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**VIEWS FROM THE FIELD:  
IMPLEMENTING THE POVERTY REDUCTION  
STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP)  
IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA**

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award  
of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Development Studies

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree.  
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## ABSTRACT

Persistent poverty is one of the critical development challenges facing Zambia. Previous development policies have not had any significant impact on the lives of poor Zambians. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) is the latest policy adopted by the current Zambian government to alleviate poverty. The World Bank and the IMF has promoted the PRSP as a blueprint for countries classified as Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) to address their development challenges.

Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas than in the urban areas. Many of the rural poor are small-scale farmers who rely on agriculture for their survival. The purpose of the study was to gauge, from practitioners, working with the PRSP on agricultural development, the extent to which the PRSP was implemented successfully from 2002-2004 to improve the quality of life of poor small-scale farmers. Moore's (1995) "strategic triangle" was used to find out how the implementation of the PRSP "measured up" to his three tests.

This qualitative study involved interviewing development managers of the major non-government organisations that are implementing or monitoring the implementation of the current version of the PRSP on agriculture. Documentary sources were also used to complement the in-depth interviews. I drew on Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to qualitative data analysis to guide the analysis of my data and I used NVivo software for managing and coding the data.

The key findings were based on Moore's (1995) three tests. The first test for legitimacy and political sustainability revealed that there was qualified support for the PRSP from NGOs and beneficiaries, but the respondents were concerned that problems like the lack of financial commitment from government for the development of small-scale farmers; limited consultation with the beneficiaries and NGOs; and marketing problems will in time erode support for and the legitimacy of the PRSP. The second test for operational and administrative feasibility found that the NGOs working with the PRSP on agriculture have adequate operational management systems in place, but the sustainability of these systems is questionable. The third test for adding substantive value to the beneficiaries found that the PRSP has brought about minor improvements in the lives of the small-

scale farmers, but contradictions in the policy have lead to practices that make small-scale farmers vulnerable to exploitation by private companies involved in the outgrower schemes. The PRSP does not fully measure up to Moore's three tests. One of the main problems has to do with the PRSP adopting a growth-centred approach to development that is promoted by neo-liberal thinking, which places economic growth before the development of the poor small-scale farmers.

The people-centred development is an alternative approach that might serve the interests of the poor better than neo-liberal growth-centred, investment-orientated development. People-centred development places people rather than the economy at the centre of development and uses pro-poor, endogenous strategies to promote self-reliance and structure transformation.

The challenge facing Zambian government is how to work inside or, perhaps, outside the parameters defined by HIPIC agreements with neo-liberal orientated Bretton Wood Institutions in order to define and implement poverty reduction policies and strategies in agriculture that help poor small-scale farmers become self-reliant.

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## Abbreviations

ACF	Agricultural Consultative Forum
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ASIP	Agricultural Sector Investment Programme
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCJDP	Catholic Centre for Justice, Development and Peace
CSPR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction
FSP	Food Security Pack
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GRZ	Government Republic of Zambia
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
NASSFZ	National Association of Small-scale Farmers of Zambia
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAM	Program Against Malnutrition
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper
RDP	Redistribution and Development Programme
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZEC	Zambia Episcopal Conference
ZLA	Zambia Land Alliance
ZNFU	Zambia National Farmers Union



# Chapter One

## Introduction

The development challenges that Zambia faces are varied and enormous. Poverty continues to plague most people in Zambia. It can be seen how great a crisis this presents, for the Government Republic of Zambia (GRZ), *Zambian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)* (2002:11) acknowledges that "around 73 percent of Zambians are classified as poor. Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas compared to the urban areas (83 percent and 56 percent respectively). Most of the rural poor are small-scale farmers, as well as quite a number of medium-scale farmers." There have been numerous attempts to reduce poverty in Zambia. Before 1991, under the Kaunda government's agriculture policy, the government through parastatals, cooperatives and other government-supported institutions was the ultimate deliverer of almost all services that is, social welfare, health, educational, and agricultural services (Dodge, 1977 & Cooper, 2002). Saasa (1996:45) argues that "the pre-structural adjustment period in Zambia [before 1992] was characterised by a policy environment in which competition was restricted while industrial growth was largely on import-substituting activity that operated behind high tariff walls." In 1992, under Chiluba and his Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) Government embarked on the reform of agricultural policy by introducing the Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (ASIP), which was part of a structural adjustment programme (SAP) of the economy. The main focus of the policy reforms was to liberalise the agricultural sector, and to promote private sector development and participation in the production and distribution of agricultural goods and services (Sakala, 2001 & Chiluba, 1994). Now under Mwanawasa, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) is the latest attempt by Government to address poverty.

Policy shifts over the years show that there have been numerous attempts to alleviate poverty, and these have brought no lasting improvement in the lives of poor Zambians, instead poverty is worsening. Saasa (2002:39) goes to the heart of the problems, which affect the formulation, and implementation of poverty alleviation policy. He says, "One noteworthy aspect of Zambia's current plight, in the face of escalating poverty levels, is the role of external factors in conditioning and, to a

considerable extent, directing policy choices and responses." He observes that "the issue of national leadership in these initiatives is still clearly missing, and the role of external development 'partners' is still uncomfortably predominant. There is an evident lack of a clear national vision, beyond what the donors prescribe, with respect to how poverty could be reduced" (Saasa 2002:65).

One wonders whether the problem is with the theory and ideology that informs the policy or the ability of organisations to translate the policy into programmes that improve the quality of life of the poor.

The purpose of the study was to gauge, from development practitioners working with the PRSP on agricultural development, the extent to which the PRSP was implemented successfully from 2002-2004 to improve the quality of life of poor small-scale farmers. Moore's (1995) "strategic triangle" was used to find out how the implementation of the PRSP "measured up" to his three tests. Moore's three tests correspond with the three dimensions of the "strategic triangle" that suggest that a policy should have political support from the local environment, that it should have an effective administrative and management structure, and that the PRSP policy should itself be a pro poor development policy, i.e. that it adds value to the poorest farmers in Zambia.

The study focuses on agriculture development because the PRSP itself has prioritised the agriculture sector, and lays out programmes to promote poverty reduction. GRZ, *Zambian PRSP* (2002:53) states that "on several grounds, agriculture in Zambia combines the virtues of growth and equity and it is in this regard that enhanced agricultural productivity is being given the highest priority under this PRSP."

The PRSPs are policy documents promoted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) as a prerequisite if they are to qualify for debt cancellation and funding of poverty reduction programmes. The PRSP is not just a paper. As a policy document, the PRSP describes a country's macroeconomic and social policies, and the programmes, which are to promote growth and reduce poverty. There is considerable debate on

the failure of past poverty reduction strategies. The IMF and the World Bank argue that the increase of poverty is due to a lack of economic growth and private investment, and insufficient public investment in goods for growth. The critics of the PRSP argue that the failure of the PRSP is mainly due to the fact that it relies largely on the neo-liberal policies (Saasa 2002 & Bond 2004). Those who have a people-centred approach, e.g. like Max-Neef (1991), argue, that in order to tackle poverty, the policy should focus on the fundamental needs that are vital to all human beings.

This qualitative study involved interviewing development managers of the major non-government organisations that are implementing or monitoring the implementation of the current version of the PRSP on agriculture. The views of the World Bank and Government of Zambia are well publicised (e.g. a study sponsored by the World Bank entitled: "Zambia Agricultural Sector Investment Programme: Implementation Completion Report, Report No. 24444-ZA"), and the views of the beneficiaries are reported in the CSPR (2005) study entitled "Targeting small-scale Farmers in the Implementation of Zambia's poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP): Assessment of Implementation and Effectiveness of the Fertiliser Support Programme" but, up till now, the views of the practitioners, directly involved in the implementation of the PRSP, have not been researched. What do they say are the pros and cons of the PRSP?

I drew on Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to qualitative data analysis to guide my analysis of the qualitative data and used NVivo software for managing and coding the data.

The subsequent chapters report on the background of the PRSP debate; discuss the conceptualisation of the research problem; describe and reflect on the research methodology; present the findings and then a discussion of the findings, and finally offer some concluding remarks and suggestions for further areas of research.

## Chapter Two

### PRSP and Debates on Poverty Reduction in Southern Africa

This chapter describes the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) as a part of the International Monitoring Fund (IMF) and World Bank's intervention to reduce poverty of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). I begin by tracing the origin and evolution of the PRSP. I do this by locating the Zambian PRSP within the broader debate around PRSPs, which the World Bank and the IMF promote as the development blueprint for addressing Africa's poverty. I note that a consultative process, involving the Government of Zambia and civil society, seems to have been followed. I go on to summarise the Neo-liberal and Keynesian origin and thinking. Then, I describe and critically analyze how the Zambia PRSP promises to reduce poverty by prioritising agriculture. Finally, I go on to outline the programmes in the agriculture section of the PRSP.

There is a dearth of publications on the PRSP in Zambia. With the exception of a few research reports from non-governmental development agencies most of the references I use are either from government reports or international publications.

#### 2.1. PRSP's Origin and Evolution

The PRSP evolved as a result of stringent and persistent criticisms of the social impact of structural adjustment programmes (SAP). Since the 1980s much of this criticism has been blistering attacks by civil society organisations and other policy analysts on the devastating effects that SAP economic reforms have had on society (Ake 1996 & Saasa 2002.) The economic reforms relating to agriculture included the removal of fertiliser and seed subsidies, liberalisation of the agricultural sector, promotion of private sector in the development of agricultural production, and privatisation of most parastatals (Ake, 1996:121). The governments have also had to cut aid for education, medicine, and food, areas which are fundamental to people's material and social conditions being improved. In the late 1990s, in response to the great outcry, the World Bank and the IMF introduced the PRSPs. PRSPs "describe a country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes to promote growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs" (World Bank, 2002a). The World Bank, the IMF and many overseas donors require poor

countries to develop Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) before they can qualify for development assistance, and for debt cancellation under HIPC (Lungu 2004:13-15). According to the IMF (2000:114):

The new approach to poverty reduction... builds on the traditional emphasis on macroeconomic structural soundness by also stressing the importance of country ownership of the poverty reduction strategy. The growing concern for country ownership, including through the involvement of civil society, is intended to reduce the risk of slippages in implementation as the countries themselves take greater responsibility.

The PRSP is accompanied by a new development discourse, that of "ownership". This was a response to the years of criticism that donors like the IMF and World Bank imposed development policies and did not allow people from member countries to have real decision-making power by participating in their own development. The IMF (2000:114) notes: "To foster ownership, the PRSP will be drawn up by the Government after broad-based consultations with stakeholders, including representatives of civil society and development partners, and with [the] assistance with World Bank and IMF staff." The IMF and the World Bank had realised that the top-down approach to development, where donors dictated conditions and decided what was best for the recipients of their aid, did not work. Consultation not only involves donors, but also with civil society and poor people themselves.

## **2.2. Development Logic of PRSP**

The PRSP strategy rests on two pillars: economic growth as understood by Neo-liberal thinkers and government social programmes, which seem to be informed by Keynesianism. Analysts like Saasa (2002) and Bond (2004) have noted that the PRSP is largely neo-liberal in its understanding of how Africa should find a way out poverty.

### **2.2.1. Origin & Nature of Neo-liberalism & Keynesianism**

In the post World War period, from 1945 to early 1970, the dominant type of capitalism "was that of international Keynesianism and state-mediated capitalism based on [stronger government planning and high deficit spending]" (More and Schmitz 1995:2). This type of capitalism was focused on increasing the wealth of the nation with more state intervention in the economy rather than on the

welfare of people. According to Peet (2003:7) John Maynard Keynes, the first proponent of this form of capitalism argued that free markets left on their own do not maximise human well-being. Instead he favoured state intervention in guiding the capitalist economy. Keynes believed that the state would regulate the economy, maintain employment and provide other social services that the market does not (Peet 2003). The 'market-led' economy is prone to economic crisis and could not reorganise itself especially in offering social services. Keynes observed that the economic crises during the great depression after the Second World War called for a reorganisation of the capitalist economy with more state intervention (Peet 2003). Keynes argued that capitalism has an inherent tendency to create and maximise inequality, so the economy cannot be left on its own without any form of guidance (Peet 2003).

During the 1970s the American International dominance was some how politically and ideologically challenged by the Soviet bloc, especially in the third world. An alternative paradigm of Socialism was offered but in fear of the presence of the communist; the USA championed a new version of capitalism in order to counter the influence of the USSR. (Ake 1996:114-115) When the Soviet economy and politics collapsed, there was a rise of the second post-war theory of "Neo-liberalism or de-regulated capitalism." (More and Schmitz 1995:2) Neo-liberalism also known as "market fundamentalism" promotes the market to make a difference in promoting development. Treanor nd. notes that neo-liberalism is best understood by focusing on "the historical development of [economic] liberalism". Neo-liberalism was a direct renewal of the early "classical liberalism" began by Smith in nineteenth century (Peet 2003:9). Wood (1999:4) has argued that capitalism from economic liberalism has laws of motion that gravitate on the market principle, which demands competition, increasing productivity, capital accumulation, and intense exploitation of labour. It is the driving force of capitalism's laws of motion which made it to spread from England on to the rest of Europe and ultimately the whole world (Wood (1999: 4). Neo-liberals argue that the state is inefficient and corrupt it should stay out of the economy as far as possible. Therefore, reacting to the Keynesian approach in organising the capitalist economy, neo-liberal economics has been adopted and informs almost every economic enterprise worldwide today in what has come to be known as "globalisation." (Stiglitz 2002)

### **2.2.2. IMF, World Bank & Development Policies Prior to 1970s**

When the IMF and the World Bank were established in 1945, their original vision was to help rebuilding European countries affected by World War II and eventually other poor countries in the world.

Peet (2003:56) asserts that:

...as originally conceived at Bretton Woods, the IMF was to be a supra-national body essentially doing two things: it would regulate the rates at which currencies were exchanged among member countries; and it would help ensure international stability by making loans at times of crisis in member countries' balances of payments.

The World Bank's mandate as a development bank was to help countries fight poverty. However, according to Peet (2003), what characterises the World Bank and other institutions like the World Trade Organisation are the neo-liberal conditions they prescribe to poor countries wanting their services. Peet (2003:56) argues that by embracing the neo-liberal vision, the IMF and the World Bank have diverted from the objectives that were agreed upon when they were established at the Bretton Woods.

### **2.2.3. Neo-liberalism, the IMF & World Bank**

The 1970s saw the IMF and the World Bank rise as powerful financial organisations. They propagated neo-liberal principles of adherence to free market principles, albeit minimal government intervention in the economy, privatisation of state assets, a balanced budget and low interest rates. Peet (2003) highlights that the Bretton Woods institutions have formed an alliance in promoting neo-liberalism based on the market policies. He notes that "neo-liberal policies aimed at creating 'more competitive markets with brave, more innovative entrepreneurs' took over a previously liberal, interventionist development economics in the 'counter-revolution' of the 1970s and early 1980s." He goes on to say that "these policies favour outward-oriented, export economy, organised through markets, with minimal state regulation, along with privatisation, trade liberalisation and limited (state) budget deficits" (Peet 2003:14). The propagation of the market principle to as many areas of social and economic existence and interaction as possible defines the core value and principle of neo-liberalism. Bond (2001:4-10) argues that it is on the basis of pushing the frontiers

of the market, as a normative position in neo-liberalism, that we understand contemporary globalisation. Bond (2001:231) has argued that since the World Bank and IMF took a role in initiating development in Southern African countries, their "initiatives have, on a whole, proved destructive to the development process." Bond (2004:80) observes that the PRSP prescribes neo-liberal policies set up by the IMF and the World Bank as necessary condition for receiving debt cancellation and funds for development programmes. A notable result of this is a rise in poverty, developmentally uneven progress and maintains the stunted growth patterns in many countries in Africa.

What is crucial in understanding neo-liberalism as it underpins the PRSP is that economic growth takes the form of expanding private sector investment and export growth. It is believed that private sector investment will bring about economic growth and consequently lead to poverty reduction. The PRSP also advocates some form of state intervention where the government initiates support programmes, like providing subsidies in agricultural seeds and fertilisers that would help reduce poverty – which is a form of Keynesianism.

### **2.3. The Zambian PRSP**

From the point of view of the Zambian Government, the PRSP is a national strategic plan with real potential to bring about poverty reduction and development. Previous national plans were flawed as they had no real impact on the lives of the poor.

Prior to 1991, agricultural policy in Zambia was characterised by government controls through parastatals, cooperatives and other government-supported institutions which provided agricultural services and, to some extent, controlled directly the production of commodities. The SAP of 1992 was the direct opposite. The main focus of SAP policy reforms was to liberalise the agricultural sector and to promote private sector development and participation in the production and distribution of agricultural goods and services.



### 2.3.1. From ASIP to PRSP

The Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (ASIP) under SAP endeavoured to create an enabling environment for private sector participation. A number of measures were introduced, such as the withdrawal of direct government involvement in production, marketing and distribution of inputs and produce; privatisation of (Government) parastatal companies; elimination of price controls and direct subsidies in the agricultural sector.

The ASIP policy objectives for the agricultural sector were:

- To ensure national and regional food security through dependable annual production of adequate supplies of foodstuffs at competitive cost.
- To generate income and employment through increased agriculture production and productivity.
- To ensure that the existing agricultural resource base (land, water, and air) is maintained and improved upon.
- To contribute to sustainable industrial development [by providing locally produced agro-based raw materials].
- To significantly expand the sector's contribution to the national balance of payments by, among other things, expanding agricultural exports in line with international advantage. (GRZ 2002:55)

The strategies for attaining these policy objectives included, strengthening and monitoring the liberalised markets, facilitation of the private sector development, and diversification of agricultural production, particularly among small-scale farmers. The review and reorganisation of institutions and legislative arrangements was also a critical policy objective (GRZ 2002:55).

Among the factors leading to the general failure of ASIP and SAP was the inconsistency between policy pronouncement and implementation which consequently led to uncertainties in agricultural production and marketing (GRZ 2002:57) The poor small-scale farmers did not benefit from the policy, there continued to be smaller harvests, and most of the small scale farmers failed to grow more food to meet their household food as well as surpluses for sell.

And as to the reduction of poverty the structural reforms took the form of "...harsh [and] ambitious projects of reform, astronomical inflation rates (fuelled by the 500 per cent increase in the price of maize meal) and scaling down of the social services" (Ake 1996:121). Ake (1996) observed that though the World Bank and the IMF argued that the pain was less to the poor than the rich, this was not true given the structure of Zambia's economy and the poverty profile at the time. The poor in rural areas and in urban settlements bore the brunt of the policies, for example, poor farmers in rural areas could not buy seed and fertiliser inputs for farming because of high prices (Ake 1996). Many people could not manage to pay for education, medical fees (Ake 1996). The government of the day had to support the SAP, even though it failed to bring meaningful development to the people. The government had to cut down aid to education, agriculture and health. In the agricultural sector, ASIP failed dismally to deliver tangible benefits to the poor; more funds were spent by the leaders at the headquarters and very little trickled down to the farmers, for whom it was intended (Ake 1996:121).

