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Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis

Botswana's Position Paper on Strategies for Poverty Alleviation Bringing the Regional  
Dimension of Economic Integration as a  
Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

Final Report

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## List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALDEP	Arable Lands Development Programme
ARAP	Accelerated Arable Rainfed Programme
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis
BOCCIM	Botswana Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Manpower
BOCONGO	Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CBS	Community Based Strategy for Rural Development
CEDA	Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency
CSO	Central Statistics Office
FAP	Financial Assistance Policy
FTA	Free Trade Area
HDI	Human Development Index
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/
HPI	Human Poverty Index
IPC	International Poverty Centre
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCH/FP	Maternal Child Health and Family Planning Programme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MSCPR	Multi-Sectoral Committee on Poverty Reduction
NAMPAADD	National Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development
NDP	National Development Programme
NE	North East
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRSP	National Rural Sanitation Programme
NSPR	National Strategy for Poverty Reduction
NSRHP	National Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme
NW	North West
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Programme
RDC	Rural Development Council
RDCD	Rural Development Coordinating Council
RNPRD	Revised National Policy for Rural Development
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SE	South East
SME	Small medium Enterprise
SSNs	Social Safety Nets
TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WW II	World War II

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# **1 Introduction**

Poverty reduction has been one of the strategies for Botswana's development since the country became independent in 1966. It has traditionally been expressed as one of the development objectives in National Development Plans. It is also highlighted in Botswana's Vision 2016, a strategy for development up to the year 2016 when Botswana would have been independent for 50 years. To further place poverty reduction at the centre of development, the government introduced the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction in 2003. An institutional framework was then put in place to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the strategy.

Consistent with the terms of reference, this paper accomplishes the following;

- Reviews the empirical evidence on nature, extent and causes of poverty and its dynamics over time (section 2).
- Reviews and assesses the adequacy and effectiveness of public action to reduce poverty (strategies for poverty reduction, policies and programmes) (section 3).
- Assesses the role of institutions in poverty reduction, particularly the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders (section 4).
- Briefly examines the relationship between poverty reduction strategies and regional integration (section 5).
- Concludes with lessons for SADC from Botswana's experiences (section 6).

## **2 Poverty: Nature, Extent and Causes**

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept relating to both material and non-material forms of deprivation: In this regard, three broad forms have commonly been identified as income poverty, capability poverty and participation poverty. Income poverty occurs where an individual lacks adequate income to maintain minimum standard of living, or to acquire the basic needs in life. Capability poverty refers to lack of access to social services such as health, education and clean water. Participation poverty relates to lack of voice to participate in decision making on issues of development, etc. Based on existing studies, this section examines trends in poverty in Botswana, looking at income and human (capacity) poverty.

### **2.1 Income Poverty**

#### **2.1.1 Poverty Estimates and Profiles**

The first comprehensive study on poverty and poverty alleviation in Botswana was undertaken by BIDPA (1997) using data for the 1984/85 and 1993/94 Household Income and Expenditure Surveys. The second and most recent study, which used the 2002/03 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), was undertaken by UN's International Poverty Centre and BIDPA (IPC and BIDPA, 2006). These studies, combined, indicate that the poverty headcount index declined from 59 percent in 1985/86 to 47 percent in 1993/94 and 30.2 percent in 2002/03,

implying that progress was made with respect to poverty reduction over time (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> The rest of this sub-section relies heavily on these two studies.

The two studies have also shown that poverty rates vary greatly across space (geography) and that rural dwellers are more likely to be poor compared to urban dwellers. Such disparities are depicted in Figure 1 where it is apparent that the headcount index declines as we move from rural areas to urban villages and lastly to urban areas.<sup>2</sup> For example, in 2002/03, urban areas recorded the lowest headcount index of 10.8 percent, compared to 24.9 percent for urban villages and 44.4 percent in rural areas. Such disparities are due to, among others, lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. Figure 1, however, shows that some progress in poverty reduction was made, over time, across all the three areas (rural, urban villages and villages), although urban areas recorded marginal progress between 1993/94 and 2002/03.

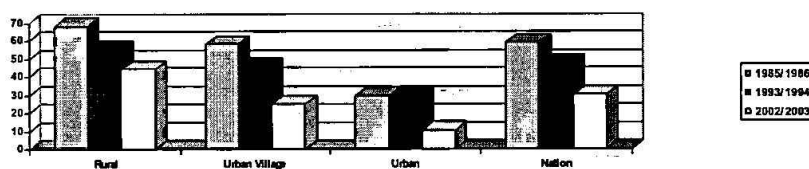


Figure 1: Poverty headcount for rural areas, urban villages and urban areas, 2002/03

A further disaggregation into smaller geographic units reveals greater spatial disparities (Figure 2). The capital city, Gaborone, recorded the lowest poverty rate (6.1 percent), whereas Rural South West (SW) was the most affected with a rate of about 50 percent. Rural North West (NW) and Rural North East (NE) also recorded high poverty rates, exceeding the national average. As noted previously, this is indicative of, among others, limited economic activities in these areas, particularly Rural South West.

<sup>1</sup> However, income inequality also increased over time, implying that the benefits from economic growth were captured proportionately more by the non-poor compared to the poor.

<sup>2</sup> Since 1991, 19 of Botswana's villages were classified as urban villages. These were defined as villages with fewer than 25% of their workforce working in traditional agriculture. Examples of such villages are Molepolole, Mahalapye and Serowe Urban villages are however different from the more established urban areas such as Gaborone and Francistown.

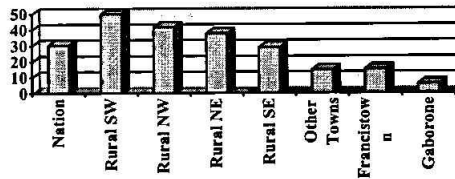


Figure 2: Poverty headcount by geography, 2002/03

Across the life-cycle, poverty in Botswana is more widespread for the elderly and children. In 2002/03, the poverty rate for children aged less than 15 years was estimated to be 36.1 percent, compared to 25.3 percent for those aged 15-60 years. The elderly, aged greater than 60 years, also recorded an estimate of 36.1 percent. Thus, children and the elderly face greater risks of falling into poverty than the rest of the age cohorts. Household size also contributes to poverty. Large-sized households with many children are more likely to be poor than smaller households (Figure 3).

