A REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP ON
POVERTY MONITORING AND EVALUATION
24th-26th JULY 2002

held at

LE MERIDIEN MOUNT SOCHE HOTEL
BLANTYRE
MALAWI
PREFACE

This report synthesises the salient and crucial institutional issues raised by the national stakeholders workshop on poverty monitoring and evaluation that was held in Blantyre, Malawi, on 29th July 2002. Tentative specific recommendations on an institutional structure for poverty monitoring and evaluation in Malawi were made by that workshop. Subsequently, those recommendations have been refined so as to take into account the views of the key stakeholders who have been consulted. It is expected that the recommendations of the workshop will guide the process of developing a sound and credible poverty monitoring and evaluation system, drawing on the nucleus of institutional structures that are already in place in the country.

It will be important for the concerned key institutions to translate the recommendations into concrete action that will bring about lasting positive change in terms of facilitating the reduction of poverty on a sustainable basis in the country. It is in the spirit of togetherness that all stakeholders will fulfill the recommendations that apply to them without losing the corroborative interaction that sustains a coherent system and unity of all players in poverty monitoring and evaluation.

Just as stakeholders that were represented in the workshop came from all sorts of disciplines in public service, private sector, civil society, the legislature and the media, it is our sincere hope that the subject of this document will truly be championed by all the stakeholders to the monitoring and evaluation of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy implementation process. The recommendations are not an end by themselves but they form a key starting point for the subsequent development of action plans. There is therefore need to maintain the consultative spirit through shared information and joint reviews of progress.

Charles Machinjili
COMMISSIONER OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

Dr Milton Kutengule
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL

October, 2002
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has become a reality through the joint efforts of a number of people. In this connection, Mr John Mataya’s tremendous role of compiling the report of the proceedings is acknowledged. Equally commendable in this connection are the authors of papers presented, chairpersons of plenary and group sessions together with discussants and participants who helped to bring out ideas crystallized into the fundamental matter of this report.

This report owes its integrity to Messrs Charles Machinjili, the Commissioner of Census and Statistics, and George Zimalirana, the Director of Poverty Monitoring in NEC. Dr Oladejo O. Ajayi, a PARIS 21 Consultant made an invaluable contribution, which is also commendable. Gratitude is equally due to Mary Strode of PARIS21 who was forthcoming with complementary additions, which strengthened the initial draft. Mrs Mercy Kanyuka, the Deputy Commissioner of Census and Statistics, is acknowledged for reviewing the coherent flow of ideas presented in the report.

There were four Rapporteurs namely Mr Alick Nyasulu, Mrs Mylen Mahowe and Ms Angela Msosa of NSO and Mrs Lana Chikhungu of NEC who prepared the various parts of the report. Gratitude is due to all of them for their immense commitment and just treatment of the themes in their write-up.

Gratitude is equally due to Mr Elliot Phiri and Mrs Lizzie Chikoti of NSO who worked hand in hand with Mr John Mataya to shape the report and consulted closely in finalizing the report. Thanks are due to UNDP for funding the production of the report.
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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCE</td>
<td>Cabinet Committee on the Economy</td>
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<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>Compact Disc-Random Only Memory</td>
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<td>CERT</td>
<td>Centre for Educational Research and Training</td>
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<td>CONGOMA</td>
<td>Council of Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi</td>
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<td>CREAM</td>
<td>Clear, Relevant, Economic, Adequate and Monitorable</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Central Statistical Office</td>
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<td>CSR</td>
<td>Centre for Social Research</td>
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<td>CWIQ</td>
<td>Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>British Department for International Affairs</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Educational Management Information System</td>
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<td>GDDS</td>
<td>General Data Dissemination Standards</td>
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<td>HMIS</td>
<td>Health Management Information System</td>
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<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Highly Indebted Poor Countries</td>
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<td>HSSP</td>
<td>Health Sector Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td>Integrated Household Survey</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monitory Fund</td>
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<td>MASEDA</td>
<td>Malawi Socio-Economic Database</td>
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<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MCCCCI</td>
<td>Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>MDHS</td>
<td>Malawi Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<td>MIRTDC</td>
<td>Malawi Industrial Research and Technology Development Centre</td>
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<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
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<td>MOH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>MPRSR</td>
<td>Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy</td>
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<td>MPRSP</td>
<td>Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>NBS</td>
<td>National Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Economic Council</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NORAD</td>
<td>Norwegian Agency for Development</td>
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<td>NSO</td>
<td>National Statistical Office</td>
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<td>ORT</td>
<td>Other Recurrent Transaction</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Public Affairs Committee</td>
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<td>PAP</td>
<td>Poverty Alleviation Programme</td>
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<td>PARIS21</td>
<td>Partnership in Statistics for Development in the twenty first century</td>
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<td>PEAP</td>
<td>Poverty Eradication Action Plan</td>
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<td>PMES</td>
<td>Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy</td>
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<td>PMP</td>
<td>Poverty Monitoring Plan</td>
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<td>PMS</td>
<td>Poverty Monitoring System</td>
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<td>PPA</td>
<td>Participatory Poverty Assessment</td>
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<td>Priority Poverty Expenditure</td>
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<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
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<td>PRSC</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit</td>
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<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>RBM</td>
<td>Reserve Bank of Malawi</td>
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<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<td>TSED</td>
<td>Tanzania Socio-Economic Database</td>
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<td>TWC</td>
<td>Technical Working Committee</td>
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<td>TWG</td>
<td>Technical Working Group</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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1.0.0 BACKGROUND TO THE WORKSHOP

Poverty is widespread in Malawi affecting about sixty five percent of the population both in the rural and urban areas. It is a major source of concern to the Government and its partners as well as the civil society. Consequently, the Government in collaboration with its partners has resolved to fight poverty with the aim of reducing or even eradicating it. As such, poverty reduction is the core economic objective of the Malawi Government. In pursuit of this goal, the Government has produced the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) as its main guide in its endeavour of reducing poverty. The MPRSP was launched by His Excellency, the State President, Dr Bakili Muluzi, on 24th April 2002. The one unique feature of the MPRSP is the sectoral programmes linked through the national budget to available resources. As such, the 2002-03 public budget is pro-poor because it provides resources for the implementation of the MPRSP.

