



Economic Commission for Africa

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The I-PRSP in Sudan: An Analysis

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The Views Expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Commission for Africa or any of its Officers

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Acronyms

| | |
|--------|--|
| ADB | African Development Bank |
| CBOs | Community-Based Organizations |
| CEM | Country Economic Memorandum |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| HIPC | Highly Indebted Poor Countries |
| INGOs | International Non-governmental Organizations |
| I-PRSP | Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan |
| IDA | International Development Agency |
| IDPs | Internally Displaced People |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| LDCs | Less Developed Countries |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MICS | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey |
| MOF | Ministry of Finance |
| MTEF | Medium Term Expenditure Framework |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NFSS | National Fund for State Support |
| NTC | National Technical Committee |
| SAP | Structural Adjustment Programme |
| SDF | Social Development Fund |
| SMS | Safe Motherhood Survey |
| UNDP | United Nation Development Programme |
| WB | World Bank |

Executive Summary

The paper is prepared as a background study on Sudan I-PRSP. The information and data sources were both official and non-official. Section (1) of the paper gives an overview of the Sudanese context and scope and methods of the study. There was extensive review of literature and documents prepared in the process of the failed PRSP (1999-2002) and the current I-PRSP process (2002-2003). Interviews with officials of the I-PRSP and discussions with a number of SCOs experts and activist were opted for to furnish the necessary information and enrich the evaluation process.

Section (2) focuses on the process of I-PRSP. This section tried to trace the preparation and participatory efforts within the I-PRSP process. The consultation heavily relied on inputs of few experts and data generated by sectoral government departments at both national and state levels. The excuse was straight for the secretariat, that they were under huge pressure to finalize the plan by end of October 2003.

Section (3) of the paper highlights the contents of the I-PRSP. By the 31st October 2003, there is only an attempt to come up with a first draft of the I-PRSP. Moreover, by late November 2003, there was no draft paper officially released. It is therefore, only possible to evaluate the contents from scattered material with the secretariat, however, unfair. Same as the process, the draft material avoided explicit mentioning of the concept used and quantifying the percentage of the poor in Sudan. There were issues of ideology and politics behind that. The contents cover the foundation of data, admitted to be meager and non-poverty focused, which attempts to develop indicators for poverty diagnostic and the macro-economic framework and the related sectoral program targets. Despite emphasis on policies of economic stability and increase in economic growth rates, yet, the I-PRSP draft document is devoid of any distribution policies. Therefore, linkages between the macro-economic policy frameworks and the programme targets (built on basis of MDGs) remain faint to tell about how growth impacts positively on poor people welfare.

Section (4) introduced the I-PRSP related MTEF and fiscal discipline. Pro-poor budget allocations and thorough revision of the Federal-State relationship and mandates is foreseen as important step towards improved access to services. However, sectoral allocations were yet to be finalized, it is necessary to focus on specific targets and reform allocations within the budget and within sectors.

Section (5) explored the extent of donor roles in facilitation and extending technical assistance for the process. There were efforts exerted by few donors including World Bank and UNDP, however many other donors seemingly apathetic towards the process. Donor's funding commitments are yet to be explored by the government and government high scenario relies on that, in case the peace agreement finalized.

Section (6) focused on the capacity limitations of both government and civil society organizations. Most evident needs were developing genuine partnership involving CSO, government and private sector institutions. Specific recommendations related to policy review, planning and impact assessment in relation to poverty reduction, were highlighted.

Section (7) concluded mainly on the process, contents and the urgent capacity requirements. Forums for exchange and learning about processes and experiences at both country level and with other African countries, were finally recommended.

1. Introduction

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the ninth largest in the world. The country is characterized by its evident diversity (ethnicity, culture, religion, ecological zones and modes of living etc.). However, and despite its well endowment, the economic performance is below its potential. According to EU report (2001) GDP in Sudan was 10.3 billion US\$ (1998), 10 billion US\$ (1999) and 11.9 billion US\$ (2000). The population was 28.3 million, 28.9 million and 29.5 million and the GDP growth rate of 6.1 percent, 5.3 percent and 7.2 percent for the consecutive years of 1998, 1999 and 2000. The origin of GDP is mainly agriculture contributing with 39.3 percent of GDP, trade 27.3 percent, other services 15.2 percent and industry 9.2 percent. The principal exports include in US\$ million: crude oil 276 percent, sesame 127, livestock 114, cotton 45, gum Arabic 26 and sugar 15.

The total debt of Sudan by end 1999 was US \$ 2.7 billion, which is 77.4% over its level in 1989. By end of 2003, the stock of debt is projected to be about US\$ 21.1 billion, most of it in arrears. The debt service doubled 12 times over 20 years i.e. from US \$ 117 million (1979) to US \$1,369 million (1998). Arrears by end of the year (2000) reached in million US\$: IMF (1,474); WB (236); ADB (65), OPEC (26) and the European Investment Bank (65). The Total government foreign obligations were 23.62 US\$ billion by 31st December, 2002 (MoF, 2003). GOS is enthusiastic to develop the PRSP, and highly influenced by thirsty to gain relief rather than acquire attempt to address the poverty situation and underlying causes of people destitution. HIPC (WB &IMF) initiative aims at eliminating accumulated debts of the world poorest countries. It uses the Enhancement Framework (EF) which links relief to poverty reduction calling countries to prepare and implement country poverty reduction strategy (PRSP) that include CSOs as main partners in the country strategy. IDA as a condition puts the EF for HIPC for eligibility for accessing debt relief and concession lending.

A comprehensive and country owned poverty strategy (PRSP) is considered as integral part of illegibility process for debt relief. Sudan will not benefit from development assistance unless it has an approved PRSP. In preparing, Sudan must comply with a prescriptive process, which is accepted by the Joint Staff Assessment team of IMF/WB. There should be a consultative process involving wider popular participations, good governance and serious steps towards ending the ongoing civil war. The UN Africa recovery Website, Volume 14, No. 4 P.1, informs "Sudan together with Rwanda and Liberia, will be "considered" to benefit from the Canada's 725 US\$ million contribution to the principles of peaceful development and good governance. This also adds to conditionality of linking Foreign Assistance with Countries' PRSP status. The Sudanese Government (2000 –2002) focused on preparation of a PRSP. By end of 2002, the aim was changed to focus on preparation of I-PRSP after the failing attempt to prepare the PRSP. A draft plan for the preparation of I-PRSP was developed, February 2003. The PRSP process ceased because of its limited coverage (focusing only on Northern Sudan), absence of data (last Household Budget Survey, 1978) and weak capacities for in-depth analysis and the anticipated changes in the political environment.

Sudan ranks among the 25 poorest countries in the world. The statistics on the number of people living below the poverty line vary greatly: The Centre for Strategic Studies and the Ministry of Social Planning, respectively gave the figures of 96.4 percent and 37 percent. Poverty is no doubt widespread in urban Sudan. However, the urban population does not account for more than 30 percent of the total population.

Poverty is on increase in Sudan as indicated by decline of the average per capita income from over US\$500 in late 1970s to around US\$ 290 in 1998 and the per capita daily supply of calories estimated to be 1840. Life expectancy at birth is at an average of 52 years. The infant mortality rate is high at 99 thousands live birth. Maternal mortality rate is also high at 655 hundred thousand live births. Adult illiteracy is high at 73 percent. It is even higher for women at 88 percent. Enrolment rates at primary and secondary schools are estimated to be about 50 and 22 percent respectively (World Bank Report, 2000) (Adam, 2002:3).

Various surveys showed the increasing trend of poverty and increase in rural poverty in relation to the urban. Also there were evidences that despite variations between the different states in magnitude of poverty but they are still within a limited range. There are many factors contributing to poverty in Sudan such as drought, desertification, floods and the long lasting civil wars and ethnic tensions. The cost of war in the ever-longest civil war in the world is enormously high. There were 2 million died since 1983 due to the war in the south. Population movements and disability, orphanage, traumatized cases are innumerable. UNHCR estimates indicate 500,000 sought refuge in neighboring African countries.

Rural infrastructure and mode of living in war zones were completely destroyed. Absolute loss of resource endowment in rural areas of war zones is explained by loss of 6.6 million cattle; 2 million sheep and 1.5 million goats due to war in the south, according to the figures of the National Conference on Peace (1998). The effects of the war explained by expenditure on military, which is an opportunity cost of the war, reads as percent of GDP an increase from 3.8 percent (1970-1975) to 4.1 percent (1985-1990) and to 13.1 percent (1990-1995).

UNDP 1998 estimated IDPs by 3,527,500. 45 percent of IDPs reside in the slum area of Greater Khartoum. 70 percent of IDPs depend mainly on female incomes generated within marginal informal job sector. The vast majority of them originate from agro-pastoral rural areas. High illiteracy rates, lacks of skills are common among them and together with socio-cultural factors were undermined from integration within the urban economy.

The growing female-headed households are not restricted to IDPs, but escalate due to the male migration and unemployment, widowhood and family disintegration. Poverty compels many females to work for low pay, often illegal jobs and sometimes vulnerable to economic exploitation and physical abuse. Child labor (6-14 years) is roughly estimated by 10 percent of labor force in Sudan. The number of street children (boys and girls) is estimated to be 100,000 almost double the figure ten years ago. While poverty and war are held as main abusers of children rights, education policies since 1993 (charging fees) had driven many children out of schools. Finally, it is no way for an appealing I-PRSP than to develop, use and target specific gender poverty indicators to address the gender disparities.

2. The Process of I-PRSP

2.1 Status of I-PRSP

The processes of formulating the I-PRSP document are still going on. It is expected that the first draft of I-PRSP be finished by October 2003. Up until mid November 2003 there was no officially released draft I-PRSP in Sudan. The Team is working hard to finalize:

- a) Poverty diagnostic, filling gaps and reviewing poverty maps.
- b) Review and finalization of sectoral policies.
- c) Costing by sector and linking with the rolling budget.
- d) Inclusion of the part on private sector

Furthermore information sharing through the meetings of the NC, the TC, and the Supervisory committees that include representatives of different stakeholders. After the finalization of the draft I-PRSP, the secretariat intends to circulate it to the concerned partners including donors. The roles and functions of relative government and non-government actors in the implementation monitoring and evaluation will be determined and enhanced. After being ratified by the National Assembly, the I-PRSP document shall be distributed to all stakeholders involved, and information be disseminated through available means of media and publicity e. g. newspapers, radio and television and so on.

2.2 The Failed attempt of PRSP

Preparation of PRSP started formally by establishing the High Council responsible for its preparation and supervision. A Social Development Department was founded in the MoF to coordinate policies and financing social development and PRSP formulation committees.

The government of Sudan (1999-2002) was preparing a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The process included a series of studies to define the extent of poverty, its magnitude and policies to reduce it. The Strategy guidelines places emphasis on issues related to poverty such as gender, environment, food security, debt, population, capacity building calls for balanced development among the country's 26 states and within each of them.

A national council under the chairmanship of the Minister of Finance and National Economy was formed to monitor the preparation of the PRSP. The national council was supported by a national technical committee (NTC) and 26 technical committees at the state level with the objective of ensuring wider participation in the preparation of the PRSP. Furthermore, an advisory committee had been created to incorporate donor residence in Khartoum in this endeavor. The National Technical Committee (NTC), founded June 2001, was a main mechanism to involve line ministries to assure country ownership of the process and product. The NTC focused on developing work plans, broadening base of consultation, review programmes and projects related to poverty reduction and plan and implement seminars, workshops etc.

It was planned that the first draft of the PRSP be produced before the end of 2002, but suddenly stopped. Meanwhile, and until the PRSP be finalized and the implementation of relative programmes and projects started, the Ministry of Finance (through the social development sector) in its efforts to reduce poverty, continued to provide financial support for the provision of social services in different states.

Quite a few anti-poverty programmes and initiatives have traditionally existed, undertaken through a loose network of governmental, and other national and international organizations. At present, however, the most prominent local institutions involved in anti-poverty activities include: Zakat (Islamic Social Tax) Fund, Takaful (Solidarity) Fund, The National Social Insurance Fund and (more recently) The National Pension Fund, The Social Development Corporation (recently established under Khartoum State Ministry of Social Planning), and certain other banking institutions (e.g. El-Nilain Industrial Development Bank Group, Faisal Islamic Bank, and The Sudanese Islamic Development Bank).