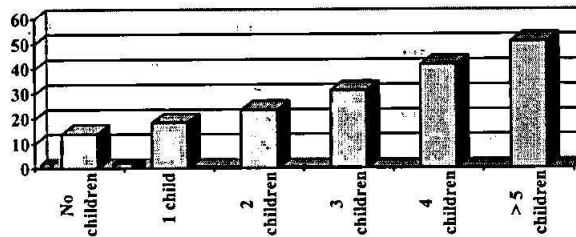


Figure 3: Poverty headcount and household size, 2002/03

As expected, unemployment is one of the causes of poverty. In 2002/03, about 22 percent of individuals living in households whereby the household head was working were poor, compared with 45 percent for households in which the household head was seeking for work. Thus, employment of the household head reduces the risk of falling into poverty. Interestingly, individuals living in households headed by house-keepers are more likely to be poor. The poverty headcount for this employment category was estimated at 45 percent in 2002/03. While this could reflect a number of causes, the most likely is that house-keepers may be underpaid due to the absence of minimum wage regulations at that time.<sup>3</sup> Sickness also increases the risk of falling into poverty as 55 percent of the households with a sick household head were poor. Thus, we can infer that there is a clear link between HIV/AIDS and poverty. Similarly, retirement increases the risk of falling into poverty. About 33 percent of the individuals living in households whereby the household head is retired were poor.

<sup>3</sup> Minimum wages for domestic workers were approved recently and are to be implemented in April 2008.

Gender plays an important role with respect to the incidence of poverty. Female-headed households are more likely to be poor than male-headed households, and this pattern was observed across space. In 1985/86, female-headed households recorded a poverty rate of 60 percent, compared with 58 percent for male-headed households. In 1993/94, poverty rates for female- and male-headed households were respectively estimated at 50 and 44 percent. Similarly, in 2002/03 poverty rates were estimated at 27.4 and 33.1 percent for male- and female-headed households, respectively.

According to IPC and BIDPA (2006), gender differentials in poverty rates may be caused by higher unemployment among females, compared to males. For example, female unemployment rate was estimated at 23.9 percent in 2001, compared to 16.4 percent for males. Another contributing factor may be the income disparities among males and females. In 2002/03, “the per capita disposable income of female-headed households” was “27.6 percent below the national average”, while that for male-headed households was “26.5 percent higher than the national average” (IPC and BIDPA, 2006; p48). While gender differences in poverty rates were not as substantial as spatial differences, it is important that policies for promoting the wellbeing of women are continued, refined or developed, to ensure that women are not left behind.

IPC and BIDPA (2006) found out that education provides for some protection against poverty. The study ascertained that there was a continuous negative relationship between the education level of the head of household and poverty. In 2002/03, for example, about 51 percent of the individuals living in households whereby the household head had no formal education were poor. The headcount index fell to 29 and 15 percent where the household head had primary and secondary education, respectively. Only about 5 percent of the individuals living in households whereby the household head has tertiary education were poor.

### **2.1.2 Causes of Income Poverty**

BIDPA (1997) classifies the causes of poverty into two: immediate causes and underlying causes. Immediate causes refer to, among others, high unemployment (which is due to inadequate jobs and other income opportunities), low wages for those in both wage- and self employment, inadequate benefits from social safety nets (including poor coverage and targeting), inadequate provision of social services (education and health care), inequitable intra-household allocation of resources (income), dependency syndrome whereby individual households expect government to provide for them, and large family sizes. Underlying factors include, among others, adverse climatic conditions (e.g drought), and the collapse of the extended family system and traditional (informal) social safety nets. United Nations (2001) provides a more systematic and comprehensive discussion of the causes of poverty. Among these causes we highlight the following:

Narrow economic base: The economy of Botswana depends heavily on mining, which is capital intensive, as opposed to being labour intensive. In 2002, mining and quarrying contributed 35.2 percent to national output and only 2.9 percent to employment (IPC and BIDPA, 2006). Agriculture, on the other hand, contributed only 2.5 percent to national output and 12.4 percent to employment. The employment-output ratio for mining was estimated at 0.1 whereas for

agriculture it stood at 5.0. The employment-output ratio for agriculture was higher while that for mining was lower than those for the other remaining sectors (economic activities), meaning that agriculture “generates the highest employment for the economy” and mining the least (IPC and BIDPA, 2006; p. 62). As economic growth has primarily been driven by mining and agriculture was more-or-less stagnant, overall economic growth in Botswana is unable to benefit the growing workforce. Thus, this leads to high unemployment in the economy. Agriculture is also characterized by lower wages, implying that the incidence of underemployment may be higher in this sector. However, economic diversification has and continues to remain one of the policy priorities in the country. Progress has however been slow. The narrow economic base, combined with skewed economic growth across sectors, has also led to increasing income inequality over time.

Poor soils and climate: This is related to the issue of narrow economic base. Agricultural output has not grown over time due to poor climatic conditions, which have made agricultural production, particularly arable agriculture, a very risky undertaking. The fact that the sector has both a high risk and low returns makes it unattractive to the youth and other potential investors. Initiatives of the past, which were meant to improve output and productivity did not succeed in transforming the sector.

Relevance, equity and access to education: While tremendous progress has been made with respect to access to education, there is a feeling that the education system has not been in synchrony with labour market needs. School leavers (including graduates) are at times not ready to perform effectively in the labour market. Hence, it is argued in the NSPR that there is a mismatch between the skills acquired and labour market requirements. The NSPR is however clear that this gap needs to be closed.

Poor health: The increase in the incidence of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) contributes directly to poverty through increasing medical expenses and loss of earnings. These diseases have increased the number of orphans in the country who need to be taken care of. The loss of productive adults has led to direct loss of income and to poverty. Some families have also devoted much of their time to taking care of ill family members, and have consequently devoted less time to productive work, leading to income insecurity and poverty.