1.1.0 THE POVERTY MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM IN MALAWI

The architects of the MPRSP realized the importance of feedback for its proper interpretation and successful implementation. They provided for the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy’s goals and objectives. Monitoring and Evaluation will be done using indicators provided in the Action Plan for each component of the MPRSP at national, district and local levels. Initial reviews of the proposed monitoring and evaluation systems revealed some weaknesses. Consequently, the Government of Malawi requested its development partner PARIS21 for both financial and technical assistance aimed at putting in place an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system. In response, PARIS21 commissioned a consultancy which reviewed the poverty monitoring system in Malawi with a special focus on monitoring the implementation of the MPRSP. The following were the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Mission:

- Examine and report on the current poverty monitoring system put in place by the MPRS, the indicators to be used and the accompanying statistical system;
- Document the needs of each stakeholder from the MPRS;
- Make suggestions on which of these needs could be met, and which might be provided for at a later date;
- Suggest ways in which the statistical system can be strengthened to provide for the priority needs of the MPRS;
- Make proposals for strengthening the analytical work in support of the MPRS and the dissemination and accessibility of information relating to poverty monitoring;
- Make proposals for the format and content of the proposed stakeholders’ workshop;
- Draft a report for the review at the workshop; and
- Make suggestions on the content of a proposal to the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building or the UN Trust Fund for Poverty Monitoring.
1.2.0 THE NATIONAL POVERTY MONITORING AND EVALUATION WORKSHOP

The national stakeholders’ workshop was proposed by the PARIS 21 Consultants during their review missions in December, 2001 and April, 2002. It was justified because it was consistent with consultative processes that characterised the production of the MPRSP. The main objective of the workshop was to “provide a forum for further discussion of information requirements of the MPRSP and its key stakeholders”. It was planned that during the workshop, participants would review the current status of poverty monitoring in Malawi and examine good practice regionally and internationally. The workshop became a reality when the National Statistical Office (NSO) and the National Economic Council (NEC), with technical and financial assistance from PARIS21, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and NORAD, co-hosted the Workshop at Le Meridien Mount Soche Hotel in Blantyre from 24th to 26th July 2002.

1.2.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop provided a forum where key stakeholders had the opportunity to:

• Review what data and poverty information were available and identify additional data and poverty information which stakeholders will need;
• Outline an action plan for developing the poverty monitoring system for Malawi;
• Draw together statisticians, policy makers and development partners in order to agree on information needs for informing development planning;
• Develop partnership at both the national and the sub-regional level between policy makers, information users, information producers, supporting donor agencies and international organisations;
• Improve the dialogue between information users, including policy makers and civil society, and the national producers of statistics. This dialogue is the beginning of the process necessary to agree the steps for developing a strategy (and for reviewing any existing strategy) to support the priority information needs of the government and other key stakeholders;
• Promote best practice and lesson learning within the sub-region by exploring the methodologies and processes used by other countries to provide priority statistics and information to data users.

1.2.2 THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOP

The following were the planned outcomes of the workshop:

• A framework for developing an effective monitoring and evaluation system for the MPRS
• Mainstreaming statistical information as one of the cross-cutting issues
• A framework for the design of a Poverty Monitoring Master Plan
• A framework for the development of a National Statistical Master Plan
1.3.0 THE METHODOLOGY FOR THE WORKSHOP

In order to realize the objectives and outcomes of the workshop several methods were used. These included thematic plenary and parallel group sessions in which papers were presented. Over twenty-five papers were presented. Plenary sessions were held under the following themes:

- Issues of poverty monitoring in the MPRS;
- Poverty Monitoring Strategies and outcomes
- Sharing Regional Experience – methods
- Strategies for developing the monitoring systems
- Strategies for Action
- The way forward.

Syndicate (group) sessions that occurred in parallel were also organized to focus on specific themes. Two constellations (A and B), each consisting of four groups, were put in place pursuing themes shown in table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constellation A</th>
<th>Constellation B</th>
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<td>A1</td>
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<td>Expenditure Tracking</td>
<td>Poverty Monitoring Plan</td>
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<td>Monitoring Well-being</td>
<td>Plan for the Statistical system</td>
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<td>A3</td>
<td>B3</td>
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<td>Programming monitoring (inputs and outputs)</td>
<td>Analysis and Dissemination Plan</td>
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<td>B4</td>
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<td>Information sharing and dissemination</td>
<td>Institutional Arrangements</td>
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1.4.0 THE REPORT

This report is a record of the proceedings of the National Stakeholders Workshop. It begins by summarizing speeches made during the official opening ceremony. It then summarizes papers that were presented and records the discussions that followed after presentations. Most importantly, the report outlines the outcomes of the workshop in form of recommendations and the way forward.
2.0.0 SESSION 1: OPENING CEREMONY

The Workshop was officially opened by the Director General of the National Economic Council, Dr Zaki Chalira who highlighted several salient aspects related to the objective of the poverty monitoring stakeholders’ workshop.

Prior to the Director General’s speech, the Commissioner of Census and Statistics, Mr. Charles Machinjili, the PARIS21 representative, Ms Mary Strode, and the UN Representative, Ms Catherine Bengue, gave remarks in that order. The issues that were raised in the opening speeches are summarized below and the presentation is made in the reverse order for convenience.

2.1.0 THE OPENING SPEECH BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL

The Director General started by detailing the objective of the Stakeholders’ Workshop. Briefly recalling the background to poverty monitoring in Malawi, the Director General pointed out that a poverty monitoring system has been in existence in the country since 1996. The Malawi Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) was designed following the launch of the Poverty Alleviation Program (PAP) in 1994 and is driven by a Technical Working Committee (TWC) which draws its membership from government, the donor community, the private sector, NGOs and research institutions. Its mandate is to monitor and evaluate the impact of poverty alleviation initiatives. He noted that substantial work and research has been carried out under the poverty monitoring system resulting in the production of several reports on the socio-economic status of Malawians.

The Director General also pointed out that the existing PMS need to be aligned to the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy since it is the most important tool that Government is using to fight poverty. This would be a welcome move because the MPRSP is linked to the national public budget.

The Director General said that such a move would also address the shortfalls listed below:

- The monitoring of the Poverty Alleviation Program is not integrated within the existing poverty monitoring and evaluation systems
- Poverty monitoring is seen as being separate from overall monitoring and evaluation work.
- The existing Poverty Monitoring does not provide for an integration of poverty monitoring at the national, district and local levels.

The Director General then called upon participants to reach consensus on the expected outputs of the workshop as listed before in section 1.3.2.

The Director General acknowledged the support given by donors in support of poverty monitoring in general and the workshop in particular. He then thanked the
PARIS21 Secretariat, UNDP, DFID, NORAD for their support without which the workshop could not have taken place. At the end of his speech, the Director General declared the workshop officially open.

2.2.O SPEECH BY THE UN REPRESENTATIVE

The UN System Representative welcomed all participants. She extended a special welcome to participants and resource persons from other countries. She commended government for taking up the new approach to poverty monitoring which she said is built on two cornerstones that have global support but are firmly anchored on country level success: the Millennium Development Summit and the Poverty Reduction Strategy process.

The UN System Representative indicated that the Workshop provides a key opportunity for all stakeholders to discuss how Malawi can integrate into one system for the monitoring of the MPRS and the Millennium Development Goals, which have become the framework for a broader development agenda stretching across the next decade and beyond. She noted that the key preconditions for achieving results are: political will which will trigger change; mobilisation of resources and coordination of action both domestically and internationally; and building capacity for the successful implementation of economic and social policy.