With the failure of SAP and ASIP, in late 1990s another development policy supported by the World Bank, the IMF and other donors was introduced. This time the donors required that many people contribute to the debate and drafting of the PRSP in Zambia. Contributors included the government ministries, NGOs, international organisations, local leaders, traditional chiefs, development workers and ordinary women and men.

### **2.3.2. Content of the Zambia PRSP**

The main goal of the PRSP in Zambia is poverty reduction. The promotion of economic growth and improvement of social services and infrastructure is to take place through government programmes. (GRZ 2002: 12-15). The four key areas of economic growth are agriculture, tourism, industry, and mining. A great deal of macroeconomic policy was incorporated into the PRSP under economic growth. For example, there is mention of the urgent need for an external sector: the expansion of the local economy through export growth, and fiscal policy: providing infrastructure, monetary and financial policy to monitor inflation through proper monetary system, structural reform, infrastructure and economic growth as a way to restore economic growth and rural development: through improving infrastructure as well as economic empowerment of the rural

people (GRZ 2002:43-47). Social investment takes the form of social services in sectors like health and education. Infrastructure development involves the improvement of transport and communications, roads, energy, and water sanitation. The PRSP also has policies on the environment, HIV/AIDS and gender. Out of all these policies the emphasis is clearly on economic growth which is supposed to lead to the reduction of poverty. The answer as to how this should be done lies in promoting and prioritising agriculture.

### **2.3.3. Agriculture Prioritised**

For a long time Zambia's economy has largely depended on copper, and agriculture, tourism and other industries have been neglected (GRZ 2002:11). Now Zambia earns little from copper exports, so dependence on copper is seen as an unreliable vehicle for driving the growth of the economy (CSPR 2002). Agricultural productivity is seen as one of the driving engines for strengthening the national economy and enhancing economic growth. "The PRSP identifies increased production of food crops, export crops and produce that can be processed or value-added in Zambia" as the way to substantial increases in the economy 'which, in turn, will reduce poverty (CSPR (2002: 5). Growth in agriculture is to come through liberalisation. This means promoting private sector-led agricultural development through outgrower schemes. Outgrower schemes are private-led companies that persuade small-scale farmers to grow cash crops. Small-scale farmer are contracted by outgrower schemes, they are given inputs like cotton seeds to grow. The outgrower scheme monitors the progress and at harvest time small-scale farmers are expected to sell their produce to the outgrower scheme. In addition to promoting growth through the outgrower schemes Government aims to provide a range of services like small subsidies and upgrading the infrastructure in order for small-scale farmers to increase their contribution to agricultural production.

The following five interventions in agriculture are proposed in the PRSP (GZR 2002: 59-60):

- To improve finance and investment: the Agriculture Development Fund that will provide (repayable) credit to small-scale farmers and also encourage more private investment in "outgrower schemes".

- To strengthen markets, trade and agri-business: by promoting extension services, business skills development, market information, incentives for investors and promoting outgrower schemes.
- To develop land and infrastructure: by identifying new farm blocks that will benefit local and commercial farmers. Activities will include land demarcation, and the construction of roads, power and dams and irrigation facilities.
- Promoting improved technology: where farmers could use appropriate technology to increase their crop and animal production. These include animal draft power, and techniques to reduce disease and increase production. New ideas for irrigation, crop storage and soil and water conservation in order to be efficient and increase profit.
- Targeted food security: the PRSP would provide poor farmers with inputs, training and extension for household food security.

In the PRSP strategy, as explained above, the key development outcome - poverty reduction - is dependent on private investment-led growth, with the government playing the minor role of addressing the development challenge which Zambia faces. The PRSP strategy, though it acknowledges the flaws of the previous agricultural policy, still builds on the ASIP (GRZ 2002:55). The major assumption of this latter Programme was that all government and donor resources would be pooled into a "basket funding" for the various ASIP activities. The strategies for achieving the objectives of ASIP also focused on enhancing production through free market development, reduction of government role in commercial activities, and provision of efficient public services. But unlike the ASIP, that largely emphasised agriculture to be driven by the private sector only, the PRSP notes that private/public partnership should be strengthened. The state should play a role in creating a favourable climate for private investment:

Zambia also maintains that the creation of a market economy does not necessarily entail that the state must have no interest or involvement in commodity, input, or resource markets. Under the PRSP such involvement is seen to be indirect and supportive, rather than direct and competitive. The Government's preparedness, under the PRSP, to be involved in some transitional functions such as those related to the provision of support services and guaranteeing of national food security. (GRZ 2002: 59)

This chapter has discussed the origin of the PRSP and the theoretical points of departure of the Zambian PRSP for agriculture. Unlike the ASIP, that failed to deliver, the PRSP policy on agriculture is seen by its authors and international sponsors to have the right mix of contextual analysis, technical knowledge and support to increase agricultural production, grow the economy and reduce poverty. For the PRSP to succeed there has to be demonstrable political will and efficient management that will ensure an effective link between allocations, disbursements, actual spending and physical outputs that translate into welfare outcomes. The political will is viewed as the willingness and genuineness of government in fulfilling its obligation to promote poverty reduction. The continuous support of donors, civil society and beneficiaries, too, is seen as essential for poverty reduction. Efficient operational mechanisms include human resources, namely, competent personnel to manage the programmes, systems for monitoring and evaluation to ensure successful implementation of programmes. The value of the PRSP, political will and an efficient management of the PRSP correspond to Moore's (1995) "strategic triangle", a useful tool for the successful implementation of the development policy, which is the reason for its being used in this research.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Conceptualisation of the Research Problem**

This chapter states the central research question and defines the relevant theoretical concepts and proposes significant theoretical questions.

#### **3.1. Central Research Question**

How successfully do development practitioners think the PRSP agricultural development policy has been translated into programmes and implemented to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries in Zambia?

#### **3.2. Definition of Key Concepts in the Central Research Question**

The key concepts “development”, “agriculture development”, “development practitioners”, “types of farmers: small-scale, medium-scale and commercial farmers” “quality of life” and “success” are defined below.

##### ***Development***

Development is a term that many understand as a synonym for Westernisation or Modernisation or neo-liberalism. Too often this understanding of development is associated with having more things. I use the term development or people-centred development to reflect the concern for seeking positive change in the whole of human life. This understanding is in line with people-centred approaches to development as proposed by Korten (1990), Chambers (1997) and Max-Neef (1991). Each view has something to teach us and hence is important to our understanding of agriculture development.

Korten (1990) contrasts the people centred-development with the economic growth-centred development promoted by many Western governments. He defines development as “a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilise and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations” (Korten 1990:67). In others words, according to Korten the

process must be driven by three principles: sustainability, justice, and inclusiveness. Chambers' (1997) understanding of development as responsible well-being built on the principles of equity and sustainability and pursued increase the livelihood, security and capabilities of the poor. For Chambers, well-being for all is termed as quality of life (1997:10). Max-Neef (1991) understands development as aiming at self-reliance and services the fundamental needs of humans. All the approaches to people-centred development emphasise the following phrases "human needs," "capabilities," As Chambers (1997:9) takes note that development thinking has undergone a major shift "from things and infrastructure to people and capacities" "sustainability," improving the "quality of life" as the objectives of development.

### ***Agriculture Développement***

Agriculture development can mean many things. There are a number of sources that shed light on the meaning of agriculture development. The Zambian PRSP implicitly understands agriculture development to mean the "improve[ment in] agricultural production, productivity, and market competitiveness in order to come out of the poverty trap" (GRZ 2002:53). I understand the term *agriculture development* to refer to an integrated approach to crop farming and other forms of agriculture whereby farmers actively participate in "...all key aspects of crop farming, principally, food production, food processing and storage, marketing, economic and agricultural policies as well as basic infrastructure" (Chongo 2004:8.) This understanding of agriculture development is in line with people-centred approach to development.

### ***Development Practitioner***

I use the term *development practitioner* to mean professional workers who seek to promote the development of people through implementing programmes. They work in the field, they understand the economical, political and cultural environment and how this environment works for and against the well being of the poor. They talk to the people, try to understand their needs and help them fulfil them (Chambers 1997:204). Development practitioners also have a better understanding of the complexity of poverty facing small-scale farmers (Chambers (1997:233).

### ***Types of Farmers***

There may be more types, but according to the government of Zambia, there are three main types of farmers in Zambian agriculture:

- i. Small-scale farmers* grow food mainly for their own consumption and sell very little for cash. These small-scale farmers are very poor and most of them live in rural areas.
- ii. Medium-scale farmers* grow some food for their own consumption, but farm mainly to sell on the market. They have been called "progressive farmers", as they can develop into large-scale or commercial farmers. Mostly these farmers are found along the railway line where they have easy access to facilities.
- iii. Commercial or large-scale farmers* grow cash crops on a large scale. These farmers usually have big farms and they use the latest agricultural technologies to increase production. Commercial farmers grow field and horticultural crops mainly for international markets (GRZ, 2002:54).

### ***Quality of Life***

I use the term "quality of life" to reflect people-centred development perspectives that view development holistically and multi-dimensionally as interventions to meet physical and psycho-social needs of human beings. Human Scale Development by Max-Neef (1991) provides a theoretical framework from which the "quality of life" is conceptualised. Max-Neef (1991:16) proposes that "the best development process will be that which allows the greatest improvement in people's quality of life [and that] quality of life depends on the possibilities people have to adequately satisfy their fundamental needs." Max-Neef emphasise that development is about people and aims at improving the quality of life of the beneficiaries by meeting their fundamental needs. The nine fundamental human needs include: subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Idleness, Creation, Identity and Freedom. In this study I focus on three needs important to the poor small-scale farmers. These needs are: i.) the need for subsistence and surplus production which can be sold; ii.) the need for protection from disease; and iii.) the need for agricultural and management knowledge and understanding through education. In other words, every small-scale farmer has the right to food, health and education, which are essential for agricultural development. It is clear that Max-Neef (1991) understand development of human needs as aiming at self-reliance in the long-term. It is a long-term



commitment as De Wet (2000:6) notes, "Max-Neef promote a process which encourages people to draw on the values and energies within their own cultures where they seek to build communities and societies in which the fundamental needs of all their members can be met." Max-Neef (1991) conceptualise self-reliance in terms of horizontal interdependency between nations, regions/provinces and local communities and culture, that is, it is conceived of as equal partnerships rather than authoritarian relationships. They argue that self-reliance is "a process capable of promoting participation in decision making, social creativity, political determination, fair distribution of wealth and tolerance for the diversity of identities" (Max-Neef 1991:58).

### **Success**

I drew on Moore's (1995) theory of a "strategic triangle" to gauge the success of the implementation of the PRSP. Mark Moore is a Professor at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. After fifteen years of research, observation, and teaching about what public sector executives should do to improve the performance of public enterprises, Moore responds by recommending the strategic triangle. Through different case studies, Moore reveals how through the strategic triangle managers can achieve their true goal of producing public value, which in people-centre development would contribute to self-reliance.

Moore (1995:70-72) stipulates that the strategy for assessing the success of policy includes three elements: legitimacy and political sustainability, operational and administrative feasibility, and substantive value for the beneficiaries.

By "legitimacy and political sustainability", Moore (1995:70) means that a policy should receive strong political support from the environment namely that it should be supported overwhelmingly by the general public, who know the policy and are confident that it would actually work. When it comes to policy the government and other policy implementers must promote negotiation and consultation with the beneficiaries, stakeholders and civil society in order to attain and sustain society's commitment to the policy. In other words, a policy needs good devoted leadership which would display that people support it and it is legitimate.

By "operational and administrative feasibility", Moore (1995:70) means that a policy should have an administrative system to influence operations. For example, there should be enough competent staff who can display efficiency and efficacy. According to Moore (1995:70) a good administrative system should be able to use available resources carefully and cost-effectively. In short, a successful development policy should be able to operate on existing resources.

By "substantive value for the beneficiaries" Moore (1995) means, a policy should add value or change the people's lives for the better. A policy which by content, by purpose and by conceptualisation improves the lives of the clients, in people-centred development ensures ultimately that the beneficiaries are self-reliant. To successfully and effectively implement a policy, Moore (1995) stipulates that the three above mentioned elements have to be coherently aligned to each other. These three tests are equal in value and very necessary for the successful implementation of a policy.

With Moore's (1995) "strategic triangle" in mind I asked the following questions of the PRPS on agriculture:

- Is there political support from the environment for organisations to successfully implement the programmes?
- What mechanisms, in terms of administrative and managerial capacity, have been established in order to successfully implement the programmes?
- Do the implemented programmes substantively contribute to improving the quality of life of the beneficiaries?

This chapter has described the relevant theoretical frameworks that guided the study and where necessary they will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

## Chapter Four

### Research Design and Methodology

This chapter deals with the methodology and design used in the study. It describes the targeted sample, the method of data collection and analysis for answering the research questions. In addition, the chapter will mention the ethical observations followed in the study.

#### 4.1. Overall Design

This study used a qualitative evaluation method. It did not do a full evaluation of the PRSP, but only targeted key development practitioners working in the field in order to examine success. As a measure of success, this study used qualitative in-depth interviews. One of the major characteristics of qualitative research is that the researcher attempts to understand people from their own worldview. Babbie and Mouton (2001:271) argue that qualitative research takes an insider perspective, that is, "to attempt to view the world through the eyes of the actors themselves". Qualitative research was deemed appropriate in order to understand the context in which the organisations find themselves as they attempt to translate policy into practice. The qualitative approach is a less structured and a more flexible way of collecting data and allows the researcher to gain insights that quantitative research often does not offer. In-depth interviews produce what qualitative researchers call "rich thick" information. Qualitative in-depth interviews were therefore deemed an appropriate method of collecting the desired data for this study.

In order to fully answer the research question, I decided to compliment the in-depth interviews with the reports from organisations. This involved a study of the progress reports of some organisations and becoming familiar with the ways the views of organisations affect the implementation of the PRSP policy on agriculture. The rationale for doing this was that familiarity with the contents of these documents might help me understand the problems hindering successful implementation of the PRSP policy on agriculture development in Zambia and stimulate thoughts about alternative policy frameworks that would effectively respond to the plight of the poor in Zambia.

To fully answer the research question, the design of the study was more than descriptive; it was also exploratory. Rubin and Rubin (1995:46-47) note:

Design in qualitative interviewing is iterative. That means that each time you repeat the basic process of gathering information, analyzing it, winnowing it, and testing it, you come closer to a clear and convincing model of the phenomenon you are studying throughout the project... The continuous nature of qualitative interviewing means that the questioning is redesigned through out the project.

## **4.2. Target “Population”**

The data collection stage involved in-depth interviews with seven development managers from six out of the eight major non-governmental organisations implementing or monitoring the implementation of the PRSP on agriculture in Zambia. One organisation, with two senior managers, provided us with two interviews, whereas the rest offered one.

Two out of the eight targeted organisations were not ready to participate. One organisation (National Association of Small-scale Farmers of Zambia (NASSFZ) was willing to participate, but their senior manager was not available on the date arranged. I was told he had travelled overseas and no one else from the organisation could do the interview. The questionnaire was sent to him electronically, but still the questions were not answered. The other organisation (Dunvant) was unwilling to participate in the study, though they are directly working with the beneficiaries.

There are other smaller organisations in Zambia but they do not work on a large-scale. In this case, the major organisations were in a better position to answer the key research questions: whether there is political will or not, whether there is an administrative structure in place and finally whether the PRSP policy on agriculture has value to the beneficiaries (Moore 1995). The research did not target the beneficiaries because they have been researched by CSPR (2005) publication entitled: “Targeting Small-scale Farmers in the Implementation of Zambia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP): “Assessment of the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Fertiliser Support Programme” and I decided to exclude government because they are obliged to favour the PRSP. Targeting development organisations is essential because, though these organisations help government achieve its development goals, they are not government departments. Also, the

researcher was able to acquire an in-depth understanding of what development practitioners think about the implementation of the PRSP.

Below is a brief description of each of the organisations that participated in the study:

- i. Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM) is a local organisation that has been contracted by the Government to implement the Food Security Pack and other particular areas affected with food security. The Food Security Pack that PAM gives targets poor small-scale farmers including female and child headed households. The Food Security Pack is in the form of seed, maize, sorghum, millet, cowpeas and beans. PAM has also been involved at the separate levels of the PRSP process and is a member of the civil society and poverty reduction. Through its civil society membership, PAM is also involved in the monitoring of the PRSP performance.
- ii. Agricultural Consultative Forum (ACF) is an umbrella organisation bringing together associations working within the agriculture sector. ACF works in close collaboration with the agriculture research trusts and farmers associations. It provides a forum where issues on agricultural policy implementation can be discussed, and where advisory notes are prepared and sent to the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. ACF was a member of the consultative committee which formulated the PRSP.
- iii. Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU), a farmer's organisation, which acts as an advocate for farmers' interests and lobbies the Government on the agricultural policy. Information sharing between farmer-members is seen as key to keeping the organisation strong and united. Through communication and information sharing helps the. ZNFU is involved in monitoring the PRSP on the agriculture sector.
- iv. Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) is a watchdog NGO that is dedicated to ensuring the PRSP is implemented properly, so that the PRSP policies and resources reach the intended beneficiaries. This NGO is an umbrella organisation that brings together other NGOs so that their views on poverty reduction can be heard. The organisation carries out budget analyses, is involved in participatory monitoring of poverty reduction programmes, disseminates information, plays the role of an advocate regarding poverty issues and, facilitates capacity building among NGOs.

- v. The Catholic Centre for Justice, Development and Peace (CCJDP), under the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC), is comprised of two units - Peace and Justice, and Development. The Peace and Justice unit does a great deal of advocacy and social awareness work. It also does a lot of policy based work in economic justice and peace; it also tackles other social cultural justice issues. The Development unit works with the parishes in the various dioceses; it helps them improve the people's effectiveness in promoting development in their communities. It has been involved in giving farming input in the form of loans to small-scale farmers.
- vi. And finally, the Zambia Land Alliance (ZLA) is a network of NGOs which advocates pro-poor land policies and laws. The goal of ZLA is equitable access to, ownership and control of land by poor rural and urban families, and to women, in particular.

There are three particular things that characterise these organisations: i.) Two of them are doing implementation while the other four are doing monitoring and evaluation. ii.) Their head offices are in Lusaka and their programmes operate countrywide. iii.) All the development practitioners interviewed are leaders in their organisations. (Their views show how the leaders at the headquarters think about the PRSP Programmes.) In short, by selecting NGOs, this research reveals views and perspectives of the PRSP arising from the experiences of development practitioners. In addition, to face-to-face in-depth interviews, I also conducted telephone interviews and by email solicited information from two of the respondents.

### **4.3. Methods of Data Collection**

Moore (1995)'s "strategic triangle" was the model of policy assessment that guided the collection of data. All the instruments used in the study followed the guidelines of this strategic triangle. The test of Legitimacy and Political Sustainability considered: government support in implementing the PRSP, and problems in implementing the PRSP programmes. The test of Administrative and Operational feasibility considered: vision and mission of organisations, organisational structure, management problems related to the operations and management of the PRSP. And lastly, under Substantive Value, factors that enhance the value of life of the beneficiaries included: needs of subsistence, protection and understanding.