## **2.2 Human Poverty<sup>4</sup>**

Several indicators have been developed to track progress on human poverty, particularly capability poverty covering health and nutrition, and education. In general, an improvement in health and education indicators was evidenced over time, except for reversals seen in some indicators due to HIV/AIDS. The Human Development Index (HDI) improved during the early to mid 1990s and declined thereafter up to 2002.<sup>5</sup> Such reversal was directly due to the drop in life expectancy induced by HIV/AIDS (see BIDPA, 2006). The Human Poverty Index (HPI)

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<sup>4</sup> This section draws substantially from BIDPA (2006).

<sup>5</sup> HDI is a composite index computed as an average of life expectancy index, the education index and the GDP index.

declined during 1991-2002, indicating that human poverty declined over time.<sup>6</sup> The improvement in human poverty was mainly induced by increasing adult literacy rates and declining malnutrition rates over time, which “outweighed the HIV/AIDS-induced decrease in the probability at birth of not surviving up to the age of 40 years” (BIDPA, 2006; p.72).

Individual education indicators have also shown some progress in enhancing capabilities. Existing data shows that adult literacy rates have consistently increased from 50 percent in 1991 to 80 percent in 2002, although in more recent years the trend appears to have flattened (showing marginal year to year increments). Although progress is being made towards the Ministry of Education’s target of 90 percent in 2010, the flattening trend implies that it may be difficult to reach this target by 2010. According to the data from UNDP (2005), Botswana is outperformed by its SADC neighbours of Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe, although priority in government spending has shifted to education expenditure. Thus, it appears that there may be some problems with the delivery of education. Access rates for primary education, expressed as gross enrolment rate and net enrolment rate, have remained more-or-less stable during the period from 1997 to 2005. Gross enrolment rates for children aged 6-12 years were estimated at about 120 percent while net enrolment rates for the same age cohort were estimated at about 90 percent during the same period. Available statistics indicate that transition rates from primary to secondary school have risen from about 95 percent in 1997 to about 99 percent in 2004.

Trends in health and nutrition indicators reveal mixed results with regard to progress over time. HIV prevalence rates for pregnant women increased steadily from about 18 percent in 1992 to a peak of about 37 percent in 2000. A slightly declining trend was evidenced thereafter to about 34 percent in 2005. According to the data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), life expectancy improved from about 55 years in 1971 to over 65 years in 1996. A reversal was however evidenced thereafter to about 55 years in 2001 and 54 years in 2006 (GoB, 2008).

Infant mortality rates declined from about 98 per 1000 births in 1971 to about 49 per 1000 births in 1991. However, a slight reversal to about 57 per 1000 live births in 2001 was evidenced. Such reversal was due to HIV/AIDS deaths. Under-five mortality rates exhibited a similar trend. A decline was seen from about 150 per 1000 births in 1971 to about 60 per 1000 births in 1991, and a reversal occurred thereafter to slightly over 70 per 1000 births in 2001. Child mortality targets for 2009 and 2011 were about 60 per 1000 births and 40 per 1000 births, respectively. Clearly, the 2009 target had been achieved in 1991. Similarly, the reversal was caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

It is unclear as to whether the reversals in mortality rates did continue after 2001. However, existing policies and programmes for combating HIV/AIDS may have minimized the negative effects of the pandemic. According to UNDP, Botswana is outperformed by its SADC neighbours of Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa with respect to both infant and under-five mortality rates, and by Zimbabwe with respect to the infant mortality rate (See

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<sup>6</sup> HPI is a composite index derived from three measures (1) the probability at birth of not surviving up to the age of 40, (2) adult literacy rate and (3) average of the population without sustainable access to an improved water source and children underweight for their age.

BIDPA, 2006). Given that Botswana has a number of policies and programmes in place to address infant and child mortality, this scenario may be due to the delivery of such initiatives.

### 3 Public Action to Reduce Poverty<sup>7</sup>

#### 3.1 Poverty Reduction Policies<sup>8</sup>

Poverty reduction has been a long-standing objective of government, and has been expressed in a number of development policy documents of the country. Since 1970, one of the four principles of national development planning has been *social justice*, which is concerned with “a democratic way of life, the protection of human rights, the availability of basic needs, and equal access to economic opportunities” (MFDP, 1991). It is through the *social justice* principle that government has and continues to place poverty reduction on the development agenda. This principle recognizes that the living standards of households can only be sustainably enhanced through their own participation in productive activities. Such participation would be possible if households had access to health care, clean water, communal land to undertake arable activities, and basic education. However, there is always a possibility that some individuals may not benefit from broad-based economic growth due to special or peculiar circumstances they face. For these individuals, social safety nets have been put in place. Thus, in practice, the government has aimed to reduce poverty through:

- Promoting broad-based economic growth, particularly through economic diversification, employment creation, income generation and citizen economic empowerment.
- Investment in social and economic infrastructure to enhance health and education outcomes, and, hence, promote economic growth.
- Provision of social safety nets for the poor and vulnerable groups.

The government also adopted Vision 2016 as a strategy for economic and social development in 1997. The Vision, which is driven by seven pillars (broad goals), sets development targets for the year 2016, when Botswana would have been independent for 50 years. While all the Vision pillars have some relationship with poverty, in its multi-dimension, the pillar *Compassionate, Just and Caring Nation*, directly advances poverty reduction goals. This pillar addresses issues of income distribution, poverty, social safety nets and HIV/AIDS. One of the targets under this pillar is to eradicate absolute poverty by 2016. Thus, it is the intention of government to have no individual living below the poverty datum line by 2016.

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<sup>7</sup> This section draws substantially from BIDPA (2006).

<sup>8</sup> Since poverty is a multi-dimensional concept, covering income, capabilities (health, nutrition, education, etc), and participation, it is not possible, given the scope of this paper, to discuss all policies. Policies not discussed here include, among others, the revised national food strategy, the revised national policy on education, national health policy, national plan of action on nutrition, national policy on HIV/AIDS, national policy on women in development, and national youth policy.