She took note of the fact that to build a comprehensive system for monitoring the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy, there is need to build adequate capacities for data collection, analysis and information sharing and reporting. Accompanying these capacities should be a high-level commitment to operationalize monitoring systems and evaluation systems that were never operational because of a weak culture of monitoring and reporting.

She pointed out that the second requirement is the establishment of a coordination mechanism among all stakeholders to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the monitoring system. The UN Representative affirmed that the indicators selected for tracking progress towards the MDGs will provide a basis for identifying information needs for the Malawi Poverty Monitoring System because of the congruency between the MDGs and the targets of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy goals.

The UN Representative pledged that the UN system would continue to cooperate with the Malawi Government on the implementation of the Poverty Monitoring System. She concluded her remarks by informing participants that resources have been set aside from its regular cooperation programme with Malawi and from the Global Poverty Reduction Thematic Trust Fund to contribute towards the development of a poverty monitoring system and for capacity building activities of national institutions to ensure quality monitoring and analysis.
2.3.0 SPEECH BY THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR PARIS21

In her remarks, the Representative of PARIS21 started by thanking the Malawi Government for inviting her organization to assist in planning the Malawi Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation System. She pointed out that national statistical systems perform an important role in a country’s governance. When accurate and freely available, statistics allow decision-makers to make informed choices and enable civil society to play its proper role.

She gave a brief historical background to PARIS21 that it was formed three years back in recognition of the fact that countries needed much better information for monitoring development. Further to this, the Millennium Development Goals to which governments have subscribed require information to check that progress is being made and that the development programmes in place are effective.

She then highlighted the fact that PARIS21 which is a consortium of donors, country governments, decision makers and practitioners aims to improve the dialogue between those producing data and those using the information.

The PARIS21 Representative hoped that the stakeholders in Malawi will be able to reach consensus on what needs to be done in order to strengthen the monitoring and information systems across departments and organizations to enable the limited resources available to be used most effectively.

2.4.0 SPEECH BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

Presenting his remarks, the Commissioner of Census and Statistics stated that the Workshop was yet another milestone in the process that started with the launch of the MPRSP. More importantly, he hoped that the framework of information requirements to support the monitoring and evaluation of the process will take a firm and robust shape by the end of the workshop. He recognized that the workshop would give stakeholders the opportunity of sharing essential and substantive ideas.

The Commissioner reminded participants that useful information would follow from well-articulated specifications of requirements supported by a whole complement of resources such as finance, institutional and human capacity. He called upon participants to seriously consider coming up with recommendations for a national statistical system.

The Commissioner pointed out that the effectiveness of this wider national statistical system plan requires the presence of a well-articulated poverty monitoring plan that clearly defines the different roles to be played by each institution in terms of data collection, data analysis, data dissemination and monitoring and evaluation. In addition, he stressed the need for the wider statistical plan to be supported by adequate resources for its implementation. He, therefore, called upon the chairpersons to highlight these strategies during the sessions.
3.0.0 CLOSING CEREMONY

Prior to the official closing of the workshop, Mr Charles Machinjili highlighted the primary course the substantive workshop discussions assumed and the main recommendations the workshop eventually adopted. In fact, the closing was performed by Mr P. Chilambe, the Secretary to the Treasury. This happened as the last item on the workshop agenda, but not at all the least important.

3.1.0 CLOSING SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

The Secretary to the Treasury (ST), Mr P. Chilambe, started his speech by expressing his gratitude to all participants to the workshop. Participation by foreign delegates demonstrated the importance they attach to the need for Malawi to have a good and sound poverty monitoring system. The ST further pointed out that the poverty monitoring system is required as a basis for information and feedback on progress and issues emerging from the actual implementation of policies, strategies and programmes.

The workshop therefore initiated the discussion on the information requirements of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy highlighted during the formulation and launch of the MPRS. The government believes the workshop would enhance the consultative process that characterised MPRS formulation. The ST pointed out that the expected outcome of the workshop was to reach consensus on:

- a framework for developing an effective monitoring and evaluation system for the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy;
- main-streaming statistical information as one of the cross-cutting issues;
- a framework for the production of a Poverty Monitoring Master Plan;
- a framework for the development of a National Statistical Master Plan; and
- a framework for capacity assessment and intervention in the area of poverty monitoring.

He thanked the Malawi Government, the participants and co-operating partners who had supported the workshop financially and technically. He had no doubts that the partnership between the Government of Malawi and the co-operating partners will continue in the pursuit of common cause of fighting poverty in this country. He then officially closed the Stakeholders’ Workshop on Poverty Monitoring System in Malawi.

4.0.0 SESSION 2: ISSUES OF POVERTY MONITORING IN THE MPRSP

Session 2 covered issues of poverty monitoring in the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategies. Three presentations were made, namely:
- Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategies: Where are we now?
- Monitoring & Evaluation – A Theoretical Framework and
4.1.0 THE STATUS OF MPRSP

The issues that were raised in session one are many and varied but relevant to poverty monitoring in relation to MPRSP. In order to put the issues in context, the paper noted that:

- The Technical Committee, which drafted MPRSP, had finalized the document and is currently seeking funding for printing ten thousand copies.
- The implementation of the MPRSP had started in the current financial year and that 63.5% of ORT has been allocated to MPRSP activities. High allocations were made to priority Ministries and Pillars as defined in MPRSP.
- The budget has put protection mechanisms for priority poverty expenditure (PPE) areas.
- One of the key features of the MPRS budget is that it gives mandate to the rural people to manage their own destiny. In this respect, District Assemblies will get their funding directly through their separate votes.
- The MPRS is coordinated by the Cabinet Committee on the Economy (CCE). Implementing ministries and agencies will report their progress on the implementation of MPRS activities directly to this committee.
- NEC will be responsible for the technical monitoring and evaluation of MPRSP with focus on impact and outcomes. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning will monitor inputs and outputs. NSO will be responsible for poverty surveys.
- The Ministry of Poverty Alleviation will be strengthened and will implement Pillar 3. The Department of Local Government will be responsible for implementation at the district level.
- As the designated Secretariat for MPRS monitoring and evaluation, National Economic Council is setting up the function to ensure efficient and effective implementation. The MPRS M&E system will produce the following outputs:
  - Annual progress reports; reports on policy studies, analyses and policy briefs to CCE;
  - Strategy priority updating and adjustments; and
  - Establishment of information flow to and from the general public.
- The MPRSP Secretariat (NEC) has put its financial requirements at US$60 million for the period of three years to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the MPRSP. Estimates for 2002/2003 are at MK35.820 million. Only MK13 million has been allocated out of the estimated requirements.

