COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION ACTION PLANS IN GHANA AND ZIMBABWE

John Nkum, 1998
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background And Objectives

Poverty is a world-wide problem. It is, however, more predominant in developing countries where about 80 percent of the poor live. The strategy for alleviating poverty has over the years changed focus in tandem with changes in development paradigms. For instance, the “trickle-down” approach to development was based on the assumption that the poor would benefit from economic growth, while the “empowerment” paradigm believes that the poor in society can best be helped by getting them involved in decision-making and implementation of development activities.

In order to guide and co-ordinate the implementation of measures aimed at alleviating poverty, many governments in developing countries have sought assistance from development agencies, especially the UNDP, to formulate action plans on poverty alleviation. Ghana and Zimbabwe are examples of countries with such plans. In recent years many development agencies from the industrialised countries have been collaborating with one another to assist governments of the less developed countries in implementing their poverty alleviation programmes. In many instances poverty alleviation programmes in less developed countries appear to be donor-driven. Quite a number of these programmes also appear to have been hijacked into the ineffective bureaucratic red tape of governments. In some cases the programmes have become fertile grounds for consultants and NGOs to reap windfalls of personal and professional gains. The effect of all this is that many poverty alleviation programmes have only helped to make the rich richer.

The problem appears to arise from poor co-ordination of donor assistance, and inadequate institutional arrangements to ensure effective delivery of development packages to the poor. This report is an attempt to compare the implementation arrangements and institutional co-ordination efforts undertaken by Ghana and Zimbabwe to improve the delivery of poverty alleviation packages to the poor, especially those in the rural areas. The National Action Programme for Poverty Reduction (NAPPR) in Ghana and the Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP) of Zimbabwe have a lot in common. They both seek to alleviate poverty through improved economic and political empowerment of the poor. They, however, differ in their style of delivery. These comparisons are the focus of this report.

1.2 Scope And Methodology

This is a desk study which centres on a few reports on the PAAP of Zimbabwe and the NAPPR of Ghana. The thrust of the enquiry is to identify from these reports the elements which constitute poverty in Zimbabwe, the strategy for delivering assistance to the poor, and the institutional set up for ensuring sustainable improvement in the well being of the poor in Zimbabwe. The study compares the Zimbabwean situation with that of Ghana to establish the parallels and the differences. The intention is to identify ways for strengthening and improving the co-ordination of effort from donors, NGOs, CBOs and governmental agencies in Zimbabwe in the area of poverty alleviation.
1.3 **Structure Of The Report**

The report has been divided into six main sections. Section one provides the background information, objectives, scope and methodology.

The profile of poverty is discussed in Section Two with emphasis on definitions and causes of poverty, and the characteristics and location of poverty in Zimbabwe and Ghana. Section Three contains an analysis of poverty alleviation programmes, whilst the issues arising from the analysis are discussed in Section Four. Some proposals for improving the implementation of PAAP in Zimbabwe are dealt with in Section Five. Section Six offers some concluding remarks.

2.0 **POVERTY PROFILE**

2.1 **Definitions and Causes**

Poverty is seen in Ghana as a multi-dimensional issue emphasising on quantitative as well as qualitative dimensions. The poor are described as those living in households with per capita expenditure below two-thirds of the national average. Hard-core poverty refers to households whose per capita expenditure is below one-third of the national average. Based on a household sample survey in 1992, about 31 percent of the estimated total Ghanaian population live below the poverty line and 15 percent in hard-core poverty.

Similarly in Zimbabwe, poverty is regarded as a multi-dimensional phenomenon encompassing both economic and socio-cultural aspects. The measurement of poverty is in terms of Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL) - that is, a minimum basket of goods and services a household should consume. Hard-core poverty is measured in terms of Food Poverty Line (FPL) - that is, the minimum food requirements per household. According to a Poverty Assessment Study Survey (PASS) in 1995, about 16 percent of the 11.4 million population live between FPL and TCPL whilst 46 percent live below FPL.

Even though there seems to be a convergence in the use of terminology in describing poverty, (that is, poverty line and hard-core poverty in Ghana and TCPL and FPL in Zimbabwe respectively), the indicators for measurement are broader in Zimbabwe. This is because they include basic consumption requirements like food, shelter, health, education, water supply and clothing. The differences in measurement could be attributed to the use of World Bank indicators by Ghana and regional-specific indicators by Zimbabwe.