The preparation of the PRSP includes several workshops and other consulting efforts necessary for the mobilization of different stakeholders to effectively participate in this process. There were four (September 2001- April 2002) symposiums including 44 papers covering macro-economic policies, sectoral strategies, financing plan programmes and implementation mechanisms. Information about PRSP are shared with various stakeholders through workshops, seminars, symposiums that have been organized to discuss poverty issues and related thematic papers. The PRSP consultations, though involved some of the academia, selected CSO organizations but fell short in furthering public debate and sharing of the process and its product.

An assessment of the progress made in the preparation of the PRSP has been carried out by the MOF in collaboration with various stakeholders towards the end of 2002. Many constraints facing the completion of the PRSP were identified. The most important of which were the following:

- The PRSP process concentrated on the Northern parts of the country with little or low coverage to the south.
- Absence of adequate data for poverty diagnostic.
- Weak capacities for in-depth analysis of poverty.

Other factors contributed to abandoning PRSP efforts include:

- Unfinished work on developing the country 25-year strategy, the main guiding document for the forthcoming PRSP.
- Progress towards peace agreement with SPLA/M and the envisaged effect on power and wealth sharing.
- Need to qualify with donor assistance, as peace and security are preconditions for release of resources for the PRSP implementation.

The national coverage: the PRSP consultation process has concentrated in the Northern States of the country with little coverage of the Southern States. This is mainly due to the security situation in these States that could not allow for that. The absence of adequate data and weak capacities to enable carrying out an in-depth analysis of poverty that is required for the formulation of sound pro-poor policies.

The available surveys and post studies to assess levels and distribution of poverty in the country were not adequate, and had become dated and had no coverage of the Southern States. The country's 25 years development strategy, which is supposed to be the main guiding document for the formulation of the PRSP, has not been finalized yet.

Despite the fact that a great deal of work has been done in the preparation of the (PRSP) but such work though appreciable, suffers from the limitations of participation and consultations with different stakeholders regarding the information and base line data required for in-depth analysis and clear understanding and monitoring of incidence and problems of poverty and plans and policies to address it.

The development of information system and data analytical capacity at all levels e.g. government at federal, state and local levels and other stakeholders is very crucial for developing multi-purpose poverty indicators that help the decision making process to address broad-based poverty reduction issues. Moreover, such data and information will help assess the strengths and weaknesses of the existing capacities of the institutions and mechanisms, and in addressing problems and constraints during the course of implementation of such programs.

For the above mentioned constraints, and as the country goes on to achieve peace agreement and the need to qualify for donor assistance and foreign debt reduction negotiations, it was decided to focus on the formulation of an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP), while removing these constraints. In the mean time capacity building and data collection efforts shall continue to assist in the formulation of the full-fledge PRSP.

2.3 I-PRSP Planning and Main Activities:

The decision was to focus on preparing an interim PRSP and work on removing constraints towards full fledged PRSP. Guidelines and principles were set for I-PRSP preparation with two prime objectives:

- Describe the current state of poverty in Sudan and the pursued policies, and
- Set a plan for completing the full PRSP.

The guiding principles set for the I-PRSP preparation are mainly:

- The 25-year development strategy (not yet ratified).
- Consultation process undertaken by MoF within the previous PRSP process.
- The MDGs and work plans of line ministries to construct the policy framework of the IPRSP.
- The wealth sharing arrangement within the peace talks, if agreed upon, shall be a binding document of the paper.
- The plan was to cover Northern Sudan and Government controlled areas in the south.
- Recommended sources of data, the organizational set-up or coordination and major actors within the consultation process.

The table below shed light on the time frame and main activities within the process of preparing the I-PRSP:

| Date | Activity | Output |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| October 2002 | PRSP stopped | 20 papers and workshops' material |
| November 2002 | Decision to start IPRSP | National Council |
| December 2002 | Establishment of IPRSP secretariat | Start consultations and meetings with NC and States' focal persons |
| January 2003 | Technical Committee formed | Draft guidelines and principles for IPRSP |
| February 2003 | Formation of experts teams | 4 task groups working on 4 papers: Macro-policies; Peace; Poverty analysis and pro-poor growth policies |
| March-April 2003 | Working on papers, sectoral meetings and contact with states for information related to MDGs | Information and data and sectoral and states inputs collected and reviewed |
| May – June 2003 | Draft papers and discussions | Policy guidelines and analysis reviewed in NC, TC and sectoral meetings |
| July 2003 | Joint WB/IMF and UNDP mission meetings | Teams oriented on how to prepare the I-PRSP |
| | | |
| August 2003 | Orientation of the National Assembly | Consultation expanded to parliament |
| September 2003 | Council of ministers briefed on progress | I-PRSP follow-up unit established (the current secretariat) |
| October 2003 | Preparing the draft I-PRSP | |
| Supervision committee meetings | Summary of chapters on pro-poor macro-economic and sectoral policies | |
| November 2003 | Revision of poverty diagnostic, poverty maps – finalize sectoral targets and costing | |
| - | Editing of the draft I-PRSP | On-going |
| December 2003 | Planned for Final Paper and Approval | After approval become integral to the 3-year programme. |
| | | |

2.4 Institutional Arrangements:

A high Council {HC} chaired by the president of the Republic was established by presidential decree in year 2000, to supervise the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive program

for Poverty Reduction. In year 2001 the National Council (NC) for the Preparation and supervision of Poverty Reduction Strategy replaced the HC. The NC is chaired by the Minister of Finance and National Economy with Membership of Ministers of the respective sectoral Ministries, head of related government institutions, Southern States Coordination Council, the Nuba-Mountains Peace Council, Zakat Fund. Also the NC included representatives from pro-government trade unions, business associations, farmers union, women movement, national experts. The NC is the main mechanism set by the government to achieve a country owned IPRSP.

The NC is subordinated by the National Technical committee (NTC) for coordination and supervision of social development programs. The TC is chaired by the State Minister of the MOF for the social sector with membership of high executives representing poverty related sectoral Ministries, Government institutions, Zakat fund, NGOs, civil society, trade unions ...etc. A social development department was subsequently created in the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to coordinate the social development policies and financing of social development programs/projects, as well as formulate the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

In a recent development, a new State Minister was appointed in MOF late 2002. The newly recruited State Minister is in charge of International Cooperation including the IMF in addition to the supervision of the formulation of the PRSP. Consequently, the TC was replaced by a Supervisory Committee (SC) under the chairmanship of the new State Minister with similar Mandate and composition. Other parallel Technical Committees were established at the state level with the same functions and responsibilities.

An Interim Secretariat (IS) was established in February 2003 under the direct supervision of the State Minister for International Cooperation to carry out the responsibility of the IPRSP preparation. In June 2003, the IS was replaced by a Technical Unit (TU) for the completion of the IPRSP and the start of the PRSP.

Under the NC, the subordinate TC, and the newly established SC a lot of work has been done covering various poverty related issues including conceptualization, nature, level, magnitude, spread of poverty across different segments of population, across sectors and Geographic area. In this respect a series of studies to define the extent of poverty, its magnitude, and policies to reduce poverty have been prepared. Furthermore, the studies tried to cover cross cutting issues related to poverty viz gender, environment, food security, debt, population, capacity building ...etc. Also the process included a number of seminars symposiums, workshops and group discussion that have been organized with wide participation of various stakeholders. This include civil society local NGOs, academic institutions, private sector, women groups and representatives from donor agencies (see listing of workshops). Also, during the consultation process working groups from Ministry of Finance and different government concerned ministries and agencies were sent to all the states in the country. The main objectives of these missions are to activate the States Technical Committees broadening the participation through the stimulation and mobilization of people at the grass root level to effectively participate in the PRSP process and to assess their views on poverty related issues as well as their plans, priorities and programs to reduce poverty.

2.5 The Policy-making Consultations

Consultations and participation mechanisms and roles and functions of various stakeholders in policy formulation, priority setting, resource allocation, decision making and monitoring and evaluation are not clearly defined in the course of preparation of the I-PRSP. There are weaknesses in both human and institutional capacities of both state and non-state actors for effective participation in these processes. There is a need for a holistic approach and clear vision of basic principles, directives, guide lines as well as appropriate mechanisms and modalities to ensure greater participation of all stakeholders including non – state actors in all stages of I-PRSP e.g. Programs/Project cycle and necessary adjustments. The vision should take into consideration all development partners including UN specialized agencies and donor community members involved in this process, civil society organizations, INGOs and National NGOs, public sector administration, and private sector institutions.

The main contributor is the head department of macro-policies in the MoF, therefore, difficult to expect a change from mainstream policies. Poverty analysis, although lead by an independent consultant and two assistant from the Central Bureau of statistics (CBS) but constrained by the pre-determined data sources and pre-determined MDG targets. The idea was to use previous consultations within the failed attempt of PRSP. Lack of capacities in the states and the limited database at state and locality levels curtailed the contributions of that government level. Even at the level of MoF the consultation process relied on a small number of officials in the secretariat, the sectoral planning and the social funds units.

2.6 Civil Society Participation in the Process

Despite the fact that the number of civil society organizations has tremendously increased during the past few years, yet the performance of most of them regarding the development issues is limited. This is mainly attributed, by them, to the lack or insufficiency of information about these organizations from one side and low capacity in the majority of these organizations in terms of management, finance and experience. In addition to that they do not have clear vision, on the definition, and conceptual understanding of poverty. Moreover the overall environment demerit real and effective participation of all actors of the society in decision-making process.

However, the main factors hindering the effective involvement of civil society organizations and private sector are the following:

- The failing political will and commitment to respect and deal with diversity. Absence of formulation and achievement of an integrated country-wide I-PRSP is the diversity and magnitude of constraints due to the socio-economic conditions e.g. cyclical drought, desertification
- The constraints of diversities in ecosystem, ethnicities, cultural and demographic features characterizing each and every state, locality and community.
- The civil war in some parts of the country, displacement, migration, in addition to uneven development and poor services delivery across almost all sectoral and spectrum of People.

This required empowerment and motivation of People at state and localities level to effectively

participate in the I-PRSP processes.

- Limitations of the Federal System, in terms of capacity and social accountability, to effectively Respond to the real needs of local population e.g. adequate devolution to the people of the states and localities to exercise power and demand accountability, promotion of fiscal discipline and responsibility ...etc
- Unfavorable and disabling environment for meaningful involvement of civil society organizations, including the private sector and the officially labeled as opposition i.e. political parties and NGOs.
- Capacities of existing civil society organizations, in terms of bargaining power and influence capacities? And do they have the required capacities, personnel, funding and experience? And what sort of capacity building required, and by whom could be delivered?
- Poor, and in some instances, lack of capacities at all levels (Federal line Ministries, State, localities to provide the necessary information and data on poverty, and to participate in building the capacities of civil society organization and help enable them to participate in the I-PRSP processes.

2.7 Overall Assessment of the Process:

The plan for preparation of I-PRSP was prepared February 2003, indicating the general guidelines and principles, the organizational set-up and the proposed framework. The I-PRSP inherited a wealth of knowledge and data prepared within the PRSP process.

The depth of participatory and consultation process is highly questionable, especially from the CSOs' point of view. Civil society participation was limited to carefully selected organizations, including pro-government NGOs, unions, women, and youth and students organizations. The limitation of the participatory process could be attributed to the shaky political will shaping the non-democratic, exclusive governance, within the I-PRSP preparation period. What was done, in my opinion, was to comply with the conditions set by the international community to guarantee country's ownership of the plan. This raises importance of just, inclusive and democratic governance as a prerequisite to come up with sound planning and not just a shy target within the plan.

Unlike the process of PRSP, where there were four symposiums and six thematic discussion groups, the consultation within I-PRSP process was limited to inputs of few experts in economics, policy formulation and statistics. The major consultative event at initial planning stages was a workshop sponsored by WB and UNDP Sudan in May 2003. The main audiences involve 198 from high rank officials, donor and INGOs representatives and few representatives of independent CSOs and the academia to debate on the underlying concepts, principle and guidelines.

Data sources were limited to few surveys, and the inputs from sectoral departments at national and state levels. In absence of capacities in data collection and analysis, particularly at state level, a questionnaire designed on basis of the MDGs was submitted to the focal points in the state for filling. Therefore, participation at that level is only provision of information, if

available. It is difficult to trace any attempts to reveal perceptions of the poor to their situation. Data analysis and policy formulations were carried out by two prominent experts, only later few scholars were asked to comment or revise.

In brief, the major shortcomings of the I-PRSP process include but not limited to:

- The dominance of one political stand and the government officials through out the process.
- Poor participation in interaction and dialogue forums (at all levels) involving the private sector, CSOs and poverty-related government institutions, especially in policy making.
- Database, interpretation and analysis was not shared widely to develop shared vision, appropriate policy framework and agreed upon targets.
- The voice of the poor was neither voiced nor heard, however, expected to be the benchmark to measure extent of the participatory process and quality of the plan.