In order to have a functioning MPRS M&E system, a number of institutional issues need to be rationalised. Existing national M&E will be linked to sectoral initiatives. A logical framework for MPRSP will be defined, detailing goals, purpose, outputs and means of verification. A District level statistical data framework will be established. The civil society will play a role in the monitoring and evaluation exercise. Parliament will continue with its role of expenditure tracking. Dissemination using media to relay outputs and outcomes from monitoring implementation of MPRS will be intensified.
4.2.0 MONITORING & EVALUATION – A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Following the presentation on the current status of the MPRSP highlighting the need for a monitoring and evaluation system to be put in place, a paper providing the theoretical framework for monitoring was presented. The main issues highlighted by the paper are summarized below:

- Monitoring helps produce effective management, policy transparency, democratic accountability and feasible target setting. This can be achieved through a priority list of indicators disaggregated by sector (rural and urban), region and gender.
- It is more useful to identify a small number of indicators, measure them well and use the results for policy making.
- While monitoring helps track down whether a policy or programme is being implemented as planned and whether the programme or policy is achieving its objective, impact evaluation helps identify the causal link between a policy intervention and outcome.
- Good practice of evaluating a programme or policy intervention requires a comparison of outcomes before and after the intervention.
- Capacity building needs for M&E will include data management in the MIS of line ministries; household survey design and implementation; poverty measurement and diagnostics; skills for PPAs and participatory monitoring; management skills to coordinate overall poverty monitoring and evaluation system; and poverty impact evaluation.

4.3.0 A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DEVELOPING GOOD INDICATORS – UGANDA’S EXPERIENCE

The presentation on Uganda’s experience in developing good indicators was made in order to give a practical guide to Malawi. The presenter paid special attention to Ugandan Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and how it was developed. The presentation highlighted the importance of effective consultations, dwelt on technical approaches to enriching the list of poverty indicators and outlined the key characteristics of good poverty indicators. Specifically, the presenter explained that:

- Uganda has a Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The PEAP functions as Uganda's PRSP (national planning framework). Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit has been set up in the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development. The unit serves as a logical focal point for a poverty monitoring system. It produces bi-annual poverty reports, annual PRSP progress report and under the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit (PRSC), it undertakes PRSC reviews twice a year.
- PEAP monitoring and evaluation is undertaken within the framework of Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (PMES). The PMES specifies the roles and responsibilities of all Ugandan Institutions involved in poverty monitoring. The PMES also maps out short, medium and long-term activities related to poverty monitoring and evaluation.
- One of the important achievements in the Ugandan PEAP is the agreed final set of indicators, which was arrived at following a series of stakeholders’ consultations.
Consultations started with working groups with specific terms of reference that then discussed the findings of the working groups in plenary.

- Two approaches are used to monitor and analyse poverty. Survey-based approach is used to examine the empirical validity of indicators. The participatory approach helps to identify poverty indicators by the poor people themselves. A good indicator will be Clear, Relevant, Economic, Adequate and Monitorable (CREAM for short).

4.4.0 OPEN DISCUSSION ON POVERTY MONITORING ISSUES IN MPRSP

Following the three presentations, there was an open question and answer session. In this session, participants discussed issues pertaining to poverty monitoring in the MPRS. During the discussion, they also asked a number of questions in order to enhance their understanding of issues at stake in poverty monitoring and evaluation.

Participants noted that quantitative targets are straightforward to deal with in terms of monitoring and evaluation while qualitative indicators are not so easy. They then questioned how one deals with qualitative indicators. Specifically participants wanted to know:

- The extent to which the monitoring and evaluation component of PRSP has been incorporated in the ORT budget for current year
- What annual monitoring surveys are, whether they are of the core welfare indicator (CWIQ) type, the institution that conducts them and how they are funded
- Whether there is a need for capacity building in Malawi Poverty Monitoring System at the national and district levels
- How effective the participation of other ministries and general society is in mainstreaming poverty under the project-based management approach
- Whether parliamentary allocation of funds is towards sectoral problems or traditional ministerial allocation
- Whether there is a common acceptance of the formation, location and operations of the Uganda Poverty Analysis Unit
- Whether after carrying out the initial Malawi IHS sometime back, there is need for another IHS

5.0.0 SESSION 3: POVERTY MONITORING STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES

Four papers were presented in session 3 that highlighted issues arising from different monitoring and evaluation approaches. The papers were: The PARIS21 Consultants’ Report, Malawi Government Response to PARIS21 Mission Report, Information Needs for Developing a PRSP and Millennium Development Goals and Country Monitoring. These papers provided background information upon which participants based their discussion of the appropriate monitoring and evaluation system for Malawi. The main points that were raised are summarized below.
5.1.0 THE PARIS21 CONSULTANT REPORT

The PARIS21 Consultants’ report reflects issues from government in as far as monitoring and evaluation of the MPRS is concerned. The salient points are:

- Data requirements with needs for a statistical plan remain critical issues to monitoring.
- There should be an extensive data needs assessment after the Workshop to underscore the importance of information requirements
- Information systems should improve quality and efficiency with due support of financial resources and relevant capacity.
- Integration has to be emphasized in terms of quantitative and qualitative attributes of data. This has to go as far as data exchange and rationalization between various organizations.
- Monitoring and evaluation must pursue an integrated system. It must involve various organizations, such as parliament and civil society because these are representatives of the poor. Such a move would demonstrate the importance of consensus in building partnership among various stakeholders.
- There is need to set and cost poverty-reduction targets
- The report emphasizes the fact that monitoring requires extensive data to be effective. In this regard, NSO has to be empowered to develop a sound integrated data bank. This will require enhancing NSO’s capacity in terms of human skills, equipment and resources to conduct specific surveys to meet challenges of the PRSP process. This has to be made through a strategic statistical plan that will emphasize monitoring as a continuing process with follow-up activities.
- To emphasize a complete trickle down effect, a common national statistical system has to be developed so that NSO remains the kingpin of statistics in Malawi
- In monitoring and evaluating the poverty monitoring process, there is need to set clear definitions of goals with corresponding targets. Poverty factors must be clearly defined to allow for relevant policy actions in the short and medium term. Monitoring will require that indicators be clearly stated and mechanisms for measuring them be put in place. This is to make sure that policy targets are well elaborated.
- Feedback mechanisms have to be put in place in the course of monitoring and evaluation. Accountability and transparency must be taken care of to instill donor confidence. At the same time, feedback mechanisms must allow for relevant policy interventions for purposes of corrective measures.
- Capacity remains a vital component. Capacity assessment of various line ministries is being done now. The desired capacity includes data management, household survey design and implementation, poverty measurement and diagnostic participatory monitoring skills.
5.2.0 THE RESPONSE OF THE MALAWI GOVERNMENT TO THE CONSULTANTS REPORT