It must be pointed out that, the use of cash income (or even cash expenditure as a surrogate measure of income) overlooks that portion of the population which does not participate in formal employment, and hence have no pattern of payments. Also it does not account for food supplies from subsistence; neither does it adequately cover those who have free access to services. Another issue which needs to be factored into the definition of poverty is the degree of participation of the poor in decisions that affect their own lives.

The causes of poverty in Ghana have been identified as low output levels especially in the agricultural sector which employs about 62 percent of the economically active population.
The low output levels are attributed to bad weather, poor farming practices, inadequate access to fertile lands and credits as well as poor infrastructure like roads, market facilities and storage facilities. Other causes are low levels of education, inadequate levels of skills for production and management, weak economic base of communities, inaccessibility to employment and unwillingness to participate in community work.

In Zimbabwe, the causes of poverty are attributed to the introduction of market-based reforms, the deterioration of social services and facilities like health and education, growing unemployment due to the transitional effects of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and the inability of the educational system to respond to skills needed in the job market. Other causes of poverty in Zimbabwe are the low income levels arising from inadequate access to productive resources like land, credit and technology.

The causes of poverty are similar in both countries. The recognition of poverty as a major problem in Ghana dates as far back as the early 1970's when the economy started to decline. When the economy reached its lowest ebb in 1982, the Economic Restructuring Programme (ERP) was initiated. The ERP is known to have rather aggravated the poverty situation, especially of the very poor households. It needs to be mentioned that the early recognition of poverty as a development problem led to the inclusion of poverty alleviation packages in all the national plans of Ghana since the 1970’s, with the exception of the ERP. For instance, the formulation of the Medium - Term Development Plan (1996-2000) for Ghana placed emphasis on poverty alleviation as the paramount focus of the programmes.

On the other hand, poverty was recognised in Zimbabwe as a problem when ESAP was implemented in 1991. Poverty is seen more or less as an off-shoot of the economic reform programme. The late recognition of poverty in Zimbabwe has resulted in the formulation of PAAP as a separate programme from the national plan.

### 2.2 Characteristics

Poverty is basically a rural phenomenon in both countries because the majority of the population live in rural areas. The share of population in rural areas is 65% in Ghana as compared with 72% in Zimbabwe. About 44% of rural population in Ghana live below the poverty line. In Zimbabwe 52% of rural households live below TCPL. The category of people in this poverty group in Ghana are mainly food crop farmers comprising male youth and women. In Zimbabwe, they are food crop farmers and migrant workers in Communal Areas (CA) as well as workers on commercial farms in both large-scale and small-scale commercial farming areas and Rural Resettlement Areas (RRAs).

These food crop farmers are in subsistence production, use simple tools and implements, farm on small sizes of land and have low level of access to basic community services such as health, education, water and sanitation. In Zimbabwe, land alienation has aggravated the poverty problem by allocating high agricultural production potential areas to the Large Scale Commercial Farming Areas (LSCFA), while reserving marginal agricultural areas with limited potentials and high agricultural production risks to Communal Areas (CA).

Urban poverty is also increasing in depth in Ghana and Zimbabwe as a result of high population growth rate of about 3 percent in both countries. This rate of population
growth is far beyond the rate of job creation. Other factors which have contributed to the
growth in urban poverty are the increased rural-urban migration and the deterioration of
social and economic infrastructure in urban areas. The urban poor include the urban youth who are mostly school leavers without employable skills, school drop-outs and
vagrants. Others are urban slum dwellers, squatters, the disabled and the aged who are
victims of the breakdown of the extended family system in urban areas.

Another feature of poverty is that most female-headed households in both urban and rural
areas fall below the poverty line. In Ghana, the ratio of female heads of households in
poverty is about 36 percent and about 65 percent in Zimbabwe indicating that this
phenomenon is more entrenched in Zimbabwe.

The severity of poverty appears to change with the seasons of the year. During the rainy
season which coincides with harvest times, the incidence of poverty is less severe than
in the lean season when harvests are depleted and new crops have not matured yet. The
fluctuations in the severity of poverty appears to be much graver for poor rural
households.

2.3 Location

In Ghana, both the incidence and depth of poverty are found to be greater in the rural
savannah (Northern Ghana) and less severe in Southern Ghana, especially in Accra, the
capital city, which has the least incidence of poverty in Ghana. In the rural north, poverty
affects whole communities and thus threatens food security especially in the lean
season, whereas in the urban areas, it is more of an individual condition and relate more
to access to stable employment. In Southern Ghana, the difference between urban-rural
poverty is only marginal.