However, despite the various shortcomings, the process of both PRSP and I-PRSP yielded the following positive aspects:

- The attempts to set multi-stakeholder consultations on poverty issues which used to be quite politically sensitive in Sudan.
- The start of dialogue on the political and policy related aspects by the Sudanese civil society.
- The change in the antagonistic relationship between the government and non-government organizations and the room created to share dialogue on nature, extent, and causes of poverty and road maps to address it.
- The statement of commitments of the governments towards the poor and the start to act in relation to MDGs.
- The recognition for need for reliable policy and poverty related information and the documented statements towards working on good governance aspects.

3. Content of the I-PRSP

3.1 Poverty Diagnostic

The following account tries to indicate the poverty related indicators, data and trends, as documented from the invaluable inputs of Nur (2003). The objectives of the background paper on poverty diagnostic is aimed at:

- Deepening understanding on poverty incidence, trends and dynamics.
- Inform the policy making process to develop pro-poor growth policies.
- Inform the I-PRSP decision-making process to develop programmes i.e. targets, sectors, and geographical areas.

He attempted to draw the poverty profile of Sudan over the period 1986-1992. The level of analysis opted for was the household level using outdated and little data and of little use. Data on Income poverty indicators and trends in Sudan were collected for the first time. In 1968 through the Household Budget Survey (HBS) followed by the second and last (HBS) was carried in 1978. In 1990 the ILO funded the Migration and Labor Force Survey, and in 1992 the Social Development

Fund funded the Poverty Line Survey. In the search for an officially accepted measure of income poverty, for the purpose of launching the I-PRSP, had indicated the need for a continuous flow of household level data pertaining to income and expenditure to measure the trends of poverty.

Nur (1988) developed poverty related indicators in the recommended average daily allowance of calories for Sudan on basis of 1973 population figures. Ali (1994) utilized the 1968 and 1978 household budget surveys data and the 1989 and 1992 Labor Force and Poverty Surveys to construct a comparable household income distributions for the years (1968,1978,1986 and 1992). Ali also computed the recommended average daily allowance of calories for the poor in urban and rural areas for the same years. He arrived at the total poverty lines on the household income distributions, the trends of poverty over the period (1968-1992) as reported in table (1). The table shows the poverty trends over three periods:

A/ (1968- 1978)

1- The head count index in Sudan over ten years period (1968-1978) had increased at an annual rate of 0.5 percent . Over the same period the number of poor rural households had been growing at a rate equal to the rural population growth rate while the number of poor urban households had been growing at a rate higher than the urban population growth rate.

2- The poverty gap ratio in the whole country had been decreasing at the annual rate of 0.64 percent . This indicates that although poverty had been spreading at an annual rate of 0.5 percent over the period, the economic conditions of the poor had improved over the period.

3- There is reduction in the poverty gap index, in spite of the increase in the head count index.

B/ (1978-1986)

4- The national head count index increased at an annual rate increase of 4.6 percent and the incidence of rural poverty (83.1) remained higher than the incidence of urban poverty 52.9 percent . The incidence of urban poverty had been growing at a higher annual rate 12.6 percent than that the rural 3.3 percent .

5- The number of poor families in Sudan increased at annual rate of 6.2 percent , which is higher than the national population growth rate.

6- The incidence of poverty had been increasing at annual rate of 0.5 percent but the poverty and the income gap ratio had been decreasing at annual rate of 0.64 percent and 1.2 percent respectively.

7- Poverty spread not only at a fast annual rate of 4.6 percent , but also grow deeper at an annual rate of 3.9 percent during (1978-1986) period, compared to the period (1968-1978).

8- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased at annual rate of increase of 29.9 percent. The real income of the poor had been growing at a diminishing negative rate of 5.9 percent.

9- The rural poverty gap index increased at an annual rate of 6.8 percent as shown by the rural-urban poverty trends disparities over this period.

C/ (1986-1992)

- 10- During the period the incidence of poverty was increasing.
- 11- The poverty rates increased over the period (1986-1992) but slowed down from 4.6 percent to 2.4 percent, from 3.3 percent to 0.2 percent, and from 12.6 percent to 7.8 percent for the whole country.
- 12- The number of poor households increased from 2.71 millions, in 1986 to 3.43 millions in 1992 at an annual rate of increase of 4 percent .
- 13- The national Poverty Gap Index increased at an annual rate of 4.5 percent over the period (1986-1992).
- 14- The rural and urban poverty indices increased at annual rates of 3.2 percent and 11.5 percent respectively.
- 15- The national, urban and rural mean income of the poor as a ratio of poverty line decreased over he period (1986-1992) from 0.42 to 0.33, from 0.54 to 0.43, and from 0.38 to 0.22 respectively.

Nur in table (1) computed income poverty trends in Sudan throughout the periods; (1968/78), (1978/86), and (1986/1992). The measurement was done across two indicators mainly; Head count (H: ratio of poor under poverty line of \$1 per day per capita to total population), and the Poverty Gap as measured by Gini's coefficient. The table further compares rural /urban poverty. The figures points to the following:

1/ Income Poverty trends for the Sudan:

The figures for the three years under comparison showed steep increase in Income Poverty as represented by the mean percentages for the three ranges, as follows:

52.9 percent , 66.03 and 84.6 percent respectively.

2/ Poverty Gap for Sudan also showed an increase in the depth of poverty through same periods as follows: 23.86 percent, 34.27 percent, and 52.4 percent respectively. These are calculated as the mean value of each range.

3/ The statistics on income poverty also showed spatial disparities between rural and urban Sudan in relation to incidence and depth of poverty. Rural to Urban poverty shows relative decline in favor of rural poverty situation. This clearly indicate that urban poverty was increasing as represented by the percentages below:

45.22 percent, 36.96 percent, 11.06 percent. The figures were calculated on the basis of the difference between the percentages, rural/urban in each range and the mean value within each range.

The table further gives indication to rural/ urban disparities as measured by the poverty gap (depth of poverty). The figures translate in 22.72 percent, 10.99 percent, and 14.64 percent, for the three periods, indicating a narrow disparity trend in poverty gap, which is closer in the middle range. One explanation could be due to the high inflation trend, which hardly impacted urban cash income

earners.

The table also links inflation rate trends to poverty. This gives a meaningful explanation on the behavior of poverty in the three periods, on which income data were provided. The period 1992-2002, if included in the analysis, would have given a good insight on poverty patterns, especially taking into account, that the period was characterized with the highest inflation records in history, despite the control measures to curb inflation to a double-digit figure in the late nineties and till now.

In brief, there are some important findings, despite the fact that the data used for analysis is out dated. Rural poverty remained high and a new form of urban poverty emerged. The period (1978-1986) was characterized by the Structural Adjustment Program (SAPs) and also characterized by a wide spread poverty in the country.

Generally, the results showed that the three main poverty indicators, namely, the Head Count Index (HC), the Income Gap Index (I-U/Z), and the Poverty Gap Index H (I-U/z), had been increasing at increasing rates over the period (1986-1992). This indicates that poverty had been intensified all over the country, particularly rural areas. This is explained by a number of interrelated factors:

- The social cost of Structural Adjustment Programme
- Urban bias and policies favoring the modern commercial farming at the expense of small-scale rural producers.
- The influxes of forced migration due to famines, drought and civil strife and war in the south.
- Withdrawal of public spending on essential health, education services

Despite, agreement with the destitute situation in rural Sudan, but Sudan has the highest urban growth rate in the African Sahelian countries. The population census data show that the urban population was 11 percent (1965); 24 percent (1983) and 32 percent (1993). The average growth rate was 6 percent for the urban and 2.3 percent for the rural in the period (1983-1993). There is no sharp increase in industry, which contributes by 15 percent of the GDP. This high urbanization is explained by huge influxes of forced migration due to the drought and famine (1984/85) and the escalation of civil war in the south. While this contributed to the urban poor, serious destructions occurred in the rural economy, in areas of origin of these migrants. The high inflation up to 1996 contributed to the situation of urban poverty. The categories that make the majority of urban poor are the IDPs, the slums, unskilled wage laborers, the retrenched public service employees and other wage earners and government employees. Within these categories, women and children are those who suffer more.

Same time, there were the policies favoring the mechanized rain fed farming and irrigated schemes. The result was blocking livestock routes and diminishing small-scale agricultural land resources, pushing pastoralists and subsistence farmers to lands of annual average rainfall below 600 mm. This again contributed to impoverishment of rural producers and put more pressure on urban poor whose food depends on rural products.

The I-PRSP poverty analysis expert admitting that poverty is more than lack of income, opted for evaluating development from two perspectives of advancement made in enlarging human choices and reduced degree of deprivation as measured by the HDI. This entitlement approach was considered to fill gap in the deficient poverty-specific data and to adhere to the guidelines of targeting according to MDGs. In absence of high quality data collected by means of poverty-specific surveys, and urgency to contribute to Sudan I-PRSP, the planning team borrowed data from non-poverty specific surveys. These surveys include: 1992 household budget survey, 1999- Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) and 2000-Multiple Cluster Survey (MICS). There is highly relevant data availed by UNDP Human Development Report (1979), but not used as not officially accepted by the government. The specific data sources were already identified within the set guidelines for preparing the I-PRSP.

Nevertheless, the identified deprivation indicators, in Northern Sudan include: deprivation in survival, knowledge and economic provisioning. Poverty maps (1,2,3) were developed to show spatial disparities and compares the states with a national average. It is difficult to agree on having the Red Sea area in green both in the state comparison to the national average and again green in the comparison to the average urban. Probably there were problems related to population figures and limited attention to the effects of occurrence of drought, famine and consequently the displacement from rural to urban cities in the Red Sea area. Still there is much debate on the accuracy of the maps and the team is currently (November, 2003) busy to make the necessary amendments.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2, as reflected in the first IPRSP draft, explain the status in relation to some selected survival and knowledge indicators.

Table 2.1 the survival indicators by Rural and Urban Areas

| Indicator | Rural (percent) | Urban (percent) |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Probability of death rate before age of 40 years | 23.3 | 19.4 |
| Infant mortality rate | 12 | 9.9 |
| Mortality rate before age of 5 yrs | 8.2 | 6.9 |

The most suffering states in relation to survival indicators are the Red Sea, Blue Nile, Kassala, South Kordofan and North Kordofan States.

2.2 The knowledge indicators by Rural and Urban Areas:

| Indicator | Rural (percent) | Urban (percent) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Not enrolled in basic education | 52.35 | 28.9 |
| Drop out rate | 49.8 | 26.8 |
| Not enrolled in secondary education | 53.6 | 27.4 |

The states reported to suffer more from knowledge deprivation are the Blue Nile, Northern and Western Kordofan States. Gender disparity with regards to gross basic education is 39.4 for females and 49.8 for males. The situation is more serious when looking to the percentages of deprivation from education for some states. The percentage of children at school age who are deprived from basic education are 83.1 percent, 81.1 percent, 76.9 percent and 70.6 percent in the Red Sea, Blue Nile, West Kordofan and South Darfur, respectively. When comparing this situation with the percent of deprived children from basic education in Khartoum States (36.4 percent) the spatial disparities and center-periphery injustice is better explained.

Decent life: Equates to deprivation from attaining decent standard of living for overall economic provisioning (adequate food intake, decent shelter, access to education, health services, to information, technology and recreational facilities.). Disparities of insufficient economic provisioning for rural and urban areas estimated to be 86.5 percent and 39.5 percent respectively. The disparities for insufficient economic provisioning for rural West Darfur, West Kordofan and Blue Nile is estimated at 99.8 percent, 99.4 percent and 97.8 percent. As far as the economic provisioning indicator, the average number of people unable to access electricity, safe drinking water, public health facility and those under poverty lines are 78.4 percent, 53 percent, 53.3 percent and 65.2 percent respectively. The most deprived regions from this provisioning are the Blue Nile, North Kordofan, West Darfur, Red Sea and Western Kordofan.

On the whole, the poverty diagnostic for the Sudanese I-PRSP suffered from some major shortcomings:

Official as well research and academia community agreed upon no single workable definition for poverty and the poor between. poverty concept: ‘inability to attain a minimum standard of living’ or ‘having a sense of decent life’ varies among social groups and societies. This is same as ‘minimum subsistence’, which relates to the socio-cultural factors surrounding the social group.