Government started by congratulating the PARS21 for a job well done. It then acknowledged that the major objective of the PARIS21 Consultancy was to identify information and statistical needs for the PRSP. From this angle, Government was able to highlight some weaknesses and shortfalls in the report as follows:

- Most recommendations proposed in the report did not come out strongly to reflect the importance of the action to be taken.
- Other marginalized sectors such as disability and gender were left out of the study.
- Government also noted that the MPRSP did benefit much from other PRSP’s in the region and beyond.
- Government must come up with the missing information in the PRSP.
- There is lack of baseline values in the proposed monitoring and evaluation of MPRS.
- District Assemblies must be able to employ statistical personnel to handle statistical matters as part of capacity development. In addition, there is need to build analytical capacity for Assemblies and NSO.
- NSO’s role in monitoring PRSP must be clearly stated with a sound master plan to guide its data-related objectives and activities.
- An annual calendar of events must be drawn as a guide for monitoring activities.
- Enough resources have to be committed to NSO which must collaborate fully with other institutions like Centre for Social Research (CSR).

5.3.0 DEVELOPING A PRSP

A presentation on developing a PRSP concentrated on information requirements. Specifically the paper emphasized the need to gather information in the aspects described below:

- Poverty profiles. This should define poverty in terms of human (knowledge, longevity etc) and material (food, financial and other assets etc)
- Setting poverty lines. The extent of the poverty situation must include poverty gaps, income inequality and head count of poverty.
- Ascertain causes of poverty. This will look at broad causes and mainly the factors of production (land, labour and capital), institutional capacities and perceived causes like laziness. But caution must be taken with perceived causes like laziness. Laziness could be a manifestation of incentive and therefore policy makers must be very careful to avoid misuse of information. It must be noted that the US 1 dollar is about a power purchasing parity (PPP) rather than a one-to-one exchange rate when making international comparisons.
- It must be emphasized that once causes are established a guiding set of priorities must be established. This will involve prioritized reduction strategies and monitoring mechanisms.
- Strategies and outcomes of monitoring need to be consistent with Millennium Development Goals.
5.4.0 THE MILLENIUM GOALS AND COUNTRY MONITORING

This presentation was based on Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) which are time-bound numerical targets that can accelerate progress and trigger action and alliances.

- The MDGs have a target with respective indicators.
- The MPRS process can buy the MDG concept in monitoring so as to clearly define the goals, targets and indicators. MDG is clear with the timing of the targets and indicators used to assess progress.
- In designing a country’s MDGs, the development context has to be taken into account. Moreover, for each goal, the prevailing status that covers the resource requirements including capacity for monitoring and major challenges must be evaluated.
- There is need to have a set of major indicators and gender/rural-urban disaggregation must be considered.
- National ownership and capacity for monitoring remain critical principles for a country’s MDGs.
- Minimum and cost-effective mechanisms for monitoring progress is another guiding principle worth considering.

5.5.0 OPEN DISCUSSION ON POVERTY MONITORING STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES

Following the four presentations, participants discussed matters pertaining to poverty monitoring in the MPRS. They examined the indicators that can be included in PMS, the true causes of poverty, the target audience, the sectoral and geographic coverage of poverty and how best information and data can be collected. Moreover, they also looked at related issues as summarised below.

- Laziness as a perceived cause of poverty: participants noted that the extent to which laziness is a cause of poverty is limited in the sense that it is a highly subjective concept. Laziness might be a manifestation of lack of incentive and therefore policy makers must take note of it.
- Capacity concerns of the legislature: delegates wondered whether government is aware that the MPRS requires parliament on the technical committee. This was demonstrated by PARIS21 Consultants’ oversight of parliament in their consultations. It was noted that involvement of Parliament was indispensable because it represents the majority of the poor.

6.0.0 PARALLEL SESSIONS A: POVERTY INFORMATION - WHAT IS NEEDED?

For session 4, participants broke into four facilitated parallel sessions. The objective was to provide for more participation and opportunity to go deeper in defining the information needs for successful poverty monitoring system. Each group had a chairperson, subject matter expert as a facilitator and a rapporteur. In addition, each...
group had a theme as presented in table 1 under 1.4.0. Some papers were presented in the parallel group sessions as a way of providing specific information for each group. The expectation was that groups would come up with recommendations as well as proposals for the way forward, which would finally be presented in plenary. The proceedings and discussions for parallel sessions identified as A sessions are presented below.

6.1.0 SESSION A1: EXPENDITURE TRACKING

The paper on Tracking Expenditure focused on the approach used by government. The presentation was followed by syndicate (group) discussions as summarized below.

6.1.1 A1: PRESENTATION ON TRACKING EXPENDITURE

Patrick Kabambe of the Malawian Treasury explained that allocations are made to specific programs through cost centres and that monthly expenditures are submitted by all ministries to Treasury which in turn tracks expenditures. What is needed to facilitate improvement is decentralisation, closer relationships with civil society and greater trust from donors.

Access to information remains one of the biggest challenges to expenditure tracking, according to Paul Khwengwere of Action Aid - Malawi. Shirley Robinson of the South African Treasury described her ministry’s three-year cycle of expenditure tracking that is implemented across a three-tiered government. The objective in South Africa is to provide not just numbers but an explicative to policy expenditures.

6.1.2 A1: OPEN DISCUSSION ON EXPENDITURE TRACKING

After the presentation, there was an open discussion at the end of which group A1 made recommendations on tracking expenditure.

- The group focused on institutional arrangements for expenditure monitoring. They noted that there are institutional mechanisms in place now but that there was more to be done in order to consolidate them.
- It was also necessary to involve all stakeholders when designing and developing the expenditure tracking mechanisms.
- Planning units in various Ministries need to be re-focused so that they may play their rightful role in expenditure tracking.

6.1.3 A1: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXPENDITURE TRACKING

With regard to planning resource requirements, the group recommended that:

- Resources within the budget should be set aside for expenditure tracking.
• Funding should be regular and based on a three-year cycle.
• There was need for a stakeholders’ meeting to determine the nature of expenditure tracking activities.

The group also came up with recommendations focusing on information needs as follows:
• Special surveys to measure inputs and outputs should be institutionalized.
• IFMIS should be customized to capture poverty expenditure.
• Information systems should be made available in compatible formats to stakeholders.
• A review of expenditure allocations is necessary in order to ensure that all outputs are mapped to PRSP indicators.

6.2.0 SESSION A2: MONITORING WELLBEING (OUTCOME AND IMPACT INDICATORS)

Parallel Session A2 focused on monitoring well-being with emphasis on outcome and impact indicators. Two papers as summarized below were presented followed by open discussions.