Poverty in Zimbabwe is located mainly in the Communal Areas, where population
densities are high, farmers live on marginal agricultural lands and generally lack the basic
social amenities and productive resources.

2.4 Summary of Comments on Poverty Profile

Some of the salient issues on the profile of poverty which can impact poverty alleviation
programmes in Zimbabwe are the following:

i. The use of simple head count measures in establishing poverty lines is not sensitive
to the depth of poverty and inequality among the poor. The use of households as the
unit of assessment presents a clearer picture of the depth of poverty and the extent of
unevenness among the poor.

ii. Indicators such as the level of participation in decision making and access to basic
social services are not highlighted in the poverty analysis.

iii. There are cultural and legal barriers which can hinder the empowerment of women,
especially among female heads of households in Communal Areas.

iv. There is inadequate investment into facilities and infrastructure which ensures food
security and price stability.
v. Commercial farming could delay poverty alleviation among the unskilled; it also drains resources from the hinterlands and damages the environment.

3.0 POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES

3.1 Programme Summary

The National Action Programme for Poverty Reduction (NAPPR) in Ghana provides a framework for poverty alleviation with the assistance of donor agencies like the UNDP. It serves as the basis for the preparation of more detailed action plans to be implemented at the district and sub-district levels in line with Ghana's vision of becoming a middle income country by the year 2020. The aim is to improve the social and economic status of all individuals and to eliminate extremes of deprivation by encouraging creativity, enterprise and productivity of all citizens.

In Zimbabwe, the Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP) of 1993 is a three-year outline of implementation modalities formulated by the government with the assistance of UNDP as a follow up to the Programme of Action to mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment. The plan is therefore an additional impetus to current efforts of the government, NGOs, donor agencies and others in poverty alleviation and income generating activities.

Whereas a comprehensive and integrated approach is adopted in Ghana by allowing each district and sub-district to identify, analyse, plan and implement their own programmes and projects within a framework, these have already been done in the PAAP for Zimbabweans thus negating the participatory nature of poverty alleviation programmes.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the NAPPR are basically related to improving productivity in agriculture and small-scale enterprises, increasing access to social services, empowering women and vulnerable groups, minimising the effects of environmental degradation, strengthening spatial and functional linkages in human settlements, and strengthening the institutional base of communities for self reliance and participation in the development process.

The PAAP on the other hand, establishes a thematic framework for the implementation of PAAP initiatives, outlines the implementation plan and management structures as well as the nature and scope of technical co-operation required to support plan implementation.

3.3 Description

The main components of the NAPRR in Ghana are to increase production and productivity in agriculture, increase opportunities for income-generating activities, enhance opportunities for women in development, reduce environmental degradation, promote functional linkages among human settlements, community development and decentralisation. The specific projects for implementation are outlined in the individual district and sub-district plans which are co-ordinated at the district, regional and national levels by District Assemblies, Regional Co-ordinating Council (RCC) and National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) respectively.
In the case of the PAAP, thirty-nine initiatives have been outlined in addition to a programme of social mobilisation and capacity building planned over a three-year period. These are aimed at better targeting of poverty assistance to the needy communities. These initiatives are outlined in the document, Government of Zimbabwe (1994): Implementation of the Poverty Alleviation Action Plan, Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Social Welfare, Harare. The main co-ordinating body is the Social Development Fund / Co-ordinating Unit of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (SDF/CU of MPSLSW).

There are five main components of the programme. These are mobilisation of civil society and capacity building, upgrading infrastructure and services in disadvantaged rural communities, providing access to means of production and resources to enable vulnerable groups and the unemployed engaged in income generating activities, instituting appropriate social policies and social safety nets as well as monitoring and evaluation of PAAP.

However, most of the sub programmes in the PAAP are not project and location specific and thus likely to face implementation problems. Again, there are no programmes for controlling environmental degradation even though there exists a two-way relationship between poverty and environmental degradation. Poverty is also regarded as a state of being poor and thus not confined to places, hence, there is no programme on spatial analysis and the effective integration of human settlements into the national economy.