At the macro –level ‘poverty is failure to meet basic economic needs’ a concept which partially explains the criteria of poverty in the Sudanese context, which indicates ‘insufficiency in economic, socio-cultural and political needs’. However, in its absolute term vulnerability to being homeless, hungry or prone to famine is not uncommon. It is therefore important to decide whether we are using the absolute notion of poverty or the relative notion. The latter is related to relative standard that explains relative deprivation in relation to income and wealth and has much to do with inequality in distribution and social injustice. The absolute notion explains better the absolute deprivation. Moreover, vulnerability in the Sudanese context is where the cycle of absolute poverty, conflict, drought and resource-less-ness interact.

On the other hand the capability ‘resource endowment’ approach explains inability to access resources to have basic essential needs ‘absolute poverty’ or perceived needs ‘relative poverty’. In both cases it is a question of the resources available in rural or urban settings. It is important to dig for what linkages that exist between rural and urban. The capabilities in rural setting are mainly means to produce agricultural and livestock products, essential for subsistence and survival for

urban dwellers. The urban endowment that links directly to the skills in services, technology and industry which backbone is the product and by-products of rural areas.

The way ahead to address poverty should then be immediate in case of (vulnerability) and in the short term for (absolute deprivation) and long term for unjust distribution of (relative deprivation). Yet, the two strategies are inseparable whereby basis for the equity: spatially and socio-economic groupings should be built within the short-term strategies.

Measurable poverty issues such as the proportion and the spatial location of the poor, their poverty depth, and inequality among them, are very crucial for a comprehensive poverty assessment needed for setting objectives, targets and directions/policies for IPRSP/PRSP. This can only be empirically fully addressed if high quality data are collected by means of poverty-specific surveys. The absence of this type of data together with the urgency to finalize the I-PRSP, data was borrowed from non-specific poverty surveys. The second and last household budget survey (the monetary approach to poverty) has been carried out in 1978. Data and information sources are mainly being provided through relevant official channels at both federal and state level. With respect to information and data at the community (grass - root) level, and as mentioned earlier, was done through the meetings of the working groups, who visited the States and few selected localities.

Data and information collected covered some selected poverty-related issues and MDGs, e.g. state of poverty, level, depth magnitude and HDI to set objectives, priorities and targets. The I-PRSP poverty diagnostic relied on data accepted by the government on political grounds. Important data sources, as those of independent research work, the UNDP (NHDR, 1997) etc that were completely ignored by IPRSP consultants and planners. At least, independent sources should have been consulted to enrich discussion and degree on consensus on estimated rates of poor people.

As a result of the aforementioned constraints, data were borrowed from three different national surveys carried out for different purposes in different points of time. These surveys include 1992 house hold budget survey, which by de facto, called poverty survey, 1999 Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with UNFPA, and the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) in collaboration with UNICEF. The results from these available and borrowed data were utilized to map out income and Human Poverty in Northern Sudan in terms of deprivation in three dimensions: survival, knowledge and decent life.

There was an important attempt recognizes the importance of empirical analysis of poverty trends in Sudan. By so doing it built essential grounds for the PRSP perspective that guides the overall policies and strategies related to income poverty. It is no doubt verifying the non-controversial magnitude on poverty and the wide agreement on its increasing trend. Yet, the concept of income poverty or the capability resource approach (HDI) does not fully explain the process and dynamism of poverty multifaceted nature in Sudan. Much of data and knowledge furnished through Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) was not used in the poverty diagnostic for the preparation of the I-PRSP. This is attributed possibly to the main officially accepted and

identified reference sources within the guiding principles for I-PRSP preparation. If wider consultations occurred, there would be a possibility to reach widely agreed upon national poverty indicators. There were rich information and data on both urban and rural poor and at individual, household and community levels generated by national and international CSOs. The PPA approach could have generated more in-depth information and analysis on vulnerability, gender disparities in priorities and within household incomes. More over own poor people analysis could help reduce biases in information, analysis and help shape the future policies. Of particular importance, are the own poor people perceptions on poverty and voicing own priorities. Of particular mention is what both urban and rural poor share in terms of sufferings viz. safe drinking water and access to health facility and drugs. That shared concern was missed in the poverty diagnostic, however realized in I-PRSP targets opting for MDGs.

Moreover, the income poverty trend analysis concluded a rural bias, in favor of the subsistence rural producers. While that is a legitimate recommendation, policy makers may opt for halting urban poverty reduction programmes. The rural-urban linkages and the dynamics of processes where not fully explored. It is no doubt the rural producers need the urban-based skills and purchasing power to increase productivity. On the other hand, the urban poor depend on rural producers for food, agribusiness etc. The fact that poverty is mentioned in the MDGs targets, without referring to clear policies on skills or access to capital or job opportunities yields that assumption. In addition, the notion itself of ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ within the Sudanese context is sometimes ambiguous taking note of ‘ruralization of urban settings’.

It is very difficult to trace in-depth analysis of the causes of poverty within the I-PRSP process. Within this complexity, identifying the key causes of poverty is a precondition for formulating an effective anti-poverty strategy. There were always some phrases that cite the war, natural catastrophes etc. as main causes of poverty. Independent analytical inputs stressed that causes human deprivation and poverty vary in nature and impact. They could be natural or man-made and could be local, regional or global. In the final analysis poor governance, which manifest itself at all levels, is to be held responsible for this destitute situation of extreme poverty. Crisis of war, famine, desertification and in appropriate, urban biased policies were attributed to poor governance. The persistent bias in favour of the centre, and in particular the interests of the political elite, explains better the state limited socially accountable governance.

Furthermore, power relations (from household to international governance levels) contributed significantly to the situation. Power relations at household level explain the gender dimension of poverty, which could hardly be traced within the poverty diagnostic in the Sudanese case. There is essential need to develop national gender –poverty and gender development indicators to help develop gender sensitive policies to close the gaps in knowledge, basic capabilities and head for gender empowerment.

Compounded by the burden of natural disasters and civil war, this failure has manifested itself in limited and inequitable access to all forms of capital: human, physical, financial and social. Deprivation from capital inevitably leads to lack of remunerative employment and low social welfare.



In absence of poverty-focused surveys and data, the I-PRSP secretariat, admitted that there were no options than to borrow data from non-poverty focused surveys. The aim was to come up with some indicators with the intention to be amended later after carrying households budget surveys within the forthcoming preparatory phase of PRSP.

Accordingly, the I-PRSP economic expert relied heavily on the data availed by the HHS (1992), SMS (1999) and MICS (2000). They were meant to measure poverty and develop poverty indicators for the North. They were not designed for poverty surveys. Despite, coverage of the MICS for three major towns in Southern Sudan, hence excluding rural southern Sudan, but were not reflected in poverty analysis and maps. Moreover, the data and analysis suffer from shortcomings in relation to causes of poverty, the socio-economic characteristics of the poor and experiences of the poor to cope with stress. This limitation would have been surmounted provided that there was a political will to consult poor people through participatory analysis workshops at community levels. The fact that the exercise was limited to intellectual inputs, deskwork of officials the quality of data and analysis shall continue to suffer from lack of consensus.

Official recognition of deficiency in poverty related data, by itself is a step forward. Emphasis on launching population census and household budget surveys within the I-PRSP period would be a major achievement. However, the contents would have benefited immensely if shared analysis of existing data occurred. Research centers, universities and both INGOs and NGOs, though of limited coverage, but had furnished useful knowledge about extent, magnitude and perceptions on poverty at grass roots level.

3.2 The Macro-economic Framework:

Economic reform packages have been implemented since late 1970s; however, growth was negative up to 1990s. Substantial reforms were undertaken during the 1990s. Early 1992 stabilization policies began to yield encouraging results. From 1997 onwards reforms were further deepened and speeded up, with assistance of IMF. Macro-economic imbalances and inflation were curbed and space was paved for the private sector. These reforms were accompanied by revival of economic growth and increases in average per capita income. The oil industry aided the economic growth recovery process. Annual average per capita income accelerated from 1.2 percent during 1001-1995 to more than 4 percent during 1996-2001. Despite, the poor were not able to catch up, simply because there were no definite policies favoring the poor.

State-controlled development policies suppressed economic growth and hence undermining efficiency. The type of structural adjustment undertaken in the Sudan had resulted in cuts in social spending, deteriorating basic service infrastructure and consequently exacerbating poverty. Privatisation of public enterprises did not clearly impacted positively on improvement in efficiency. It was a hasty and shaky attempt that contributed to private monopolies and retrenchment in public servile service sector. The public sector, which was the main source of employment completely collapsed due to politicization and cuts in public expenditure. As a consequence the middle class significantly squeezed, civil service collapsed and safety nets based on social linkages were lost. Under such a situation of macroeconomic performance and inflationary conditions, unemployment rose and real wages fell inevitably, poverty mounted.

Annex (4) shows the macro-economic indicators by item by actual and planned (years 2000-2003). Annex (3) is a matrix of policies (fiscal, monetary and foreign sector) to achieve the objectives of:

- Reduced budgetary deficit
- Reduced inflation rate
- Equilibrium in balance of trade

In Sudan, there are certain imbalances that call for economic growth and economic structure within a framework of development. Clear indicators should be developed on the impact of above policies on poverty, impact on services and their impact on economic growth. How positive growth rates trickle down on the poor and the essential services should be spelt out in the policy matrix. Regional disparities, gender disparities and people and regions affected by war should be top on the agenda of a clearly spelt out and committed distribution policy.

There has been high growth but distorted distribution. Expenditure on social services was cut by more than 50 percent relative to gross domestic product (GDP) 1992-1998 causing considerable reduction in social services and infrastructure. It is therefore, questionable whether this growth is accompanied by pro-poor structural reforms.

Official records of the draft IPRSP material, October 2003, indicates the following macro-economic performance indicators:

- Annual Average National Growth is -1.2 percent.
- Public Expenditure exceeds revenue, recording a budget deficit of 9.8 percent of GDP (1989/90).
- Inflation was 72 percent due to increased money stock 156 percent by end of year 1990.
- The Balance of Trade deficit jumped from 362 million US\$ (1980) to 848 million US\$ (1998).

However, some official sources reported positive performance attributed to the mid term economic salvation programme (1990-1993). A programme that established economic liberalization policies, in pricing; internal and external trade systems; privatization and controlled role of public sector institutions and revision of the legal framework and by-laws that restricts the role of the private sector.

Official sources indicated annual growth rate of (+ 1.2 percent) in (1990/91 and afterwards reaching (8.9 percent) in (1994/95). Currently the officially recorded average growth rate is (6 percent). Despite the fact that there is a positive growth rates, according official sources, it is difficult to trace any positive trickle down effect on the poor. Same time, this did not stop liquidity, increased inflation rate and deterioration of the exchange rates. Inflation rate reached (130 percent) in (1996). The excuse, as usual, was the gulf war, civil war and decreased external development support and expatriates remittances, in Gulf region. The liberalization policies were reinforced in the period (1997-2003) through improved monetary policies and reforming the banking systems. The aim was to decrease the inflation rate, perceived as main reason behind economic instability.

The Macro-policy Framework is shown by (Annex 3). This was believed to generate positive changes as follows:

1. Stability of exchange rates.
2. Economic Growth Rate increased to more than double of population growth rate.
3. Budget deficit decreased from 4 percent in 1992/93 to 1 percent by 1999.
4. Currency annual average exposure decreased from 83 percent for the period 1990-1995 to 25 percent for the period 1997-2001.
5. The deficit in current account is reported as 0.2 percent of the GNP.
6. The inflation rate is stable to less than 10 percent.

A number of measures were introduced to address poverty situation including:

1. Macro-economic policies targeting agriculture and rural areas. However it is difficult to record changes in investment e.g. in subsistence farming or pastoralist communities, where 70 percent of population is recorded. Same period coincided with the jailed farmers due to credit default, especially in mechanized farming schemes.
2. Increased salaries of civil service sector. Same time, huge number of civil service employees and laborers lost their jobs. The used to be middle class, is almost finished.
3. Support of states to provide essential social services: education, health and water).
4. Laws and by-laws for production, marketing and distribution of products. The collapse of the social service infrastructure, quality and quantity of service are recorded, at all official levels. At the same time, despite talk about center support to state, there is wide perception among locality officials and people that it is just load shedding policies.
5. National Funds (Sanduk): Zakat chamber, Takaful (social support), Social Development Saving Bank (SDF) to support poor families are of limited coverage, sometimes politicized selectivity of targeted communities and individuals.