As one of the signatories to UN's millennium declaration, Botswana has also embraced and set targets for the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs cover various dimension of poverty, including income and capability (health and education). Relevant government agencies (ministries) have aligned their development objectives with the MDGs to ensure that their goals and targets are consistent with the MDGs. In 2002, the government adopted the Revised National Policy for Rural Development (RNPRD), which aims to reduce poverty, provide opportunities for income generation and involvement in economic activities, create employment and enhance popular participation in development planning and implementation process, as a basis for broad-based, balanced and sustainable development (MFDP, 2002). Clearly, the strategy points to employment creation for all as a way to promote sustainable rural development. Moreover, the strategy highlights participation (by the poor) as an impetus for sustainable and inclusive development.

A related policy to the RNPRD, the Community Based Strategy for Rural Development (CBS), was launched by the Rural Development Council (RDC) in 1997 (IPC and BIDPA, 2006). The objective of the strategy is to improve rural livelihood and thereby reduce rural poverty. The CBS strategy also aims to promote community participation in development through enhancing community leadership structures. The strategy is implemented by institutions based in districts, such as District Development Committees, NGOs, and individuals. Each participating community is expected to develop Community Action Plans, aimed at increasing incomes and reducing poverty. The idea is to promote community self-mobilization and ownership.

To further advance poverty reduction as a development agenda, government adopted (through a presidential directive) the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (NSPR) in 2003 (MFDP, 2003). The NSPR outlines Government's strategy for poverty reduction together with administrative structures for designing, implementing and coordinating national initiatives for promoting the poverty reduction agenda. The strategy explicitly recognizes the need to address all the dimensions of poverty including income, capability and participation. The goal of the NSPR is to introduce policies and programmes for promoting opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, and to coordinate the implementation of initiatives for employment creation (MFDP, 2003; BIDPA, 2006). The strategy would also ensure that economic growth is spread-out evenly across space (districts) and economic sectors. This would be achieved through sound economic management. The strategy provides for the provision of well-targeted social safety nets to those individuals who would be unable to benefit directly from broad-based economic growth, such as the poor and vulnerable. The NSPR would also promote targeted social investment (for example, in health and education) to enhance the capacity of the poor to participate in the economy. To further enhance the participation of the poor, the strategy advocates for building their organizational capacity to influence policy making and outcomes (MFDP, 2003). To ensure effective implementation of the anti-poverty initiatives, the strategy is to also strengthen both national and local government institutions managing the respective programmes.

The NSPR is an overarching document for guiding poverty reduction policies and programmes in Botswana. It seeks to address the following broad policies:

- Macro-economic stability, economic growth and pro-poor government spending.
- Exchange rate stability, price stability and efficient financial systems.



- Sound fiscal policy (expenditure and tax policies) with the aim to achieve economic diversification and sustainable economic growth.
- Attraction of foreign direct investment and mobilization of domestic investment to enhance economic growth, diversify the economy and create jobs.
- Continuous review of land policies to ensure security of tenure and access to and use of productive land by the poor.
- To establish a national tourism board as an autonomous organization for spearheading the marketing of Botswana as a tourism destination, and thereby create employment in the industry and reduce poverty.
- To unpack and address poverty reduction issues of Vision 2016, which is a key guide for development initiatives in the country.
- To promote the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994, to ensure appropriate human resource development and utilization.
- To mainstream HIV/AIDS into national development programmes.
- To build poverty databases and thereby ensure availability of up-to-date information on poverty.
- To improve the performance of the public sector through training of leaders at all levels, and monitoring and evaluation of anti-poverty initiatives.

The strategy also identified a total of 16 specific programmes from the National Development Plan 9, which are consistent with the poverty reduction agenda. These are classified under five programme areas of Sustainable Livelihoods, Enhancing Capability, Enhancing Participation, Strengthening Local Government Institutions and Strengthening National Development Management Capacity. While it is important that the NSPR should be mainstreamed into development planning process, it appears that when the NSPR was developed, NDP 9 programmes were considered for consistency with the NSPR and the 16 deemed to be consistent were listed in the NSPR. Thus, no groundwork was done to develop new programmes for the NSPR; instead, existing programmes were considered. This is one of the reasons NSPR implementation and coordination has been problematic. Given this scenario, it would appear ideal that the NSPR itself is reviewed to deal with its deficiencies.

## **3.2 Anti-poverty programmes and incentives**

### **3.2.1 Economy-wide incentives for employment creation**

Poverty reduction programmes have involved indirect economy-wide initiatives aimed at growing the economy and creating employment opportunities, and social safety nets, which are aimed at directly reducing poverty and vulnerability. Economy-wide schemes have been introduced to primarily create new job opportunities, and thereby reduce poverty. One of these initiatives was the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) which was in place from 1982 to 2002. Its objectives were to create employment, to expand production for the export market and import substitution, to diversify the economy, and to improve the skills of citizens through training (see IPC and BIDPA, 2006). FAP grants were available to both citizen and foreign companies willing to invest in Botswana. The level of grants given to entrepreneurs favoured businesses

located in rural areas, those with female ownership, and those with potential to create many job opportunities. According to the evaluation study of FAP carried out in 2000, the programme was not very effective in sustainable job creation (IPC and BIDPA, 2006). The study showed that only 25, 50 and 75 percent of small-, medium and large-scale projects had respectively not collapsed after operating for five years, and that actual employment created was found to be much lower than projected employment at project funding.

FAP was replaced by the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), which came into force in 2003. Among its objectives were to promote economic diversification, citizen entrepreneurial culture, and employment creation. To achieve these objectives, CEDA provides loans to viable citizen-owned businesses at subsidized interest rates. Loans for small- and medium-scale businesses are given at interest rates of 5 and 7.5 percent, respectively. While both FAP and CEDA have impacted positively on job creation and overall economic diversification, progress has generally been slow as the economy still largely depends on mineral output and exports.

