

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Government of Botswana UNDP workshop on poverty was held on February 9-10, 2000 at the Grand Palm Hotel, Gaborone. It came three years after the 1997 BIDPA study on poverty and poverty alleviation in Botswana and built on the latter study's comprehensive definition of the nature and extent of poverty in Botswana to propose an approach to the reduction of poverty that engenders popular participation and human rights.

Workshop Objectives

- 1.2 The workshop was intended to take stock of the poverty situation in Botswana through the assessment of poverty policies and programmes, and build consensus on the way forward. The workshop was also expected to identify the key elements of a poverty strategy for Botswana and the roles of stakeholders in responding to the situation. The workshop programme and the list of participants are attached as annexes VII and IX respectively

Background

- 1.3 The workshop was set within the context of the United Nations Country Strategy Note for Botswana and Botswana's National Development Plan 8 (NDP8). In both documents poverty and HIV/AIDS are identified as the country's foremost development challenges. The country's Vision 2016 document sets the development targets that should be met and the time frames . By 2007, the proportion of Botswana living below the poverty datum line should have been reduced from the 47% observed in 1993/94, to 23%. By 2016, no Botswana should be living below the poverty datum.
- 1.4 By most accounts, Botswana has made tremendous progress in development since independence in 1966. The most commonly lauded aspect of Botswana's development history is the economy's phenomenal and unprecedented growth performance in the first three decades of independence. The annualised real rate of growth of GDP averaged 10% in the period 1966-1999, thanks to robust performance by the mining sector from the mid 1970s to the early 1990s and widely acknowledged sound macroeconomic management. Equally deserving of praise, however, is the extent to which the Government of Botswana has used its share of the resources availed by this phenomenal growth to develop the people.
- 1.5 Through high rates of per capita investment in human *resource* development, social indicators improved substantially in the first 30 years of independence. According to the paper from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) the infant mortality rate fell from 108 deaths per thousand in 1966 to 38.1 deaths per thousand in 1999. Over the same period, life expectancy at birth and primary school enrolment respectively rose from 47 years to 67 and 50% to 97%. Adjustment of these variables for the impact of HIV/AIDS would however show some deterioration in the health-related indicators.

- 1.6 Although the measurement of poverty does not have a long history in Botswana, there are indications that the proportion of Botswana living in poverty has been falling since independence. For instance, the BIDPA study of poverty reports a 12 percentage points decline in the proportion of the population living in poverty over the period 1985/86 – 1993/94. Through a wide range of economic empowerment schemes and welfare programmes, the government has aggressively sought to eradicate poverty and mitigate its effects by creating employment and providing safety nets.
- 1.7 Since the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), development has focused more than ever before on people, and the state of being poor has increasingly been seen as a state of deprivation of fundamental human rights. Culturally, this is an acceptable position to Botswana, whose value system revolves around humanness (*Botho*). Botswana's Vision 2016 captures this succinctly in providing for "a compassionate, just and caring nation" in which nobody will have an income "...below the appropriate poverty datum line" (p 8).
- 1.8 The challenge then for Botswana was to refocus development policies more on the eradication of poverty; to accept that poverty dehumanises and approach the eradication of poverty as a process of restoring human rights to those who are deprived of them and in consequence, promote true human development.

2. OPENING SESSION

Chairperson: *Mr Morago Ngidi*

Secretary for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and
Development Planning (MFDP), Republic of Botswana

OPENING REMARKS

- 2.1 The Workshop was opened by Mr Macharia Kamau, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Co-ordinator in Botswana, and Mr Morago Ngidi, Secretary for Economic Affairs, MFDP, Republic of Botswana.¹

Macharia Kamau

- 2.2 In his opening remarks, Mr Macharia Kamau emphasised foremost that the workshop was part of a process of formulating an Integrated National Poverty Eradication Framework for Botswana. Poverty and HIV/AIDS, he said, were acknowledged in the UN Country Strategy Note for Botswana and the Mid Term Review of Botswana's eighth National Development Plan (NDP 8) as key development problems for Botswana. He argued that poverty dehumanises. Consequently, he proposed that in accordance with the resolution of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), which asserted the right to development as a fundamental human right, the approach to the eradication of

¹ For further details of the opening remarks of Messrs Kamau and Ngidi, see Annex I and Annex II respectively.

poverty should adopt the view that the poor are people deprived of fundamental human rights. Amongst these he mentioned the right to food; the right to shelter; the right to health care; the right to education; the right to work; and the right to ownership and control of property.