6.2.1 A2: PRESENTATION ON THE VALUE OF HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

The presentation, focused on the value of household surveys in monitoring poverty, highlighted the following:

• These surveys are quantitative in nature and are a source of baseline, monitoring and evaluation data. Major surveys in this regard are the Integrated Household Survey (IHS), Malawi Demographic Health Survey (MDHS) and the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ).

• The IHS which was done in 1997/1998 was quite comprehensive in the sense that it covered all districts with various modules on income, consumption, assets and expenditure.

• Various indicators are calculated from the IHS. In fact, IHS has been the source of deriving poverty lines.

• Weights for the consumer price indices have been derived from the same and so have estimates of private consumption in national accounts.

• The MDHS on the other hand collects information on a wide range of health and demographic indicators and was last conducted in 2000. Some of the indicators collected in this survey are nutritional state, mortality rates and life expectancy amongst others. It also collected information on access to services and educational attainment amongst others.
• The CWIQ uses a large sample on district level but relies on proxy variables to measure poverty.

• These surveys have to be timely and consistent with one another while at the same time relevant and cost-effective.

• Surveys are very costly and funding is not easy to come by. An integrated system must be adopted to save on resources. At the same time, concepts and definitions must be standardized for comparability.

6.4.2 A2: PRESENTATION ON THE VALUE OF QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

The other presentation in this session hinged on the importance of qualitative information for poverty monitoring. Qualitative data basically refer to that information which is not subject to direct statistical measurement. This includes perspectives, values and cultural matters etc. The paper emphasized that qualitative information is quite complementary to the household data that is quantitative. Qualitative information helps to determine the basis of the behaviour of phenomena that statistics cannot easily explain. In the process, new discoveries can come out i.e. they usually give in-depth view to an issue that can be probed.

But more important is that indicators used in household and qualitative surveys must complement each other and be forward-looking. This is to underscore the fact that most donors are looking at the sustainability of monitoring impact and would give more funds to such endeavours. In the absence of vital registration, these surveys will remain indispensable for impact assessment. However, there is need to have vital registration systems in place in order to balance up the survey gap that comes with delays when releasing survey data.

6.4.3 A2: OPEN DISCUSSION ON MONITORING WELLBEING

The session had two presentations out of which discussions followed. Issues at hand mainly focused on quantitative and qualitative aspects of data in monitoring. Proceedings of the discussion are summarised below.

• Quantitative indicators are easily disaggregated but the same must be emphasised in qualitative data as well. Disaggregation must take on board gender aspects to allow monitoring for the vulnerable groups.

• A system of vital registration must be implemented though it takes time to come into effect. Qualitative surveys must continually be done in place of vital information systems that is expected to be put in place.

• Monitoring and evaluation must be a continuing process using the various quantitative and qualitative sources. Discussants noted poverty was a serious issue because lives were at stake and therefore continuity of the monitoring process should be imperative.
• Indicators being used must be of relevance to various stakeholders and more importantly to donors who fund most of the surveys. This must be done to ensure that diverse interests are taken on board.

6.2.4 A2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MONITORING WELL BEING

• It was agreed to maintain constant module in surveys to enable time trend analysis of those same indicators.
• Limit resources to Malawi data collection agencies and carefully examine indicators for inclusion in the MPRS
• Convince policymakers of the importance of timely data collection and the role of district statistics
• Capacity building for data analysis at the NEC and NSO

6.3.0 SESSION A3: POVERTY MONITORING PROGRAMMES

In this session, the following papers were presented:
• Using Management Information Systems In Health – Ministry of Health
• Malawi Education Management Information System – Ministry of Education
• Role of Agriculture Information – Ministry of Agriculture.

Major areas of focus were highlighted and these are:
• Management Information Systems that have been put in place
• Institutional arrangements
• Indicators in place.

The group dwelt much on indicators for poverty monitoring. Each of the three sectors came up with a list of poverty monitoring indicators that have been put in place in their Ministries as shown below by sector.

6.3.1 A3: INDICATORS FOR THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR.

Agriculture information for poverty monitoring is derived from the poverty monitoring systems which were established to monitor the implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programs (PAP). Below are the indicators mentioned during the discussions:
• Access to credit to farmers.
• Access to extension services.
• Land under irrigation
• Production – crop and livestock estimates
• Productivity indicators – measure of efficiency per hectare.
6.3.2 A3: INDICATORS FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR.

The education sector has its own Education Management Information System (EMIS) database which is used to gather data on education indicators. Education Indicators were divided into three major categories:

**Access to education**
- Gross enrolment ratio
- Net enrolment ratio
- Participation ratio

**Efficiency**
- Drop – out rate
- Repetition rate

**Quality of education**
- Pass rate.

6.3.3 A3: INDICATORS FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR.

In health sector, the indicators were:
- Infant mortality rate
- Maternal Mortality rate
- Life expectancy.

6.3.4 A3: OPEN DISCUSSION ON POVERTY MONITORING PROGRAMS

Common features that were highlighted during the three presentations were:
- Systems heavily follow the decentralization principle.
- Data analysis is done almost at all levels.
- So many indicators are used.
- Data quality is questionable as figures are inflated for several reasons.

Issues raised during the discussion related to the incentives at each level.
- Accountability incentives involving community organisation
- Propensity to use the data generated
- Need for few indicators for monitoring poverty (Identify key indicators)
- Need for adequate resources: human and financial resources
- Need to improve data quality
- Need to rationalize the institutional arrangements (Restructure the systems): clarify link of NSO with other Government bodies
- Clarify and reinforce the role of NSO
- Use NSO as one stop data centre.
6.3.5 **A3: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POVERTY MONITORING PROGRAMMES**

- Participants agreed that in order to improve quality of data and information generated for use in poverty monitoring, it is essential that the producers and users of information keep in constant contact. This will ensure that appropriate data and information is generated and used.
- The group recommended use of NSO as the hub of data management. NSO should play the coordinating role in all issues relating to information and data management in the country.

6.4.0 **SESSION A4: INFORMATION SHARING**

There were three papers in this session namely National Statistics Office as a Producer of Statistics, Malawi Poverty Mapping and Poverty Mapping – the South African Experience.

6.4.1 **A4: PRESENTATION BY THE NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE AS A PRODUCER OF STATISTICS**

The first paper explained the role of NSO as producer of statistics, its range of products and how these products get to the users. Some of the organization’s surveys come out with important poverty indicators useful for poverty monitoring as well. These surveys are conducted at different intervals. The statistics are equally updated at different times. The information is shared through the survey reports; monthly and quarterly bulletins; annual publications; Internet and CD ROMs.

6.4.2 **A4: PRESENTATION ON POVERTY MAPPING IN MALAWI**

The second paper on poverty mapping highlighted the release of the recently published Atlas of Social Statistics which is to be distributed to some institutions. Poverty mapping is proving to be a user-friendly disseminating tool; the pictorial presentations are easy to interpret. One of the many uses of the maps is for poverty reduction strategies and programs. The Atlas of Social Statistics is going to be available in August, 2002 at NSO’s website; bookshops and the National Statistical Office.