### **3.2.2 Agricultural incentives**

In agriculture, a number of public support programmes have been introduced to increase output and productivity, and to create employment, particularly for resource poor households in rural areas. Massive support has gone into this sector, particularly before the policy change in 1991 from food self-sufficiency to food security. A few key programmes are worth mentioning here. One of these programmes is the Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDEP), which was launched in 1981 to provide farm packages to resource poor households. The programme provided draught power (donkeys, mules and oxen), animal drawn implements (ploughs, planters, harrows and cultivators), fencing material, scotch carts, water catchment tanks and fertilizer. This is perhaps one of the few programmes that were targeted at improving the wellbeing of the poor. Farmers, however, did not adopt all the technological packages provided to them, particularly the use of cultivators and harrows. This programme has recently been reviewed and continued.

Another programme also aimed at improving the livelihoods of rural farming communities was the Accelerated Rainfed Arable Programme (ARAP), which was launched in 1985/86. ARAP provided six packages including the provision of grants for destumping, ploughing, planting, weeding, fencing, water development at the land areas, and crop protection. The programme literally paid farmers for engaging in arable activities (Seleka, 2004). The programme targeted all farmers engaged in rainfed arable agriculture. Thus, while it also assisted resource poor households, it was a blanket programme. The programme was effective in increasing cultivated area, output and productivity (Seleka, 1999). ARAP was terminated after the 1989/90 cropping season, after operating for five cropping seasons. ARAP packages were reintroduced under a drought relief programme in 1992/93, for three cropping seasons up to 1995/96.

In 2002, the government introduced the National Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development (NAMPAADD). The idea was to promote commercialization in rainfed arable agriculture, irrigated agriculture and dairy. NAMPAADD technologies are still being piloted on-

farm, and the success of this programme in transforming the agricultural sector remains to be seen. The pro-poorness of the programme is perhaps in its potential to create employment. However, its ability to transform smallholder farmers is limited by the fact that resource poor farmers do not have the financial muscle required to adopt recommended technologies under this programme.

### **3.2.3 Health and Nutrition Programmes**

A number of programmes have been introduced to promote good health and nutrition. While these programmes were not primarily introduced to directly deal with poverty, they do have a bearing on human capabilities and, hence, human poverty. We do not discuss them exhaustively here. Examples are the National Rural Sanitation Programme (NRSP), Maternal Child Health and Family Planning Programme (MCH/FP), Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Programme (PMTCT) and National Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme (NSRHP) (IPC and BIDPA, 2006). NRSP provides subsidies to citizens throughout the country to, among others, construct ventilated pit latrines and flush toilets. MCH/FP provides training of nurses and other health workers, and family welfare educators.

The objective of PMTCT is to reduce HIV infections in children by preventing HIV transmission from mothers to their children. The programme provides free treatment and infant formula to enrolled HIV-positive expectant mothers. NSRHP aims to improve sexual and reproduction health of all people living in the country. Specific objectives are, among others, to educate children ten years or under on sexual and reproductive health, improve adolescents' values, attitude and behaviour with respect to sexual and reproductive health, and reduce maternal mortality. Other health and nutrition programmes are classified as social safety nets (see below).

### **3.2.4 Social Safety Nets**

A number of social safety net programmes were introduced to reduce poverty directly and to assist groups that are likely to fall into poverty due to the peculiar circumstances they face, such as disability, illness, etc. Table 1 provides a summary of existing SSNs, including the eligibility criteria and the packages currently provided through each programme. A study by Seleka, et al. (2007) revealed that SSNs are comprehensive over a life-cycle, depending on the needs of the poor and vulnerable groups. The study also revealed that the SSNs do contribute significantly to poverty reduction. When the benefits received from government transfers through SSNs were removed from household expenditure and poverty estimates recalculated, the headcount index for 2002/03 increased by about 10 percentage points, implying that poverty would have been higher in the absence of the SSNs. However, the study also raises issues of the adequacy of the benefits to remove households out of poverty. The study also revealed that some of the SSNs meant to benefit the poor, such as the destitute programme, have also leaked to non-poor, implying poor targeting and that the eligibility criteria may not be adequately adhered to. Incidents of households benefitting from several SSNs were also reported.

Table 1: Publicly provided social safety nets

SSN programme	Eligibility criteria	Packages
(1) The Destitute Persons Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals unable to engage in sustainable economic activities, due to disability or chronic health problems.</li> <li>Individuals with insufficient assets or income sources; should have less than 4 livestock units, and should earn income less than P120/month without dependents or P150/month with dependents.</li> <li>Individuals who due to physical or mental disability are incapable of engaging in sustained economic activity, as determined by a health practitioner.</li> <li>Individuals who due to emotional or psychological disability are incapable of engaging in sustained economic activity, as determined by a social worker.</li> <li>Children under 18 living under difficult circumstances.</li> <li>Individuals who are terminally ill.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the policy, permanent rural destitute persons receive food packages amounting to P211.90 per month. Their urban counterparts receive food packages worth P211.40 per month. However, the figures may go up, depending on the cost of the approved food basket.</li> <li>According to the policy, temporary destitute persons receive monthly food rations valued at P181.90 in rural areas, and P181.40 in urban centres. However, the figures may go up, depending on the cost of the approved ration.</li> <li>Both permanent and temporary destitute persons receive an additional P70.00/month (in cash) for personal (non-food) items.</li> <li>Provisions are made for shelter (if needed), medical care, occasional fares, funeral expenses, and exemptions from service levies, taxes, water charges, street licenses and school fees, and tools required for rehabilitation.</li> </ul>
(2) Vulnerable Group Feeding Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on whether a drought has occurred; thus coverage depends on assessment by the District Based Drought Committees, Inter-Ministerial Drought Committee and the Early Warning Technical Committee.</li> <li>During non-drought years, the programme covers medically selected under-five children and pregnant and lactating women (including those who are anaemic, not gaining enough weight, teenagers between 13 to 18 years, and TB and leprosy patients); blanket coverage is implemented during drought years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tsabana (a fortified soghum and soya product) for children between 6 and 36 months.</li> <li>Dry skimmed milk for children aged 37–60 months and medically selected pregnant and lactating women.</li> <li>Sunflower oil for children aged 6–60 months.</li> <li>Fortified precooked maize for children aged between 37–60 months and TB out-patients.</li> </ul>
(3) Orphan Care Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children under 18 years of age who have lost one (single) or two (married) parents (biological or adoptive).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the policy, the food baskets (amounting to P216.60) are provided through local retailers; each basket is based on nutritional requirements by the age of the child. However, in practice, the cost of food baskets depends on prevailing local prices.</li> <li>Clothing, toiletry, transport fees, school fees, etc.</li> </ul>