3.4 Strategies

The NAPPR recognises the on-going activities in the various sections of the Ghanaian economy and thus complement these efforts by placing them within a national framework. The overall strategy is to improve standard of living of Ghanaians by facilitating the decision making process and supporting direct actions in poverty reduction. The specific strategies are identified under the components of the programme by making a recourse to the document, GHANA-VISION 2020 - The First Step: 1996 - 2000.

The main strategy of PAAP is to direct additional resources towards improving, broadening and deepening the delivery of existing programmes rather than creating new delivery structures to complement other activities in poverty reduction by both public and private organisations. Two main components of the implementation strategy are:

i. the creation of awareness among the populace by introducing PAAP to civil society through social and political mobilisation process, and

ii. the establishment of community based poverty alleviation programmes.

It could be realised that the PAAP is not integrative since it does not cover other governmental and non-governmental initiatives in poverty alleviation as in the case of Ghana where they are all brought under a national framework. Again, specific strategies for the implementation of PAAP have not been articulated. For instance, providing access to means of production and resources is too vague to guide the implementation of a programme on agriculture. Then also, it is ironical how the second component of the implementation strategy could be applied where the programmes are defined at the national level.
3.5 Implementation Plan

The outline of the PAAP implementation plan is very limited in scope because activities for implementation are not detailed out. It also does not lend itself for easy monitoring and evaluation since no indicators for measuring results and means of verifying outputs are provided. In this wise, it would be difficult to learn from experiences in the implementation of the PAAP in order to guide the implementation of future projects on poverty alleviation.

In the Ghanaian situation, the implementation plans on poverty alleviation are manifested in the various five year District Development Plans formulated by each District Assembly.

3.6 Cost and Priority Resources Needed

The total cost of the NAPPR cannot be determined since poverty alleviation programmes are embedded in all District Development Plans. Donors therefore channel their resources through the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the NDPC. A programme support document by UNDP in December 1996, indicated that UNDP is contributing US$7 million over a three-year period, with national government inputs in kind worth ≥40 million which is approximately US$20,000 towards poverty reduction programmes in Accra and other four districts in Ghana.

In Zimbabwe, the total cost of PAAP is estimated at US$150 million with donors contributing about US$84 million representing 56 percent with the remaining proportion as the government’s contribution.

The resources urgently required for these programmes are funds and skills at both national and local/community levels. The timely release of funds by donor agencies and national governments honouring their pledges would go a long way to enhance the implementation of the programmes. Capacity building of staff in all aspects of programme planning, implementation, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation are crucial to the success of the programmes. In the short run, the services of consultants are needed in policy formulation, detail programme planning and design of internal monitoring and evaluation system. The talents, energies and skills of beneficiaries cannot also be underscored in plan implementation.

3.7 Sources of Funding

The NAPPR identified the following as the sources of funding for the poverty reduction programmes:

- Donors and NGOs support
- Ghana Government regular budgetary allocation and other support mechanisms
- Local level resource support for District Assemblies, local groups and individuals as well as contributions from beneficiaries and the District Assembly Common Fund.

In Zimbabwe, similar sources were identified except that the government’s contribution is in the form of pledges, instead of being a regular budgetary allocation.
3.8 Major Actors and Linkages Among Stakeholders

The major actors in Ghana are donor agencies such as the UNDP, UNICEF, USAID, CIDA, GTZ, ADB, and DANIDA. In addition NGOs such as World Vision International, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Water Aid, Catholic Relief Services and others working at the community level are actively involved in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. The government of Ghana is involved in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes through the Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) and NDPC at the national level, through the RCCs at the regional level, and through the District Assemblies at the district level. Communities undertake self-help initiatives to provide themselves with basic services and facilities.

It must be pointed out that there is a weak horizontal linkage among donor agencies, leading to some duplication of efforts by the agencies. However, a working relationship exists between each of the agencies and the government through financial and technical support for the implementation of the programmes. An oversight committee, the Inter-Ministerial Committees On Poverty Reduction (IMCPR) and the Technical Committee on Poverty (TCOP) also exist to co-ordinate the activities of governmental agencies at the national level whilst at the local level there are DPCUs and relevant departments of the District Assemblies in collaboration with the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). Horizontal linkages at the grassroots are also weak thereby reinforcing a strong vertical relationship from the national level through the regional level to the district and community levels. This trend is however, being broken by the weakening of the regional level so that attention is focused at the district and community levels especially with the transfer of the means of executing the plans through the District Assembly Common Fund. A lot of education and capacity building at the local level are therefore required to make this a reality if poverty alleviation programmes should have an impact on the poor.