In order to sharpen the data collection instruments and avoid ambiguous questions, or ones that people could not answer, interview questions were pre-tested via email with one relevant NGO representative from the field. The NGO that was used in the pilot was not one of the targeted organisations. As a result of the response, from the piloted interview schedule, some questions were modified, and some new ones included. In particular, "social science jargon" was removed as some development practitioners might struggle with it.

Instructions on completing the questions were given prior to the administration of the interview schedule. These instructions encouraged respondents to answer the questions in full. Since the questions were open ended, respondents were given time to explain their views. But some took a long time answering one question, so again I had to modify some questions in order to cover major issues. To ensure the integrity of the data collected, all the interviews were audio taped with the permission of the interviewees. The recordings were later transcribed and the resulting texts were used for analysis. This was aimed at facilitating the emergence of insights and in-depth analysis.

Three documentary sources: Ministry of Community Development and Social Services' (2004) "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2001/01 to 2003/04 Agricultural Seasons," CSPR's (2004) "Poverty Monitoring Summary Report" and CSPR's (2004) Tracking Poverty Reduction Expenditures under the PRSP", which were obtained from respondents, will be used as supporting the evidence.

#### **4.4. Methods of Data Analysis**

Mark Moore's theory of a "strategic triangle" as a model of policy assessment was a great aid in the process of analysis, as it was useful in preliminary analytical step before even transcribing the recorded data. My analysis was guided by Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach to qualitative data analysis, which involved having a starting list of codes, based on the three theoretical themes that emerge from our interview format.

Before coding, the seven interviews were transcribed from audiotapes on to paper. Then I did a thorough reading of all the seven interviews, in order to familiarise myself with the data. De Wet and Erasmus (2005) say that a close reading of the data gives the researcher an opportunity to interact with the data as a whole.

After a thorough reading of the transcripts, I proceeded to do what Miles and Huberman (1994) call first-level coding of the data. This means that I selected some data and assigned some labels to these pieces of information. De Wet and Erasmus (2005:9) support what Dey (1993) says about the process of selecting a bit of data and assigning it to a category which necessarily entails data fragmentation. Miles and Huberman (1994:70) talk about "first level coding as a device for summarising segments of data". According to De Wet and Erasmus (2005:9) coding, or assigning the labels to data is not done randomly, but "codes are partly analytical as they link various segments of text to a particular concept."

The transcripts which were initially coded manually were then imported into NVivo computer software and coded electronically. Computer assisted coding helped to systematically organise and rigorously analyse the data. Following Miles and Huberman's (1994:58) recommendations, codes were developed from the three theoretical questions (following Moore's strategic triangle).

After the data had been electronically coded, it was now easier to systematically group the codes under concepts or broader codes. This is what Miles and Huberman (1994) call second level coding. The phase of second level coding consisted of grouping data or codes into broader codes, in order to come up with a hierarchy of codes or what in Nvivo is called "coding trees". This systematic procedure helped to interpret the difficulties and/or success that and NGOs faced in trying to put the PRSP policy into practice. Further, I decided to compare the codes I had made, and how they related to each other. I was able to see the categories that related to each other, and by so doing I was able to see how they related together as a theme, for example all those categories that had to do with social and ideological issues were grouped under the theme or category "Social and Ideological Factors," which in turn formed part of the broader theme "legitimacy and political sustainability" drawn from one of the theoretical questions.

In the next step of the analysis, I noted the relationships and patterns and explanations of the categories, for instance, how the codes or categories and their properties within the broader theme "Beneficiaries" related to each other and how this 2<sup>nd</sup> level code related to another 2<sup>nd</sup> level code "Quality of Life". I also noted how many respondents adopted more or less the same position and which ones adopted a different position. I then came up with what Fielding and Lee (1998) call a "storyline" or explanation. For example, the storyline which emerged from the theme "Quality of



Life," was that the PRSP generally did not improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries. Very few farmers graduated from the programmes like the Food Security Pack due to problems like lack of funds, inadequate management operations. The storyline that emerged from the data revealed that the quality of life of beneficiaries had not significantly changed in ways that would lead to self-reliance.

Numerous documents I obtained from the organizations were carefully analysed. Some of these documents complemented the primary data I collected. Those that added value to the research were combined with the primary data and are referred to in the findings below.

#### **4.5. Ethical Issues**

Ethical research practices recommended by Babbie and Mouton (2001) were followed. Prior to the interviews, letters were written to the organisations and the interviewees concerned. An explanation of the purpose of the interviews was made clear before the interviews and informed consent was sort prior to the interviews. All the persons interviewed did so freely, knowing how the information they gave was going to be used and for what purpose. Pseudonyms were assigned to the interviewees to preserve anonymity and to protect the privacy of the individuals. These pseudonyms are used in the findings reported below. Interviewees were also assured that if they would want to see the results of the study, a report was going to be made available to them.

## Chapter Five

### Findings

The purpose of the study was to gauge, from practitioners, working with the PRSP in agricultural development, the extent to which the PRSP was implemented successfully so as to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries. The findings, presented in this chapter, are organised according to the three elements in Moore's Strategic Triangle and covered by my key theoretical questions. The elements and corresponding questions are:

- Legitimacy and political sustainability: Is there enough support from the socio-economic political environment for organisations to successfully implement the programmes?
- Administrative and operational feasibility: What mechanisms, in terms of administrative and managerial capacity, have been established in order to implement the programmes successfully?
- Substantive value to the beneficiaries: Do the implemented programmes contribute substantively to improving the quality of life of the beneficiaries?

#### 5.1. Legitimacy and Political Sustainability

The first test assessed if there was sufficient political will, on the part of government, civil society, donors and the beneficiaries themselves to support PRSP policy on agriculture and see it succeed. The following themes emerged from the interviews and served as crude indicators of the legitimacy and political sustainability of the PRSP: respondents' organisations' relationship with government; participation and ownership, beneficiaries' views of the PRSP, participation and ownership, social and cultural factors and factors that undermine political support and legitimacy.

##### 5.1.1. Organisations' Relationship with Government

The relationship between the Government and the NGOs implementing and monitoring the PRSP agriculture policy is useful in determining the political support necessary for comprehensively implementing the PRSP. NGOs help the government to improve the quality of life of people; they are essentially the arms and legs of Government; they can reach beneficiaries in the remotest

areas, where Government officials normally cannot. All the seven respondents indicated that their organisations enjoy a cordial and supportive relationship with government. Chilufya's (Interview 1, Dec 2004) response is typical. She said that they have "... always enjoyed a good relationship with government." Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) thought that his organisation's relations with all levels of Government could be better and he was committed to strengthening relations with Government. He said, "In fact, that is something we want to strengthen in future, so we are not just talking at the headquarters level here in Lusaka, but we also talk with the provincial level and district level." Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) mentioned that his NGO, as a farmers' union, constantly worked at building rapport and consensus with all stakeholders, including Government, in the agricultural sector. He said "We have always believed in a personal dialogue position, as opposed to confrontation."

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004), however, warned that the NGOs need to be very careful not to lose their focus; or their autonomy and independence from government. Chabota was concerned that NGOs working too closely with the government could become political pawns, and this might affect the quality of service delivery. Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) discussed problem of the Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM), another NGO implementing the PRSP programme on behalf of Government. He said, "they are not so free to do what is right in terms of implementing their programmes as a social security safety net. [Government] will always be saying: take this product. They [PAM] take this by political manipulation".

Three respondents Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), Chali (Interview 6, June 2005), and James (Interview 7, June 2005) indicated that though their organisations have no problem in their relationship with government, they had difficulties getting information (e.g. how much money is allocated to the PRSP programmes and why, when it is released, it is less than planned) from Government, when it is most needed. These difficulties are due to bureaucracy. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) expressed their concern well, when she said, "... in certain cases there are difficulties especially with access to information. At the central level maybe, it is not so much [a problem] but it is there. In order to get information from government it is not easily forthcoming". Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) also indicated that the relationship with government cannot be said to be equally good throughout all provinces, but where working relationships were established his organisations' work

was made easier. He said "some organisations are getting on well with the provincial administration, while in others [provinces] they are being sidelined. The relationship, of course makes our work easier, but we have been encouraged to continue by the support we have got from members of CSPR, the general public and the international community."

### **5.1.2. Beneficiaries' Views of and Attitudes Towards the PRSP**

The study did not directly solicit the views of beneficiaries, but it was important to know what the respondents had to say about how the beneficiaries viewed the PRSP-related services. All the respondents thought that the beneficiaries were aware that they received some services as a result of the PRSP, but lacked detailed knowledge of the PRSP. All the respondents indicated that the beneficiaries seemed grateful for the services received. The particular services mentioned included programmes such as the Fertiliser Support Programme, Food Security Pack, relief programmes and the outgrower schemes. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) thought that sometimes the beneficiaries were confused about the link between the aid they received via NGOs and the government's PRSP programmes. By way of example she said that the beneficiaries called the Food Security Pack provided by Programme Against Malnutrition (a local organisation contracted by government) "the PAM Food Security Pack" and not "the Government Food Security Pack". This confusion, according to Chilufya, was the source of some tension between NGOs and Government.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed that the beneficiaries were happy with the Fertiliser Support Programme. He said, "They [the beneficiaries] are appreciating the aid. The situation is much better than one or two years ago and that is attributed to the poverty reduction programmes carried out by government and NGOs, for example, the Fertiliser Support System helped to boost production". However, Matongo added "that it is not enough. If you go to villages, most homes have adequate food stocks to for [only] one or two months". Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) and James (Interview 7, June 2005) thought that the beneficiaries would be happier if the interventions were long term. Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) said, "the farmers ...could be happier by now, but the issue which is in contention, is that the [programmes] are short term measures. They [farmers] are waiting for long-term measures. Giving 50% fertiliser support is it [really] long term?" He continued:

It actually would weaken the farmers to think they are being cared for, but in actual fact they are being destroyed. We should have a consistent policy for, say maybe 10 years, 20 years, in place. But that is not happening ... Every year the government keeps everyone waiting. Will the government give us 50% [subsidy] support? Then towards the beginning of the season the government comes to say, listen, I am a listening government; I have given you 50% [subsidy?]

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) thought that the government's short-term subsidies to poor farmers were "a vote buying arrangement" to gain their political support. Furthermore, he observed that poor farmers are not gullible and they seem to know what is needed for their development. He said:

In the short term the farmers are happy, but the farmers are demanding a long term consistent well defined, well directed policy. A policy, that is why it is called a policy should be definite, very consistence, predictable and understood by people.

When asked whether beneficiaries involved in PRSP programmes, like the Food Security Pack, Fertiliser Support Programme and the outgrower schemes, are reluctant to follow the PRSP implementation guidelines five respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004), Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004), Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) indicated that many poor farmers followed the guidelines of the PRSP. For example, Matongo (Interview 5 Dec 2004) thought that many small-scale farmers were prepared to support the idea of farming as a business, which is promoted by the PRSP. He said, "...farmers will all buy into the view that promotes farming as a business".

The respondents also noted that there are factors that discourage poor farmers from working according to the programmes. One of the main factors mentioned by all five of the respondents is the lack of adequate funds for poverty reduction programmes linked to HIPC. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) put it well when she said:

It is [a question of the] limitation of resources...for example, this year our funding has been very minimal, but that is because everything this year is targeting the HIPC completion point, which in a way, is kind of unfortunate because the HIPC completion point is supposed to benefit the poor, but when poor people's programmes are reduced because of HIPC then it means that it is actually defeating [the purpose].

Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) noted that inconsistencies resulted in some programmes under the PRSP not being implemented which frustrate poor farmers. Some deviations and inconsistencies are to be expected when policy is translated into practice, however, major inconsistencies, like the one above frustrate beneficiaries and the organisations that are implementing the PRSP.

Poor farmers are not inclined to adhere to loan agreements they have obtained as part of the PRSP agricultural strategy. Many do not pay back loans or do not follow the timeframes set up for repayment. According to Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) "in few development programmes we had ... like credit schemes ... or support for micro projects, sometimes the payments are slow."

Some poor farmers are also reluctant to learn new farming methods promoted by the PRSP. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said, "...support for sustainable agriculture, as an alternative to fertiliser-based farming, the responses [of farmers] have been slow."

The respondents were divided over whether the beneficiaries were thinking in line with the PRSP policy. Three respondents agreed that beneficiaries worked within the parameters laid down by the PRSP policy. These respondents argued that on the whole the beneficiaries were in principle committed to working according to the PRSP, but in practice that they seem to struggle to do so. Representing this view, Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) said, "The farmers have always thought so, the farmers have always thought in the principles of the PRSP always - the issue is implementation."

Documentary sources also indicate that although the beneficiaries appreciate the PRSP programmes, there are difficulties associated with its implementation that discourage them. For example, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004:2) report indicates that "the main characteristics of the funding of the programme have been that the money has usually fallen short of the requirements to meet the target and its release has been untimely [poorly timed]." Government is being blamed for not putting in place an effective mechanism for implementing the PRSP programmes.

Another four respondents, Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), James (Interview 7, June 2005), Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) and Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004), did not think the beneficiaries' mindset was in line with the PRSP policy on agriculture. In their view this was because of Zambia's history. The beneficiaries still think the government has to donate fertiliser and seeds to them. This view reflects dependency on the government which some beneficiaries are reluctant to abandon. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed, "Zambia comes from a state controlled and government made sure that the farmers get [sic] a number of [government] parastals buying their products, everything was done for them."

Three respondents Mundia Interview 2, Dec 2004), James (Interview 7, June 2005) and Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) said that while the PRSP policy on agriculture tries to promote other crops, many poor farmers still think maize is the only crop to grow. Similarly, Mundia's (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said, "at the moment agriculture is seen as maize production. And one of our aims is to generate a better understanding of other crops, appreciation of farming other crops for income and for food as well. So there again we need to generate that kind of understanding. It will take time, it is a slow and tedious process, changing their mindsets." In this respect the beneficiaries are out of step with PRSP agricultural policy and "there is still need to conscientize [educate] people on this important document [of the PRSP]" Mainza (Interview, 3 Dec 2004).

One wonders whether the beneficiaries would not have greater confidence in the PRSP were it to adopt a people-centred approach that focused on working with poor farmers to make them more self-reliant and less dependent on aid.

### **5.1.3. Participation and Ownership**

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) who monitor the implementation process of the PRSP did not think that they were in a position to comment on the level of participation of the beneficiaries. However, they were keen to talk about the participation of NGOs in the PRSP process. The respondents from the implementing organisations talked about the participation of beneficiaries in the PRSP programmes. Both the NGOs and the beneficiaries' sense of "buy-in" into the PRSP has a bearing on the question of the PRSP's legitimacy and their general support for it.

### ***Participation of NGOs in PRSP Process***

All the respondents indicated that they had been involved in the PRSP process, although not all at the same levels. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) echoed what the others were saying when she said, "We have been involved at separate levels of the PRSP [process]. [At the] start, we were involved in the conceptual development of the PRSP in Zambia which particularly required civil society participation."

Four respondents observed that though, in the initial stages there was consultation with NGOs in the formulation of the PRSP policy, however, like previous donor-driven programmes, this was not extensive. Chabota argued that the PRSP, "Just like any other processes, it came from somewhere [else]. It might have appeared that it was initiated by us but certainly it was not". Chabota (Interview 3, Dec 2004) also questioned the kind of participation: "We could not say that the consultation was there [because] they just came and put the idea to everybody; there is no direction for change." The process can be said to have lacked genuine consultation, and therefore, it is understandable that NGOs see the PRSP ultimately as the Government and World Bank and IMF initiative.

### ***Participation of Beneficiaries***

Two respondents mentioned that some NGOs have adopted a participatory approach which involves the beneficiaries in the implementation of their PRSP-related programmes. This draws poor farmers into the PRSP process as partners with NGOs and government. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) said, "We use participatory methods in selecting beneficiaries; the community itself meets [to] choose who they think is vulnerable. [W]e use participatory methods in training. We again use participatory facilitation where people participate. We use farm field schools for demonstrating to beneficiaries this practice. We have lots of field visits [and] farm visits to other provinces..." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) thought that the philosophy behind this approach was that high levels of participation and involvement in decision-making encourage grassroots ownership of the programme and indirectly the PRSP.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed that some PRSP programmes like outgrower schemes, run by the private sector do not encourage participation of the beneficiaries and farmers have no



say in matters that affect them. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) said, "The outgrower support programme does not have that component [of participation] because funding is given to private sector institutions and then you have the private sector making all the decisions." The outgrower companies cannot accommodate genuine consultation and participation by beneficiaries, because this is likely to undermine the profit motive of the company. Outgrower schemes run contrary to the spirit of helping the poor become self-reliant (I discuss this further below).

Korten (1990) argues that development programmes must not come from the outside, but if they do, they must be consistent with the local people's aspirations. If he is right then programmes like the outgrower schemes are likely to fail because the so-called beneficiaries do not really believe in them.

#### **5.1.4. Social and Ideological Factors**

The respondents suggested a number of social and ideological factors that erode efforts to implement the PRSP successfully. These include the continued effects on people's habitudes of the past socialist system, the effects of liberalisation, and HIV/AIDS.

Two respondents observed that past socialist style central planning of the Kenneth Kaunda's government continues to influence present day thinking of the beneficiaries, particularly regarding their expectations about the role government and other agencies in poverty alleviation. These expectations undermine development that promotes self-reliance. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) argued,

I think that most of the influence comes from the history of state control and state provision. We come from twelve years of democracy and before that the state used to provide almost everything and really providing everything. This is one of the factors that is still an influence on people's behaviour and practices.

In addition, Matongo (Interview 2, Dec 2004) felt that "...if you have to change, you have to change the system. Then people change their behaviour which is difficult." Matongo's comments lead one to wonder whether this is a case of people's mindsets and behaviour being at odds with global and national economic changes, or whether people long for a return to a bygone era of socialism.

Notwithstanding the reluctance by many poor farmers to embrace self-reliance, Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) observed that the change in the government's approach to development has resulted in "people seeing the need to do things for themselves." However, she felt Neo-liberalism has also had devastating effects on the beneficiaries. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) thought that the new capitalism contributed to corruption and this could undermine the beneficiaries' sense of accountability. She said, "I think this [sic] past twelve years was [sic] also associated very much with kind of *laisse faire* attitude, lack of accountability. If it is happening right at the top, nobody is going to positively influence anybody else."

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed that the agricultural sector is feeling the impact of HIV/AIDS. Small-scale farmers are dying out, from HIV/AIDS leaving behind grandparents and orphans who are less able to contribute to agricultural production. He said, "The AIDS pandemic creates, especially in the rural areas young orphans, and old people are sick and cannot implement the programme"

#### **5.1.5. Factors that Undermine Political Support and Legitimacy**

All the respondents identified a number of factors which speak of Government's lack of political will to demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of the PRSP. These include: inadequate resources, poor marketing, political and economical systems, political interference in the programmes and the problem of accessing credit. There seems to be a lack of political will to make the changes necessary to move towards self-reliance.