(4) Community Home Based Care Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides optimal care for terminally ill patients in their local environment.</li> <li>• While it was established in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, it covers those patients with other conditions as well.</li> <li>• The basket is provided to needy patients only.</li> <li>• Assessment guidelines for the destitute programme are applied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides food baskets based on recommendations by a doctor or dietician; thus no price is attached to the food basket.</li> <li>• In practice, the cost of food baskets has ranged from P200 to P1,500 per patient per month.</li> </ul>
(5) Primary School Feeding Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children attending public primary schools are eligible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The food basket caters for a third of the daily caloric requirements for children.</li> <li>• Two meals are provided, a mid-morning snack and lunch.</li> </ul>
(6) Old Age Pension Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All citizens aged 65 years and over are entitled for benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pensioners receive P191.00 per month.</li> </ul>
(7) World War II Veterans Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All WW II veterans are eligible for benefits under this programme.</li> <li>• When the veteran dies, his widow receives payments.</li> <li>• If both the veteran and his spouse are deceased, their children under the age of 21 receive payment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The beneficiary receives P312.00 per month.</li> </ul>
(8) Labour Based Drought Relief Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides temporary income support during periods of drought; workers are engaged in labour intensive programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labourers receive P15.00 while supervisors receive P20.00 per six-hour day.</li> </ul>
(9) Remote Area Development Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted at all marginalised communities in the remote areas of Botswana.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides basic facilities to communities; facilities include education, health, drinking water, and vulnerable group feeding schemes.</li> <li>• Promotes access to land and water through water rights.</li> <li>• Promotes income generating opportunities for remote areas dwellers.</li> <li>• Promotes self reliance, social integration, etc.</li> </ul>

Source: Seleka, et al. (2007) (Table 2).

## 4 Role of Institutions in Poverty Reduction

### 4.1 Institutional Framework for Implementing the NSPR<sup>9</sup>

The NSPR prescribes the institutional framework for coordination and monitoring of anti-poverty initiatives in Botswana (BIDPA, 2006). The institutional framework may be described to consist of the following structures:

*A high level steering committee:* The Rural Development Council (RDC), which is chaired by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, can be thought of as a high level steering committee overseeing rural development initiatives (including poverty reduction initiatives). The Minister reports to cabinet on activities of the RDC. Membership to the RDC includes permanent secretaries of relevant government agencies, and “representatives of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and the trade union” (BIDPA, 2006; p4). Hence, the RDC is a high-standing structure with the ability to influence public policy on rural development and poverty reduction.

*A coordinating unit and a secretariat:* The Rural Development Coordinating Division (RDCD) in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is charged with the responsibility to coordinate the activities of the RDC and to serve as a secretariat to the RDC.

*Inter-agency committees or working groups:* The RDCD serves the RDC through the following five inter-agency committees: Multi-Sectoral Committee on Poverty Reduction (MSCPR), National Food Strategy Monitoring Group, Inter-Ministerial Drought Committee, Rural Extension Coordinating Committee, and Natural Resources Committee. Some of these committees have sub-committees reporting to them. *The MSCPR, which was initiated to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the NSPR, is the inter-agency committee responsible for poverty reduction.* However, the other committees also deal with poverty and rural development issues. It thus appears that there should be inter-committee liaison to ensure that the poverty reduction mandates of these committees are well coordinated and fully executed. Membership to the MSCPR is drawn from government agencies responsible for implementing anti-poverty initiatives, the private sector and non-governmental organizations.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> This section benefited greatly from BIDPA (2006).

<sup>10</sup> It is currently made up of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (RDCD, CSO, Population Development Coordination, and Development Budget), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources, Ministry of Lands and Housing, Ministry of Health (Nutrition), Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO), Botswana Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Manpower (BOCCIM), and Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA). BIDPA as represented by the Executive Director serves as the chair of the MSCPR, while the Rural Development Coordination Division (RDCD) serves as the secretariat.

Line ministry M&E units: Various government agencies have been identified to implement anti-poverty initiatives. As noted earlier, the NSPR identifies five categories of programmes for implementation by different government agencies as follows: (a) sustainable livelihoods, (b) enhancing capabilities, (c) enhancing participation, (d) strengthening local government institutions, and (e) strengthening national development management capacity. Lead and collaborating agencies, which vary across the programmes, include government agencies (line-ministries and training institutions), non-state actors (private sector and non-governmental organizations) and local authorities. BIDPA (2006) identified the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Health, the Department of Social Services as relevant line ministries/government agencies responsible for implementing anti-poverty initiatives.

A national statistics institute: The Central Statistics Office (CSO), an agency within the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, is responsible for the collection, analysis and publication of statistics on income poverty, health and nutrition, education and other poverty-related issues. It serves as the centre for data collection, analysis and reporting for the various line ministries. For example, CSO is responsible for the design, administration, analysis and dissemination of the findings of the HIESs, which are used to measure income poverty.

The foregoing institutional arrangement is consistent with global thinking on how institutional framework for poverty M&E should be structured. According to a study based on 12 developing countries, a poverty M&E system usually consists of a high-level steering committee, a coordinating unit or a secretariat, inter-agency committees or working groups, the national statistics institute, and line ministries (Bedi et al., 2006). While the institutional setting is adequate, BIDPA (2006) pointed to some weaknesses which require attention:

- Exclusion of the ministry of education (MoE) in the MSCPR membership. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is a key stakeholder when it comes to issues of capability poverty. Education indicators should be included among the core impact indicators of a poverty M&E system, and the MoE, as a key implementer of education policies and programmes, should participate in the implementation of the NSPR. This is an important omission since the revised education policy is stated as one of the poverty reduction policies in the NSPR.
- Lack of clear operational linkages between MSCPR and Line Ministry M&E units. While line ministries are represented by top-level officials at the MSCPR, the linkages between the MSCPR and line ministry M&E units are very weak. This therefore, makes the coordination of anti-poverty programmes by the MSCPR weak. While the CSO has strong linkages with line ministries, it was also weakly linked to the MSCPR. The MSCPR is however addressing these weaknesses to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of poverty.



