty Reduction Support Credit [PRSC] introduced by the World Bank in 2001. As a result, bilateral grants, concessionary loans and debt relief have all become inexorably linked to poverty reduction policies and strategies. The World Bank has gone even further with the introduction of a new slogan: ‘A World Free of poverty’, and a mission statement: ‘To fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results’. However, a major criticism of the ‘Washington Consensus’ has been that World Bank led policies continue to contain all the main elements of the first generation economic reforms, designed to ‘get prices right’. The second generation reform, rather than revising and improving the economic policies so far pursued, only adds new elements, emphasizing the importance of getting institutions right or simply good governance *as part of MDGs*.

**Continental Approaches to Poverty Eradication in Africa & SADC:** The piece-meal approach to poverty alleviation in Africa started through the Lagos Plan of Action in 1980, to the Africa Economic Community [AEC] otherwise known as the Abuja Treaty of 1992. All these and many other development treaties and protocols preceded what is known now as New Partnerships for Africa’s Development [NEPAD]. NEPAD was adopted as Africa’s flagship program by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) in July 2001, who pledged, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, to **eradicate poverty** and place their countries, individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable development. NEPAD is, therefore, premised on African-ownership and African-leadership. Most importantly, NEPAD was designed as a concept for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the UN in 2000. The NEPAD’s core objectives and goals are to: [i] eradicate poverty and underdevelopment in Africa; [ii] accelerate sustainable growth and development in Africa; [iii] halt Africa’s marginalization in global affairs; [iv] promote an active role for Africa in a globalizing world; *and [iv] advance the empowerment of women.*

The underlying principles that guide the realization of NEPAD goals and inform the implementation of NEPAD programs and projects include: [i] Promotion of good political, economic and corporate governance; [ii] Accountable leadership and people-centered development; [iii] African ownership and leadership of its own development process; [iv] Establishment of partnerships with stakeholders in each country, with African countries and the international community, [v] Promotion and protection of human rights including gender equality; and [vi] Accelerating integration at regional and continental levels. The NEPAD program is divided into three (3) main components:

- a) *Conditions for sustainable development* are defined to be: [i]Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Governance Initiatives, [ii]Democracy and Good Political Governance, [iii]Sub-regional & Regional approaches to development;
- b) *Sectoral priorities* [i]Infrastructure–ICT, Water & Sanitation, Energy, Transport; [ii]Agriculture and Food Security; [iii]Human resources development – especially Education and Health; [iv] Trade and Market Access; [v]Environment and Tourism, inclusive of Culture, [vi]Science & Technology, [vii] Gender development, [viii]Private Sector development
- c) *Resource Mobilization* includes the NEPAD Capital Flows and Market Access Initiatives (i.e. Capital Flows: increasing private capital flows, market access, debt relief, ODA reforms while Market Access covers diversification of production, private sector development and promoting African exports and removal of non-tariff barriers). Resource mobilization was defined as a crucial activity to accelerate economic growth and consequently development. To achieve higher levels of growth and more effective poverty reduction, Africa needs to mobilize additional resources, both from domestic and foreign sources<sup>4</sup>.

**Regional Approaches to Poverty Eradication in SADC:** In 2001 SADC started overhauling its structures, operations and cooperation plans in both the political and security cooperation and the socio-economic spheres. This overhaul was intended to be the key to boosting the region’s ability to achieve the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Included was the preparation of a comprehensive SADC-wide socio-economic development plan. After years of labour the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) was launched in March 2004.

The RISDP identifies a number of interlinked priority intervention areas, of which many overlap with the MDGs and NEPAD core goals. They include poverty eradication; combating HIV/AIDS; gender equality; information and communication technologies; the environment; trade and economic liberalization and integration; infrastructure development; food security; and human-resources development. It sets out strategies and timeframes for achieving area goals. Laudably, it is in alignment

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<sup>4</sup> I wish to thank Mr Bankole Adeoye, NEPAD’s Partnerships & External Relations Manager for making available to me basic information about NEPAD.

with the MDGs and NEPAD objectives as it views poverty eradication as the overarching long-term objective and main priority [Oosthuizen, 2008].