6.4.3 **A4: PRESENTATION ON POVERTY MAPPING – THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE**

The third paper continued to dwell on usage of poverty mapping. The South African presentation showed the practical experience on how the maps have been a source of detailed and accurate information by different socio-economic groups. Poverty maps have also been known to improve targeting of resources and interventions. The
development challenges being faced in South Africa have given way to development plans that facilitate monitoring, reviewing and evaluating of various programmes and projects. Development of poverty maps has evolved as a result of initiatives to inform and support the development planning process.

It is necessary to relate the poverty reduction strategies and monitoring processes to these statistical products. Closer collaboration between the statistical office and data users is important in order to get the right needs on indicators, which have policy implications. There is also need for a clear institutional arrangement in order to achieve the goals in the poverty monitoring process.

6.4.3 A4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFORMATION SHARING

- It is necessary to relate the poverty reduction strategies and monitoring processes to these statistical products.
- Closer collaboration between the statistical office and data users is important in order to get the right needs on indicators, which have policy implications.
- There is also need for a clear institutional arrangement in order to achieve the goals in the poverty monitoring process.
- It was agreed that an institutional arrangement would require district statistics centres to disseminate information, while capacity building is still needed.

7.0.0 SESSION 5: SHARING REGIONAL EXPERIENCES – METHODS

This session generally offered an opportunity to stakeholders to appreciate progress made in the region relative to data dissemination standards, database development for poverty monitoring, statistical considerations in monitoring and specific instances of poverty monitoring applied to health.

7.1.0 PRESENTATION ON DATA STANDARDS – WHY USERS NEED THEM

This presentation focused on General Data Dissemination Standards (GDDS) Project directed by International Monetary Fund (IMF). The goal of the project is the sustainable improvement in the capacity of statistical systems of participating countries to support the production and dissemination of reliable, timely and relevant macro-economic and socio-demographic statistics. Key issues that were raised are highlighted below.

DFID is the funding agency while the IMF is the executing agency in collaboration with the World Bank. GDDS project has developed metadata now operating in these countries: Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
It is a structured process that addresses statistical requirements emerging from globalization. It sets out objectives for data production and dissemination in four areas of strategic importance:

• Data: coverage, periodicity and timelines
• Quality, including improvement plans
• Integrity
• Access by the public.

Macroeconomic and financial data involves, real, fiscal, financial and external sectors. Socio-demographic data have core indicators like population, poverty, health and education. Dissemination of reliable, comprehensive, and timely economic, financial, and socio-demographic data is essential to the transparency of macroeconomic performance and policy and in particular, monitoring the PRSP.

7.2.0 PRESENTATION ON TANZANIA SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATABASE

This paper highlighted the process of creating the Tanzania Socio-Economic Database (TSED) which is geared to monitoring efforts of attaining sustainable human development in Tanzania. The objectives of the TSED include the following:

• To enhance the availability and timely dissemination of data in order to support policy analysis and decision making of the government, its development partners and the public
• To strengthen the capacity of database management at the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
• To support the NBS in its role as an executive agency
• To build capacity among policy makers in the area of data analysis.

TSED will provide users with a comprehensive set of indicators that will help to monitor the development situation in Tanzania. It is expected to facilitate decision making at policy level and resource allocation. TSED has made some achievements and these are:

• Institutional set-up: this has seen the establishment of a steering committee with 12 Ministries and NBS as the chair.
• Database content: a list of 330 indicators has been identified covering nine sectoral and four cross-sectoral areas.
• Roll out of TSED to 10 pilot districts
• Database programming and customization
• Nomination of focal points: participating Ministries nominated two focal points to be in charge of TSED in their respective organizations
• Data management: data quality issues, an audit arrangement and communication lines have been agreed upon by all communicating Ministries
• Launch of database: It was launched in May 2001 and promotional materials to raise awareness amongst stakeholders were developed.

However, the TSED has some further steps to be undertaken for advancement. These steps are listed below:
• Network and Internet: participating Ministries will be connected to the Internet.
• Training: more training will be conducted for users because of new features of the TSED.
• Thematic seminars will be organized on a regular basis for data users. This will build on particular themes like poverty and enhance capacity for senior managers.
• Harmonizing TSED with local government monitoring and evaluation system will help generate a bulk of data in priority sectors: water, agriculture, governance, roads, health and poverty.

The success of the TSED is linked to a team of dedicated staff in the NBS and financial resources from donors especially UNICEF and UNDP.

7.3.0 PRESENTATION ON MALAWI SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATABASE

In the presentation, Malawi Socio-Economic Database (MASEDA) was shown to be an adaptation of ChildInfo software. ChildInfo is UNICEF’s internal system of data storage and dissemination. UNICEF advocated use of ChildInfo by local governments. This led to the formation of a Technical Working Group for MASEDA consisting of government officials, NGO officials, UN country team members and representatives from the university.

There was an illustration on how to retrieve information by using infant mortality rate as an indicator of child survival in the health sector. Equally, participants were shown the poverty-related information contained in the MASEDA. In fact, poverty monitoring is among the many uses of the database.

7.4.0 PRESENTATION ON BOTSWANA CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE – SOME EXPERIENCES

The presentation on Botswana Central Statistics Office (CSO) was made in order to share Regional Experiences. The presentation highlighted the functions and organizational structure of Botswana CSO.

The CSO is a Government Department in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning that operates within the framework of 1967 Statistics Act and 1904 Census Act of the Botswana Laws. The CSO, organised into three major divisions, functions coherently to provide information for monitoring, evaluation and formulation of development plans and programmes to Government Ministries and Departments, Non-Government Organizations and members of the public. It is the apex body in the official statistics system of the country hence most official statistics operations fall within the mandate of this office.

It has established user-producer committees meant to maintain a continuous dialogue between CSO and the major users of the data including the private sector. Whenever the CSO carries out exercises of multi-disciplinary nature such as population and
housing census, the Government forms reference and advisory committees to collaborate with the CSO on policy-related and technical matters.

7.5.0 PRESENTATION ON MONITORING SYSTEM IN THE HEALTH SECTOR IN UGANDA

Health reforms in Uganda have been characterized by the development of a new national health policy and a health sector strategic plan (HSSP) and the subsequent implementation of HSSP. To be properly aligned, appropriate priorities were set. This included determining Uganda national minimum health care package, organization and management of National Health System that involved restructuring of Ministry of Health and decentralization of health services and the reinforcement of the health service infrastructure.