#### ***Inadequate Resources***

The lack of adequate resources to implement the PRSP is a sign of poor support and legitimacy from government. Due to inadequate funding to PRSP programmes, the government sustains powerlessness of the poor and disempowers them. All the respondents identified funding as the major problem. Two respondents indicated that the budget allocated to implementation of the programme is inadequate. Chilufya (Interview 2, Dec 2004) articulated the point well when she said, "The major problems has been limitations on the budgets because you can present a budget [to funders] which would make a meaningful impact, but if that budget is reduced [by the funders] to less than a third of what was proposed then the impact becomes reduced." Consequently the

quantity of subsidy per farmer in the form of farming inputs like seed and fertiliser is reduced. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) said, "The little money that is given is made to reach as many farmers as possible and as a result most beneficiaries get half the money rather than the full amount that they are supposed to get. As a result many farmers are saying there are not ready to be weaned." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) and Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) also raised the issue of cutting down the initial allocation of input supply for the targeted beneficiaries and increasing the number the beneficiaries. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) asserted that

...when you look at that type of production, the production from one and half limas is just enough for the household to eat, beyond that it would not take the household out of their poverty because you need to produce enough for household to eat, enough for them to meet their livelihood needs, school fees, clothing and all that. And enough for them to buy input for next farming season.

Five respondents mentioned that during the period 2002-2004 some programmes that fell under the PRSP did not received any funding, some and others received funding very late. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2005) observed:

There are 19 other programme components under agriculture [which] were left unfunded. There is never enough funding and that was one of the biggest issues during the sector advisory conferences where everybody presented, everyone was presenting reports from the sectors and from the provinces. Delegates said funds were too little and they came to too late for implementation.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2005) also pointed out that the management of disease was not a priority until a disease had broken out and a crisis loomed. He said, "disease control was not funded until we got foot and mouth disease." This is an important point because the government cannot react only when there is a crisis.

Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) reiterates the point how the lack of funding is hampering the success of the PRSP; he observed that where NGOs were adequately funded from private sources they were able to achieve their objectives. He said, "largely yes, I can say that," indicating that they have enough funds to run their projects successfully. NGOs that can carry out their projects successfully while the projects depend on the government budget have very little effect. The above observation is supported by a progress report from PAM entitled: "Performance of the Food Security Pack (2001/01 to 2003/04 Agriculture seasons" which states, "The main characteristics

of funding of the programme have been that the money has usually fallen short of the requirements to meet the target and its release has been untimely."

Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) argued that the national budget in Zambia does not sufficiently take account of the costs of implementing the PRSP.

When you look at the whole of PRSP, it has not sufficiently impacted on the way the budget is done in Zambia. There has not been that much change because of the PRSP. PRSP programmes have just become add on. The budgeting system has just gone on as it was before and all various ministries had to do was identify some poverty reduction programmes.

The point is echoed in the CSPR document: "Tracking Poverty Reduction Expenditures under the PRSP" (p.19) which observed, "Having analysed the patterns of resource allocations and releases under the PRSPs, there does not seem to be a deliberate effort to link the budgets and release to match the PRSP priorities."

### ***Poor Marketing of Agricultural Produce***

The poor small-scale farmers lack an effective market mechanism and as a result they are powerless to influence and justly benefit from the sale of their products. The lack of a favourable market mechanism for agricultural products is a disempowering deception that denies the poor small-scale farmer from improving their quality of life. All respondents identified marketing as a big problem that has been affecting agricultural development in Zambia for many years. They believed that Zambia lacked a practical and reliable market mechanism. The Food Reserve Agency (FRA) for example was established by government to buy maize and other crops from farmers but in reality it has the problem of paying farmers late. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) said:

Whenever we have a good harvest or bumper harvest as people put it, we will have a problem of marketing. For the two seasons that we have experienced good harvest, farmers have had the problem of selling their produce. This year the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) is buying maize from farmers on credit but there is some scepticism that they will not be paid in time which means they will not receive inputs for their next planting seasons in good time.

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) noted that although the FRA exists, he raised concerns about the sustainability of the FRA and wondered why the government is prioritising commercialisation of agriculture they continue to subsidize the FRA every year. When the FRA is given money to buy

maize they have to sell the maize in order to become sustainable. He asks: Why should the government, year in and year [give money to FRA?]." Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) concludes that government has to come up with an effective market system. He said: "there is a realisation among farmers that there is need to create a marketing system that would provide different levels of marketing for commercial farmers and small-scale farmers."

The findings above show that the problem with marketing linked with FRA is that FRA is not efficient and that makes many subsistence farmers not to benefit much from its services. This can be attributed to the poor market mechanism it uses, that is, it keeps the price low for the producer in order to benefit the consumers. Subsistence farmers get less for their produces so that the consumer can benefit. Here the government faces a dilemma that though in the PRSP, they encourage subsistence farmers to sell their crops at the commercial price, they then introduce the FRA which fixes low prices for subsistence farmers in order to help keep the prices low for consumers. In this regard, Chabota fails to understand the dilemma that faces government through the FRA that in order to keep prices low for the consumers, they are forced to buy crops at low prices from farmers. Then, the government subsidises the consumer in order to keep the price low and in the process they end up paying lower prices to the producers. This is even more the reason the government gives money to the FRA each year. By fixing the prices, the FRA prevents the prices from fluctuation and keeps the prices low for the benefit of the consumers. Of course, Chabota is advocating that if the FRA is a true commercial enterprise, then that should not happen. Chabota seems to fear that the FRA is becoming a main competitor on the market, and preventing the private sector from competing on the market because of its system of subsidy.

### ***Problem with External Factors***

The powerlessness of poor small-scale farmers is also a result of the external economic system which denies the farmers political power to take part in meeting their own needs. Three respondents Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) and James (Interview 7, June 2004) thought that the poor progress of the PRSP on agriculture cannot be entirely attributed to implementation problems external economic factors have affected progress. Chabota observed that the costs of production are vulnerable to external economic factors over which Zambia has no control. He argued that "most of the issues are economical problems [which]

you [cannot] control. [For example,] Zambia has given resources to help the poor then from nowhere fuel [price] go[es] up. Where do you get the money to [pay for] this other cost which is part and parcel of [the farmers'] lives, if you where a farmer in the village longing for money to [buy] inputs, [and] now fuel goes up. It means you have to give more from other resources to mitigate [the] transport cost. So that issue of [fuel] increment has nothing to do with PRSP. It is an economic [problem] happening." Zambia's neo-liberal policies have pushed for its rapid integration into the global economy and that made it vulnerable to global factors that contribute to the poor performance of the PRSP. In the above-mentioned example the price increases in the cost of fuel on international markets are passed on to the local consumer because local fuel prices are no longer fixed or regulated. Financial assistance for farmers is then used to pay for rising fuel costs and not to increase production.

#### ***Problem with Political Interference in Programmes***

The government's interference in the running of programmes undermines the ability of NGOs to effectively implement the programmes and in the process disempowers the beneficiaries. Five respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004), Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004), Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) and James (Interview 7, June 2005) identified political interference from government as a hindrance to the successful implementation of the PRSP. Chabota observed that PAM one of the organisations implementing the programmes on behalf of government is inefficient because "they are not so free to do what is right in terms of implementing their programmes as a social security safety net. The government will always be saying take this product they [organisations] take this by political manipulation." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) supported this point when she said that if they were left to run the programme as a professional organisation without political interference, the impact was going to be greater. She said, "As far as the Food Security Pack is concerned, we wish that we were left to run it as a professional programme where if you have less money you then target just enough people so that those people that are targeted can within that fully benefit." In addition, it was observed that the budget is politically influenced and does not reflect the real priorities of the poor. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) questions the motivation behind these programmes and wonders whether politically motivated programmes are sustainable. In addition, Mundia (Interview 2 Dec 2004) observed that the budget is politically influenced and does not reflect what the real needs of the people. Mundia

(Interview 2, Dec 2004) indicated that "some of things in the [national] budget for instance, the support of agriculture [in the form of] fertiliser and seed [programmes] was strongly a political decision not necessarily because of the PRSP but it was a political decision that the political leadership felt that was necessary. Mundia questions the motivation behind these programmes and wonders whether they are sustainable. Furthermore, James (Interview 7, June 2005) observed that land demarcation tended to favour politicians and some big commercial farmers instead of the poor themselves. He argued that "there is lack of transparency, rent seeking and gate keeping by government officials, coupled with Ministry of Lands' under funding. The ministry usually fails to meet public demands for land administration" (Interview 7, June 2005)

Two reports surveyed also echo the above constraints especially on the poor marketing arrangements, the impact of HIV/AIDS and the inadequacy of funds. CSPR (2004:6) entitled "Poverty Monitoring Summary Report" says two very pertinent issues that came out of their monitoring that constrain the agricultural sector were poor marketing arrangements, HIV/AIDS and also inadequate funds allocated to the agricultural sector. The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004:23) report entitled, "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2000/01 to 2003/04 Agriculture seasons" also recognizes that "Poor maize market [mechanism] especially the low prize of maize fetches is gradually turning farmers away from growing maize into growing cash crops like cotton and tobacco. If unchecked this trend will worsen Zambia's food security situation."

#### **5.1.6. Summary of the Legitimacy and Political Sustainability**

The respondents' organisations generally enjoyed good relationships with Government but some were wary of becoming government pawns and were protective of their autonomy. Their relationship with Government was undermined by Government's reluctance or inability to provide information freely to NGOs. Some respondents interpreted this as bureaucracy; a lack of transparency and co-operation from Government.

Generally the beneficiaries seem to appreciate the programmes under the PRSP and supported it in principle. However, they would support the PRSP initiatives more if there was evidence of a long term development strategy to address poverty and not simply short-term aid to boost the government's popularity. The beneficiaries often lacked knowledge of the PRSP and how NGOs

worked with government to achieve the aims of the PRSP. They were easily discouraged by lack of aid and inconsistencies in the way the PRSP was implemented. Often in practice they did not seem to operate within the PRSP guidelines and did not seem to think funding agreements were binding.

NGOs were consulted and participated in the formulation of the PRSP but not extensively and hence they do not really view it as theirs. The beneficiaries are sometimes actively involved in PRSP programmes but this depends on the development approach of the NGO working with them. Outgrower schemes are not designed to involve the beneficiaries in the decision-making and are likely to be seen as an imposition that does not serve poor farmers best interests. In other words, NGOs partnership with beneficiaries encourages beneficiaries to participate in the PRSP but private sector and beneficiaries discourages participation.

The respondents were worried that a number of social and ideological factors undermine support for the PRSP. These include: the effects of the past socialist system on the small-scale farmer's mindset, the effects of the new market-led system which has influenced the beneficiaries' sense of accountability, and the effects of HIV/AIDS that is wiping out physically able-bodied adults and leaving children and grandmothers to work the fields. All these factors undermine the necessary political will to successfully implement the PRSP programmes.

The respondents were also concerned about the following factors that undermine political support and legitimacy.

- Lack of resources to fully implement the PRSP hinders support.
- Marketing for small-scale farmers has always been a big problem. Though the FRA is trying to solve the problem, it is paying the small-scale farmers low prices and pays them very late.
- Integration of Zambia into the global world has made her even more vulnerable. It means Zambia has to dig deeper to survive global problem like the fuel crisis.
- Government's interference in PRSP programmes implemented by NGOs shows lack of legitimacy. They thought that government should leave the NGOs to run PRSP programmes as profession organisations. However, respondents wondered whether politically motivated programmes are sustainable.



## **5.2. Operational and Administrative Feasibility**

The second test is aimed at assessing the operational capacity of the organisations and government in terms of managerial and administrative structures put in place to enable the successful implementation of the PRSP on agriculture. If the PRSP is broadly supported by the political environment and is even valuable to the beneficiaries but the necessary operational capacity to achieve it is weak, it is unlikely to succeed.

I did not do an exhaustive audit or evaluation of each of the organisation's management and administrative systems, but the responses in the interviews give us a general view of their operational capacity. Further information was taken from the following support documents: CSPR (2004) "Poverty Monitoring Summary Report," Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004) "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2000/01 to 2003/04 Agricultural Seasons" and CSPR (2004) "Tracking Poverty Reduction Expenditures under the PRSP: An analysis of the 2002 and 2003 budgets".

The relevant themes from the interviews that involve assessing the operational and managerial feasibility are: common vision and mission, organisational management, feedback and monitoring, networking, and factors undermining the operations and management of programmes. Some of the respondents talked about their own organisations while others talked more generally about those implementing the PRSP.

### **5.2.1. Common Vision and Mission**

Two respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) and Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) indicated that the staff in their organisations share a common vision and mission. Mundia thought that the staff at her organisation share a common vision and mission, and all subscribe to the strategic plan. She said, "We work very hard on this [establishing a common vision and mission]; we are in the current strategic plan which is 2004 – 2006." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) explained that even the organisations to which subcontracted to work have to broadly share in their vision and mission. She said:

Actually before we can work with any community based NGO or CBO they have to be dealing with the same activities as we are, they should be in the same professional field. For example, if they

are a church organisation they should be a church that is working with small-scale farmers trying to facilitate them in uplifting their standard of living (Chilufya Interview 1, Dec 2004).

Matongo thought that the idea of a common vision did not only apply to government and NGOs but also government and the private sector. He observed that through the outgrower schemes, proposed by the PRSP, the government has naively looked to the private sector to champion development among poor farmers. He thought that the government's vision of helping the poor and the vision of profit maximisation of the private sector were not easily reconcilable. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) said:

Outgrower schemes want to make money, they want to make profit otherwise they will be out of business at some point. These limits they have to be understood.... a private company is not a charity of trying to better the lives of small-scale farmers. That should be understood. They are running businesses and [yet] they want to play a part in reducing poverty levels in Zambia.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) argued that for any partnership between the public and private sectors and poor farmers would require business to compromise its profit motive. He said,

Out of the whole thing you have to find a compromise between development and business [interests]. ...Through the outgrower schemes small-scale farmers can be developed but they can [also] be exploited. It depends on the ethics basically of the company and there are companies that do not have very high ethical standards.

### **5.2.2. Organisational Management**

The quality of organisational management determines the capacity to successfully implement the PRSP. Two respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) and Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) were confident that their organisations are well governed and managed. They have enough competent staff members to carry out their work effectively. They mentioned that they value professionalism and their staff members are well qualified to do the job. For example, Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) pointed out:

We will be hiring two more managers that is a manager for food security and entrepreneurship, finance and human resources and then have a manager in nutrition and emergencies so with that we feel that they will be a bit more focus on the different areas because our mandate is two fold. One is emergencies and nutrition, and the other is developmental aspects of improving the livelihood of the beneficiaries.

When asked about the organisations' means of achieving their objectives, two respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) and Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), who work for organisations implementing PRSP programmes, identified their strategic plans as important means of achieving their objectives. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said, "We have a strategic plan, we [the staff] each have objectives that we have to meet." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) also said, "We started implementing our strategic plan [which we] developed in 2003 which will run until 2008. It came there to strengthen PAM as an institution through [the help of] its management."

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) and Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004), from the monitoring organisations, did not want to comment on the management and administrative capacities of other NGOs that implement the PRSP. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) said, "That is an internal question and should be asked to each organisation. I cannot know exactly." Matongo and Chabota did not also comment on their organisations' capacity. However, Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) commenting on his organisation, said, "I think CSPR has been well managed so far and this has largely contributed to the work we have had so far. Management has been able for instance to put in place monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that programmes are carried out; financial resources and necessary equipment have been made available to enable staff carry out their duties. Team spirit has also played a role in this."

The documentary sources obtained from the respondents did not analyse the operations and management of the PRSP programmes even though the Ministry of community Development and Social Services (2004:2-3) in a report entitled "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2001/01 to 2003/04 Agriculture Seasons" indicate in a summary of expenses that out of the K43 billion approved budget, 17% of the resources was spent on Operational costs and 10% on management fees. The reports do not give an evaluation of how the money was used on organisations' operational costs and management fees and how this impacted on the implementation of the PRSP. They only mention that there were inadequate funds to meet the targeted requirement without telling us how management has been able to cope with the limited resources.

### 5.2.3. Feedback and Monitoring

All the respondents indicated that their organisations do get feedback from the beneficiaries and have mechanisms in place to monitor their programmes. Two respondents indicated that they get feedback from their beneficiaries when they monitor their programmes. For example, it was mentioned that they get feedback from beneficiaries through impact assessment reports, during monitoring trips, and evaluations through questionnaires. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) said:

We get reports from the community through the area Food Security communities which in turn pass it on to the district Food Security committee which is supposed to report directly to us. Our lead NGOs, NGOs that implement the programmes at community level, also submit reports so that we have impact assessment reports. Depending on the length of duration as a project we may have it within the year.

Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2005) also said, "We do [get feedback] in the course of monitoring but of course we do have evaluations at the end of each strategic plan. And now we are trying to include questionnaires, in our various programmes."

The other five respondents noted that they do monitoring of their projects in the form of trips into the field, data is collected using questionnaires and impact assessments reports are produced. It also emerged from the interviews that the government and NGOs have different monitoring systems. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed that "monitoring and evaluation vary. What we have seen, the government has its own monitoring system for its programmes, monitoring reporting systems and monitoring evaluating programmes". Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) added, "things have to be improved still I think there are efforts going on to improve the monitoring of these programmes." In addition, Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said that "we have recently come up with the monitoring and evaluation tools for us to so what we need to do is really get stuff and internalize that and see how we can better monitor our work".

One wonders, what benchmarks are used in the different monitoring systems and how they affect the outcome of determining the impact programmes have on beneficiaries. It seems there is need to come up with common monitoring tools in Zambia, which will help in determining the flaws in operation and management of all PRSP programmes.

#### **5.2.4. Networking**

Five respondents identified networking with other NGOs in the field of agriculture as an important aspect of their work that helps their organisations implement their programmes. In this regard, Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) stated that her organisation relied on building partnerships and effective networking with other NGOs who are already doing agricultural activities with communities. One such partnership and network is using existing government structures and NGOs working in communities. It is believed that by creating partnerships and networks, the organisation re-enforces existing structures. She said:

We work through a network of NGOs, so we work within a structure at national level but on the ground we use NGOs that already doing agricultural activities for communities so that reduces the costs of our programme. With government we use the government system; we use the Ministry of Agriculture when it comes to back up - technical backup. For targeting [the beneficiaries], we use the Ministry of Community Development because their structures are already there. So we feel by reusing them we are re-enforcing [the already existing structure rather than creating new ones]. We also work with civil society. (Chilufya, Interview 1, Dec 2004)

Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) believes that his organisation has "stayed on course" because of the network of support it enjoys. He said that "CSPR has stayed on course since its formation and there has not been major upsets in our programming. This has been so because of the cooperation we receive from network members, donors, the public as well as the competence and determination of staff."

#### **5.2.5. Factors that Undermine Operations and Management of Programmes**

All the respondents observed problems associated with the administrative and managerial capacity. Respondents mentioned factors that directly or indirectly hinder the successful operations and management of PRSP programmes. These factors include: lack of capacity, late arrival and mismanagement of funds, lack of credit schemes, poor infrastructure, lack of coordination vastness of the country and natural disasters.