- 2.3 Mr Kamau paid tribute to Botswana's outstanding record of commitment to human development. He noted that the country has accorded education, health and the social services in general, priority status in annual fiscal budgets and has committed resources to anti poverty programmes. As a result of this, he argued, significant progress has since independence in 1966 been made in reducing poverty. He cited the twelve (12) percentage points decline in the proportion of Botswana living in absolute poverty from 59% in 1985/86 to 47% in 1993/94 as an example. Much of Botswana's development success, he argued, could be ascribed to good governance, sound macroeconomic management, respect for the rule of law and a culture of humanness in both the Government and the people.
- 2.4 He argued however, that although Botswana's achievements in human development and the eradication of poverty were impressive, they were not an adequate reflection of the level of effort; that strategies should be found to make Botswana's macroeconomic performance work better for the poor. In this regard he indicated that the UNDP would during the course of the workshop, present a "rights based" approach to eradicating poverty. The underlying principle of this approach, he explained, was respect for the "the dignity and worth of the human person", whose essence was captured well in Botswana's vision of "A Compassionate, Just and Caring Nation" by 2016. He underscored the importance of putting in place measures that would ensure that enough would be achieved every year to ensure that the Vision 2016 targets were achieved.
- 2.5 In conclusion he urged participants to speak freely and openly.

Morago Ngidi

- 2.6 For his part, Mr Morago Ngidi, concurred with Macharia Kamau's view that the workshop was part of a process of developing a framework for co-ordinating efforts towards eradicating poverty. He informed participants that poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS were placed high on the Government's agenda for development. From the Government's perspective, he explained, Vision 2016 constitutes the blue print for socio-economic development and that all programmes and policies had to be "Vision 2016 compliant". In this regard, he restated the Vision 2016 targets for the eradication of poverty; that the proportion of Botswana living in absolute poverty should have been reduced from 47% in 1993/94 to 23% by 2007; and that by 2016, no Botswana should be living in absolute poverty.
- 2.7 According to Mr Ngidi, the Government's position was that the key requirement for the eradication of poverty was rapid economic growth. The Government, he said, was committed to eradicating poverty and would in this regard continue to pursue rapid economic growth as a key prerequisite. He outlined other important prerequisites for the eradication of poverty as good and accountable governance;

country specific policy and programme design; public sector reform; and popular participation in programme design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, especially by the poor. These requirements, he said, are largely met in Botswana. On popular participation, he argued that it was important to reflect on the question of who should have the final say, in particular, whether international lobbies should be allowed to veto government policy.

- 2.8 According to Mr Ngidi, one of the lessons the Government has learnt in the implementation of Government antipoverty programmes such as the Financial Assistance Policy was that not every Botswana could be turned into an entrepreneur. Further to this, the Government was concerned that some programmes inadvertently perpetuate dependency. The ongoing review of FAP and other future programme reviews, he said, would take into account all these lessons.
- 2.9 On the way the workshop should conduct its business, Mr Ngidi advised participants (1) to refrain from recommending the establishment of new institutions and, in the interest of efficient use of finite public resources, focus instead on how existing institutions could be reformed and strengthened. (2) to avoid asking for more resources for antipoverty programmes and direct their effort at determining how best to use the substantial volume of resources already committed to antipoverty programmes to produce better outcomes for the poor (3) to avoid sweeping generalisations in their conclusions and recommendations (4) to avoid willy-nilly calling for more consultants and (5) to understand that eradicating poverty would require a process that may take time, and avoid raising the expectations of the poor unnecessarily.

3. PRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 There were two key presentations; a paper on “Poverty Policies and Programmes: Implementation, Successes and Challenges” from MFDP and a UNDP paper entitled “Background Paper for Formulating an Integrated National Poverty Eradication Framework”.