## 4.2 Current RDCD Activities on NSPR Implementation

As noted earlier, the RDCD serves as a coordinating body for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy and a secretariat of the MSCPR. The RDCD, and the Poverty Reduction Policy Advisor to this Division, is currently undertaking several activities to implement the NSPR. The activities are classified into the following five clusters:

Cluster 1: Poverty policy and programme design and mainstreaming. It is intended under the cluster to ensure that policies and programmes developed to implement the NSPR are pro-poor. Thus, the first step involved the assessment of existing policies and programmes in terms of their pro-poor compliance. An internal assessment of programmes within the RDCD concluded that most programmes cannot be identified as pro-poor. An expert was also involved to assess the extent to which the NSPR is mainstreamed into the National Development Plans. The exercise concluded that most programmes are not mainstreamed to NDP 9 and suggested that mainstreaming of the NSPR should be considered during the drafting of NDP 10. However, the NSPR itself may need to be reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with current thinking on designing pro-poor policies and programmes.

Cluster 2: NSPR implementation monitoring and evaluation. The goal of this cluster is to enhance poverty monitoring and evaluation (M&E). A review of the existing poverty monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems was undertaken in 2006 under this cluster. The review concluded that poverty M&E was very weak, and recommended a set of core welfare indicators for poverty M&E. The review also indicated the need for mainstreaming the NSPR into NDPs, as the NSPR was introduced after the current NDP had been developed. As a result, an expert was engaged in 2007 to advice on how the mainstreaming exercise should be conducted. As another activity under this cluster, the RDCD has identified pro-poor programmes, from existing programmes, which will be subject to the poverty monitoring tool that was recently developed by the division.

Cluster 3: Pro-poor institutional development. The RDCD is in the process of developing terms of references for the activities under this cluster.

Cluster 4: Poverty information systems and advocacy. The key activity under this cluster has been the publication of annual reports and quarterly progress reports. So far two quarterly reports and one annual report have been published. There were also consultative meetings at all districts except just one.

Cluster 5: Generating poverty data and statistics. Planned activities include establishing poverty profiles and determinants, periodic situational reports on poverty, and policy focused poverty studies. The implementation of activities under this cluster depends on the availability of regular data, which is the responsibility of CSO. A key limitation has been that in the past surveys were not conducted regularly. For example, the HIES has historically been conducted on 10 year intervals. RDCD is however working with CSO to introduce mini (lighter) surveys, which can be done every two years in between the HIES, to generate regular data and information on poverty. A recommendation has been



made to CSO to build-in a multi-topic survey-based poverty monitoring system into the existing HIES, to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the NSPR.

### **4.3 The Role of UNDP(Botswana)**

As part of the current UNDAF for Botswana (2003-2007), UNDP partnered with various government departments to implement relevant poverty reduction initiatives for the programme. Among the main activities were the following:

- Support to the MSCPR Secretariat through the provision of a Poverty Reduction Policy Advisor whose main role was to strengthen capacity of the office.
- Support to CSO through the provision of funding and technical assistance for poverty data collection and analysis.
- Support to the Ministry of Trade and Industry through the provision of technical assistance for developing trade negotiation position papers, competition policy and piloting of two trim garment projects. The latter is a pilot cluster of women who had initially benefited from an old micro enterprise subsidy scheme (FAP) and were working individually from their homes. The women have now come together and are working under one building and being assisted in terms of training through the UNDP programme of Trade, Investment and SME Development.
- UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government piloted a Community Renewal /Redevelopment with Community Resilience in six villages and one urban area. The aim is to strengthen community institutions to pursue own development, utilizing the resources in their own environment.

The programme is currently being evaluated, and lessons from the above activities will be very useful in formulation of future poverty reduction activities.

### **4.4 The Role of NGOs**

The Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO), an umbrella organization of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), is currently involved in poverty reduction initiatives in Botswana. Its main role with respect to poverty reduction has been in the area of policy advocacy and information dissemination through public debates, conferences, workshops and seminars. For example, the Council usually brings together different stakeholders to discuss the implications of annual government budgets for the poor. Moreover, BOCONGO has used local media to debate and advance their positions on poverty and development in Botswana. BOCONGO has also brought various stakeholders together on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty to discuss poverty-related issues in the country. This has involved the use of some prominent members of Botswana society as ambassadors to advocate and spread the word about the need to reduce poverty in Botswana.

BOCONGO also serves in the MSCPR. While such participation gives the Council an opportunity to somewhat influence public policy directions, BOCONGO feels that there is need to increase the number of representatives from their constituents so that their voice can be heard at the MSCPR, and other committees where they participate. They felt that government representation at this level is overwhelming, and, hence, overpowers the views of the NGO sector. They sometimes also lack the necessary skills to be able to comprehend some of the key issues discussed at the MSCPR level. Hence, there is need to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to articulate poverty issues.

Some of the NGOs registered with BOCONGO have been directly involved with community mobilization in the areas where they have comparative advantage. For example, some of the NGOs work with communities involved with Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). The respective communities harvest natural resources to create employment and/or generate income for the community. While the poverty impact of these programmes has not been systematically studied, BOCONGO is confident that CBNRM projects have contributed to improved livelihoods of the communities concerned.