##### ***Insufficient Human and Financial Capacity***

All the respondents observed that both government and NGOs have insufficient human and financial capacity to successfully implement the PRSP programme. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004)

said, "...the capacity of the government and even the other organisations that are involved in[promoting] commercialisation of the PRSP is inadequate. It is an over ambitious programme and the government has got no capacity to implement it fully... Then the programme cannot be implemented entirely on government resources because government budget is very, very tight." Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) also argued that lack of capacity "has been worsened by the cooperating partners [donors] attach[ing] strings to the aid that they give to Zambia".

Chilufya presented a different analysis of the human and financial capacity provided for the implementation of the PRSP. She thought that the limited financial resources were overly invested in training and capacity building with insufficient material support offered to poor farmers to help them become commercially viable farmers. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) said,

If PRSP had more financial resources that actually target the beneficiaries this PRSP would have succeeded overwhelmingly. But you find that three quarters of the resources under PRSP are for capacity building and facilitation while the persons whose livelihoods are supposed to be improved have not received tangible results.

She argued that "you can keep on training a person every year but if you do not give him or her the means of production, the training is useless. And you find most of the donor projects are always ending at capacity building." Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) reflected her frustration by asking, "How many times are you going to build the capacity of our poor people?" She suggested, "What really they [beneficiaries] need is to be given credit at no interest or very low interest" (Chilufya interview 1, Dec 2004). I return to this below.

Chilufya raises an important question about priorities. In her view, funding capacity building should not be prioritised above funding programmes that are aimed at helping the beneficiaries materially to establish themselves. This is an important debate in development circles and I reflect on it below in my discussion.

### ***Late Arrival and Mismanagement of Financial Resources***

The problem of inadequate financial resources has already been mentioned, but linked to it, is the problem of delays in receiving funds that come to organisations implementing the PRSP. These delays undermine these organisations' capacity to achieve their objectives. Mundia (Interview 2,

Dec 2004) said, "Instead of receiving the funds in January, we receive them in February, March, April, and May. So already that means that you have to reschedule a number of activities and hence you will not achieve what you wanted to achieve in that particular year." In addition, Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) commented on the mismanagement of funds meant for PRSP programmes. He said, "also the other thing (hindering the operational implementation) is funding under the PRSP is not managed properly" because of corruption and embezzlement of funds which directly affects the success of the PRSP. I was not able to determine the scale of this problem.

### ***Lack of Credit for Poor Farmers***

Three respondents talked about the problem of beneficiaries not accessing credit as a hindrance to the successful operations of the PRSP programmes. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) observed that the private financial services sector did not easily provide credit to so-called unbankable poor farmers. He said, "The assumption that the private sector can take up the roles that were performed by government in terms of providing credit to farmers has not been realised in Zambia because of the harsh economic situation so most farmers are finding it difficult to find [financial] inputs." Similarly, Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) observed that there are few financial institutions giving credit consequently they do not cater for many of the beneficiaries. She argued:

Everyone wants to be on it [Food Security Programme] because that is the only programme giving inputs to people. Otherwise, [it was going to be helpful] if they can be credit facilities like the old Lima Banks. Those banks were important it is just that they were mismanaged but they are critical in the development of the people (Chilufya Interview 1, Dec 2004).

In this regard, Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) observed, "Micro Bankers Trust is very under funded as a result it does not make meaningful impact." Diverse views on this matter emerged in the interviews. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) and four other respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004), Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) and Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) argued that government intervention is necessary in providing credit facilities to poor farmers. While Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) thought that government should avoid giving loans and let the private sector get more involved in offering services such as micro-lending. The respondents who supported government intervention in giving loans observed that loans are very important in farming for start-up capital but because there are few NGOs that give credit and small-scale farmers swamp them.

### ***Vastness of the Country***

The vastness of the country worsens the problems affecting the success of implementing the PRSP programmes. Two respondents alluded to the vastness of the country which means that many potential beneficiaries have not benefited from the PRSP programmes. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) said, "The country is vast some areas cannot be reached [by government and organisations implementing the PRSP programmes]."

### ***Lack of infrastructure***

Four respondents Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004), Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004), James (Interview 7, June 2005) and Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) observed that the lack of proper infrastructure was a big problem operationally affecting the implementation of the PRSP. Prospective buyers of agricultural produce do not go to remote rural areas which are not easily accessible by car. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) articulated the problem well when he said:

Our rural areas cannot be reached. Some of them even during the dry season because of bad state of roads they cannot be reached. So it is important that roads are worked on so that even remote parts of the country accessed. We have farmers in the rural areas and they cannot be reached, meaning even when there are buyers for their crops they cannot take their crops to the market because of poor roads.

### ***Lack of Coordination***

Three respondents: Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004), Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) James (Interview 7, June 2004), observed that the lack of coordination of service delivery between NGOs and government departments working on poverty reduction programmes affects the effective implementation of the PRSP. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) described the problem clearly when he said:

Some NGOs are concentrating on areas where the government is active and there is worsening of the situation due to the fact that there is no sharing of information on the various programmes carried out in various areas. The agencies are working in the same areas and in fact the government and the agencies are targeting the same people and yet in other areas people [farmers] can not access such help.

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004), suggested, "It is important that there is collaborating and there should be exchange of information and there should be synergy between the government, private sector and the NGOs so that they do not target the same people and same geographical areas and



the impact is seen." Also James noted that there is limited research data on land in Zambia: "Inadequate and outdated information going to the public and the need for research and facts, and action to lessen bureaucracy." Thus, the issue of coordination and networking mentioned earlier becomes very important if the implementation of poverty reduction programme is to have an impact. Otherwise they will be duplication of services.

### ***Natural Disasters***

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) observed that "there are also calamities like drought whereby money allocated to poverty reduction programmes are diverted to buying relief food for people affected by the drought. There are also floods, foot and mouth diseases experienced in the Southern and Central provinces and government would divert money to combat them." Mainza's concern is important because funds were supposed to be saved for emergencies like floods. Due to lack of planning and political ineptitude, government diverts funds meant for poverty reduction programmes in order to respond to such natural disasters. The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004:12) also mentioned that "adverse weather conditions such as droughts and floods have also negatively affected the performance of the beneficiaries [and the general management of the programmes.]

### ***Ambitious Policy***

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) observed that the PRSP is an unrealistic, ambitious policy. It did not take account of the available operation management or the current capacity of Zambia that would deliver effective poverty reduction programmes to the poor. He warned that "...the programmes themselves should not be over ambitious. We have to develop a programme that will match the capacity of government, donors, NGOs so that the programme is implemented in full and the impact of poverty alleviation is experienced".

#### **5.2.6. Summary of Operational and Management Feasibility**

Generally, respondents thought that their organisations share a common vision and mission. This made it much easier for them to implement their programmes. However, they were concerned that the outgrower schemes' vision of maximising profit is different from their vision of helping the poor.

The respondents were happy with the management of their organisations. They have enough competent staff, and strategic plans to guide them manage the programmes well. The respondents felt they get feedback from their beneficiaries and they monitor their programmes. However, the problem is that all organisations are using different monitoring systems and tools. Thus, there is need to come up with common monitoring tools which will help operation and management of PRSP programmes.

Through networking, the respondents believe they effectively use already existing structures either from government or other NGOs to implement their programmes.

Lastly, the respondents observed problems that constrain agricultural management and effective operation of programmes. These are:

- Financial resources were not only inadequate but they came very late.
- Lack of credit facilities
- Lack infrastructure
- Lack of coordination
- PRSP funds are diverted to mitigate the impact of natural disasters.
- PRSP is over ambitious and did not take into account the lack of financial and human capacity available in the country and the time and resources needed to establish efficient and effective management systems.

### **5.3. Substantive Value of Programmes to the Beneficiaries**

The last test considers whether the PRSP policy has substantive value, the value to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries. For Moore (1995:80), the purpose of the PRSP programmes are cast in terms of their value to the beneficiaries. What Moore (1995) is saying here is that if the policy has political support and is administratively feasible but does not significantly improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries it will remain "academic". Respondents were asked whether the programmes based on the PRSP policy have actually improved the beneficiaries' quality of life. The following themes emerged from the data: quality of life of the beneficiaries, needs, commercialisation may not serve the interests of the poor farmers and the role of HIPC in the PRSP.

### 5.3.1. PRSP and General Perceptions about Quality of Life of the Beneficiaries

The general perceptions about the quality of life of the beneficiaries also include achievements in improving the quality of life of the poor small-scale farmers that respondents have identified. Four respondents Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004), Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004), Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) observed that some of the PRSP programmes had improved the quality of life of the beneficiaries but they thought that the impact was minimal. These respondents were confident that the quality of life of the beneficiaries had somehow improved as a result of the PRSP intervention in agriculture. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) represents this view by discussing the testimony of one of the beneficiaries:

The quality of life for our beneficiaries is definitely improving. I was in Mwinilunga last week and people stood up to give testimony, one woman said 'I was in the Food Security Pack for two years and now I am no longer in the Food Security Pack.' Last year she produced enough food for herself, she sold some of it, and she even bought a number of goods which she is keeping for this year.

Chilufya, (Interview 1, Dec 2004) was confident that the PRSP through the Food Security Pack was improving the lives of the beneficiaries. She said:

The PRSP is trying to uplift the livelihood of the people to a point where they [beneficiaries] can stand on their own by giving them inputs on a very minimal return loan system. To me it is the best way you can empower them [poor farmers] because you see if someone succeed in producing enough to eat and a balance to sale it means immediately as a rural dweller they will acquire some assets, some will buy goats, some will buy a cow and once they buy a cow or an oxen that means next year they will produce more.

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) confirmed that the quality of life some of the beneficiaries was improving as a result of the PRSP programmes. He said, "Yes, some of them [beneficiaries], [especially] those under the Food Security Pack. If you go to them they would tell you, they grow maize and then they have managed to buy bicycles, new clothes, animals like goats, chickens, and some of them have married more women." He also identified that the Fertiliser Support Programme has helped boost production.

However, Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said she found it difficult to gauge how the quality of life of the beneficiaries had improved as a result of the PRSP programmes, but she identified some

areas of improvements. Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) observed that in the programme her organisation is implementing, there was an improvement in the beneficiaries' level of awareness about the Budget Tracking Programme. She said, "In the area the Justice and Peace our programme has been able to impact on people, intervene in the abuse of rights through the cultural practices, police abuse of power and so on. In so far as some of these issues are being redressed one can say that people's rights are being respected" She went on to say that "people were now more able to ask critical questions about government expenditure or the quality of services being delivered, the disappearance of agricultural inputs like fertiliser." Mundia, (Interview 2, Dec 2004) further observed that the national budget has not changed to be a pro poor budget. She said, "When you look at the whole of PRSP, it has not sufficiently impacted on the way the budget is done in Zambia. There has not been that much change because of the PRSP. The budgeting system has just gone on as it was been before the PRSP".

An analysis of budget expenditure under the PRSP by the CSPR (2004) report entitled "Tracking Poverty Reduction Expenditures under the PRSP supports Mundia's observation when it says:

[Budget] analysis revealed that programmes contained in the PRSP 2003 broadly answered the objectives under the PRSP, [but] the problem is that the budgets do not easily match the poverty reduction programmes. This is because the budget was not adjusted to be in line with the way programmes in the PRSP appeared.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) thought that the PRSP was "on the right track" but he was not certain about whether the PRSP programmes impacted positively on the beneficiaries' lives. . He said:

We do not have the figures yet and it is probably very difficult to relate the impact of a programme like the PRSP to increases in living standards or decreases in poverty. We had a good season last year, there is more and more money circulating in Zambia. So yes, we are on the right track but it is very difficult to say this is the contribution, this is the impact created by the PRSP programme. (Matongo, Interview 5, Dec 2004)

Matongo (Interview 5 Dec 2004) thought that it was too soon to assess the impact of the PRSP on the beneficiaries lives, but one sure sign of improvement is when farmers start commercial farming

or are attached to outgrower schemes. The implication is that once farmers are attached to outgrower schemes or start commercial farming they are likely to enjoy food security. He said:

The final aim is to reduce poverty. The impact of the PRSP will be judged on poverty decreasing since 2002. So we have to give it time before an impact or before we can measure it. We have to be a bit patient. But commercialisation is happening. How do we check that? There are more and more farmers being connected to outgrower schemes....the promotion of cash crops through outgrower schemes has also ensured food security. If a farmer starts commercialisation, their food supply is secure. (Matongo, Interview 5, Dec 2004)

Like Matongo, Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) was cautiously optimistic and expressed similar sentiments:

One would safely say that though not much has been achieved, the tone has been set for possible take off. Should Zambia remain on this path and sort out its political problems, involve citizens in shaping the direction of the nation, more could be achieved. But it should be noted that majority of citizens are still struggling to meet their basic necessities largely due to lack of income generating activities in the nation.

Two reports from the Ministry of Community Development and Social Service (2004) and CSPR (2004) observed that some programmes implemented under the PRSP had impacted on the lives of the poor farmers. The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004) report entitled "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2000/01 to 2003/04 indicates that the Food Security Pack programme has had some impact on both the household food security and the national food security and economy. The report notes that at the household level, "the [Food Security Pack] programme has increased crop production resulting in improved food security and nutrition security among the poor and has thus made a major contribution to the household food security and poverty reduction in rural areas" (p.5). On the national level, "the [Food Security Pack] programme has made significant contribution to the National Food Basket [in term of increased crop yield], particularly during the 2002/2003 seasons when the weather conditions were favourable" (p.5). However, although the main goal of the Security Pack programme is graduation of the beneficiaries, the report observes that none of the beneficiaries graduated from the programme. If the beneficiaries do not graduate from the programme, the point in question is how much the programme is promoting the beneficiaries to be self-reliant?

Four respondents Chali (Interview 6, June 2005), Chabota (Interview 2, Dec 2004), James (Interview 7, June 2005) and Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) did not think the PRSP had succeeded in significantly improving the lives of the beneficiaries. For example, Chali (Interview 6, June 2005) said:

The quality of life of majority citizens has not significantly improved in the last three years of PRSP implementation. This is because of lack of adequate resources to go round the country as well as lack of better use and targeting [particular groups and people]. Also people themselves are not challenging enough to ensure that the government implementers deliver on their behalf.

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) graphically reiterated this point when he said:

The period is so short for the PRSP to have an impact. You see, the simple way of approaching this in terms of farmers. If I find you with one shirt this year and next year I find you with two shirts then I would say your life seem to be improving. But if I find you with one shirt, and next year I find with the same one but now it is torn and you have no capacity to replace it then there is a problem.

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) seemed to think that PRSP was a general policy, heavily influenced by international practices but insufficiently by internal analysis of Zambia and the competitive advantages of the different sectors in the country. He said:

The PRSP has a nationwide approach and that is also what creates many problems because you need to identify, ...you need to internally look at what are the critical, competitive advantages we have [and] which we can concentrate on. It does not matter what other people do.

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) also suggested that there is need for sectoral development and looking at what is competitive in each sector. He said:

You can not develop a country like Zambia just like that. You need to have segments, you need to look at what is competitive in each particular sector, which area, what kind of programme can we do in this particular area because each area has its advantages and disadvantages.

### **5.3.2 Needs**

In order to learn more about the effects of the PRSP on the quality of life of the beneficiaries, I explored the extent to which PRSP interventions help poor farmers meet certain needs. In this research, three needs have been identified as important for the development of poor farmers in Zambia. These needs are: i.) the need for subsistence and surplus production which can be sold;

ii.) the need for protection from disease; and iii.) the need for agricultural and management knowledge and understanding through education.

### ***Need for Subsistence and Surplus Production***

Three respondents said that there were some signs that the need for subsistence is being met. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) mentioned that her organisation provided Food Security Packs that has helped increase household food production as well as food security. She said: "The major improvement is food and nutrition security for the household [under the Food Security Programme.] From the proceeds of what [small-scale farmers] grow [and sell] they can access other livelihood commodities which they would not access if they do not participate in the Food Security Pack."

Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) also voiced her frustration with very limited funds they receive and which curtails the number of farmers who receive their Food Security Pack. She said, "The only problem is that each year we only target twenty per cent of the poorest and vulnerable." Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) mentioned that farmers are assisted with inputs of fertiliser and seeds during the drought. He said, "the development programme, for instance, assistances farmers to meet their needs in the drought. In terms of tangible outcomes has done something." Mundia is mainly referring to the need for subsistence when she talks about farmers meeting their needs. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) was convinced that "the promotion of cash crops through outgrower schemes has also ensured food security. [He argued,] If a farmer starts commercialisation, their food supply is secure."

A report entitled "Performance of the Food Security Pack 2000/01 to 2003/04 from the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004:11) supports that because of the Food Security Pack, there has been increase not only in maize production which is the staple food in Zambia but also in other crops like cassava; the Food Security Pack "FSP has contributed to crop diversification by introducing a range of crops to spread the risk of crop failure and discourage mono-cropping. Crops such as cassava and sweet potatoes have been introduced in new areas."

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) thought that while the PRSP was attempting to meet the need for subsistence it is yet to make significant inroads. The passage below indicates that he nevertheless remained optimistic.

I do not think it has met them [needs] but it is striving to meet them. As I said we can never because the programme period is so short. And someone cannot tell me that we have finished and put it on the shelf. This is the development process and we can not be achieved just like that. It is trying to, but we want it to streamline, be focused, in the competitive sectors that it is capable and can do well (Chabota, Interview 4, Dec 2004).

The evidence above shows that the need for subsistence in terms of increased food production for poor farmers is being addressed by programmes like the Food Security Pack and the Fertiliser Support Programme. Is any increased production in maize and other crops going to continue in the long term, or are these merely short term measures to pacify the farmers? What evidence is there of interventions that promote self-reliance and sustainable increases in production? For example, what irrigation schemes have been put in place to support increased crop production?

### ***Need for Protection***

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) mentioned that outgrower schemes help the farmers meet the need for subsistence, protection and knowledge. He observed that when farmers have a good crop, they can not only meet the need for subsistence, but also the needs of protection. He argued, "because of your crop you can sell to have money. If you have cash in hands you can certainly manage to pay for your health needs. You can certainly pay for your education."

Two respondents Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) and Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) expressed serious concerns about the impact of HIV/AIDS pandemic on agriculture and pointed out that their organisations had included this dimension in its work. For example, Mundia (Interview 2, Dec 2004) said, "of course health is one of the areas that have to be mainstreamed. The development programme [in her organisation] in various forums at the community level [encouraged farmers] to come and discuss all those issues, HIV, stigma and so on." Mundia's point of incorporating HIV/AIDS in programmes is crucial because if the productive farmers become too ill to work or die of HIV/AIDS any gains made in agricultural development will be lost.



### ***Need for Knowledge and Understanding***

Three respondents Chilufya (Interview 2, Dec 2004), Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) indicated that the beneficiaries who have participated in her organisation's programmes have improved their knowledge of agriculture. Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) observed, "We have been training them [beneficiaries] in conservation farming, training them in the use of field impacting technologies. So, really these [beneficiaries] do have better skills than those who have not participated in any programme." Chilufya's observed is that farmers who operate near the railway line are more knowledgeable about agriculture than those in remote areas. It is likely that more time and training takes place with farmers near the railway line than those in remote areas. No wonder Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec 2004) went on to say "that [beneficiaries] who are nearer the railway line have better knowledge [in marketing] than those who are living in far remote areas. Marketing is still a problem for small-scale farmers in the rural areas because they are too far." This reflects the major development problem where the poor in remote areas and on the periphery will always remain poorer (this case in knowledge) than those in the urban or semi-periphery urban centres.