The I-PRSP macro-economic objective, as indicated in the draft IPRSP (October 2003) is to:

- Achieve sustainable economic growth rate within a range of 6 to 7 percent, and
- Decrease inflation rate to 5 to 6 percent (on average) annually, and
- Achieve stability in exchange rate
- The policy directions to achieve these objectives comprises:
- Development of traditional farming and livestock sector
- Public investments
- Increased productivity in the irrigated farming sector
- Motivation of the private sector, and
- Investment in infrastructure

On the other hand the monetary policy objective is to decrease the overall budget deficit within 1 percent of the GDP, through increased revenues from real resources. But, again there are fears of increased expenditure on rehabilitation and development of war-affected areas. The option might then be increased revenues from customs, oil pricing and widening the direct base of taxation. Yet, huge expectations of increased international flow of funds are there, once a peace agreement is signed. Moreover, the HIPC initiative, activation of donor roles and financing institution, is a

source on which the government does count. The monetary policy mechanisms, within the free market, include:

- Issue of financial instrument, (government bond e.g. Shahama certificates) and improving stock exchange market.
- Improvement of banking systems (credit policy measures) to support saving and investment policies.
- Exchange rate determined by the market forces, and
- Establishment of a foreign currency reserve.

Within the process of PRSP, an important workshop was held (October, 2001) involving a number of national experts, the academia, the research centers, the media etc to discuss the macro-policy framework. However, within the I-PRSP process, the policy framework is yet awaiting endorsement and release from the macro-policy department of the Ministry of Finance. Again, it is obscure to say there is dialogue or consensus on the macro-policy framework. Within the Sudanese diverse case, opinions of CSO and in particular the political parties in the growth-related and poverty reduction macro-economic policies are vital to assure participation in decision-making over policies. Apart from very few press releases from the Ministry of Finance, about status of I-PRSP, the media is completely devoid of information related to the process or its anticipated outcome.

The past macro economic performance is bold in the I-PRSP, highlighting the high increase in the rate of growth in the GDP in the 1990s compared to the 1980s. However, admitted that efforts in poverty reduction fall behind. These efforts were sporadic and not pursued as a coherent strategy supported with appropriate distribution policies and programmes.

The increase in the rate of GNP is expected to reflect positively on incomes and consequently ability to access goods and services. Increased incomes supposedly lead to increase in the supply of goods and services, which increases production and thus opening new employment opportunities. Increased employment, leading to increased wages and salaries is expected to increase government revenues, which could be used in investment on project and services. This remained as theoretical assumptions that lead to skepticism about whether the growth is real, in the sense that it is not linked with production. Moreover, the role of oil in the economic stability and increased growth rate remains secrecy. The I-PRSP contents, yet to clarify how the growth strategy would be translated into welfare improvements for the poor. Simply the policies are not clear on how growth is distributed fairly and how is it going to reach the poor?. There is vital need for clearly stated distribution policies and commitment of the government translated into just public allocations, financing basic services and closing gaps in regional and gender disparities.

The information on oil revenues and its role in poverty reduction financing is not shared and treated with limited transparency. The poor people and CSO organizations count much on oil role in addressing people sufferings. It is no doubt focusing on oil over the past five years was at the expense of other important sectors of the economy. While oil is perceived to contribute to the growth rate, real role of producing agricultural sectors is not clear. Again, oil revenues could

have been important vehicle to address spatial historical disparities. In all cases, oil and other geopolitical factors e.g. water sources etc, require in more depth analysis in terms of risks and benefits related to poor people and growth and development in Sudan.

It is generally acknowledged that economic growth does not necessarily trickle down on poorer sections of the society. The Sudanese case better illustrates this statement, particularly since 1996 where an annual growth rate is positive and stable reaching 6 percent. To come up with pro-poor policies that integrates growth and development, there is special need to increase:

- The national per capita income to measure development at the national level
- The per capita in household income to measure prosperity at micro-level
- The individual (within the household) income, assets and capability (endowment) to measure disparities along gender and age groups (women, youth, eldest etc.).
- The Sudanese policy-makers should, therefore, rethink policies related to:
 - Private ownership of rural people resource base e.g. land, pastures, animal routes etc.
 - Limited government social spending and load shedding of services on the local governance structures, in turn on ordinary man and woman.
 - Commercialization of basic services e.g. education, health and drinking water

Rural producers need policies that decrease exposure to vulnerability: Legislations on land, water, animal routes, taxes on farm and animal services and products. More over, drought and flood preparedness and institutions to forecast and cope with natural disaster and buffer stocks of grains should be a backbone for effective rural poverty strategy.

Nonetheless, the conditions under which pro-poor growth may be achieved should at least include explicit policies and interventions on:

- Equitable distribution of the benefits of growth and economic stability (spatial, ethnicity, gender, mode of living etc.).
- The commitment and role of the government budget especially the revenues from oil, the envisaged post-peace agreement donor support etc.
- Development of pro-poor medium term public sector investment programme
- Pro-poor private sector investments.

Finally, the I-PRSP did not ignore the need for institutional and legal amendments to improve the general financial performance. This takes into account the need for transparency and control systems, improvement of accounts and auditing systems and the importance of coordination between the various government departments and authorities. It is worth mentioning that the stated policies and target towards the private sector are yet to be developed. The draft document indicated the heading for that with a statement reading 'be included later'.

3.3 Sectoral Pro-poor Policies:

The strategic directions, as identified within the I-PRSP could be summarized as follows:

- Achieving real and sustainable economic growth, through investment in the agricultural sector. It is important to emphasize here the role played and possible to be played by the livestock sector in particular. While the policies were advocating limiting investment in irrigated modern

sector, the subsistence farming sector contributions to growth, in the short run is skeptical.

- Directing and increasing public and development expenditure, to avail social services, through integrated rural development. Integrated Rural Development approaches are not new to Sudan. The experiences since late 1970s, proved only limited successes. It is therefore, important to focus on specific interventions e.g. access to capital and preparedness to the shocks of drought, crop failure due to pests and buffer food grains during peak periods of farm labor.
- Support of good governance, through supporting the federal governance system. The issue of governance cannot be repaired by piece meal actions. Structural reforms in the center-state-locality relationships are becoming a necessity.
- Support of the private sector, through investment in infrastructure: roads, electricity, rail ways etc. This is obviously a requirement for a long-term development plan. It is difficult to forecast what could be done in this respect within the I-PRSP short period.

The pro-poor policy framework for the I-PRSP in Sudan, was built on the invaluable inputs in Atabani paper (2003). The matrix (Annex 4) introduces the sectoral plan objectives, indicators and the recommended pro-poor policies. Although not yet finally endorsed but stands as a corner stone for constructing the rolling 3-year programme of the I-PRSP.

Agriculture

Agricultural Development Policies have mainly concentrated on the irrigated and mechanized rain-fed sub sectors, mainly situated in Central and eastern parts of the country. Over years, considerable public resources as well as the bulk of bank credit and financing have benefited these two sub sectors. Little attention was paid to traditional rain fed agriculture and livestock sectors where the vast majority of rural population is engaged, and where most of the food for the country produced, while poverty is most prevalent. Proposed plans call for a shift of emphasis away from the irrigated and mechanized sub-sectors. Government policy is to withdraw from the active involvement in managing and financing of the major irrigated schemes but concentrate its efforts on institutional reforms and research. Tenants should be responsible for the crop choice, finance, production, field operations and marketing. To implement this, the question of land fee, and security of title, changes in legislation, setting up the management boards of those schemes and detailing their functions need to be brought about as well as legislations enabling the transfer of specific irrigation operations to the tenants, will have to be efficiently addressed (Atabani, 2003:3).

Effective withdrawal of government from active involvement in the irrigated sub-sectors clears the way for a major shift in policy and resources towards the traditional sector. This is will be a concerted development effort to deal with the poverty issue through maximizing long-run growth in these sectors. Such policy would address the question of food security in the country through an effective policy of building strategic reserves coupled with the creation of an early warning system of rain failures and droughts. Through enhanced growth of production and productivity and access to physical and productive assets and creation of pro-poor institutions without adversely affecting the environment. Policy packages that

include marketing and infrastructure, technology, soil fertility, credit, storage facilities, farm size and land fee/rights, extension, improved seeds, stock routes and better veterinary services would need to be worked out within the framework of the proposed plan. Rural roads and market information are also an essential part of such policies (Atabani, 2003:4). It is legitimate to focus the traditional sector, but also legitimate to differentiate between emotions and needs for pro-poor growth. There are also fears on whether the advocated, sometime technical solutions would improve productivity in the subsistence farming. It is essential for rural subsistence farmers to have policies and legislations that decreases privatization of their resources e.g. land, water, forests etc. Moreover, livestock routes blockages and the need for own native civil administration were to be top for reversing their destitute situation. It is always important to remember that it is a sad coincident for traditional subsistence and livestock producers that Land Act and abolishment of native administration occur same time in 1970. They were dis-empowered from both bargaining power and land resources.

The shift of emphasis from (modern) irrigated farming in favor of (traditional farming sector, sounds unsurpassed pro-poor policy due to being a paying sector, could do with low investment. On the other hand, analyzing the Sudanese politics, this sector is devoid from organized civil society forces that could claim rights for historical denial of rights for development. Moreover, the elitism element and urban biases were dominating politics and the role of urban unrest on fragile governments. Again, pursuing those policies, in light of risks of droughts, policies for water harvesting appear essential in certain areas besides the recommended early warning systems.

Social Sectors

The social sectors: health, education, water supply and sanitation were adversely affected by the curtailment of expenditure (both development of infrastructure and operation and maintenance. Cuts in social spending have been the main instrument of the stabilization policies of the late 1990s. This had lead to under funding of these sectors. Responsibility for provision of health services has been transferred to state governments. Same time the States were not provided with adequate resources to fund these services. It is therefore accepted that more resources be allocated and spent on these social sectors. However, this requires more political commitment of government and assured social accountability and responsiveness to citizens' claims. The government responsibility for rehabilitation, development of social service and secured provision (quantity and Quality) has to be dealt with as citizens' rights rather than addressed within a revisionist policy recommendation.

Health

Sudan started to adopt the Primary Health Care (PHC) as an approach to health care in 1979 as a response to the Alma Ata Declaration of Health for all in the year 2000. It is a question of a clear commitment to assure that health be brought within reach of every individual in a given Sudanese community. While the IPRSP pro-poor policies on health call for rehabilitation of existing facilities, improved Mother and Child health and fight of epidemic diseases, etc. It is vital to focus on particular health aspects to viz. Malaria, TB and other epidemic diseases. Well-defined policies and public funding should encourage the roles of individuals and communities in PHC.

Education

The paper indicated the deteriorating basic and secondary education due to being shifted to the states, within the framework of limited resource transfer. The policies have compromised the standard and quality of basic education. The poor education facility and the trained cadre, together with the poor socio-economic of teachers contributed to the deterioration in this essential service. While the I-PRSP agreeably call for the attention for enrollment of girls that should receive particular attention in an attempt to redress existing gender imbalances, other sectors of pastoral communities, IDPs and disabled or children of special needs have to be targeted with special education policies. On the other hand, adult education and illiteracy eradication may also be targeted, but experiences of Sudan educate us that such an important intervention requires long-term investment. Besides, integrating this in development extension programmes, much can be done through decreasing dropout rates and establishing school and extension facilities in remote areas.

Water supply and Sanitation

The paper indicated the need for policies in drinking water. About half of the urban and 70 percent of rural population have no access to safe drinking water. Retrenchment in expenditures has reduced many water reservoir (haffirs), wells, dams, filtration and purification facilities ineffective or working well below capacity. It is also important to care for rainwater harvesting, in areas prone to drought conditions. The revival of the historical role of soil conservation and land use department should be a guiding start. The I-PRSP plan is to give top priority for rehabilitation of existing facilities and creation of competent maintenance and operational water capacity. Provision of drinking water for livestock should be aimed at in combination with stock route development. As far as sanitation, disposal network hardly exist outside major towns. Plans should be in place to provide pit latrines on communal basis. It is definitely a situation of limited capacity of institutions and personnel and work facility. As in the case of water, environmental health, particularly in urban areas needs to be enhanced.

Infrastructure

The paper confirmed the need for investment in transport infrastructure. It is important to clearly define the requirements in urban and rural areas. While it is essential to avoid urban biases, linkages between urban markets and rural producers should be prioritized. There is also need for substantial investment in rural roads, linking production areas to markets, railways rehabilitation. It is important to highlight the need for electricity supply and expansion to areas that had no access to electricity, but there is also need to differentiate between short term and long term policy options.