SADC countries in line with this declaration have also proposed the Windhoek Declaration which calls for effective structures for dialogue, improved alignment and harmonization and proposes some key areas of cooperation within the region though with some lines on it with bilateral country programming. Furthermore, the SADC regards NEPAD as one of the frameworks for achieving the MDGs. The RISDP has been referred to as “SADC’s NEPAD programme”, highlighting the linkages between the two plans. The secretariats of SADC, NEPAD and the African Union attempt to coordinate their NEPAD and MDG activities [Oosthuizen, 2008]. The preconditions to the realization of the RISDP, and therefore the MDGs, are many. SADC’s leaders recognized that good political governance is among them, and that sustainable socio-economic development “will not be realized in conditions of political intolerance; the absence of the rule of law; corruption; civil strife; and war”. The leadership is forthright about the other challenges to the RISDP’s successful implementation. For example, the securing of the “significant” human and financial resources is regarded as a key challenge. This explains why five years after the commencement of the overhaul, it remains incomplete. The requisite institutional structure is not in place, and the SADC Secretariat lacks authority as well as sufficient human resources to implement RISDP.

**National Approaches to Poverty Eradication in SADC:** An important novelty in the post-1999 approach to poverty alleviation in SADC countries is the preparation of PRSPs as prerequisite for reduction of their debt and for concessionary loans and grants. PSRPs are country based-strategies for poverty reduction, which aims to provide the crucial link between debt relief, national poverty actions, donor support, and development outcomes needed to meet UN MDGs. Within this context, five core principles that underlie the PRSPs approach are as follows: [i] *Country-driven*-promoting national ownership of strategies through broad based participation of civil society, [ii] *Result-oriented* and focused on outcomes that will benefit the poor, [iii] *Comprehensive* in reducing the multidimensional nature of poverty, [iv] *Partnership-oriented*-involving coordinated participation of development partners and based on long-term perspective for poverty reduction, and [v] *Broad-based* participation by civil-society organizations, stakeholders and the poor is also required [SADC, 2008].

Some SADC Member States are addressing their poverty problems either through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), under the auspices of IMF and World Bank, or through other initiatives. From

a total of 14 SADC countries 8 countries are at different stages of implementing PRSPs, while the other 6 countries have nationally initiated poverty alleviation strategies. PRSPs implementing countries include-Angola, DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar, Tanzania and Zambia. While Non-PRSPs implementing countries include: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Mauritius and Zimbabwe. In South Africa, nationally initiated anti-poverty policies include the [i] Child grant, [ii] HIV/AIDS grant, [iii] Disability grant, [iv] Pension scheme and [v] Free primary schooling/feeding. In Botswana nationally initiated poverty alleviating policies targeting the poorest of the poor includes the following: [i] World War 11 Veteran grants, [ii] Old age pension scheme, [iii] Primary school feeding program, [iv] Community Home based Care program, [v] Orphan Care Program, [vi] Vulnerable Groups feeding program, and the [vii] Destitute persons program [BIDPA, 2007].

While PRSPs are not tailor-made, they all support policies that aim at helping the poor so that they can benefit from growth by expanding their opportunities, with focus on safety nets, pro-poor economic growth emphasizing productive sectors and employment creation, building human, physical and other capital assets of and for the poor, good governance and a conducive macroeconomic environment.

At this point, it important to argue to what extent, can the state and the poor be said to own the process, taking into consideration that the voices of the poor and preferences of the local and international policy elites can hardly be synchronized. *‘In practice donors project local ownership most easily into the PRSPs, yet these though regarded as national development strategies are not actually seen to be nationally owned and participatory’*. [Charles Mutasa, 2007 ] For example, it has been noted that the Zambia process suffered from the following: [i] Lack of awareness of the PRSPs process; lack of capacity; [ii] faulty consultative process; [iii] government domination of the process; [iv] limited timing and time-scale; [v] Inadequate information and imposition of political boundaries [some sort of no-go areas] on participants [Fredrick Mutesa & Wilma Nchito, 2005]. Thus SADC also noted that overall though PRSPs process has made important progress in helping the government to strongly focus on poverty reduction, engaging more with civil society and more attention to donor alignment, however the experience of PRSPs in the SADC also exhibits a number of challenges. These include unclear linkages between growth and poverty reduction, a weak analysis of external shocks and past policies and limitedness of country ownership of PRSPs [SADC, 2008].