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) noted that some beneficiaries in some areas have improved their agricultural knowledge "because the government extension officers are the ones re-enforcing and implementing the programme and providing technical advice." He also observed that "other areas had no government agricultural officer to technically advice them even when the [farmers received] resources in time. So farmers ended up using their own knowledge to plant, consequently, did not produce enough and could not pay back what they owed" (Mainza Interview 3, Dec 2004).

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) was not convinced that there were sufficient examples of successful educational interventions to help increase the productivity of poor farmers. He argued that successive governments over the past decade or so had neglected agriculture and the training of farmers and now farmer are themselves starving. He said,

...someone who comes from abroad to Zambia and sees thousands [of people] sitting hungry, especially farmers [who] are hungry will not think that the farmers have been offered enough knowledge to increase their agricultural production. From 1991 the government had not invested in agriculture and there was no education for farmers. Therefore you do not expect an increase in farmer's [agricultural] knowledge and the way they look at agriculture.

In this regard, Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) observed that the private business in agriculture and civil society NGOs have taken up the challenge to provide education to farmers under their programmes even though their impact is minimal because they do not work widely enough with farmers across the country. He said "the only area where there has been any form of investment in terms of education is those farmers who are in that particular NGO or private company like Duvant. Duvant only provides education to farmers in that particular commodity sector. There is no private company or NGO who can invest into so many provinces in Zambia."

The assessment of the need for knowledge and understanding for the beneficiaries from the above evidence shows that some beneficiaries especially those attached to an NGO, those along the railway line, and those who have access to agricultural extension officers have increased their knowledge in education. Whereas those beneficiaries in remote rural areas, those who are not attached to any NGO and those who have no access to agricultural extension officers have not advanced in their agricultural knowledge. Government has not invested enough in educational extensional services.

### **5.3.3. Does Commercialisation Serve the Interests of Poor Farmers?**

All respondents were in favour of commercialisation of agriculture as prioritized in the PRSP, but they did not all agree on how commercialisation ought to be achieved. Two respondents Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) and Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) supported a form of commercialisation where the private sector fully participated in the implementation of the programme. Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) explains the notion of commercialisation and reflects what the others were saying when he said:

The thrust of agriculture development in Zambia has put up the commercialisation of agriculture production. The government sees the outgrower scheme approach as a vehicle to commercialise production of small-scale in Zambia in partnership with the private sector. So through the PRSP funds were made available for our scheme operators to expand their operations to reach out to small-scale farmers so to speak. Strictly speaking if you are a subsistence farmer and under the outgrower schemes arrangement, you are not a subsistence farmer because you are driving for income and not for consumption.

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) supported Matongo's view when he said, "We are very much in support of this commercialisation of small-scale farmers which is the way forward."

However, three respondents Mainza (Interview 3, Dec. 2005), James (Interview 7, June 2005) and Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) argued that the high levels of poverty in Zambia cannot be brought down solely by commercialisation or by the trickle-down effects of this growth orientated strategy. Mainza (Interview 4, Dec 2004) observed that the promotion of commercial farming has to go hand in hand with supporting small-scale farmers in order to ensure food security. This is consistent with the view that commercial farming can end up not helping the poor farmers but instead exploiting them. He argued that the capitalist principles, on which the PRSP is based, do not benefit the struggling subsistence farmers. He described how outgrower schemes promoted by the PRSP, exploit the small-scale farmers by persuading them to plant a single crop for the market and then offering them low prices for their produce. Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) said:

The principle of the trickle down does not work in Zambia. The farmers which are growing cotton and receiving ridiculously low prices for their produce and if they are growing cotton, you find that all the family income is directed towards growing cotton and they have no time to grow other crops.

Mainza thought that the outgrower schemes focused on increasing productivity, maximizing profits and consequently exploited farmers and undermined their ability to succeed. What Mainza is saying is that outgrower schemes undermine vulnerable farmers' ability to succeed. This contradicts the purpose of the PRSP. Mainza seems to directly challenge the principles that underlie the outgrower schemes and their consistency with the purpose of the PRSP on agriculture.

Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) suggested having commercial farmers as well as small-scale farmers rather than turning all small-scale farmers into commercial farmers,

I think this should be two sided. Where you have commercial farmers growing commercial crops and then small-scale farmers growing traditional crops and those who can be subcontracted by a firm to grow specific crops and then that crop should not take up all their time and labour they should also grow traditional crops like sorghum, millet etc. something that they can compliment with growing a commercial crop. As for paprika growing it is easier for those with certain contracting firms.

James (Interview 7, June 2005) also echoed dissatisfaction arguing that in promoting commercialisation the PRSP was not pro-poor. He said, "The PRSP was pre-occupied with commercial production (referred to as private sector development)." He went on to say that the PRSP "did not adopt a pro-poor focus on land, but took a market approach to the issue [which in their view] provides a sense of security and places value on land for commercial transactions – implying that customary tenure was insecure, unproductive and unsustainable for the poor. James (Interview 7, June 2005) argued that the PRSP did not prioritise land or adopt a position that favoured the poor in the long term. He said, "The Zambian PRSP 2002-2004 did not adopt a pro-poor focus on land, but took a market approach to the issue. First the document did not deal with land as a sector but merely placed it under agriculture, as if land was all about agriculture". He mentioned that government promoted the Land Act of 1995, which aimed to add commercial value, allowing state land to be sold and customary land to be leased. James (Interview 7, June 2005) argued that "this is the very essence why civil society organisations and traditional leaders have constantly opposed Zambia's Lands Act of 1995 because this act has created tenure insecurity. If land is to be leased, it must be converted to state land. Once that happens, all customary rights to that land are extinguished." James (Interview 7, June 2005) went on to say:

With regard to land, the PRSP is only geared towards titling customary land with a view that this would improve marketing of land and agricultural productivity, and consequently help reduce poverty. But it is unlikely that titling would improve productivity. Rather it would increase conflict in the absence of functioning resolution mechanisms. Titling would also undermine the existing local social structures and endanger access to common property and natural resources. All of this is likely to affect negatively the welfare of the poor and vulnerable farmers.

He concluded:

The absence of a clearly defined pro-poor land policy, laws and regulations have impacted negatively on use, management, tenure systems, environmental protection, planning, leading to unequal benefits and enhanced conflict of resource use. Land, agriculture, water, forestry, environment are still fragmented in various policy and legal frameworks which are dualistic in nature (customary and statutory), administered by various ministries some with unclear roles on land. This causes lack of coordination among the sectors dealing with land and breeds inefficiency in land administration (James, Interview 7, June 2005).

James (Interview 7, June 2005) raises serious questions about how far the PRSP is geared to promote sustainable or integrated agricultural development that takes seriously the plight of the poor farmers.

On the topic of commercialisation Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) thought that there was a conflict between the objectives of private sector – outgrower schemes and government in the implementation of the PRSP programmes. He said:

Out-grower schemes are run by private sector. The private sector wants to make money, they in it for the profit whereas government is developmental so they [their goals] are in conflict. I think in Zambia we are in a situation where poverty levels are that high and you find a general motivation to play a part in poverty reduction although the prime aim is to make profit that is for the private sector organisations. They want to make money, they want to make profit otherwise they are out of business at some point. These limits they have to be understood that a private company is not a charity of trying to better the lives of small-scale farmers.

Matongo (Interview 5, Dec 2004) suggested a compromise between development and business. He said:

Well, out of the whole thing you have to find compromise between development and business. And through the Out-grower schemes models small-scale farmers can be develop but they also can be exploited. It depends on the ethics basically of the company and there are companies that do not have very high ethical standards.

Mainza and Matongo questioned the purpose of the PRSP. In their view it is not clear how the subsistence farmers will come out of poverty when at the same time they are being exploited by the private owned outgrower schemes. I will come back to this point in the Discussion chapter.

#### **5.3.4. HIPC's Effect on the PRSP**

HIPC was supposed to help the PRSP add value to the beneficiaries. The assumption was that the funds meant for debt repayment under HIPC will be used for poverty reduction programmes. Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) explained that the PRSP is a product and one of the dimensions of HIPC where the money that the country was supposed to pay back is used in the vulnerable sectors of the economy. He stated:

We had some programme where for instance one of the things that has come out from the PRSP because the PRSP also provide these resources under the HIPC, this is the product of HIPC by the

way, where there has been some money that the country has to pay back but have not paid it back but instead of paying back they want to take that same money to the vulnerable sectors, for sectors of the economy to enhance the economy to grow, groom and do what. So we have had such kind of money that has come is more in the agriculture sector and in that sectors you find more of export, market oriented cash crops arrangement.

Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec. 2005) observed that though the aim of (HIPC) is to reduce the debt burden of poor countries and poverty, she noted some contradictions in its purpose. While HIPC was thought to be able to serve the PRSP in meeting the needs of the poor, it is impoverishing people it is meant to serve. She said:

This year our funding has be very minimal but that is because everything this year is targeting the HIPC completion point which in a way is kind of unfortunate because the HIPC completion point is supposed to benefit the poor, but when poor people's programme are reduced because of HIPC then it means that it is actually defeating.

#### **5.3.5. Donor Driven Policies Create Dependency**

Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) and Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) both point out that the PRSP was a new version of old neoliberal policies imposed by foreign donors. Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) said: "But one fact you have to agree is that the PRSP initiation process is like any other donor-driven programme especially after 1990 when we embraced the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The PRSP generally is a reincarnation of the SAP and ASIP; it still has a donor-driven motive." In a related point, Mainza (Interview 3, Dec 2004) argued that there should be less dependency on donor funds which apparent in the PRSP. He suggested that "the government should set aside money for poverty alleviation; it should not entirely depend on donors coming from other countries. Our donors change [what they fund] depending on their interest in a particular area [or sector] in the country. We should thus be aware of this factor and not base our hope on them..."

#### **5.3.6. Summary of Substantive Value of Programmes to the Beneficiaries**

Generally, the respondents felt they were improvements in the quality of life of the beneficiaries under the PRSP programmes. However, the respondents felt the PRSP has not made the lives of the poor small-scale farmers improve significantly. It has not brought a lot of change to the lives of the small-scale farmers so as to make them self-reliant.

Generally, the respondents felt that the need for subsistence is being met by the programmes under the PRSP. However, there was a concern about the sustainability of the Food Security Pack and the Fertiliser programmes and whether they promote self-reliant among the small-scale farmers.

The respondents felt that through the need for subsistence, they can meet the need for protection. However, they raised concern of the HIV/AIDS pandemic which is a threat to poor small-scale farmers. Respondents observed that some beneficiaries especially along the railway line who have access to agriculture extension officers and are attached to an NGO have improved in agricultural knowledge. However, poor small-scale farmers in remote areas without any extension officer and are not attached to any NGO have not advanced in their agriculture knowledge

Generally, the respondents agreed with commercialisation of agriculture but differed on how to go about it. Some believed that the outgrower schemes should be promoted because they promote small-scale farmers to grow crops mainly for profit and eventually become commercial farmers. Other respondents believed in promoting commercial farming as well as small-scale farming because they think outgrower schemes do not benefit the poor small-scale farmers in Zambia. Instead, they exploit the poor small-scale in their pursuit to maximise profit.

The respondents were frustrated that instead of HIPC helping the poor; it is exploiting them by the government cutting down the funds meant for PRSP programmes because of meeting the HIPC completion point a condition imposed by the IMF and the World Bank.

Lastly, the respondents observed that the PRSP as a donor driven programme like programmes of the past, produce dependency and not self-reliance among the small-scale farmers. They felt government should be very aware of that and help design programmes that are sustainable.

## Chapter Six

### Discussion

I now return to the questions I posed at the outset of this study and discuss them in the light of my findings, the theoretical framework and pertinent literature. Further questions that emerged during the analysis of the findings are also discussed.

At the heart of the study is the central research question: How successfully do development practitioners think the Zambian PRSP agricultural development policy for 2002-2004 has been translated into programmes and implemented to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries? A policy articulates principles that are to be pursued to attain goals and further actions. Since the purpose of a development policy is to improve people's lives, the implementation is pivotal in determining the outcome of policy and the impact it has on the beneficiaries' lives. Moore (1995) has provided me with the theoretical tools to assess the implementation of the PRSP agricultural policy. Armed with these tools and the views of development practitioners who are directly involved in either monitoring or implementing the PRSP agricultural policy I am now able to discuss how the PRSP measures up to Moore's three tests which gauge how successfully a policy has been implemented.

The three questions that correspond with Moore's three tests are:

- i. Is there political support from the environment for organisations to successfully implement the programmes?
- ii. What mechanisms, in terms of administrative and managerial capacity, have been established in order to successfully implement the programmes?
- iii. Do the implemented programmes contribute substantively to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries?

I also reflect on the following questions that emerged from the findings:

- i. Is the PRSP significantly different from the Structural Adjustment Programme of the past?



- ii. How can the private sector outgrower schemes achieve the dual objectives of increasing production [and profits] and reducing poverty?
- iii. Is the PRSP on agriculture viable as a poverty alleviation strategy for poor farmers or is it doomed from the start because of contradictions within the policy?

### **6.1. Legitimacy and Political Sustainability**

In Moore's first test the key concepts are legitimacy and political support. I assume political support implies legitimacy (although the reverse need not be true) and therefore I focus on the question of political support.

#### ***Qualified Support from Organisations Implementing the PRSP***

On the whole, the respondents' general perception is that development agencies involved in implementing or monitoring the PRSP on agriculture are willing to work with government because government supports their efforts in broad terms. They were consulted in the formulation of the PRSP and there is some evidence that they are still consulted. But this is not without its problems. When it comes to the specifics the organisations feel that Government has somehow frustrated their efforts. The respondents mentioned particular problems such as the Government's tendency to manipulate and interfere in the programmes and not providing easy access to information, which made it difficult for organisations to implement the PRSP programmes successfully. Saasa (2002:65) similarly concludes that Government interference into poverty reduction interventions programmes shows a lack of leadership. The lack of government leadership is also seen in the lack of transparency on matters of interest to the NGOs. Government is not usually open with non-governmental actors. Government seems to be afraid that NGOs may expose its weaknesses and their failure to deliver services to the poor. Bond (2004:82) supports this view when he cites a sentiment that emerged at a conference of Jubilee South Africa on PRSPs in Africa. Bond (2004:82.) said, "The lack of genuine commitment to participation in the [PRSP] is further manifested in the [government's] failure to provide full and timeous access to all necessary information, limiting the capacity of civil society to make meaningful contributions."

If Government cannot assist organisations in meeting their objectives, NGOs will lose faith in the integrity of Government which in turn would undermine the legitimacy of the PRSP. Moore (1995)

says that good leadership in government, advocacy and negotiations are important techniques of political management. He argues that without such leadership support and legitimacy, which are the functions of good political management, are undermined. Moore (1995) sees good political management as meaning that government is able to draw on and support the values and interests of the NGOs working in the field rather than to dictate to them what it wants done. In such a situation of cooperation between the state and NGOs there would be greater congruency between development agencies and the aspirations of the beneficiaries. It is clear from the findings that some NGOs want to target specific categories of beneficiaries in order to make a substantive and lasting impact that will help the beneficiaries become self-reliant, in other words they are more interested in quality than quantity. However, the government has opted to provide food packages, seed and fertiliser but training in areas like appropriate technologies, production and farm management, and loans for start-up capital are not forthcoming. The government is interested in giving as widely as possible, and consequently, giving less to each individual. Some respondents have viewed this as a vote buying technique which government is using in order to win short-term political support from poor small-scale farmers. These respondents seem to be saying that though this strategy may buy the state a bit of time, it creates dependency and effectively keeps people in poverty because it does not lead to self-reliance.

The respondents were also frustrated about the kind of participation that was promoted in the PRSP process. Though the World Bank (2005) and the IMF in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Second Annual Progress report and joint assessment saw the PRSP as an important point of reference for dialogue between the government, civil society and donors, the respondents revealed that consultation and participation in the PRSP process was shallow. Chabota (Interview 4, Dec 2004) rightly observed, "Could we say there was consultation really, when they just came and put the idea to everybody where there is no direction to change [from the previous policies]; the process itself was dictated [to us]."

Other literature reveals that NGOs' participation in the PRSP formulation process was a sham to give credibility to the neo-liberal principles that dominate the PRSP. The Panos Institute report (cited in Abrahamsen 2004) observes "that many NGOs have been frustrated by the experience of 'consultation', and that there is growing concern that their participation has helped legitimise the

neo-liberal economic policies of the IMF and the World Bank". Bond (2004:81) quotes from a report presented at the Jubilee South conference of the main African social movements in Kampala: "The PRSPs are not based on real people's participation and ownership, or decision-making. To the contrary, there is no intention of taking civil society perspectives seriously, but to keep participation to mere public relations legitimisation." Is the reference to consultation, ownership and participation in the PRSP merely rhetoric like the glossy wrapping to sell a product?

### ***Support for PRSP from Beneficiaries – But Will It Last?***

According to the respondents short-term aid for farmers through the PSRP programmes and government's consultation with small-scale farmers is welcomed by poor farmers. It also gives them a stake in the process of implementing the PRSP, however, sustained support for PRSP by farmers is undermined by i.) the perception that government does not have a long term plan to assist poverty stricken farmers, ii.) the government's limited resources and fiscal austerity measures contradict statements about substantial aid for the alleviation of poverty, and iii.) market mechanisms do not give vulnerable farmers easy access.

The poor small-scale farmers live in desperate conditions. Among other things they lack farming inputs like fertiliser and seed, which results in low agricultural yields. Aid, in the form of fertiliser and seed, for struggling farmers is welcome as short-term help.

The farmers' gratitude can be interpreted as political support for the PRSP. However, some respondents are not convinced that many farmers are satisfied with how the PSRP has been implemented. Some of the respondents argue that in their assessment poor farmers would have greater confidence in the government's policy and programmes were there a clear and sustainable longer-term strategy. Zambia has a history of failed short-term strategies aimed at poverty reduction; one recalls the efforts of Chiluba and Kaunda. Saasa (2002:40) observes that by giving a subsidy, "pre-SAP government policies further compromised the development of a sustainable economic base." The CSPR (2005:22) study on the impact of the Fertiliser Support Programme under the PRSP recently observes that the main challenge facing government programmes under the PRSP is the sustainability of the fifty per cent subsidy they give to farmers in the Fertiliser Support programme. There is no doubt that the major issue is that subsidies offered by

government to farmers are short-term measures. Some small-scale farmers who find themselves within the PRSP programmes will experience no substantial improvement in their quality of life because the subsidies are a once-off transfer. Subsidies for poor small-scale farmers may be a necessary short-term measure but sustainable development requires interventions that help beneficiaries become self-reliant?

It seems that though government programmes in support of small-scale farmers are mentioned in the PRSP, they are not a priority. The GRZ Zambia PRSP (2002:58) points out that the PRSP's position is that development and, consequently, poverty reduction has to be growth-orientated and led by private sector investment. In agriculture a focus on credible large-scale farmers is seen as important in increasing agricultural production. This, of course, is based on a neoliberal vision of economic development.