## **5 Poverty Reduction Strategies and Regional Integration**

Regional economic integration is “a process in which a group of nations reduces tariff and non-tariff barriers to allow for the free flow of goods, services and factors of production including labour and capital” (AMRC, 2007). It is widely held that freer trade leads to economic growth. However, there is no universal conclusion as to whether trade liberalization benefits or hurts the poor (Winters, 2002). The impact of trade liberalization on the poor depends on the extent of their involvement in the sector being liberalized. For example, the reduction in the border price of an imported commodity on which the poor depend as consumers may benefit them if domestic markets are able to transmit such price reductions to the final consumers. However, if the poor participate as producers of an import-competing commodity and they are involved in domestic trade, trade liberalization may hurt them through lower farm-gate prices for their output. Similarly, if the poor supply unskilled labour to the industry being liberalized, they may face loss of employment or lower wages due to trade reforms. If the poor are involved as producers (or labourers) of an export commodity being liberalized by a country’s trade partners, they may benefit from such action if favourable prices are passed on to them. Thus, the poverty impacts of trade liberalization vary from situation to situation, and the individual poor within a given country may face varying effects. The long term effects depend on the ability of the economy to adjust to new dynamics, and whether new opportunities are created for those who were adversely affected.

As part of regional integration, SADC has decided to form a Free Trade Area (FTA). An FTA means that intra-regional trade within SADC should be liberalized through the removal of trade barriers. SADC had aimed to liberalize 85 percent of intra-regional trade by 2008, and trade in sensitive commodities by 2012 (Seleka, 2007). Botswana, together with her SACU counterparts, has implemented its SADC tariff reduction

commitments. However, some imports from SACU and other SADC countries are still subject to quantitative restrictions. These are common for agricultural commodities such as horticultural products, dairy products, pig meat, poultry meat and table eggs, where import permits are being used, through the Control of Goods, Prices, and Other Charges Act, to regulate trade (Seleka, 2004; Republic of Botswana, nd). The impact of removing these quantitative import restrictions on the poor in Botswana has, however, not been systematically studied. However, small-scale producers and unskilled labourers in these sub-sectors may be adversely affected, particularly for the poultry sub-sector where domestic production meets a substantial proportion of total consumption. Botswana is not unique in the application of quantitative import restrictions on intra-SADC trade, as such restrictions are widely applied across SADC and have proliferated since the SADC Protocol on Trade came into force (SADC, 2005). The proliferation of import restrictions is caused by the fear that the complete removal of protectionist policies may impact negatively on the welfare of domestic producers and, hence, worsen the poverty situation in individual SADC countries.

A closer examination of the NSPR and related documents indicates that trade-issues were not taken on board when poverty reduction policies were formulated. It is unclear as to what mitigation strategies would be put in place to minimize the negative impacts of trade on the poor. This is also because Botswana does not yet have a trade policy, although the Ministry of Trade and Industry is currently working on one. Thus, there is need for a trade policy, which would take on board the developmental (including poverty) aspects of trade liberalization.

## **6 Conclusions: Lessons from Botswana's Experiences**

Botswana has expressed the desire to reduce poverty in a number of policy documents: Vision 2016, NDPs, the RNPRD and NSPR. However, the NSPR is the key document placing poverty reduction at the centre of development. This document sets out an institutional framework for coordinating the implementation of poverty reduction strategies and for the monitoring and evaluation of anti-poverty policies and programmes.

A number of economy-wide initiatives have also been introduced to primarily grow and diversify the economy and create employment opportunities. While such programmes were not directly aimed to reduce poverty, they have had important impact as growth has in the past been associated with poverty reduction. Programmes aimed to improve human capabilities have also been targeted to promote health, nutrition and education. Social safety nets have also been introduced to assist individuals who are unable to take advantage of economy-wide schemes.

While there has been progress in poverty reduction and the anti-poverty policies and programmes have been effective in reducing poverty, the following lessons may be drawn for SADC:

- It is important to have political commitment if poverty reduction programmes are to be effective. In the case of Botswana, the MSCPR is composed of high-ranking officers from government agencies, with the ability to influence policy formulation. This committee reports to the RDC, which is chaired by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, who reports to cabinet. Thus, the MSCPR and the RDC are well placed to place poverty reduction at the top of government agenda, a very important lesson for the rest of SADC.
- Progress made in human poverty is being eroded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS has adverse effects on household wellbeing and is one of the causes of income poverty. Moreover, Botswana has seen reversals in progress made in life expectancy and infant and child mortality rates, due to HIV/AIDS. Botswana has put the fight against HIV/AIDS at the top of the development agenda since not much progress can be made on poverty reduction if the pandemic is allowed to go unabated. Thus, it would appear that HIV/AIDS should be put at the top of the poverty reduction agenda across SADC.
- Poverty reduction policies and strategies in themselves are not adequate to contribute to sustainable poverty reduction. They need to be implemented through a well-coordinated institutional framework with clear mandates across the various players. In the case of Botswana, the NSPR is not yet mainstreamed in the National Development Plan. Therefore, line ministries and other development players, did not have commitment to implement the NSPR as they instead concentrated on implementing NDP activities. Thus, the NSPR should not be a stand-alone process - it should be mainstreamed into the NDP to ensure implementation, and to promote the formulation of pro-poor policies in line ministries. This is an important lesson for SADC.
- To ensure that progress is made in poverty reduction, a well-coordinated monitoring and evaluation system, with clear input, output, outcome and impact indicators must be put in place. Indicators should be developed through the involvement of all relevant stakeholders including the poor themselves. In the case of Botswana, a well coordinated M&E system was initially lacking, making tracking of progress unsystematic. However, core welfare indicators were recently developed, and M&E templates have also been developed. What remains is to institutionalize the system. A lesson for SADC is that there is need to develop a well-coordinated poverty M&E system if progress towards targets is to be well tracked.
- It is important to involve other players outside of government structures in the fight against poverty. In the case of Botswana, NGOs and the private sector are involved at National Committee levels, such as at the RDC and the MSCPR. An important lesson for SADC is that such involvement of non-state actors is important to ensure that the views of the poor are represented. However, non-state actors' participation may be limited by their lack of capacity to well

articulate poverty-related issues. In this regard, capacity building of non-state actors on poverty and development should be one of the priorities.

- Regional integration issues have not been mainstreamed in Botswana's poverty reduction strategy. Thus, trade position papers or trade liberalization commitments are often made outside the spirit (framework) of the NSPR. Since trade liberalization may be associated with both positive and negative effects on the poor, it is important that trade issues are taken on board when formulating regional integration policies and commitments. This would ensure that strategies for maximizing the positive impacts (or minimizing the negative impacts) of trade on the poor are devised.

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