**The Role of the Third Sector/INGOs in Poverty Alleviation in SADC:** By way of anti-poverty campaign, micro-financing, project funding, advocacy, humanitarian response, capacity-building and provision of infrastructures, seeds, equipments...etc a number of NGOs and INGOs are deeply involved in the struggle to make poverty history in SADC<sup>5</sup>. The civil society approaches to poverty eradication in SADC also involves the incorporation of International actor personality such as Bob Geldof, Nelson Mandela to raise money and food for the deprived in SADC through such programs as *Make poverty history* campaign & Kenneth Kaunda Housing for the Orphan programs. Some of the active ones in SADC includes Oxfam, Worldvision, Care, Tearfund, Save the children, Actionaid, Wateraid, Skillshare International, Plan international, Society for Family Health [SFH], ICRC,e.t.c

Though there are over fifty [50] major INGOs operating in SADC, they all have different approaches to poverty eradication and priorities, as well as different strategies. For example, Habitat for Humanity [which started in the USA in 1976] works in several SADC countries [Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia] to eliminate poverty housing and to make adequate housing a matter of conscience and action [Habitat World, 2008]. In summary the HFH work in SADC revolves around rural, urban/peri-urban and vulnerable group housing, land tenure, disaster response and national institution development. Others include housing finance & loan management, research & capacity building, advocacy, community development transformation and volunteer mobilization.<sup>6</sup>

Most of the IGOs and INGOs, some bilateral are operating in SADC as either partners or are directly involved in poverty alleviation projects and institutional strengthening .Within the UN system , they include the WFP,FAO,UNDP,UNICEF, WHO,UNAIDS and UN High Commission for Refugees[UNHCR].The bilaterals include DFID,USAID,AUSAID, IrishAID, SIDA, DANIDA,GTZ, CIDA etc. Among the multilaterals and financing institutions are the EU, World Bank, IFAD and of course ADB. All these work though without coordination to defeat poverty in SADC by focusing or

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<sup>5</sup> For example, SANGOCO convened **Speak out on Poverty Hearings**, between 31 March and 19 June 1998 [<http://www.sangoco.org.za/site/index.php>].

<sup>6</sup> Personal Interview with Mr Samson Nyam, the Urban Habitat Specialist at the HFH's Africa/Middle East Regional Office in Pretoria, South Africa.

prioritizing what each deemed the most potent driver of poverty or best strategy through which poverty can be eradicated.

## CONCLUSION

Poverty in Southern Africa is a consequence of economic, technical, environmental, social, political and exogenous factors as enunciated by studies reviewed. By way of summary some of the drivers of poverty in SADC include; Political instability, Corruption, Disasters, Low/unsustainable rates of economic growth in the wake of higher rates of urban population growth resulting in low incomes. Others includes, Lack of capital assets [physical, financial, human, natural and social], lack of access to financial markets. Lack of adequate human capital have resulted in absence of educational facilities, high opportunity cost of being in school, high cost of education and the impact of brain drain. Others includes Lack of adequate natural capital may be the consequence of environmental degradation, unequal distribution of land or pressure on the land caused by growth of population or marriage systems that lead to settlement in areas that are already overpopulated. There are also social problems and lack of social safety nets amongst others.

But what are the conditions for poverty alleviation? The list of factors contributing to achievements in poverty reduction can be long and varies according to country specific circumstances. Some basic conditions are, however relevant in all SADC countries for the alleviation of poverty and sustainable development. These are:

- Good governance to ensure that the state plays an active and enabling role in promoting human development. Governance needs to be democratic and participatory, free from corruption and mismanagement and with adequate checks and balances through free and fair elections as well as ensuring active role for the civil society.
- Massive & continuous investment in social services, providing equitable access to education, health, safe water, sanitation and adequate shelter
- Equitable economic growth that creates job opportunities, raises income and livelihood opportunities of poor people, and generates the necessary resources for effective governance and adequate investment in social services

- Gender equality to ensure that the fruits of progress are shared between women and men and that the pivotal role of women in all aspects of development is recognized. Closely associated with this is the need to empower the youth, as a critical segment of the society.
- Peace and security [at domestic and national levels] or the absence of armed conflict and rampant crime that has tragic consequences for poverty reduction, social cohesion and solidarity and for economic prospects and prosperity.
- Proactive engagement with HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The above conditions remain a *sine qua non* and must be sought to be met. It is until then a dynamic relationship between the government, the civil society and the private sector can thus create /enhance enabling environment for people's empowerment through quotable distribution of the fruits of economic progress

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