Governance

Good governance is advocated on basis of creation of new institutions and reforming and strengthening of existing ones to enhance transparency and accountability. Effectiveness of Audit General Office, financial and fiscal allocation and monitoring commissions, review of procurement rules and abolishing Government monopolies, enacting Anti-poverty trust were envisioned. There is also need to establish Lands Claim

Commission, enhanced independence of Judiciary, creation of a Judicial Service, an Electoral, Human Rights and Public Service Commissions.

Decentralization

A Federal system had been created in 1992. Many functions were devolved to the States for management. The constitution reserves six sources of revenue for the States (business profit tax, excise duties and fees, profits of State's projects and internal grants, loans and credit facilities). And states' own sources of revenues from taxes imposed on their behalf by the Federal Government (e.g. part of VAT) and taxes and fees levied by their own legislature. But the taxes rates are being set by the Federal Government have no capacity to alter the total amounts received. The National Fund for State Support (NFSS) was created to administer the grant system. The following are some comments of the recommended policies in this respect:

- Adopting policies designed to bring about more devolution of rights and obligations to State and local levels. It is essential that these rights be identified and spelt out in legislation. Rights to access public funding in relation to own resource base and historical injustices have to be transparently stated.
- Enable states to generate and control own revenues and responsible for service delivery. The current debate on agricultural taxes is a good example that does not advocate such a policy of 'own resources'. There is wide complaint that collected taxes and revenues do not show up in terms of services. Transparency and accountability is only guaranteed by social policies and representation of people in decision-making institutions at the respective governance level.
- Improve service delivery mechanisms and institutions at state and locality levels. The civil service and the related training and promotion system together with work environment and work facility specifically, require special attention.
- Enhanced capacities of civil society organizations to effectively participate in poverty alleviation programmes. It is essential to review the laws governing CSOs to have more space and acquire a legitimate position in policy and decision-making institutions e.g. I-PRSP policy review and implementation and monitoring institutions.
- There are immense difficulties in capacities, good governance issues and limited democratization, even at Federal level. This might be an appealing policy in the long run, provided that there are revisions for the governance structures, at all levels, particularly with the peace process.

Capacity building

In overall, such a programme to reorient the policy framework and to assure generating pro-poor policies and growth a significant technical assistance and capacity building programme at all levels and for all actors and stakeholders is a prerequisite.

3.4 Sectoral Targets within the I-PRSP

The table (3.4.1) below indicates the status in Sudan compared with Arab countries, LDCs and Developing countries. Sudan reads lowest in rates of enrollment to basic education (60 percent) and rate of people accessing safe drinking water (60 percent). The HIV/AIDS is highest compared

to Arab countries.

Table (3.4.1) Current Status of MDGs –Poverty Related indicators compared to other Countries.

| Indicators | Sudan Current Status | LDCs | Arabic Countries |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|------------------|
| Enrollment rate in B. education | 60% | 60.4% | 86.4% |
| Illiteracy rate | 50.1% | 59% | 56.7% |
| Infant mortality rate | 68/1000 | 104/1000 | 55/1000 |
| Mortality rate of children under 5 | 103/1000 | 161/1000 | 72/1000 |
| Maternal mortality rate | 509/1000 | NA | NA |
| Malaria | 25% | 37.3% | 19% |
| HIV/AIDS | 1.6% | 4.13% | 0.16% |
| Access to safe D. water | 60% | 64% | 83% |
| Coverage with public health facility | 60% | 40% | 77% |
| | | | |

Source: Ministry of Finance, Draft document of I-PRSP, October 2003.

It is worth mentioning that all the identified forms of deprivation are spread all over the Sudan, though with marked disparities within and among States. Addressing all forms of deprivation simultaneously and in all states would require levels of social spending that might not be forthcoming from government and donors within the foreseen future.

Sectoral prioritization was pursued within the I-PRSP with a view to meeting MDGs targets. This was intended to help overall geographical prioritization for the sectoral interventions, while the intra-state disparities may be addressed by compiling indicators at locality level. Table (3.4.2) shows the targeted indicators of I-PRSP (2004-2006).

Table (3.4.2) The IPRSP Targeted Indicators (2004-2006)

| Targeted Indicators | IPRSP 2004-2006 | Target pending resource availability | Arabic Countries |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Indicators | Status as per available budget | Target pending resource availability | Arabic Countries |
| Enrollment rate in B. education | 67.1% | 90% | 86.4% |
| Illiteracy rate | 41.1% | 5% | 40.3% |
| Infant mortality rate | 65/1000 | 55/1000 | 55/1000 |
| Children under 5 yrs mortality rate | 96/1000 | 72/1000 | 72/1000 |
| Maternal mortality rate | 478/1000 | 365/1000 | NA |
| Malaria | 23% | 15% | 19% |
| HIV/AIDS | 1.12% | 1% | 0.16% |
| Access to safe D. water | 64.5% | 70% | 83% |
| Public health coverage | 66% | 80% | 77% |
| | | | |

On top of above targets, acute poverty due to conflicts, drought and floods remains the main challenge for the Sudanese people. Unjust wealth transfer and aggressive market mechanism always worsen vulnerable masses situation. This normally results in socio economic injustices and consolidation of pauperization. There is therefore need to define clear directions and priority strategies and programmes focusing on extreme poverty.

The focus on incidence and intensity of poverty distracted the attentions away from the underling causes of poverty to be worked upon. Focus should be on vulnerability (e.g. following drought and famine) and persistent impoverishment, which are the dynamic of human suffering. This situation is generally attributed to:

- Withdraw of concessions on import export tax for manufacturing raised cost of production □ cost of production □ mass redundancy □ release of workers □ unemployment □ vulnerability & impoverishment □ lamentable loss.
- Long periods of totalitarian regimes, without popular support, where resources are not committed on human development and productive pursuits.
- Conflict in the south and other regions and complexities at local and regional levels.
- Mal resource use and management contributed to vulnerability of land producers and pastoralists to drought, environment degradation etc.
- Injustice and marginalization on basis of regions, ethnicity and exclusion from power structures and access to resources lead to civil war, ethnic tensions and the consequent dislocation of IDPs, refugees etc.

It is worth noting that participatory poverty assessment studies carried by independent researchers and CSOs generally came up with shared priorities in both urban and rural settings:-

- Enrollment in basic, quality education and dropout of children at school age.
- Safe drinking water as a primary health component. Despite the fact that there is a marked rural - urban gap in access to safe drinking water, only 59.8 percent in Khartoum use water from pipes. The rest who have access to drinking water from public tap suffer from affordability 'water vendors' and or 'health hazards' and the drudgery of water fetching by female children.
- Communicable diseases viz. malaria, HIV/AIDs and TB make serious threats to the livelihood of both urban and rural poor.

On the other hand, other public health problems e.g. garbage is a countrywide complaint in all-urban settings. While the infrastructure of basic health facility and availability of drugs and trained cadre, is dominant in rural areas. People also call for more representative and socially and financially accountable local governance, held responsible for poor service infrastructure. Same time there were voiced claims that the federal government should at least shoulder the responsibility for free children education and basic health care.

3.5 Mainstreaming Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment:

Gender

Women, in particular in rural areas are more affected by poverty than others in terms of displacement, and the increasing phenomenon of female-headed households. According to some research findings female-headed households account for 24-26 percent of all households especially in some rural areas stricken by factors of war, drought, and male migration in search of income opportunities. The displaced women staying in the host community, mostly urban, is perpetuated by their lack of education and vocational skills compatible with urban labour market. In addition to inaccessibility to urban skilled labor markets, women's economic empowerment has also been severely constrained by unequal access to and control over the means of production, particularly land and credit and productive assets.

The table below shed light on some gender specific indicators. The most profound stand of the IPRSP is recognition of gender and attempts for the integration of gender in the poverty alleviation strategy. The I-PRSP is deficient in sufficient gender analysis. Illiteracy among women is 64 percent, which is higher than among men (42 percent). A wide variation does exist within and between different states and between rural and urban areas. School dropout rates are also higher among girls, particularly in internally displaced communities and in rural areas.

Compared to men, women are more vulnerable to health problems particularly during their reproductive age. Pregnancy and child bearing within absolute poverty situations are more hazardous to women and children. Health services, e.g. primary health units and/or trained midwives, are either lacking or not functioning. In absence of government support to health services, access to health care service is getting expensive and consequently hardly accessible

to many people. However, the targets of health and education focused on gender disparities. Taking the proportion of women in the population and evident gender gaps in the reproductive, productive and socio-political roles, mainstreaming in relation to further in-depth gender analysis is paramount to test effectiveness of the plan.

| Indicator | Status |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Percentage of total population | 48.12 % |
| Basic education as percentage | 45.30 % |
| percent Of total labor force | 27.30 % |
| Labor force in agricultural sector | 79.20 % |
| percent In civil service | 57.00 % (junior –clerical jobs) |
| percent In federal parliament | 10.00 % |
| In state level member assembly | 05.00 % |
| Source: Gender Center compilation from various departments | |

In light of the complex situation of Sudan, whereby women suffer more within the poor addressing gender- poverty related indicators should be the over-riding policy and programme guidelines. To be more focused, effectiveness of the I-PRSP could be high if only addressed gender disparities along the identified poverty indicators. Nevertheless, one would suggest the following short-term gender requirements:

A/ Gender Requirements at Policy Level:

- Gender analysis and gender-sensitive poverty analysis
- Gender policy making institutions
- Analysis of policy and poverty related issues from gender perspective
- Formation of gender national strategies
- Promote ratification of conventions protecting women rights
- Promote gender focused CSOs and women representation in policy -making institutions.

B/ Gender Requirements at Programme Level:

- Mainstreaming gender in programme targets e.g. rural women producers, access to financial resources and job opportunity, girl enrollment and drop out, access to safe drinking water etc.
- The perceived women related targets e.g. maternal and child care, FGM etc addressed from gender perspective involving men as well as women.
- Gender sensitive decision-making, implementation and monitoring structures.

Environment

War and environmental degradation in rural areas caused the destruction of production base and led to the displacement of about six million persons (almost 25 percent of the population). Most of the IDPs, due to drought, moved into towns ending up unemployed or at best underemployed in the informal sector.

The dominant agreement within the environmentalists groups is that there is a generic relationship between environmental deterioration and poverty. Poverty is believed to be a consequence of

environmental deterioration more than a cause for deterioration of the natural environment. Poor public health and sanitation contribute significantly to decreasing people capacities for production, access to income and basic needs.

A variety of essential activities in industry, modern farming and expansion of rain fed-mechanized farming, land mining, fuel wood trade, silting and salinity in agricultural lands are held responsible for the wide range of man made environmental hazards.

The distribution of wealth and power within communities, by mode of living and at state or regional levels, tends to escalate the disparity between the rich and poor, causing conflicts. This has increased pressure on poor people who in turn put pressure on marginal resources for their survival, a process that is contributing to the aggravation of environmental problems.

Therefore a balanced and sustained utilization of natural resources require the mainstreaming of environment in any kind of human activity that takes place. While working on to improve poor people livelihood, and reduce exhaustive use of resources, alternative approaches should be introduced such as for improving access to cheap energy.

Environmental awareness and environment sensitive attitudes and practices have to be incorporated in basic education curricula, and health and agro pastoral programs. Policies contributing environmental deteriorations and conflict over resources should be improved. Environmental monitoring, evaluation and impact indicators should be in-built for any development program.

HIV/ AIDS

HIV/AIDS is spreading in Sudan at alarming rates. The first case was identified in 1986 in Juba in the South. The formally reported HIV/AIDS positive cases in Sudan rose to 8,630 people by March 2002. According to HIV/AIDS surveillance reports of Sudan National Aids Control Program (SNAP) of the Federal Ministry of Health, the first reported two cases were in 1986. From 1987 to June 2002 a total of 8918 had been officially recorded. These include 4351 AIDS cases and 4567 symptomatic cases. There are 600,000 cases reported to date and the prevalence rate is 1.6 percent. It is important to forecast the negative impact of the disease on economic development, especially that the highest range affected is those in the economically active age group (15-49 years). The prevailing conditions of large scale poverty and continuous population movements of mainly refugees, IDPs, soldiers, traders and others make HIV/AIDS a real threat. The general rate of spread of the disease is 1 percent (Al- Ray Al-Aiam, 2002:15). While most states have no record on prevalence of HIV/AIDS records show high prevalence rates in Bahr El Gebel (Equatoria), Khartoum, Kassala, Gadaref, Nahr El Nil and Port Sudan. It is clear that the disease is spreading all over the country. Sudan faces a serious threat from it' s spread from neighboring countries. Targeting HIV/AIDS within the IPRSP is not explicit. Therefore, mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS should be explicit in the plan policies and programmes. Policy options to be opted to should care for prevention through developing a national plan to combat HIV/AIDS. There is vital need to establish a national council for coordination and implementation of that plan. While being addressed within a

holistic approach to PHC, and as spreading epidemic, the other socio-economic measures to improve well being of people shall help diminish the potential dangers of HIV/AIDS.