In Zimbabwe, the major international donor is the UNDP which was involved in the design of the programme. The UNDP appears to be assisting with financial support and also the co-ordination of donor contributions. Other actors are the African Development Bank (AfDB), World Bank, UNICEF and the ILO which actively participated in the discussions. The Government of Zimbabwe through its Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Social Welfare (MPSLSW), other line ministries and District Councils; NGOs and Community Based Organisations and beneficiary communities is actively involved in implementing some aspects of the PAAP.

Management structures to efficiently manage the implementation of the initiatives will also be established at the district and national levels. These management committees would be co-ordinated by the SDF/CU of MPSLSW whilst the donors are co-ordinated by UNDP. This arrangement ensures a horizontal linkage among donors at the national level. However, in the implementation of the plan, a strong vertical relationship is likely to exist since institutions at the local level are not fully decentralised hence the involvement of line ministries in the plan implementation.

The composition of the District Management Committee could affect co-operation among donors because the representative of the donor(s) making significant contributions on the committee will be responsible to his/her employer and not the entire donor community. In order to facilitate linkages among donors and other actors a comprehensive Technical Co-operation Programme has been outlined.
The promulgation of laws and decrees by the Government of Zimbabwe in order to control the operations of NGOs has greatly reduced co-operation between NGOs and government agencies.

3.9 Summary of Comments on PAAP

The evaluation of the poverty alleviation programmes in both Ghana and Zimbabwe have revealed certain issues which have affected co-operation among actors and also reduced the impact of such programmes on the poor in Zimbabwe. These findings are as follows:

i. PAAP is not an integral component of the national plan; it is being implemented as a project with a specific life span;

ii. There is no clear national policy framework on poverty alleviation;

iii. Poverty is narrowly measured, and excludes the involvement of the communities in the processes of decision-making; in spite of the promises of involvement of the poor in the decision-making process, they still remain marginalised, because the decentralisation programme has not been effectively implemented;

iv. The perception of policy makers about poverty and of the poor as an economic burden is an obstacle to poverty alleviation;

v. NGOs and other implementing agencies working on behalf of the donor community simply engage in handouts to the poor;

vi. Weak co-ordination of the activities of donor agencies owing to the minimal impact of training and capacity building efforts and the dispersed nature of the programme;

vii. Conservatism of public officials involved in the implementation of PAAP at both national and local levels; and

viii. Government’s attempt to regulate the activities of NGOs through laws and decrees.

4.0 SUMMARY OF LESSONS FOR IMPLEMENTING PAAP

4.1 Prospects for Success

The factors which appear to be necessary for promoting a successful implementation of PAAP are identified as:

i. Effective participation of individuals, Community-Based Organisations, NGOs and private sector institutions in the identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of poverty alleviation projects.

ii. Attitudinal change of public officers and individuals involved in plan implementation.
iii. Political will of governments to transfer responsibility, competence and means to
district authorities to effectively implement decentralisation programme as well as
structural changes in land tenure arrangements.

iv. Change in perception of policy makers about the capabilities of the poor.

v. Formulation of comprehensive policy framework on poverty and integration of poverty
alleviation programmes into national plan.

4.2 Risks of Failure

The following factors need to be addressed in order to reduce the risk of failure in
reaching the intended targets under PAAP:

i. Delay in obtaining donor assistance.

ii. Inadequate competence of local authorities and community-based organisations
involved in plan implementation.

iii. Undue restrictions and bureaucratic red tape from Sector Ministries and other
Government Agencies to regulated local institutions and NGOs.

iv. The current state of land alienation.

v. Apathy of individuals in communities and traditional authorities.

vi. High illiteracy levels especially among women.