POVERTY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: IMPLEMENTATION, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Modise Modise

- 3.2. Mr Modise, the Deputy Secretary for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, presented the MFDP paper on “*Poverty Policies and Programmes: Implementation, Successes and Challenges*”. He started his presentation by noting that Botswana allows people to speak freely and therefore is particularly well suited to hosting a discussion on a subject such as poverty. He thus urged participants to speak freely and honestly on the subject during the workshop. On economic growth *as a developmental goal*, Mr Modise made the point that contrary to popular perception, the government of Botswana is “... not a growth enthusiast”. Issues of poverty, he explained, receive due attention in public policy, whose thrust has been to use mineral revenue, through the medium of

government, to deliver benefits to the rest of the economy and improve the welfare of Botswana. Citing a number of government antipoverty programmes, he argued that the fact that Botswana's growth performance attracts more attention than performance in other areas should not be equated to excessive emphasis on growth.

- 3.3. He noted that due largely to the economic reality at independence, poverty policies have had a rural bias. Then, the economy was agrarian, the population was predominantly rural and poverty was essentially a rural problem. Circumstances have changed, he observed, and there was need now to pay more attention to the urban poor and give poverty policies and programmes a national focus. He ascribed high unemployment and poverty rates, despite rapid economic growth, mainly to a structural deficiency of the economy. To explain his point he informed participants that the mainstay of the economy, mining was a capital intensive enclave activity with few substantive linkages with the rest of the economy. He surmised that stronger linkages between mining and other sectors of the economy would serve the course of eradicating poverty better.
- 3.4. On the limitations of the government's antipoverty programmes, Mr Modise observed that many lacked long term sustainability. The workshop, he advised, should address this problem. He nevertheless lamented the inability of the poor to take advantage of opportunities availed by such government programmes. On popular participation, Mr Modise expressed concern that because they were not able to organise themselves into an effective lobbying group, the poor were unable to communicate their concerns effectively and run the risk of being misrepresented by individuals and organisations that purport to speak on their behalf. A particular challenge for the workshop, he said, was to suggest credible ways of involving the poor in policy/programme formulation, implementation and review. He made special note of, and lamented, the apparent absence of the poor in the workshop.
- 3.5. According to Mr Modise, other key areas of concern with regard to programmes include; encroachment of the non-poor on the entitlements of the poor; unclear programme eligibility and exit criteria; inadequate mobilisation of the poor to promote popular participation; weak monitoring and evaluation systems; and unclear programme objectives. He argued that programme monitoring was made more difficult by lack of time-bound targets and verifiable indicators of performance.
- 3.6 He reiterated Mr Ngidi's point that sustained economic growth was essential for the eradication of poverty and that in this regard, economic diversification and employment creation had to be pursued more aggressively. On the latter, he argued that sufficient attention should be paid to self employment and that to serve this objective, education and training should focus more on the development of skills. He emphasised that the development challenge now required that Botswana be prepared for opportunities outside Botswana and that the education system should not be found wanting in this regard. Other imperatives, he said, included a population policy that ensures that the economy continues to meet society's needs adequately; social harmony; good governance; and sound macroeconomic management.

- 3.7 In concluding his presentation, Mr Modise accepted the human rights approach to poverty eradication and noted that human rights could best be sustained in an economy that was growing.

Floor Discussion of “Poverty Policies and Programmes: Implementation, Successes and Challenges” and comments on opening remarks by Messrs Macharia Kamau and Morago Ngidi

- 3.8 The following is a summary of the comments, questions and responses that followed the opening remarks by Messrs Kamau and Ngidi and the presentation by Mr Modise.
- 3.9 On the question of sustainability of human rights, it was explained that fundamental human rights were by nature inalienable and governments were obliged to promote and protect them: that no institution should have the discretion to decide which fundamental rights to promote and which ones to disregard. This, it was explained, was the import of the human rights approach to the eradication of poverty.
- 3.10 Other related questions and comments revolved around whether it was desirable to link the eradication of poverty to human rights and the consensus view was that what was being proposed in the human rights approach to the eradication of poverty was already in the Vision 2016 document. The document envisages a society in which the basic needs of life would be adequately met for all by 2016.
- 3.11 Participants wanted the institution that serves as the focal point on poverty issues to be identified. It was explained that as the agency responsible for development and planning, the MFDP plays this role but only within the government sector. A division in the ministry, the Rural Development Co-ordination Division (RDCD) was charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating the implementation of government poverty policies and programmes in rural areas. Concerns were raised about the quality of co-ordination of Government policies and programmes, suggesting that the RDCD may lack the capacity to provide effective co-ordination of poverty policies and programmes.
- 3.12 Following on the above observation, it was observed that poverty policies and programmes in Botswana were not integrated, leading to substantial duplication of effort in some areas and neglect of others. The need for a co-ordinating agency whose mandate extended to the private and NGO sectors was subsequently established. The agency’s primary function would be to co-ordinate all efforts towards eradicating poverty in Botswana with a view to avoiding duplication of effort, creating and establishing synergies and maximising efficiency of resource use and the effectiveness of interventions.
- 3.13 Concern was also expressed that Government regulations often stood in the way of eradicating poverty. In this regard a participant cited an instance in which he could not secure mortgage financing for a house because the affordable locally developed technology he wanted to use was not permissible. Participants endorsed the view