3.6 Follow –up Issues on I-PRSP Contents:

Knowing that the contents didn't mention the anticipated role or commitments of CSOs including the donor community, INGOs and the private sector, is attributed to the limitation in consultation processes. There is lack of clear vision about a future partnership in implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the plan. The hasty preparation, in light of still to be approved plan, require further appraisal. Launching an awareness about the I-PRSP contents and a serious attempts to come up with shared analysis, shared vision and strategic directions including the most appropriate and widely acceptable policy options are prerequisites to ascertain a degree of country ownership and consensus and consequently commitments towards the plan. In absence of coherent linkages between growth and its social impact that were translated into clear and widely acceptable strategic objectives, the plan may end up as scattered sectoral activity focused interventions. Targeting is general and related to the shopping lists prepared by government departments, lacking focus on the specific requirements of special groups e.g. age groups, pastoralists, IDPs etc.

The I-PRSP, did not adequately address the income poverty targets. Targeting incomes and employment options for the youth, women and IDPs, cannot be generated by investment in subsistence farming alone. The informal sector which is now gaining solid grounds require special targeting e.g. banking for the poor, skill training etc. The I-PRSP contents ignored the need to address HIV/AIDS. Despite the recent recognition of the government to the rate of spread and potential threat of HIV/AIDS and the efforts exerted on planning, the strategy did rule out as a targeted or mainstreamed issue. On the other hand, there is apparent strength in the I-PRSP in addressing gender aspects within education and health targets.

The implementation and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the I-PRSP are vague. A national council, under the Minister of Finance, is proposed to prepare and supervise the document. Its membership is to include representatives from Federal ministries, banks, the National Council for Strategic Planning, unions and the secretariat. It is essential to impede specific partnership arrangements including roles and responsibilities of the government departments, CSOs and the private sector. A monitoring and evaluation detailed plan with specific indicators for monitoring progress and evaluating effectiveness of interventions and policies in addressing poverty has to be part of the I-PRSP.

The contents of the draft I-PRSP, hopefully address, within the final document, the visible needs for:

- Policy making institutions involving the CSO and private sector for both financial and social accountability purposes.
- Clear government political and financial commitments towards the plan, roles of partners and other stakeholders.
- Clarity on economic growth strategy and diversification of economic base together with clear policies of distribution and the indicators showing how it impacts positively on the

poor.

- A capacity building plan for both government and SCO to be impeded in the plan defining needs and how to address them.
- Well-identified implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and systems on basis of tri-partnership (government, CSO and private sector) and support organizations.

4. Public Finance

4.1 Fiscal discipline

The financing for the I-PRSP period (2004-2006) is linked the rolling programme budget with the government budget within the economic framework for purposes of efficiency and monitoring. The macro-economic framework, as indicated in the I-PRSP, aims at sustained economic growth rate (6 to 7 percent) and decreased inflation (5 to 6 percent). This is expected to improve performance in agriculture and livestock sectors.

There was also an assumption that resources shall be real (from external and internal resources). Same time there were loads of the necessary non-poverty focused expenditure i.e. post peace rehabilitation programmes. On the other hand, the impact of peace cannot appear within the I-PRSP short-term period, if an agreement is reached by December 2003. Consequently, one would expect a significant deficit in the budget. This may lead to increased taxation, increased prices of oil and goods and services and hence poverty is sustained. The final resort would be the donor support for the I-PRSP and rehabilitation and the expectations of (HIPC). The realistic option in this case is to focus on specific targets viz. child education, health and safe drinking water. Investment on infrastructure should refrain as a long-term objective within the forthcoming PRSP.

The fiscal stabilization programme included the following measures:

1. Rationalizing tax and custom systems
2. Monitoring and Control of Public expenditure
3. Streamlining the budget process, and
4. Reforming fiscal accounts

Stabilization policies brought cuts in public expenditure. According to the World Bank Sudan Country Memorandum (CM) report (June, 30,2003) the government domestic revenue ratio to GDP has been weak. The government' macro stabilization efforts were mainly cuts in public expenditure. Federal expenditure declined from an average of 18.4 percent during 1986-1990 to 9.4 percent during 1996-2000. While development expenditure stood about 1.5 percent of GDP, expenditure on defense and security account for about 3 percent of GDP. This had hit hard on the civil service that was eroded and became inefficient to operate the public administration.

By 1998, the states and localities received a total budget of 2.4 percent of GDP. By 2001, regional expenditure had risen to 4 percent, the period coinciding with net oil revenues equivalent to 5 percent of GDP. The Federal –state relationship and the decentralization process, suffering from load shedding of mandates on servicing basic needs and development, has been unable to deliver sufficient social services to improve poor people socio-economic development. Therefore, there is vital need to develop policies that guarantee budgetary allocations for the poor. For this to happen, modifying the budget structure towards more pro-poor spending is needed. Allocations within the budget and within sectors are essential to cure distortions viz. disparities in

expenditure on: infrastructure vs. services, higher education vs. basic education, irrigated modern agriculture vs. traditional rain fed farming, etc.

4.2 The I-PRSP Budget Allocations

Final budget allocation of the IPRSP is expected to be finalized by the end of this year (2003). The associated budgets have been discussed with the respective sectors and shall be incorporated in the annual development budget for the years 2004-2006. Table 4.1 and 4.2 shed light on government financing projections and sources by item. This included costing of the needs, priorities and programs/projects of each individual sector, and a clear-cut plan of action for effective and efficient utilization of the earmarked funds, and for the realization of the targets of the IPRSP. Quantitative and qualitative indicators and measures for each and every activity under the IPRSP have to be developed to help in the monitoring and evaluation process.

Table (4.1) Projected Government Expenditure on the I-PRSP

Government Expenditure on PR programme Expenditure on I-PRSP (milliard SD)
Milliard SD

| Sector | 2003 | Rate | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Basic education | 1.85 | 61.84 | 3.00 | 3.45 | 3.96 |
| Health | 9.79 | 70.67 | 16.71 | 23.90 | 32.52 |
| Water | 0.10 | 86.01 | 0.18 | 0.21 | 0.25 |
| Agriculture | 9.28 | 16.39 | 10.80 | 11.33 | 13.01 |
| Insurance and pension | 10.82 | 25.00 | 13.52 | 16.90 | 21.12 |
| Running support | 40.60 | 146.31 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Social support | 19.40 | 18.56 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 |
| Rehabilitation of war zones | 3.10 | 480.27 | 18.00 | 48.00 | 75.00 |
| Total Development of states | 7.45 | 558.00 | 49.00 | 55.00 | 63.00 |

Table (4.2) I-PRSP Projected Expenditure (2004-2006) I

| Items | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total Local Resources | 49.00 | 55.00 | 63.00 |
| Water | 18.00 | 18.00 | 18.00 |
| Education | 15.00 | 17.00 | 20.00 |
| Health | 6.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 |
| Others | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total External Resources | 130.00 | 143.00 | 156.00 |

| | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| Water | 15.00 | 15.00 | 15.00 |
| Education | 39.00 | 39.00 | 39.00 |
| Health | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 |
| Others (farming and graduates employment) | 26.00 | 39.00 | 52.00 |

According to the draft I-PRSP, October 2003, the government social expenditure is projected to be about 1.6 percent of the GDP in the period (2000 –2003). This includes increased salaries by 60 percent but does not include allocation to national development. The targets set for the I-PRSP period (2004-2006) is expected to reach almost 4 percent, including 60 percent increase in salaries. Same source indicated that social expenditure reached about 2.2 percent, including increased salaries by 25 percent, for the same period and does not include allocation to national development. The targets of I-PRSP for social expenditure is expected to reach 6 percent, including 25 percent salaries increase.

The government of Sudan is embarking on the preparation of the Three Year Rolling Development Program for the period 2004-2006. The program is expected to serve as an institutional framework for medium term public expenditure planning. The program is prepared within the framework of the country's strategy for the coming two decades, which is in the process and shall be endorsed by the government, the Poverty Strategy that, its interim program is under preparation, and the country's Action program for least developed countries (2001-2010). Also, the program covers the remaining period of the second presidential program for the period (2001-2006). These strategies and programs are based on the objectives of the Declaration of the MDGs at the Millennium Summit (September/2000), and the New Partnership for Economic Development in Africa (NEPAD). In this respect, the I-PRSP is considered as an integral part of this program. It is worth mentioning that the I-PRSP shall cover the same period proposed in the time frame of the said program.

There is no clear commitment, so far, from the government to finance the I-PRSP. 20 SD billions was included in the state support budget, which is almost same as the figure of last year. While the government expenditure is estimated by 0.5 percent of GDP that goes to the services, almost 50 percent of the state budget goes for services. Recent surveys carried out by the researcher revealed that about 90 percent of the expenditure of a locality in Khartoum state goes for teachers' salaries. It is essential that well-defined priorities for public sector be defined showing clear political commitment towards the poor. This requires reviewing major sectors and reallocation of government resources to be pro-poor. This is to be directed towards rural basic education and health, safe drinking water and micro-finance for both rural and urban areas and rural infrastructure. It is simply difficult for a country like Sudan to have MTEF using donor development resources without moving from insecurity to political stability with realistic and clear strategic priorities aiming at restoring economic and social development. After peace being realized, it is expected that many reforms shall take place with regard to public expenditures institutions and mechanisms. Creation of new institutions and reforming the existing ones with respect of good governance, transparency and accountability is considered as an essential element of I-PRSP.

4.3 Budget Management:

The government intends to continue with budget management reform as agreed upon with the IMF. This includes a medium term stabilization program to enhance transparent budget management, reviewing the tax exemption regime to remove any rent-seeking opportunities, overhauling the fiscal reporting system to produce accurate monthly-consolidated accounts. The Auditor General Chamber shall be strengthened in terms of qualified personnel, remuneration, training and equipment. To ensure transparency and fairness in allocation of nationally collected funds to lower levels of government, a Fiscal and Financial Allocation and Monitoring Commission shall be established with experts to be nominated by the States and the National Government. The regulations of procurement and the functions of the Procurement Department of Ministry of Finance shall be reviewed to ensure accountability of all public units to procurement and competitiveness principles. The review will include setting of procurements standards to which all units have to comply with. The role of the regulatory authority shall be enhanced and appeal boards with representation of professionals shall be established, and information on procurement decisions shall be publicized. The regulatory authority shall be properly manned and well equipped. Government monopolies to be dismantled an Anti-trust Law shall be issued. It is expected that these reforms in institutions and regulations will greatly enhance the role, efficiency, and effectiveness of both public and private sectors.

Network systems for financial management need to be established at each national, federal/line ministries, States, and local level to enable track expenditure and evaluate the impact on poverty. Also, the process should include non-government actors' e.g. civil society organizations, national NGOs, and donor agencies. With a view to strengthen and enhance the management capacities and create proper monitoring and evaluation system, there is a need for I-PRSP operational manual. The manual shall identify the roles, functions, and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the IPRSP processes.

5. Realigning Donor Policies and Resources

5.1 Donor Facilitation and Assistance

The government of Sudan is clear about the need for a country owned PRSP to enjoy debt relief and donor financial and technical assistance. It's very obvious that peace and socio-politico-economical stability are considered as a necessary condition for the donors support. In the light of the recent positive developments in the peace front, it is hoped that, after signing the peace agreement, assistance from the donor community, be increased and the chronic debt problem of the Sudan be solved, which necessarily make a big push for the PRSP implementation for the whole Sudan.

There is satisfaction among some secretariat members about the level of awareness and technical assistance of donors for the I-PRSP. The Joint mission of IMF/WB?UNDP was always cited as an important contribution of technical assistance. There were also satisfaction among secretariat

members that the process was participatory and involving a number of stakeholders including the international donor community together with the private sector and civil society. Donors (mainly specialized UN agencies) have already initiated the process of establishing sector-working groups with the respective government line ministries and other stakeholders in various fields related to poverty reduction. The main function of these working groups is to prepare the poverty reduction priorities and programs/projects of each individual sector. The process has also considered the needs and priorities of the SPLA controlled areas that have been carried out separately. This work needs to be further scrutinized and coordinated in order to avoid duplication and be consistent with the overall Poverty Reduction Strategy of the country.