Table 1 below is a summary of the comparisons and lessons drawn in this study.
### TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN GHANA AND ZIMBABWE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>GHANA</th>
<th>ZIMBABWE</th>
<th>LESSONS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◊ Definition</td>
<td>Positive Aspects: Quantitative and Qualitative Dimensions</td>
<td>Negative Aspects</td>
<td>Assessment: Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ Measurement</td>
<td>Positive Aspects: Emphasis on Quantitative (per capita income or expenditure)</td>
<td>Negative Aspects: Qualitative Neglected, e.g. Access to basic service, Level of participation, Poverty gap analysis not included</td>
<td>Assessment: Not Comprehensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ Analysis</td>
<td>Positive Aspects: Household incomes, Relative shares of aggregate income, Disaggregated data on urban/rural and women/men heads of households</td>
<td>Incomes of households in informal employment not properly assessed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>◊ Causes</td>
<td>Positive Aspects: Inverse relationship between Poverty and Economic growth recognised</td>
<td>Cyclical nature of Poverty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ELEMENTS</td>
<td>GHANA</td>
<td>ZIMBABWE</td>
<td>LESSONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>◊ Characteristics</td>
<td>• Reduction of Poverty in Urban Areas in Southern Ghana</td>
<td>• Poverty more severe among rural farmers especially women and migrant workers</td>
<td>• Spatial - functional linkage analysis of settlements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increase in poverty among rural farmers especially women</td>
<td>• Entrenched in communal areas</td>
<td>• Gender targeted programmes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Poverty is widespread in Northern Ghana</td>
<td>• High population growth rate</td>
<td>• Review of land alienation policies and cultural practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High population growth rate</td>
<td>• Maintenance of status quo by current government</td>
<td>• Increase in access to basic services</td>
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<tr>
<td>◊ Programme Description</td>
<td>• Recognises relationship between poverty and environment</td>
<td>• No programmes on controlling environmental degradation and human settlements.</td>
<td>• High production risks in rural and communal areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decentralisation should have preceded plan implementation instead of being a component of the programme</td>
<td>• Programmes too large to be implemented</td>
<td>• Adoption of intensive citizen participatory approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• No social safety nets for the unemployables (physically disabled, the ill and the elderly)</td>
<td>• Narrow scope of programmes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Programme provides the framework for the identification of projects at the local level.</td>
<td>• Difficulty in integrating local projects into national programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>◊ Strategy</td>
<td>• Participatory • Decentralised administration</td>
<td>• Centralised programme planning approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Inadequate capacity at the local level</td>
<td>• Minimal impact of programme on the poor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The extent of participation is questionable</td>
<td>• Adoption of intensive citizen participatory approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Weak co-ordination of activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mobilisation and utilisation of Resource</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Decentralised programme management</td>
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<td>ELEMENTS</td>
<td>GHANA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation Plan</td>
<td>● The use of PPM in planning project implementation</td>
<td>● No schedule for implementation</td>
<td>● Programme planning should facilitate implementation and lend itself for monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Implementation Plan</td>
<td>● Presentation of different formats even though PPM was proposed</td>
<td>● Activities are not outlined</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Prospects for successful implementation</td>
<td>● Programme costing is likely to be guess work since no activities were detailed out</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Costing</td>
<td>● Integral component of district annual budget</td>
<td>● No uniform basis</td>
<td>● Reforms in public financial management at both local and national levels. ⇒ Composite budgeting approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● No uniform basis</td>
<td>● Determines government annual budgetary allocation</td>
<td>• Criteria for assessing costs should be outlined by the main co-ordinating bodies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Costing</td>
<td>● Determines government annual budgetary allocation</td>
<td>● Facilitation of composite budget preparation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Attempt at estimating total cost of PAAP</td>
<td>● Co-ordination of donor’s contributions by UNDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Linkages among Actors</td>
<td>● Existence of co-ordinating bodies/units e.g. IMCPR, TCOP, NDPC, RCPU and DPCU</td>
<td>● Weak horizontal linkages</td>
<td>● Establishment of co-ordinating mechanisms at both national and district levels</td>
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<td>• Institution of incentives for private sector involvement rather than regulation</td>
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| Evaluation | • Policy framework for poverty alleviation firmly established  
• Apathy  
• Low level of citizen participation and private sector involvement  
• Inadequate means for plan implementation  
• Attitudinal change  
• Over-reliance on external donor assistance | • The use of consultants and experts in programme implementation  
• The perception of policy makers about the poor as economic burden  
• Unavailability of policy framework on poverty  
• Regulation of NGOs through laws and decrees | • Minimal impact of programmes on the poor  
• Inadequate co-operation among actors  
| | | Revision of strategies in plan implementation  
Revision of laws and decrees that stifle co-operation among NGOs and the government  
Enhancement of opportunities for the poor to be productive  
Capacity building  
Intensification of internal generation of funds. |
5.0 PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVING THE EXECUTION OF PAAP