that policies and regulations should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they support efforts towards the eradication of poverty and at a general level, that they promote development.

- 3.14 Another area of concern identified by participants was excessive centralisation of decision-making powers at the level of central government. This, it was argued, resulted in uniform policy prescriptions from the central government without due regard for variations in locational wants. Consequently, a case for further decentralisation of functions to local authorities was made with the recommendation that local level institutions be accorded the human and financial resources necessary for them to carry out their expanded functions. Examples of inefficient policies arising from centralised decision-making included ALDEP, which, though clearly not suited for the Ghanzi and Kgalagadi districts, had been sold aggressively in both.
- 3.15 Questions were raised about how the poor could participate in the design of policies and programmes that address their problems. In this regard, dissatisfaction with workshops in which the poor did not have representation was registered. Further to that, doubts regarding the sincerity of some -NGOs in particular - who purport to speak for the poor were expressed. The general view was that possibilities for misrepresentation of the concerns of the poor by their 'self-appointed' representatives were real.
- 3.16 Participants agreed that getting the poor to participate in the design of policies and programmes that address their problems requires more than workshops. In particular, a social mobilisation effort was required to empower the poor to participate meaningfully in problem identification; programme design and implementation; and programme monitoring and evaluation.
- 3.17 A participant wanted to know whether smallholder agriculture should be emphasised as a way of eradicating poverty. The MFDP explained that traditional smallholder agriculture had very limited potential for further development because of adverse soil, climatic and weather conditions. The more promising areas, it was explained, were horticulture and dairy farming.
- 3.18 The Ministry's view that poverty policies and programmes should be tailored to the circumstances of the implementing country was well received. However, participants expressed the view that needs varied substantially across regions or districts even within one country. The resulting recommendation was that policies and programmes should be customised to the specific needs of individual localities.
- 3.19 In response to a question on what constitutes the basket of goods and services on whose basis the Poverty Datum Line is constructed, the UNDP country office made the list available to participants.

BACKGROUND PAPER ON FORMULATING AN INTEGRATED NATIONAL POVERTY ERADICATION FRAMEWORK

Fantu Cheru
UNDP Consultant

- 3.20 Professor Cheru presented the paper on behalf of the UNDP country office in Botswana. Commending the Botswana Government on the effort so far committed to eradicating poverty and the good ideas on which Government sponsored poverty initiatives are based, Professor Cheru started his presentation with the following as points of departure.
- 3.21 First, the issue was not how much to spend on the eradication of poverty but rather how to spend. He concurred with previous speakers on the point that a substantial amount of resources was already committed to current antipoverty initiatives. What was needed then was more efficient and effective utilisation of the resources. Second, existing welfare programmes had to be reoriented to mobilise the poor into becoming effective agents of their own development. As is, he argued, it would appear that the poor were involved in these programmes largely as passive recipients of welfare support, with little propensity towards active participation in the processes intended to benefit them. Third, the Government's pursuit of growth was not necessarily a problem since eradicating poverty required growth. The objective of antipoverty programmes should not be to negate growth, but rather to promote pro-poor growth. Finally, institutions that deliver services had to be strengthened so that they could deliver them more efficiently and effectively to the poor. Weak management in institutions, he said, hampered delivery. In this regard, focus should be on a division of functions between institutions on the basis of which ones could deliver most efficiently and most effectively.
- 3.22 In his view, the objective of a poverty strategy should therefore be to identify the root causes of poverty and establish where appropriate interventions could be made. It should also provide a productive link between macroeconomic policy and social policy. For instance, economic growth should be pro-poor in the sense that it does not aggravate income disparities. Tax and expenditure policy should promote pro-poor growth.
- 3.23 On the relevance of human rights to the development process Professor Cheru explained that human rights and development were inseparable and that all human beings had inalienable social and economic rights – the right to food; shelter; health care; work; property etc. These, he said, are provided for by international conventions but are not entitlements. He submitted that the obligation of the state in respect of these was to create and nurture the environment necessary for them to be actualised. This, he argued, included:
- a) Engendering equality on matters of race and gender and ensuring that the basic social and economic rights of all were guaranteed regardless of race and gender
 - b) Popular participation by beneficiaries. The underlying principle was that the poor must have their say in how their problems are resolved. This, he argued,

was essential to the protection and promotion of the dignity of the persons of the poor.