#### ***Lack of Financial Commitment to the Development of Small-scale Farmers***

Lack of funds is another factor hindering greater support by the farmers for the implementation of the PRSP programmes. The respondents thought that the small-scale farmers might see this as undermining the legitimacy of the PRSP policy. When the PRSP was first introduced many Zambians saw this as government's resolve to make extensive use of funds for poverty reduction programmes. Despite much hope and enthusiasm for meaningful poverty reduction, it is clear that the lack of financial resources has been a major hindrance to the successful implementation of the PRSP. Interestingly enough, the World Bank and IMF (2004) joint staff assessment of the PRSP also identifies inadequate resources as a major constraint to the successful implementation of the PRSP. Reflecting on the government's implementation of the PRSP for the period 2002-2003 the report concluded "...that the implementation of the PRSP has been weaker than intended because of extreme pressures on the budget by extra budgetary expenditures, which reduced the funding available to PRSP programmes and activities." Due to lack of adequate funds to buy fertiliser, the CSPR (2005) study on the impact of the Fertiliser Support Programme observed that government gives a few bags of fertiliser to the beneficiaries. In sum, the lack of funds does not only make the impact of the PRSP minimal but also few small-scale farmers successfully graduate from the programmes.

The problem of inadequate funds mirrors a fundamental contradiction in the PRSP on agriculture (although it applies broadly to all other sectors). Poverty alleviation requires that the government invest, in the short and medium term, large financial resources in order to assist poor farmers become viable agricultural producers, but the neo-liberal principles require that the government exercise fiscal discipline and limit public spending. Behind this position is the belief that economic growth alone will lead to poverty reduction. Consequently, funding for poverty reduction programmes like agriculture is reduced. Saasa (2002:47) rightly observes:

Past realities shows [sic] that expenditures on poverty reducing interventions in Zambia have been given little priority in the budget despite the general recognition that growth alone through the 'trickle down' effects is not sufficient and can only be an indirect and, quite often, slow manner of addressing the growing problem of poverty in the country.

Bond (2004:85) further confirms this view when he argues that "neo-liberal principles promoted by the IMF/World bank have forced developing countries to lower their trade barriers, cut subsidies for their domestic food producers, and eliminate government programmes aimed to enhance rural agriculture. As a result the agriculture sectors in developing countries, key for rural poverty reduction, have been devastated".

The issue of resource allocation to agriculture is crucial in the successful implementation of the PRSP. Many of the poor are small-scale farmers in the rural areas where they are dependent on agriculture for a living. The GRZ, Zambia PRSP document confirms this when it says: "The failure of agriculture to provide for secure livelihoods is considered as a major factor contributing to rural poverty." Yet we learn from some of respondents that the government's budget allocations do not prioritise the agricultural sector. Saasa (2002:53) supports this finding. He notes, "the worst government policy failure in meeting the agricultural needs for the rural poor regards rural finance." Influenced by neo-liberalism the government uses resources that could be allocated to poor farmers to attract foreign investors. The problem with this growth-centred development strategy is that investors have not been enticed to invest on a large-scale in the Zambian economy. One wonders whether the financial resources used in this way could not have been put to better use. In South Africa the ANC has followed a similar strategy to attract foreign investors and the economic conditions there are arguably more favourable for investors but they have also shown little interest. If this strategy has failed in South Africa, can it hope to succeed in less economically, less

attractive country like Zambia? Adelzadeh (1996:92) observes that Gear's "primary concern is to boost investor confidence by adopting the main tenets of neo-liberal strategy and policies. This unduly conservative macroeconomic framework [is] far from achieving the RDP [Reconstruction and Development Programme] objectives".

Moore's (1995) broad philosophy is that good political management has to reflect a commitment to goals set and the ability to act on them. In this case, it also includes a commitment to a better use of financial resources and a feasible budget allocation. This would attract enough political legitimacy and support from the beneficiaries. This view correlates with the people-centred approach which suggests that in good political management, government budgets and the allocation of resources should be structured in such a way that they promote those sectors where the people are most vulnerable. (Taylor 2000:4) In Zambia this means the agricultural sector. Saasa (2002:54) also observes, "the facilitation of rural finance (especially in the agriculture sector) seems to be at the core of any meaningful strategy to empowering the poor to meaningfully take advantage of the liberalised economy". Substantial public investment in poverty alleviation is viewed by neo-liberal minded civil servants as dangerous because private investors may see this move as a shift towards socialist policies of the past and react by taking their capital away. Herein lies the dilemma that faces the Zambian government. Through the PRSP it wants to assist poor farmers to the point where they can take advantage of neo-liberal capitalism and become self-reliant commercial farmers, but in order to get to this point in the short term they have to go against the neo-liberal idea of fiscal discipline with restrained public spending and minimal involvement in development. The worry is that this might frighten off foreign investors.

### ***Marketing Problems for Vulnerable Small-scale Farmers***

The lack of a pro-poor market system directly affects the small-scale farmers and hinders their support of the PRSP. When poor farmers do manage to produce surplus for the market, they encounter further problems. Getting their produce to the market is in itself a huge challenge. Once they reach the market they may struggle to sell their produce because there are very few private traders. In the absence of private traders the state has become the primary purchaser but there is a limit to what it can purchase. Where the state (in the form of the Food Reserve Agency or the FRA) does however purchase, it pays a fixed amount that has consistently been well below global

market prices. Milimo et al (1997) in a study entitled "Listening to Farmers: Participatory Assessment of Policy Reforms in Zambia's Agriculture Sector" observe that farmers felt marketing their produce and the lack of political participation (general participation) in decisions in the markets is one of the major constraints. The CSPR (2005:21) study supports this view when it observes, "Farmers acknowledged that because of poor marketing arrangements, long distances and lack of buyers of farm produce, they are not only unable to sell their farm produce, but also unable to buy farm inputs since they do not have the money with which to do so." Saasa (2002:101) in a study on small-scale farmers in Luapula Province observed that "it is clear from the perceptions of the poor people that one of their priority needs that is currently not being addressed is support towards marketing improvements." What Saasa is actually saying here, is that there is need for market improvements that would favour the poor small-scale farmers. The chances of this happening are slim because small-scale farmers have no bargaining power in the market place. Zambia's agriculture performance has, in recent years, been relatively poor and, given that the present system, does not favour poor farmers, I doubt whether many will become large-scale producers

Years ago Dodge (1977:267) in an attempt to solve the pricing and marketing problem, recommended that the National Marketing Board (NAMBOARD), similar to today's FRA, fix national prices for produce according to world prices, "because this facilitates the attainment of the efficient interregional and inter-crop allocation of production". Her theory was that the private traders coming into the market would compete with the NAMBOARD who would offer world prices and this would benefit the small-scale farmers. Dodge's proposal seems to be based on Keynesian thinking.

However, the current situation in Zambia is that the FRA has kept the producer prices low, and worse still, there are no private traders to compete with the FRA so that small-scale farmers get a better price. The few private traders in the market are even paying much lower prices than the FRA. Any reliance on private traders to buy the farmers' crops for export purposes has failed to take off in Zambia.

### ***Limited Participation and Consultation in the PRSP Process***

According to the respondents the beneficiaries of the Food Security Pack and Fertiliser Support Programme are adequately consulted and participate in the programmes. A study by the CSPR (2005) entitled "Targeting Small-scale Farmers in the Implementation of Zambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP): An assessment of the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Fertiliser Support Programme" confirms that the farmers are consulted and participate in the programmes. The report also observes that some small-scale farmers have organised themselves into cooperative groups or have done so with the help of agriculture camp officers. These farmers have appointed committees who are responsible for managing and running the activities of the cooperatives or farmer groups.

The same cannot be said of the outgrower schemes. Participation of small-scale farmers in outgrower scheme programmes is generally poor. The PRSP policy in a typical neo-liberal style promotes outgrower schemes in order to deliver high productivity as a strategy for poverty reduction. The main goal of outgrower schemes is to increase production and maximise profit. The small-scale farmers are not, generally speaking, included in the decision making processes. Outgrower schemes are not designed to serve the interests of poor farmers. This means that, in the process of maximising profit, outgrower schemes manipulate and exploit small-scale farmers. For example, outgrower schemes pay low prices to small-small farmers who attached to them. This growth-centred approach to poverty reduction has an inherent contradiction: It claims to aid the poor while exploiting small-scale farmers because their priority is to maximise profit.

Many other arguments are echoed and given greater depth in Saasa's (2002:21) *Aid and Poverty Reduction in Zambia*. The focus of his study is, not so much on the outgrower schemes, but on the participation in private donor-supported projects in Zambia. He observed that there was poor involvement and lack of ownership on the part of the beneficiaries, in the projects and the PRSP process itself. He said, "The World Bank has tried to involve the beneficiaries, communities or stakeholders in the projects that it has supported. Yet, the actual level of integration of the beneficiaries in those projects in which they are involved was less appealing." For Saasa, the poor involvement of recipients - the poor small-scale farmers themselves raises serious questions regarding ownership. He argues that "to guarantee local ownership, initiatives towards poverty



reduction must not be supply-driven but determined by client demand" (Saasa 2002:21). What Saasa is saying is that poverty reduction programmes should not be brought from outside but the beneficiaries should feel the need to have these programmes and then participate fully in the programmes. Participation of the small-scale farmers in programmes encourages them to take part in decision making and finding solutions to their own problems. In the end participation promotes ownership which is a step closer to self-reliance.

### ***Final Assessment***

This test has shown that there is qualified support of the PRSP, but the respondents were concerned that the above-mentioned problems will in time erode support for and the legitimacy of the PRSP. According to Moore (1995) the political management must reflect a commitment to promote and sustain political support and maintain legitimacy of the policy, by showing greater concern for the above factors that hinder implementation of the PRSP.

## ***6.2. Operational and Administrative Feasibility***

Here operational and administrative feasibility is perceived as an administrative system that is able to operate its programmes in a sustainable way using from the resources at its disposal.

### ***Are the Administrative and Operations Management Systems Sustainable?***

The general perception is that NGOs implementing the PRSP have adequate administrative and operational structures; they have enough professional staff, each organisation has a strategic plan and they have some monitoring and evaluation system. The big question is whether the administrative and management systems are sustainable. Saasa (2002:77) argues for a sustainable administrative and operational system that uses Livelihood Monitoring this requires strong participation of the beneficiaries. He says:

Livelihood Monitoring Surveys [were commended] as the being the most useful, [type of monitoring the quality of life.] In terms of output, the Project [the Project Urban Self Help] has been highly rated, particularly in the areas of training, livelihood improvement, especially through the Project's credit scheme; improvement of planning skills; community development through sustainable and community-managed water supply projects; and gender development.

Saasa (2002) is saying that Livelihood Monitoring system promotes strong beneficiaries participation and is more sustainable. In this regard, a programme can achieve more sustainable

outcomes if the administrative management it uses are participatory, and enable beneficiaries to be part of the operating system. The above discussion suggests a need for a monitoring system that takes into account the needs and participation of the beneficiaries. At the moment it seems the emphasis is on spending and delivering services, with little concern about the quality or the sustainability of interventions. This has been an attempt to improve and link the PRSP interventions to the priorities of people on the ground. It is worth noting, that the evidence of administrative and operations management in the study was based on those organisations implementing the PRSP. The respondents also mentioned general problems associated with the operations management that affect how the organisations and the government fail to satisfy the beneficiaries in regard to the delivery of services.

### ***Factors Hindering Effective Administrative and Operational Management***

The study has revealed a number of constraints regarding operations management which are hindering the successful implementation of the PRSP. These include: Insufficient human and financial capacity, late arrival of funds and input delivery, mismanagement of resources, lack of credit schemes for farmers, lack of infrastructure, lack of coordination, the vastness of the country and natural disasters. These problems directly affect the administrative and operations of the programmes. The PRSP's objectives did not seem to take into account the scale of the operation needed to implement the PRSP on agriculture across the entire country and the lack administrative and managerial capacity in the country. As a result, both the government and NGOs' operations on the ground have failed to match the ambitious objectives that are set in the PRSP. The lack of a suitable infrastructure like roads and bridges, for example, hampers the ability of NGOs involved in implementing the PRSP to reach many remote areas. Furthermore, as I will discuss in detail below, the PRSP did not seriously consider the human resources necessary to implement the PRSP programmes.

The respondents' general perception is that NGOs and government lack sufficient financial and human capacity to effectively implement the PRSP. Chilufya (Interview 1 Dec 2004) suggested that there should be more direct funding made available to the beneficiaries rather than repeatedly investing in training and capacity building. This raises a serious development debate about whether priority should be given to funding capacity building or funding programmes that are aimed at

helping the beneficiaries to establish themselves materially. Saasa (2002) has illustrated this debate by assessing several donor funded interventions. He says that the European Union financed different Micro Projects in Zambia in areas of education, health, water and sanitation etc. Saasa's findings were that the programme design did not sufficiently consider the human capacity to tackle the issue of how beneficiaries were to be identified, targeted, participate and how remote areas were to be reached. Consequently, Saasa (2002:74) reveals that "with respect to the impact of the programme, the livelihood situation of the beneficiary communities does not seem to have been changed in a significant way". Saasa (2002) refers to a case study of the Luapula Livelihood and Food Security Programme which aimed to improve the livelihoods of female members of rural households. The programme design had a trained team leader and local, trained consultants who used participatory methods to identify specific components of the programme. Saasa (2002:82) observed that "to ensure sustainability, all the projects were undertaken by local actors through collaborative links with other institutions at the local level." The daily management of the programme was handled by a management team that was directly involved in the activities. In the final analysis, Saasa (2002:82) found that the programme registered a number of successful outputs. What is crucial in this analysis is that initiatives aimed at just providing assistance to rural small-scale farmers are prone to be less effective, while projects which build the organisational capacity of the rural poor have more lasting benefits. Building capacity helps the poor small-scale farmers to become self-reliant. Investing in human resources increase the likelihood of efficiencies in implementing programmes and is in line with Moore's (1995) belief that managers and their staff should always have their mandate in mind, to deliver services and fulfil obligations to clients. In Moore's (1995) this necessitates investments in human resources in order for managers and their staff to achieve their true goal of providing services that has real value to the beneficiaries.

While capacity building that improves service delivery is crucial and favoured by Moore the point raised by Chilufya (Interview 1, Dec. 2004) about material resources is nevertheless valid. Small-scale farmers need start-up capital to develop a commercially viable production line.

Some of the problems that emerged in the interviews are also recorded in the literature. Studies by the CSPR (2005), Milimo *et al.* (1997) and Jorgensen and Londjeva (2005) all mention constraints like inadequate human and financial resources, delays in making input supplies like fertiliser and

seed available, natural disasters like climate changes which cause drought, lack of access to land, lack of appropriate skills, lack of credit, and lack of infrastructure.

### ***Final Assessment***

The respondents seem to think that they have adequate operational management systems in place in their organisations. However, from the above-mentioned problems it is clear that the PRSP interventions lack realistic medium and long term plans to achieve its objectives. It does not fully meet Moore's (1995) test of administrative and operational feasibility, that is, that the policy's operational management should be able to meet its objectives by utilising existing resources. The PRSP aims at providing services to almost all the small-scale farmers in Zambia, but the links between service goals and the necessary human and financial capacity, infrastructure etc. needed to deliver the services are missing. In other words, the design of programmes in the PRSP has not matched the existing resources. Consequently, the present operational capacity in Zambia cannot deliver the PRSP's objectives.

### **6.3. Substantive Value to the Beneficiaries**

Moore (1995) suggests that the purpose of any policy or programme is to add substantive value to the targeted beneficiaries. In this section I explore whether the PRSP does add substantive value by examining the respondents' perceptions as to whether the PRSP has improved the quality of life of the poor farmers by meeting the needs subsistence, protection and understanding.

#### ***General Perceptions on the Quality of Life***

According to Max-Neef (1991) improvement in the quality of life depends on the beneficiaries meeting their fundamental human needs. In this study, three needs: subsistence, protection and understanding or knowledge were considered. Some respondents revealed that the Food Security Pack and the Fertiliser support programmes do meet the need for subsistence in the short term. This finding is reinforced by the CSPR (2005:17) study that assessed the implementation and effectiveness of the Fertiliser Support Programme. The CSPR report found that 60.34% of the beneficiaries interviewed felt that there was small improvement in their quality of life, while 14.66% said that there was no improvement. 13.80% mentioned that there was much improvement, and 11.21% said there was a big improvement.

Some respondents were more cautious. They said that the PRPS has not adequately met the need for subsistence, but it is trying to do so. This suggests that the impact of these programmes is in fact limited. This observation is supported by the CSPR (2005: v) study on the views of the beneficiaries concerning the effectiveness of the fertiliser support programme. The report says that "the Fertiliser Support Programme has very little impact on the food security and poverty reduction. Income effects cannot adequately address the many household needs that communities in rural areas would like to address, issues of sustainability and adequacy of the amount of fertiliser farmers receive from the programme were raised".

The need for protection against disease seems to be met at the same time as the need of subsistence. When the small-scale farmers grow enough food for consumption and for sale, they are nourished by the food and can go to the hospital from the money they get from selling their produce. But the effect of HIV/AIDS pandemic on poor farmers and their ability to protect themselves was also raised in numerous interviews. HIV/AIDS threatens poor small-scale farmers' chances of becoming self-reliant. Saasa (2002:35) raises similar concerns. He says, "Agriculture, too, is increasingly being adversely affected by HIV/AIDS-related illness as the predominantly agriculture-based communities in Zambia continue to be depleted as able-bodied persons join the escalating number of the infected and dying" (Saasa, 2002:35). He goes on to say, "Of particular concern is that the agriculture sector employs a large share of the labour force and accounts for a major portion of the gross domestic product and export earnings in the country" (Saasa, 2002:35). The PRSP sees HIV/AIDS as an issue that cuts across all sectors in Zambian society, but it does not offer a clear policy how the agricultural sector ought to respond to it.

The general perception was that the beneficiaries attached to NGOs have learned more about agriculture. An important finding is that, beneficiaries living next to the railway line have much easier access to facilities for example, agricultural extension workers, and have learned considerably more about agriculture and have considerably increased their agricultural knowledge. On the other hand, small scale-farmers in remote places have learned very little or nothing. For example, they have not learnt the comprehensive conservation farming practices which use the soil in a sustainable way and can increase crop yields. What the above finding suggests is that there is

a strong correlation between education and location. Once again the centre is advantaged over the periphery.