5.2 Donor Financial Assistance

As mentioned earlier, The I-PRSP is at an advance stage and is expected to be finalized and issued as an official document of the Government of Sudan within a couple of months. Consequently it shall be distributed to all stakeholders including the donor agencies. A Resource Mobilization Strategy then be formulated, and plans to approach each and every donor be developed. Donors shall be keen to support the I-PRSP/PRSP if the process deliver a nationally-owned strategy and if it become an integral part of the national strategic planning process and lead to pro-poor strategy, taking into account the views of the poor people and their representatives. Therefore donors may have difficulty in accepting an I-PRSP if it may not represent a nationally agreed development plan and if they may not have confidence that the process for preparing it has had a sufficiently pro-poor focus. However, in a non-peace environment, freedoms for civil society to operate tend to be restricted for many reasons, peace will therefore provide the opportunity to permit Sudanese to express their views more openly. Quick movement after a peace agreement is reached to increase freedom for civil society to operate would be likely to provide encouragement to donors to re-engage more rapidly. Therefore, donors are expected to availing and pooling their resources in the form of budget support to finance programs and projects under the I-PRSP.

The government intend to prepare a Resource Mobilization Strategy (RMS). This strategy, as expected by the government, shall serve as a guiding document for donor agencies regarding the financial procedures of I-PRSP programs and projects. The RMS is expected to take into account the specific requirements as well as the rules and regulations of each individual donor. Donors may therefore be willing to channel their resources through the national process and system. This shall eventually help develop and strengthen the national capacity, and foster the national ownership and implementation of the I-PRSP and introduce flexibility in the donors aid practices.

Donor policies towards funding the I-PRSP are yet to be clarified. However organizations like the World Bank, UNDP, FAO and UNICEF did extend some capacity building inputs in macro and sectoral policy advice and how to promote the country's ownership of the process and empowering civil society through increased participation in the process. The government is working hard on the political front to open up, reconsider human rights behavior and reach a

peace settlement deal, to help reverse the donor apathy. There were indications that the Arab regional funding organizations may cover the arrears, towards eligibility to get loans with grace periods immediately after peace agreement. The bilateral relations were also anticipated to reschedule the debts. Accordingly the I-PRSP was built on two scenarios of financing. Relying on own government resources for partial financing the plan is the lowest scenario, while the highest scenario is to meet the set MDGs by 2006 with donor support. In all cases there is tendency to put a ceiling for each sector. The secretariat is currently trying to assess donor positions and finalize sectors ceilings and financing sources by sector.

6. Capacity Building

6.1 Government Institutions

In order to reorient the policy framework to serve and generate pro-poor plans and welfare, there is a need for significant technical assistance to build the capacities of government institutions and staff involved in the preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of PRSP. This should include programs at line ministries (Ministry of Finance and National Economy on budgeting, result-oriented monitoring, design and implementation of medium term public sector development plan, strengthening national accounts, improving public expenditure management, financial management, and procurement ...etc), operating sectoral Ministries and government institution (agriculture, livestock, health, education, water and sanitation ...etc) at both Federal and State level, in planning, implementation and monitoring and evolution of pro-poor policies, programs/projects as well as service deliveries and sectoral specific technical, managerial, and operational issues.

Quite few, so far, in the concerned operating government line ministries and institutions at the central level have managed to maintain accumulated experience and capacity to plan and monitor pro-poor policies and programs, while institutions at both state and local level do not have the required experience and skills to carry out such tasks. This is mainly due to the problems and constraints these institutions are facing. Some of which are the shortcomings of the existing Federal System, absence of incentives and motivation (low pay, lack of training programs, slowness of the promotion system...etc), that subsequently resulted in a very low capacity staff with poor performance and in high turnover and increased migration rates of skilled staff to the big towns in the urban areas specially to the national capital, Khartoum and then abroad i.e. skills brain drain.

Despite the large expansion that has taken place in recent years, specially in the higher education, there is still skills gap and sever problems of both human and administrative capacity building which undermining and constraining the implementation of the IPRSP. The obstacles to capacity building are ascribed to the following factors: -

- Increased turnover and migration of a huge number of highly experienced and qualified persons for various reasons e.g. political, economic, and social reasons.
- Stoppage of external technical assistance that used to finance wide scale internal and external training programs.
- The negative impacts of the macro economic policies of the stabilization programs and as a result, the depreciation of the real wages and salaries of government

employees and the deterioration of the living conditions of a large number of the country's population including the skills.

Below are specific and urgent capacity needs focusing the government staff and institutions:

- Extensive training and education requirements on: growth-development model and MTEF planning and implementation; Strategic thinking and management and skills to monitor and evaluate sustainability and impact of growth in relation to poverty reduction.
- Skill upgrading in poverty diagnostic and launching house hold budget surveys and data analysis and use for poverty focused planning.
- Raising the levels of social development and policy formulation, particularly with regard to preparing the required skills and up-grading the manpower through education, training and incentive policies and through sharpening institutional structures at both public and private sectors levels for them to spawn prudent policies, relevant technologies and human talents necessary to address socio-economic challenges of the millennium.
- Fostering the development of human and administrative capacities through education, training, and upgrading of skills at all levels without any biased ness to any educational and training institutions for the same Sudanese.
- Giving attention and high priority to the development of women capabilities.
- Raising the level of social development and curbing unemployment.
- Addressing the causes of brain drain, through the adoption of relevant manpower policies and improving the working conditions and terms of service.
- Re-establishment, strengthening and enhancing the middle-class and develop its role as step towards poverty alleviation and its other functions through efficient and effective suitable capacity building programs.

6.2 Civil Society Organizations:

The Sudanese CSO is diverse and only recently it was possible to network around advocacy issues. It is therefore, a prerequisite to reinforce and encourage government recognition for the wider spectrum of CSO. Capacities related to legislations and democratization dealings of government with CSO has to be top on the agenda. There is also apparent need to formalize interaction between CSO, Government and private sector.

Moreover, the Sudanese CSO suffer from the limited organizational and managerial capacities. The representative of CSO for poor, remote areas is not beyond scattered newly emerging CBOs with direct support from the INGOs. This indicates the need to think about and help develop strategies on how the interest and voice of the poor is communicated. According, and in absence of own poor people organizations, the SCO skills should be upgraded in soliciting people voice, problem analysis and participatory review of macro-policy impact at grass roots level.

Briefly, there were urgent capacity needs, besides resources, that could be addressed through

training:

- Policy- oriented research skills and fundraising capacities to establish poverty related data base and advocacy campaigns.
- Social policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.
- Mobilization and organizational skills to assure voicing poor people interest and voices
- Advocacy, networking and negotiation capacities for pro-poor policy formulation
- Interaction with sister African CSO to learn about processes and products and practices on

I-PRSP and PRSP.

Moreover, for a successful implementation of the IPRSP, and subsequently planning and implementation of the Full PRSP, capacity building strategy and training programs should be developed to address the capacity needs for both government institutions and civil society organizations, at all levels. Capacity building process should depend on the following interacted and interrelated factors:

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- Caring for scientific research and researchers, through maintenance of sound policies, staff motivation, appropriate public and private research facilities, and the provision of sufficient funding with sustained interaction of all elements involved to effectively addressing the needs of the society.
- Capacities to develop shared vision, shared analysis of poverty and its structural causes are pre-requisites to construct the guidelines for any strategy. Capacities in planning approaches, participatory and objective-oriented methodologies are evident gap at all levels.
- Essential capacities on focused on development of poverty related policy indicators and establishment of information systems for use of data for planning purposes.
- Invoking a strategy to mobilize indigenous capacities capable of ensuring effective participation of both government and non-government actors, (e.g. the private sector and the civil society) within joint mechanisms in the preparation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the PRSP, priorities, programs/projects, and policies at both national and local levels.
- Soliciting the required financial resources to help achieve its objectives and priorities.
- Maintaining economic growth and soliciting the required resources (both internal and external resources) and creating an enabling environment to fostering sustainable human capacity building. This is highly dependent upon the following: -
- Pursuance of an integrated development that incorporate agriculture, rural development and rural based industries.
- Responding to the requirements and challenges of globalization and the introduction of the sphere of capacity building requirements.
- Focusing on shifters of supply such as physical infrastructure, technology, human capital, and administrative and institutional structures, to enable the economy in capacity building requirements positively.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations:

Poverty in Sudan is multi-dimensional in nature. The experience of the Sudan in the process of I-PRSP is an important learning-by-doing exercise. Due to that nature the limited participation, excluding the poor and important segments of the Sudanese Civil Society Organizations, curtailed the country's ownership of the process.

Assessment of poverty and analysis of its causes and the future vision and the related strategies, policies and programme targets, suffered from being limited to few inputs of experts and officials. The consequent result is the limited awareness about what is going on about the I-PRSP and lack of consensus and broader education on the plan. The sense of ownership by the different stakeholders is yet to be hunted and strengthened. All partners including the poor people should be on board to express rights and understand commitments towards the plan.

The status of the document by end of October (2003) is a first draft, not submitted to the council of ministers for approval. The process finally ended up with targeting on basis of the MDGs. There is lack of clarity about how growth strategies could lead to improvements of poor people welfare. Much need to be done on the social policy planning and impact of the macro-economic and structural reforms. A growth - development model is a challenge faced throughout the process. This is a rather capacity constraint that requires special technical back up by the international community. There is fear that the product may end up as isolated and ineffective sectoral shopping lists.

The macro-economic policies proposed for I-PRSP are not new to Sudan. To assure being pro-poor it is essential to clarify the distribution policies necessary for linking growth with the welfare of the poor. Sectoral and spatial targets have to be redefined and avoid many scattered efforts and everywhere.

Public financing of the plan programmes was linked with the government budget. However, sectoral ceilings and financial sources are still under preparation. Many efforts of the government on the political and economic front to increase external funding are underway. Same time there is wide recognition of the poor capacity in public financial management system and capacities to absorb anticipated funds.

There were scattered efforts in facilitating the process and technical assistance for the process by donor community. However, there is reluctance to express any financial commitments, so far. Issues of governance and prerequisites of fostering inclusiveness and participatory process and product are important to reverse the donors' apathy towards the plan.

Finally, despite shortcomings in the process and contents of the I-PRSP in Sudan, there were apparent positive outcomes related to:

- Recognition of deficiency in poverty related data base
- Attempts to involve the private and CSO to share discussion on policy framework and programme targets.

- Recognition of weaknesses in the capacities of both government and SCO institutions and cadres and awareness about the need to address them.
- Awareness about the need for good governance and partnership that involve all stakeholders in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of poverty related policies and programmes.

It is recommended, therefore, that before finalizing the document the secretariat should work hardly with others from the civil society and private sector to come up with:

- Comprehensive understanding of pauperization (poverty process) and efforts exerted aiming at poverty alleviation
- Share appraisal of poverty diagnostic involving academia, CSO and poor people to address the knowledge gab on poverty (data base and analytical skills).
- Revision of policies and targets using participatory and critical assessment of the structural and root causes of poverty to assure development of pro-poor policy and strategy document.
- Bold and dauntless review on all fronts of political and economic spheres related to poverty, including democratization, decentralization and good governance aspects.
- Reduced urban bias and bias of center and political interest of powerful groups against vested interest of the marginalized, excluded, voiceless poor people and communities to participate in shaping their poverty reduction strategic plans.
- Improved commitment towards equitable access to resources, human development, physical, financial and social.
- Encountering the negative aspects of SAP in favor of the poor, including commitments of international governance institutions, expressed in explicit alternative policy framework based on citizens' rights to access basic social rights.

Finally, the researcher, for the purpose of increasing the African countries ownership of the PRSP, recommends :

1. Learning and knowledge sharing among African countries experiences and capacities in the PRSP process.
2. Creation of an enabling environment for the involvement of government and non-government actors in all PRSP stages to effectively participate in this process.
3. Establishment of a country and region-wide network to carry out the responsibilities and functions with regard to the PRSP preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
4. Building/strengthening the existing capacities at all levels (community/grass roots organizations, regional, central and national, as well as civil society organizations including academic, training, research, national NGOs etc.
5. Mobilizing and sensitizing people and stimulate their views and initiatives in all poverty

- related issues.
6. Dissemination of Poverty related information and data using various existing channels.
 7. Increasing resource allocation and utilization efficiency that help in the poverty alleviation process through common leading speeches and information.
 8. Develop resource mobilization strategy and policies for various donors.
 9. Sharing information and best practices among African countries through appropriate means of communication with a view to assist in strengthening PRSP processes.
 10. Creation of national level (L-G) linked with (ECA PRSP-LG) and pressure groups to foster learning and advocacy in favor of the poor with eco-political institutions.

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