- c) Environmental sustainability. The poor, he argued stood to lose relatively more from environmental degradation and development policies and programmes should as such not destroy the environment. Further to that, the poor must have an equitable share of the benefits of environmental resources.

3.24 Professor Cheru emphasised that development was a long-term process in which all must participate and benefit. Central to the process, he explained, were issues of human dignity, liberty and empowerment. He argued that for the process to be successful, a change of attitudes - in both government and the broader society - and institutional reform were necessary. In this regard he suggested that local government structures be empowered to deliver services to communities because they were best placed to do so.

3.25 On the key attributes of a poverty strategy he emphasised three: First, the establishment of clear priorities for action and the attendant targets. Second, a schedule for the development and implementation of sectoral measures and third, the determination of strategies to engage civil society and local communities in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of poverty programmes. He suggested the strengthening of a central unit to co-ordinate efforts and monitor performance against targets.

3.26 According to Professor Cheru, an action plan for the eradication of poverty should be founded on the following pillars.

- a) *Broad-based Economic Growth:* Growth, he said, was essential so long as it was understood that its effects were neither automatic nor equitably distributed. Deliberate measures had to be taken to ensure that growth was pro poor and therefore helped reduce poverty.
- b) *Governance:* Noting that local government institutions were better placed to identify community needs than central government agencies, Professor Cheru argued that responsibility for service delivery should rest with local government and that in this regard, district and town councils should be accorded the requisite financial and human resource capacities.
- c) *Physical Infrastructure:* Implicitly taking the view that poverty is predominantly a rural programme, Professor Cheru argued that infrastructure development was necessary to reduce the structural constraints that limit the poor's response to market incentives.
- d) *Informal Sector Productivity:* Professor Cheru argued that in recognition of the potential role of the informal sector in employment creation and the provision of essential goods and services to low income groups, measures should be taken to raise informal sector productivity and develop micro-enterprises as entry points for reducing poverty.

- e) *Human Resource Development*: This, he argued, required such basic human needs as access to health services, education and skills development, nutrition and water.
- f) *Effective Co-ordination and Monitoring Mechanisms*: Professor Cheru argued that eradicating poverty requires the efforts of a multiplicity of actors in the Government, the private and NGO sectors. In this regard, he reasoned that effective mechanisms for co-ordinating the efforts of all actors were necessary to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and make the best use of scarce resources.

3.27 In concluding his presentation, Professor Cheru advised that effective eradication of poverty required a learning approach. Innovative strategies for involving the poor in the process should be developed and in this regard, lessons must continuously be drawn from experiences, both good and bad.

Floor Discussion of “Background Paper for Formulating an Integrated National Poverty Eradication Framework”

Comments, Questions and Answers

- 3.28 Participants agreed that the volume of resources Botswana had committed to the eradication of poverty was substantial and that the main concern for the anti-poverty crusade should be how the resources were expended and the outcomes thereof rather than how much more should be committed to poverty programmes. Consensus was also reached on the view that a huge gap exists between policy prescriptions and implementation; and that for better results, effective policy implementation should be ensured. In this regard, participants agreed that for the future, programme monitoring and evaluation should be given priority to ensure that where an optimal link between programme inputs and outputs was not established, corrective action was taken early enough.
- 3.29 The plenary identified the major weaknesses of programming within Government as inadequate popular participation, inadequate co-ordination of policies and programmes, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, and limited consideration of long-term sustainability in programme design. A high premium was attached to broad-based community participation in planning and programme design as an alternative to top-down planning. Broad-based participation, it was agreed, ensured proper diagnosis of and response to problems; improved understanding and ownership of programmes by the beneficiaries; and consequently enhanced chances of programme success. The consensus view was that this was currently lacking at the level of planning and programming within Government and that social mobilisation should entail creating awareness of current programmes.
- 3.30 On co-ordination, the plenary bemoaned the lack of interface between programmes and policies run by different Government departments. Consequently, it was suggested that the co-ordinating unit, identified as the RDCD in the case of poverty

policies and programmes, should be strengthened to ensure effective monitoring and effective long term planning, with vulnerable groups – the poor, the youth, the disabled and the elderly – accorded special attention. On sustainability, the point made was that unless complementary services were provided, many of the well-intentioned government programmes would fail. Agriculture, which enjoyed generous production subsidies but was not, in the view of the plenary, equally supported in infrastructure development to give farmers access to markets and key inputs, was given as an example.