What is clear here is that if the programmes under the PRSP do not promote sustainable livelihoods of the beneficiaries, it follows that the small-scale farmers will remain dependent on government and NGOs as beneficiaries of aid and handouts. One respondent graphically described development as a situation where a farmer has one cow in the first year and the following year he/she has three. The PRSP has been going for 4 years and many poor farmers in Zambia still find themselves with one cow and maybe that cow has even died. One wonders whether the PRSP on agriculture is doomed to fail because of the neo-liberal contradictions inherent in the policy and the problems with drawing on neo-liberalism to address poverty in Zambia. I wonder whether policies like PRSP and their associated strategies aimed at reducing poverty among poor farmers would not be more successful were they to incorporate people-centred principles of development. For example, Max-Neef (1991) and Kaplan (1996) argue that an improvement in the quality of life of the beneficiaries means that they ought to become increasingly self-reliant. (see discussion below)

### ***Contradictions in PRSP Policy on Agriculture***

The general perception is that all the respondents are in favour of commercialisation of agriculture as stated in the PRSP document. However, the results of this study raise serious concerns regarding the effects of commercialisation on poor small-scale farmers. Of particular concern is the prominence in the PRSP on agriculture given to outgrower schemes (private sector investment) that are informed by a neo-liberal growth-centred approach to development. The respondents revealed that outgrower schemes are exploiting poor small-scale farmers, and they wonder how subsistence and small-scale farmers will climb out of poverty. Farming is seen as the main livelihood that would enable the poor small-scale farmers to meet their basic and household needs and requirements. One of the contradictions in the PRSP is that poor small-scale farmers are exploited by the outgrower schemes which are supposed to empower them. How can the private sector outgrower schemes achieve the dual objectives of increasing production and profits, and simultaneously reduce poverty? The PRSP suffers from policies that tend to work antagonistically,

i.e. promoting outgrower schemes aimed at profit and the assumption that outgrower schemes will help reduce the poverty of small-scale farmers. There is lack of coherence in the manner in which these policies impact upon one another.

Can we say that the PRSP is a pro poor policy when it does not serve the needs of poor small-scale farmers? This question is raised by Jorgensen and Londejeva, (2005) who note that, in conjunction with other constraints such as drought and disease, the liberalisation in agriculture has increased insecurity and reduced the community's capacity to care for the needy. Jorgensen and Londejeva (2005:25) argued that, "the focus of a pro-poor strategy should be the removal of the above listed constraints." Bond (2004:193) observes that the PRSPs have similar views to NEPAD and donor aid which shows us how the capitalist countries championed by the IMF and World Bank, aim to maintaining control of the poor countries and for ever keep them underdeveloped. Saasa (2002:97) demonstrates that poverty in Zambia has increased in recent years. Factors which contribute to the worsening of poverty include the government's macroeconomic policies for the agricultural sector where there has been a significant decrease in crop yield. Sassa (2002:97) says that this is difficult to separate from Zambia's policies of economic liberalisation and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). The influence of the World Bank and IMF on "economic policy in Zambia has come in different forms, but largely is connected to their concern for sustenance of the [Structural Adjustment] reform process" (Saasa 2002:63). Hence, Saasa (2002:62) argues that the PRSP has "exhibited serious weaknesses in both the conceptualisation of poverty and the strategies to address it." In this regard, the PRSP is not very different from the Structural Adjustment of the past. The PRSP has adopted the same neo-liberal principles promoted by the World Bank and the IMF. Neo-liberalism has resulted in the exploitation of the poor small-scale farmers. Saasa (2002) concludes his detailed analysis, by suggesting that a long-term poverty reduction policy must focus on improving poor people's income and assets, not merely by improving their access to goods and services.

### ***Final Assessment***

The general view is that though there are some minor improvements in the lives beneficiaries, the PRSP programmes have not made any significant improvement in the quality of life of the beneficiaries. Moore (1995) argues that a policy should be valuable to the beneficiaries, but in the

case of the PRSP where the policy has internal contradictions like the mechanisms that are meant to help small-scale farmers actually making them more vulnerable, its value is undermined. Instead of the poor small-scale farmers developing into successful, market-oriented farmers, they are sliding deeper into poverty. In this regard, Honyona (2002) observed, "Out of the estimated 650,000 small-scale farmers in Zambia, 70 per cent of them are considered resource poor, with limited access to capital and markets according to the Farmer Organisation Support Programme (FOSUP)." A recent report by the Southern Region Poverty Network (2005) also revealed that the poverty levels in Zambia are very high and there is little, if any evidence that they have fallen in recent years. The report observes that, though there is slight growth in Growth Domestic Product (GDP), "there is no evidence that these economic gains have resulted in better living conditions for the poor."

#### **6.4. General Assessment of the PRSP on Agriculture Based on Moore's**

##### **Strategic Triangle**

Overall, this study reveals that there is qualified support for the PRSP, that the NGOs have adequate operational management systems in place but the sustainability of these systems is questionable, and that the PRSP has brought about minor improvements in the lives of the small-scale farmers but contradictions in the policy have led to practices that make small-scale farmers vulnerable to exploitation by private companies involved in the outgrower schemes.

The key successes include: the willingness of NGOs to work with government in implementing the PRSP, the beneficiaries' support of the PRSP programmes, the participation of beneficiaries in Food security pack and Fertiliser Support programmes. NGOs implementing the PRSP have adequate administrative and operational structures. The Food security programme and the Fertiliser support programme have added some value to the lives of the beneficiaries. However, the ability of the PRSP on agriculture to implement change that favours poor small-scale farmers to become self-reliant is threatened by serious internal contradictions in the PRSP, insufficient support from Government, and the lack of a sustainable medium to long term poverty alleviation plan. To answer the research question whether the PRSP has been successfully implemented to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries, the study has revealed that there is limited success. The PRSP has failed to fully measure up to Moore's three tests because of many problems mentioned



above. One of the main problems has to do with the PRSP adopting a growth-centred approach to development promoted by neo-liberal thinking which places economic growth before the development of the poor small-scale farmers. For example, the PRSP's reliance on outgrower schemes to boost agriculture production fails to help the small-scale farmers in a way that can make them self-reliant.

### **6.5. Zambian Development Strategies in a Broader Context of Southern African**

I now consider the Zambia's predicament in a broader context. How does the approach to development in Zambia compare, for example, to the Government's approach to development in South Africa? Is this not part of a general approach to development in Southern Africa and beyond?

Zambia is not alone in the neo-liberal direction it has been coerced to take. South Africa has followed a similar route. In South Africa, there is the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy or GEAR. GEAR is a macroeconomic policy that was adopted by the ANC government in 1996, Gear which was thought to promise to reduce poverty and inequality in South Africa through employment creation. GEAR followed neo-liberal principles propagated by the IMF and the World. The neoliberal principles recommend government fiscal discipline cutting on government spending, liberalisation of the market or removing government controls in the economy in order to promote private investment (Le Roux, 2001:214). By promoting private investment, it was thought there would be high levels of economic growth which would lead to employment creation and eventually poverty reduction. (Le Roux 2001:214) GEAR is clearly linked to job creation. The more private investment, the more poor people will be able to escape poverty. GEAR also lays down the delivery of social services by government, which will play a supporting role in reducing poverty. This suggests some kind of Keynesian macroeconomic policy. However, as Adelzadeh (1996:67) has pointed out "after a careful reading of the [GEAR] document, we have concluded that the proposed framework and policy scenario represent an adoption of the essential tenets and policy recommendations of the neo-liberal framework advocated by the IMF in its structural adjustment programmes." In other words, the emphasis is clearly on private investment and employment creation linking growth to poverty reduction.

The critics of Gear have argued that the policy has also failed to deliver what it promised in terms of employment creation and poverty reduction by the end of the programme period (1999-2000). Some like Fine & Padayachee (2001:275) argue that neo-liberal policies that among, other things rely on foreign private investment are unrealistic and inappropriate.

In a most surgical analysis, Magdoff (2003:2), argues that neo-liberalism "works in such a way that there are sections of the population that live in misery, where children don't have food, don't have medical attention, don't get a decent education" He concludes that (Magdoff 2003:2) there is no escape from the system's inner logic, "overcoming the ills of capitalism calls for the creation of a sharply different society, based on transfer of power devoted primarily to meeting the basic needs of all people. This would mean removing the dictates of markets in search of maximising profits."

## **6.6. Limited Development Options Open to Zambia**

Can the Zambian Government abandon neo-liberalism? The dilemma facing Zambia is that even though the government may want to drop the neo-liberal approach to development, they are bound to it by the IMF and World Bank. Zambia is part of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative promoted by the Bretton Woods institutions which makes it difficult for Zambia to act independently. It would appear that the Zambian Government will be confined, for the foreseeable future, to working within the parameters set by the IMF and World Bank, and, at the moment, the parameters are mainly neo-liberal and to a lesser extent Keynesian. This means that government has to stick to neo-liberal policies like promoting private investors, while at the same time undertaking interventions in the form of government programmes like giving seed and fertiliser subsidies to small scale farmers.

One wonders whether there is scope for Zambian development agencies to continue to work within the PRSP and still promote self-reliance. What alternatives are there?

## **6.7. People-centred Development Might Offer a Viable Alternative**

The Growth-centred approach to development promoted by neo-liberal thinking places growing the economy before the poor people. Are people to serve the economy or is the economy to serve the people? For the PRSP to be geared towards poverty reduction of poor small-scale farmers, it

should be guided by policies that aim to make small-scale farmers self-reliant. One of the aims of the Food Security Pack is to provide enough fertiliser and seeds to small-scale farmers. The aim of the initiative, as explained above, is not merely to provide fertiliser and seed, but also to increase the household food security. In the short-term this may be necessary but if it leads to dependency the number of people that can be helped will be very small. Can the government design a multi-pronged strategy where the household food security is not the primary end result, but rather part of the development of human beings in a holistic manner?

A multi-pronged strategy that combines short-term aid and medium to long-term interventions that help poor farmers become self-reliant may be a better way of utilising scarce resources. Self-reliance is according to Van Zyl (1995) one of the five principles of people-centred development (the other four are: "human needs orientated", "endogenous", "ecologically sound", "based on structural transformation"). Korten (1990:67), the president and founder of the People-Centred Development Forum, defines development as "a process by which members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilise and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations" Max-Neef (1991) conceptualises self-reliance within such a definition of development. Max-Neef (1991:56-57) argues that dependencies whether economic or political inhibit development. For Max-Neef (1991:58) self-reliance is a process that "promotes participation in decision-making, social creativity, political self-determination, a fair distribution of wealth and tolerance for diversity of identities". At a personal level it is about nurturing creative capacity, self-confidence, a sense of identity and the need for freedom (Max-Neef, 1991: 60). At a social level it is about building the capacity for subsistence, providing protection against exogenous hazards, enhancing endogenous cultural identity and working for collective freedom (Max-Neef, 1991: 60). Interdependency is central to Max-Neef's understanding of self-reliance. It involves horizontal interdependency between the micro and the macro, between and with nations, regions/provinces and local communities and cultures, that is, it is conceived of as equal partnerships rather than authoritarian relationships (Max-Neef, 1991:58). Furthermore, for Max-Neef (1991:58) self-reliance is the turning point in the articulation of autonomy with planning and of civil society with the state.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to gauge, from practitioners, working with the PRSP in agricultural development, the extent to which the PRSP was implemented successfully from 2002-2004 so as to improve the quality of life of poor small-scale farmers. Moore's (1995) "strategic triangle" was used to find out how the implementation of the PRSP "measured up" to his three tests.

The first test for legitimacy and political sustainability revealed that there was qualified support for the PRSP from the NGOs and beneficiaries. The lack of demonstrable government leadership and contradictions in the PRSP that are linked to its neo-liberalism seem to have eroded the NGOs and beneficiaries' confidence in the PRSP's long-term ability to meaningfully address the plight of poor small-scale farmers. The study revealed that government lacks good leadership in terms of commitment and transparency when dealing with NGOs. The respondents also see several contradictions in the PRSP that undermine their support for and legitimacy of the PRSP. First, the PRSP focus on (external) private sector investment has led government to design short-term interventions, which do not, in the short-term, significantly improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries and, in the long term, undermine self-reliance. Government indicates that it wants to help struggling farmers but it does not back this up with necessary financial commitment because their neo-liberalism policies of fiscal constraint implemented to impress the World Bank and IMF and foreign investors. Poor, small-scale farmers are disadvantaged by the absence of a favorable market mechanism and the use of the government's Food Reserve Agency to purchase farm produce at low prices. Lastly, the PRSP's outgrower schemes, which are informed by neo-liberal thinking, do not promote consultation with small-scale farmers. The terms governing their participation in the outgrower schemes are dictated by the owners of the schemes who exploit vulnerable small-scale farmers by paying them ridiculously low prices. All these constraints undermine legitimacy and support for the PRSP and strangle support from small-scale farmers.

The findings on the second test, which is about administrative and operational feasibility, reveal that organisations implementing the PRSP seem to have the basic operational management systems in place. However, the study revealed important factors which hinder the operational

management of the PRSP. These are: inadequate financial and human resources, late arrival and mismanagement of resources, lack of credit schemes for farmers, lack of infrastructure, lack of coordination, the vastness of the country and natural disasters. These factors directly hinder the operation management of implementing the PRSP. They also reveal that the PRSP is an over ambitious policy because it has not developed programmes that match the capacity of government, donors, and NGOs. The strategies aimed at capacity building among poor small-scale farmers are inadequate because they are not geared to making poor small-scale farmers self-reliant and they do not promote their genuine participation by the beneficiaries in the PRSP programmes.

The third test deals with the substantive value of the PRSP to the beneficiaries. The general impression of the respondents is that there is some improvement in the beneficiaries' lives but that substantive value has not been added because there is no evidence that poor farmers are becoming more self-reliance. The study revealed that some development practitioners were convinced that the neo-liberal policy of growth at all costs, found in Zambia's PRSP had contributed greatly to further impoverishing the poor. The promotion of private investment which is a key focus of neo-liberalism is not pro-poor and has not made any significant impression on the lives of the poor. The major stumbling block to implementing the PRSP's programmes to assist poor small-scale farmers is the neo-liberal policy of reducing public spending and relying on attempts to make the agricultural sector attractive to foreign investors in order to grow agricultural production. There have not been significant increases in investment in the agricultural sector to instil confidence in the growth-centred, investment-led approach in the PRSP.

It is clear from this study that the PRSP is not very different from past policies like SAP which was based on the same neo-liberal policies that extensively damaged Zambia. It is in understanding how the PRSP is hog tied by neo-liberalism, that we can explore alternatives that would actually improve the lives of the small-scale farmers. What alternatives are there for Zambia?

People-centred development offers an alternative development route. The main principles of People-centred are self-reliance, human needs orientated, endogenous, ecologically sound, and based on structural transformation. These principles have been promoted by some social movements and NGOs running projects in rural areas for example, the Livingstone Food Security

Programme implemented by CARE International was designed to ensure longer term sustainability of the beneficiaries and, for me, such projects may offer hope for poor Zambian farmers.

The problem for the Zambian government is that it has little scope to adopt radical alternative approaches because it is bound by the HIPC agreements. The challenge for Government is to continue working with the World Bank and the IMF while creating the space within its policies on agriculture to support NGOs that use people-centred, bottom-up approaches to work towards self-reliance among poor small-scale farmers.

The feasibility of pro poor development strategies among small-scale farmers is one area for further research. Another is how government can work within policy boundaries defined by the World Bank and the IMF and create the space within its policies to sustain the work of NGOs that adopt pro poor strategies.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Formal Letter to NGO Managers**

2 September, 2004-09-02

Attention:

**Re: Assistance in Research Information**

I am a Zambian citizen, currently pursuing a Masters degree in Development Studies at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. I'm planning to conduct a research into the PRSP with a focus on agriculture and the rural people.

The topic of my research is: **Views from the field: Implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in agricultural development in Zambia**

The entry point of my research is on the implementation of policy into practical programmes that make a difference in people's lives.

My assumption is that your organisation does subscribe to the PRSP. Thus, I would like to know your perceptions on how your organization has or could translate the PRSP policy into practical programmes that make a difference in the lives of poor people in rural areas?

I would like to conduct interviews with your organisation on an arranged date in November. If you could please assist me with information, your cooperation would be greatly appreciated. Should you provide the information and are interested in receiving the findings, I will certainly be happy to provide it.

Thanking you in advance and waiting for your response.

Very Truly, Yours,

Kelly Michelo

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Interview Questions**

#### **VIEW FROM THE FIELD: IMPLEMENTING THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP) IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA**

##### **Main Research Question:**

**How successfully do development practitioners think the Zambian PRSP agricultural development policy for 2002-2004 has been translated into programmes and implemented to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries?**

Tell me what you do and your organization?

What has been your relationship to the PRSP, if any?

Do you work within the parameters of the PRSP policy?

Are your programmes guided by the PRSP policy?

If yes, how are they guided?

Are there programmes that you are implementing in an attempt to translate the PRSP policy into practice in order to meet the needs of the beneficiaries?

What are those programmes?

Have you experienced problems translating the PRSP into practical programmes on the ground?

What are these problems and why do you think you have encountered them?

How is the relationship between you as an organization and the government institutions at the local, provincial and national level?

How has this relationship increased your commitment to effectively do your work and continue to work within the PRSP framework?

How has been the support you have received from government? Do you think the support you are given by government helps your organization do its work?

Do the beneficiaries demonstrate that they appreciate how your organisation is helping them?

Give examples of the things they do or say. Are there times when they show reluctance to follow what you propose? Why do you think this is the case?

Is the way the beneficiaries' think about agriculture in line with the principles that inform your programmes? If yes, how? And if not, why not?

How do the social and cultural factors in the beneficiaries' local environment influence the effectiveness of your programmes?

When you think of about the way your organization is managed, do you think it helps the staff to optimally meet the organization's objectives. If yes, how? If not, why not?

Do you think the staff share a common vision and mission and have a clear understanding of what they want to achieve through the PRSP?

In your assessment, do you think your organization has enough staff members to effectively carry out your work? And do your staff members have sufficient skills to perform the functions in order to achieve your organisational objectives?

Can you think of instances in the last year when your organization has been hindered from achieving its objectives?

Are there particular things in the last two years that has enhanced the achievement of your organization's objectives?

Do you have adequate funding in order to meet your basic objectives?

What accounting and monitoring systems are in place to check that you are on track to achieving your objectives? In your assessment how do you think these systems could be improved?

How do you get feedback from the beneficiaries to help you improve the programme? How do you think the feedback systems could be improved?

What would you say have been your major achievements in the last two years of implementing your programmes?

Do you think the quality of life of your beneficiaries is improving as a result of your programme? If yes, how? If not, why not?

Do you think the programme has been able to help the beneficiaries' better meet their needs for food, shelter, clothing and water? Would you please give examples of how you think The Programme has improved their ability to meet their subsistence needs?

How does your programme help the beneficiaries protect themselves from disease?

Do you think the people the beneficiaries in your programme have improved their knowledge of agriculture (in terms of farming skills, disease control, issues around sourcing equipment and seed at good prices and marketing their produce in cost effective ways) than they had before?

How would you explain this increase in knowledge?

How does your programme encourage greater involvement of the beneficiaries to participate in the making of decisions, planning and formulating policies that affect them?

Do you think your programme encourages the beneficiaries to increasingly do things for themselves and to become less dependent on aid agencies? How?

Can you think of examples of how they programme encourages the beneficiaries to creatively solve their own problems?

What are the challenges you have found in implementing your programme?

What lessons if any, have you learnt that could better improve your programme?

Given an opportunity to redesign the programme what changes or recommendations would make in order to **BETTER** help the beneficiaries to meet their own needs?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your time.