5.1 Strategies to Decentralise Poverty Alleviation Programmes

The main strategy could be to decentralise poverty alleviation programmes so that such programmes would have an impact on the lives of the poor in Zimbabwe. This will promote citizen participation in decision-making and implementation. Success of such an approach depends on the following:

i. Establishing community organisations with representatives from organised or institutionalised groups, individuals with exceptional qualities in mobilising resources and willing to participate, private institutions in operation at the community level, pressure groups and traditional authorities.

ii. Capacity building of community organisations, NGOs and local authority staff through training sessions, seminars and workshops.

iii. Creating awareness among the people about PAAP through public education and forums as well as re-orientation of the people through revision of school syllabi in relation to the development path chosen by the national government.

iv. Providing of infrastructure through communal work and improving access to services.

v. Encouraging the establishment of private financial and social institutions like saving mobilisations and loan centres, community banks, credit unions and others.

vi. Establishing Farmers Service Centres (FSCs) where extension services and facilities would be easily made available to needy farmers.

vii. Resourcing Business Service Centres (BSCs) with qualified staff, office equipment and training manuals to be effective in discharging their functions.

viii. Establishing Technology Transfer Centres (TTCs) to organise apprenticeship courses in various courses for groups of people.

These would ensure that prospects for self-employment are created, thereby enabling the poor to be actively involved generating much needed income for themselves.

These efforts at the local level should be supported by appropriate policies, review of laws which stifle individual initiatives and capacity building of national institutions to effectively co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate poverty alleviation programmes. These policies should be gender-targeted with emphasis on education aimed at reducing fertility and improving health conditions.
5.2 Enhancing Co-operation Among Actors

This could be achieved through the following:

i. Deregulation of NGOs and ensuring independence from the government of its activities. However, a strong co-ordinating mechanism could be set up through Co-ordinating Units at both national and local levels to co-ordinate the activities of all actors especially NGOs. Terms of reference for co-ordinating should be clearly outlined by the main co-ordinating body, that is SDF/CU of MPSLSW.

ii. Building networks and alliances of NGOs so that they do not duplicate their efforts and ensure harmony in the implementation of the poverty projects/programmes. This could be achieved through the formation of association of NGOs and categorising them based on their roles, activities and other criteria to be determined.

A review of their roles in the development process could also be undertaken by the SDF/CU of MPSLSW so as to redirect NGOs to priority areas based on their objective functions.

iii. A Donor Association Committee (DAC) is proposed to replace the existing arrangement where UNDP co-ordinates the activities of all donors in Zimbabwe. The composition of the committee should be representatives from each donor agency. The committee’s roles include determining the level of financial assistance to Government of Zimbabwe and the timely release of such funds, co-ordination of the activities of donors and monitoring as well as evaluating the implementation of PAAP.

iv. The district management committees should be reconstituted as a permanent co-ordinating unit in line with the institutional restructuring required at the local level since temporal Project Management Units have the tendency to be dissolved when a major contributor pulls out.

v. The National Management Committee should be dissolved and its functions taken up by the SDF/CU of MPSLSW, whilst an oversight committee is set up in its place to foster linkages among donors, institutional NGOs, Local NGOs and governmental institutions involved in the programme.

5.3 Other Proposals

i. Integration of PAAP into a comprehensive national plan based on a policy framework.

ii. Identification and generation of private sources of funds which could complement efforts of government and other donor agencies.

iii. Intensification of institutional restructuring at both national and local levels in line with the decentralisation programme.
6.0 CONCLUSION

Poverty is a multi-dimensional problem. It therefore requires a concerted effort of all actors and beneficiaries in a structured, consistent and comprehensive manner in alleviating poverty. This calls for a thorough review of PAAP in Zimbabwe in the light of the proposals made from this study. Certain pre-conditions like the decentralisation of functions and responsibilities, institutional restructuring, intensive educational campaigns towards synthesising the minds of the people about the new direction of development and changing the perception of policy makers about the poor should be well addressed.

The political will of the government to implement these tasks would signal to the donor community about the preparedness of the Government of Zimbabwe towards alleviating poverty and improving the living standards of its people thereby soliciting their active participation in the process. The Government of Zimbabwe should therefore play a facilitating role by setting the framework for donors, NGOs, private sectors and individuals to operate successfully in alleviating the menace of poverty.

Poverty alleviation efforts should not therefore be regarded as economic burden but a contributor to economic growth by making the poor more productive.
LIST OF REFERENCES

GHANA


ZIMBABWE