- 3.31 Issues of capacity constraints and the division of functions between central and local government institutions were raised. The consensus view was that for effective response to poverty, the central government should cede some of its decision making and programming functions to local authorities. The latter institutions were considered better informed about local needs and therefore better predisposed to provide appropriate responses. It was recognised though that local institutions would have to be capacitated if they were to assume additional responsibilities as recommended. In particular, the human resource capability of councils should be enhanced by providing incentives for competent personnel to stay in local institutions. In this regard, the position of Council Secretary was singled for upgrading to the permanent secretary level to stem the brain drain from local to central government where prospects for career progression were better, and promote career paths in local government.
- 3.32 A human rights approach to human development and the eradication of poverty was accepted. The approach was viewed to be consistent with Botswana's Vision 2016 ideals, which included satisfaction of the needs identified in the rights approach by year 2016. Adoption of a human rights approach to the eradication of poverty therefore served to ratify, and give more weight to, commitments that Botswana had already made. A participant observed that the Vision 2016 document was itself rights based and that successful implementation of the Vision would deliver a rights based development. In this regard it was agreed that the challenge lay in operationalising Vision 2016 and monitoring its progress. It was further agreed that a human rights framework for development and poverty eradication ensured that planning, programming and service delivery responded to the concerns of weak constituencies, including the poor, and thus provides a monitoring instrument for Vision 2016.
- 3.33 Community participation was essential to the process of eradicating poverty. In this regard, information dissemination and feedback mechanisms relating to antipoverty measures require revision so that they could more effectively promote broad based community participation.
- 3.34 Poverty should be placed firmly on the political agenda. A participant had expressed the view that political debate on poverty was inadequate. This, the workshop surmised, resulted from the inability of the electorate to hold politicians accountable. A participant observed the irony that political debate on poverty is limited even though the poor constitute the majority of the people who registered to vote. The poor should therefore be mobilised so that they could claim better

political representation. Politicians, on the other hand, should be sensitised to the needs of their largest voting group.

- 3.35 The plenary accepted the MFDP view that growth was a necessary requirement for poverty eradication but emphasised that growth policies should be juxtaposed with those that ensure that growth served the ends of human development and the eradication of poverty.
- 3.36 A participant observed that the keynote paper's appraisal of welfare programmes did not adequately address some of their inherent weaknesses and gave as examples
- (a) *The displacement of family support systems for the aged by the old age pension:* The main concern was that households may increasingly abdicate their responsibilities towards their aged, leaving most of the responsibility to the state.
 - (b) *Discrimination against the youth in poor households, where it was assumed that the family system would take care of children:* The concern was that the socio-economic rights of children in households that were on welfare support were, given the particular problems of poor households in Botswana, not guaranteed.

A related point was made with respect to non-governmental organisations. They were accused of being more responsive to donor conditionalities for funding than the needs they purport to exist to serve.

- 3.37 Participants agreed that eradicating poverty required a functional partnership between Government, the private sector, development partners and civil society and that the Government should facilitate this partnership. The corporate sector should be given incentives, tax rebates for instance, to assume more social responsibility. Constraints on the development of the informal sector, including access to credit, should be addressed. Finally the Government should enhance its own capacity to deliver and reform itself as appropriate to accommodate other potential role players.

4. THE KEY ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE WORKSHOP

- 4.1 Mindful that a lot of effort, particularly from Government, has gone into combating poverty and mitigating its effects, the key issues emerging from the discussions in the plenary and working group sessions over the two days were as follows.
- 4.1.1 *Review of current policies and programmes:* Current policies and programmes need to be reviewed in order to identify gaps; to give them a stronger focus on poverty; to allow for more active participation by the beneficiaries in the (re)design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

- 4.1.2 *Popular participation was considered essential for an effective strategy for eradicating poverty:* An effective strategy for eradicating poverty must empower the poor to be agents of their own development. In this regard, social mobilisation was essential to ensure that the poor participated effectively in programme design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
- 4.1.3 *Effective co-ordination is essential:* Considering that eradicating poverty would require the efforts of a multiplicity of actors an effective co-ordinating mechanism was deemed necessary to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to build and exploit synergies amongst programmes to ensure maximum impact on poverty. Several levels of co-ordination were identified. These were co-ordination at the national level to integrate and harmonise the national effort, co-ordination within and between ministries to harmonise intra and inter ministry programmes and co-ordination at local/district level. At the national level, a single institution was deemed necessary to ensure mutually reinforcing co-operation amongst actors.
- 4.1.4 *Monitoring and evaluation:* For effective resource use, programme performance should be monitored on a continuous basis against time-bound targets and verifiable indicators of performance. In the context of Botswana, and the eradication of poverty in particular, it was agreed that the targets were spelt out in Vision 2016.
- 4.1.5 *Good governance and accountability:* The basic requirement for the successful eradication of poverty was a functional government. Good, transparent and accountable governance based on popular participation ensured efficient and effective resource use for the desired ends – namely good macroeconomic management, a good link between macro objectives and social policy and the creation of an environment necessary for people to claim their rights.
- 4.1.6 *The rights approach to development was deemed consistent with Vision 2016:* The fundamental rights enumerated in the human rights framework for eradicating poverty – the right to food, shelter, education, health care etc - were provided for as targets for 2016 in Botswana's vision document.

5. SUMMARY AND THE WAY FORWARD

5.1 Consensus Issues

- 5.1.1 Poverty has not been neglected in Botswana. In particular, the government had committed a substantial volume of resources to eradicating poverty and mitigating its effects. Tangible results have been achieved. For instance, in the eight (8) years between 1985/86 and 1993/94, the proportion of Botswana living in poverty was reduced by 12 percentage points from 59% to 47%. For the future, the country had committed itself to eradicating absolute poverty by

2016. The apparent policy bias towards rural areas should, however, be addressed to accord urban poverty sufficient treatment.

5.1.2 Although progress has been made, government programmes aimed at eradicating poverty have not been as successful as they could have been. The key weaknesses of these programmes were identified as:

- a) Inadequate popular participation in programme design; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation; which resulted in poor targeting and under-utilisation of programmes.
- b) Inadequate co-ordination of poverty programmes leading to failure to capture synergies at both the central and local/district levels.
- c) Inadequate monitoring and evaluation, which means that programme outputs were not adequately reconciled with targets, and gaps were not identified early enough.

5.1.3 There was need for a poverty eradication framework that would provide the basis for the co-ordination of all efforts towards eradicating poverty.

5.1.4 Popular participation was deemed essential for programme success. In this regard, it was agreed that efforts should be made to empower communities to participate in programme design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

5.1.5 Systematic monitoring and evaluation of programmes and strategies, involving all stakeholders, should be an integral part of poverty programmes and strategies.

5.1.6 A human rights framework, it was agreed, would not be a problem for Botswana. The country had a good human rights record and a functional democracy. The provisions of the rights approach - the right to food, the right to shelter, the right to health care, the right to education and the right to work - it was noted, are articulated in Vision 2016 as long term development targets.

5.1.7 It was agreed that an urgent need for an adequately empowered institution that would co-ordinate all efforts aimed at eradicating poverty existed. It was subsequently agreed that a reoriented and adequately capacitated Rural Development Council (RDC) should be the co-ordinating body.

5.1.8 Eradicating poverty required a working partnership between the government, development partners, the private sector, civil society and the beneficiaries within an efficient and well co-ordinated framework.

5.2 The Way Forward

The proceeding of the workshop resulted in consensus on the following as the immediate steps on a way forward.

Co-ordination

- 5.2.1 The Rural Development Council (RDC) should be confirmed as the institution that would assume overall responsibility for the co-ordination of programmes and activities aimed at eradicating poverty. Other immediate activities would include an assessment of the RDC's capacity to deliver on its expanded mandate. Following the assessment, the RDC would be capacitated as appropriate. *It was noted that the RDC was already under review and agreed that a decision on the future character and role of the RDC should take on board the outcome of the review.*
- 5.2.2 Rationalisation of the co-ordination and management of programmes at the central and local government levels to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The division of functions between the two tiers should be such that the relative strengths of each were fully exploited. Where necessary, capacity should be enhanced.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, the following activities were recommended.

- 5.2.3 An assessment of current monitoring and evaluation instruments, data systems and tools as input towards the development of an integrated monitoring and evaluation system to assess performance against the Vision 2016 targets.
- 5.2.4 Measures and systems of putting in place verifiable performance indicators for programmes at the central (RDC) and local/district levels and with ministries.
- 5.2.5 Measures to enhance the capacity of the reoriented RDC to undertake effective monitoring and evaluation to ensure programme efficiency and effectiveness vis-à-vis Vision 2016.

Participation and Social Mobilisation

- 5.2.6 An inventory of stakeholders should be taken with a view to identifying their roles and fostering co-operation amongst those that have similar programmes and goals.
- 5.2.7 A comprehensive social mobilisation strategy should be developed and implemented with a view to:
- (i) Empowering communities to contribute to the identification of priority programme interventions and programme design and implementation.

- (ii) Empowering communities to demand accountability from leaders and institutions.
- (iii) Promoting good governance through popular participation.

Identification of Gaps

5.2.8 A comprehensive review of policies and programmes was in this regard recommended as a means of identifying gaps. This objective will in part be met through the social mobilisation exercise.

Finalisation of a UNDP Poverty Programme Support Document (PSD) by February 2001 to implement the Key Recommendations above

5.2.9 The process would commence through the immediate development, *in consultation with Government*, of a UNDP Preparatory Assistance Document (PAD) to be implemented between April 2000 and January 2001. The key activities in the preparatory assistance would include:

- a) Determination of the expanded role for the RDC. The process would take on board the outcome of the ongoing review of the RDC.
- b) An assessment of the capacity of the RDC to deliver on its expanded mandate and capacitating it as appropriate. This exercise should commence as soon as possible to take advantage of the ongoing review of the RDC.
- c) Identification of the means and mechanisms of capacitating the RDC to perform its wider co-ordination functions.
- d) Reviewing the co-ordination mechanisms at the central and local government levels with a view to identifying capacity gaps and making recommendations towards the development of harmonised co-ordination mechanisms.
- e) Dialogue amongst stakeholders to develop an approach to address issues of co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation, social mobilisation and governance.
- f) Social mobilisation as provided for by the outcome of 5.2.9 (e) and for the ends specified in 5.2.7.
- g) An evaluation of current policies and programmes on poverty to identify gaps, avoid duplication of effort, capture synergies and maximise their impact on poverty should be undertaken. This would entail:

- i) Revisiting existing social welfare and poverty alleviation programmes to see where room for further improvement can be found. The exercise would benefit from the ongoing reviews of some of the existing programmes. Policies and programmes under review include the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP), the policy on destitution and NDP 8 (mid-term review).
- ii) Revisiting and refocusing the development programmes to give poverty greater emphasis and build momentum towards achieving the Vision 2016 targets.
- iii) Reviewing the co-ordinating mechanisms of the current poverty eradication programmes, development programmes and social safety nets and making recommendations as appropriate to create and exploit synergies amongst them in order to maximise their impact on poverty.
- iv) Involving communities and all stakeholders in the review and reformulation of all programmes.

6. CLOSING REMARKS

- 6.1 At the close of the workshop, Nileema Noble, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Botswana thanked participants for their lively participation in the workshop, which made it the success it ultimately became. She informed participants that although the workshop was important as an event, it was not an end in itself, but rather an important step in the development of a UNDP Programme Support Document (PSD) for poverty alleviation. The workshop, she said, had contributed in a most positive manner towards this process. She assured participants that their views would be given utmost consideration in the design of the UNDP PSD. The UNDP, she said, was keen to move from discussion to delivery and would in this regard expedite the preparation the PSD.
- 6.2 In his brief closing comments, the Deputy Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Modise Modise, expressed satisfaction with the quality of the discussions in the workshop, which he described as high. Participants, he noted, did not engage in abstract discussions but rather focused on practical issues. He expressed satisfaction with the amount of information shared. In his view, the fact that the workshop was a success should inspire participants to find ways in which they could make a contribution on a way forward. His final word of encouragement was that he expected the next meeting of this kind to discuss progress made on the ground