The actual monitoring of the HSSP started off with a consensus to adopt 20 indicators, a review of the HMIS to meet the information needs of the HSSP, development of an indicator manual and reconsideration of data collection, analysis, interpretation and use at all levels. In addition, joint missions, quality assurance support supervision visits, district monthly reports through HMIS, weekly reporting of epidemic by nature and district were promoted. Quarterly review, senior staff and top management meetings corroborated the measures mentioned above.

In a nutshell, monitoring and evaluation of the health sector in Uganda has improved planning at all levels, influenced policy formulation and strengthened implementation of the HSSP.

8.0.0 SESSION 7: STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING THE MONITORING SYSTEM

The session concentrated on issues to do with the development of strategies for a poverty monitoring system. The following papers were presented:
- Poverty monitoring system for Tanzania
- Stakeholder Comments on the Institutional Set-up for MPRSP
- A Statistics Plan To Monitor Development – Recent Experiences From South Africa

8.1.0 POVERTY MONITORING SYSTEM FOR TANZANIA

The presentation started by giving an overview of Tanzania’s poverty monitoring system. Tanzania has established a comprehensive poverty monitoring system, which is documented in a Poverty Monitoring Master Plan (PMMP). The paper highlighted the following issues:
- Objectives of the Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) which were to:
  - ensure availability of timely and reliable information of poverty levels and
  - provide for accurate assessment of the impact of poverty reduction efforts
• Tanzania’s policy framework for poverty reduction includes a number of policy initiatives such as the Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS). TAS identified the need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to data and information. Besides, it also supported the development of the poverty monitoring system.
• An institutional framework served to accommodate interests and roles of various stakeholders in order to avoid duplication of efforts and wastage of resources.
• The main features of the Tanzanian PMS include the definition of information needs, data collection instruments, a dissemination plan and a joint funding system.
• The key outputs of PMS include reports, socio-economic database, an online library and policy briefs.
• Lessons learnt and the challenges faced in the Tanzania’ poverty monitoring process were considered useful in a context of the Malawi PMS implementation.

8.2.0 **STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS ON THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP FOR MPRS**

This presentation concentrated on issues to do with the development of a monitoring plan for poverty within the context of the MPRSP. It was inspired by the presentation of a paper entitled: “MPRSP-Where are we now?” which discussed progress made so far since the launch of the MPRSP. Key issues were identified. Critical issues arose in developing a poverty monitoring plan.

Featuring high in the plan is the institutional framework for monitoring. This must spell out clearly which institutions are responsible for monitoring. At the same time, the plan must identify institutions with the components they should monitor. Specifications in this regard must indicate reporting structures and feedback mechanisms. NEC was identified as the lead institution in this process.

The plan within the reporting format must indicate who are to take responsibility for making decisions and how these decisions are to be made. At the same time, it must clearly indicate the format in which information will be passed to those making decisions.

Organisation-specific monitoring in the process must be underscored. Nonetheless, organisations must be linked up to ensure a sound and complete feedback mechanism. This is particularly true for line ministries. This must allow for ascertaining progress for poverty issues that are identified with a particular ministry. This will allow line ministries to re-visit relevant strategies based on outcomes.

A clear and firm relationship between the monitoring plan and the statistical plan is indispensable to the process. Harmonisation of NSO data and that from other planning units must be undertaken to ensure a well-set focus. Indicators must constitute the core component to tracking the four pillars of the MPRS.
Involvement of stakeholders in the monitoring plan must be role-specific. How donors, the media, NGO’s, parliament, government etc are to be involved in monitoring must be determined and at the same time, who benefits from the monitoring exercise must be clarified. NGOs, parliament, government, and other interest groups must benefit from the process depending on how they represent the target groups.

Because resources play a crucial role in the success of a monitoring plan, linkage to the national budget is a must. It must be stated that monitoring success will hinge mainly on resources committed to the process.

8.3.0 A STATISTICS PLAN TO MONITOR DEVELOPMENT – RECENT EXPERIENCES FROM SOUTH AFRICA

The paper explained that the implementation process of National Statistical System which is an integrative framework requires a comprehensive strategic plan in order to meet development information needs. It was imperative to have the NSS in South Africa to bridge the information gap that existed in a society which had too many producers of statistics that was fragmented.

The NSS provides a framework to spearhead integrated planning and produces statistical outputs to match policy questions. One of the important issues that has been addressed by such an integrative framework is the need for quality and timely data by the government for planning in policy priority areas such as poverty alleviation. A strategic planning process was very important in the implementation of the NSS since it looked at the following issues: critical assessment of data gaps; identification and prioritization of current and future needs and full identification of required inputs and activities to be carried out.

9.0.0 PARALLEL SESSIONS B: STRATEGIES FOR MALAWI

Four groups held separate parallel sessions identified as B1, B2, B3 and B4 as shown in table 1. They examined how best to come up with specific strategies related to the poverty monitoring, statistical system, analysis and dissemination and institutional arrangements specifically for Malawi, taking into account the guidance of the preceding workshop presentation and discussion.

9.1.0 SESSION B1: POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

9.1.1 B1: PRESENTATION ON THE PLANNING PROCESS

Participants agreed that the planning process for poverty monitoring should not start from scratch since some work had already been done, for instance, PAP. They also discussed implications in the planning process. There was consensus that it was important to involve key stakeholders, from all sectors and at all levels, in the
process. In this regard, they noted with concern that MPs were not fully consulted in
the process. Summarised below are some of the key issues discussed.

9.1.2 B1: PRESENTATION ON THE POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

The presentation began by looking at the current state of poverty monitoring
mechanisms in Malawi. The group focused on how best a poverty-monitoring plan
could be developed and as a result the possible content structure of the plan was
suggested. Strengths and weaknesses were identified and recommendations made for
the effective monitoring of the MPRS.

- Poor coordination amongst various government agents in monitoring different
line programmes was pointed out as a problem, which was similarly shared
among other NGOs.
- The need to strengthen institutional coordination is, therefore, indispensable for
the success of monitoring. Hence, monitoring roles need to be clarified.
- It also became evident that indicators to be monitored must be clearly identified
and defined.
- Sources of information that will be required for monitoring and evaluation should
be ascertained.
- More importantly, monitoring should be done at both district (sub-national) and
national level. The frequency and duration of monitoring would depend on the
nature of information obtainable and data requirements.
- Harmonisation of the data systems is quite critical in order to guard against
inconsistency in information.
- Roles and responsibilities of government, parliament and the civil society in the
monitoring process must be clearly described and explained. In addition, the
national budget cycle must be aligned to MPRS.
- The presentation showed that poverty analysis must be purpose-focused.

9.1.3 B1: OPEN DISCUSSION ON THE POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

In the discussion that ensued, participants raised more questions than answers. The
objective was to bring out issues that should be considered when designing the
Poverty Monitoring Plan. Some of the questions are presented below:

- Participants wanted to know who would check consistency of different data for
same indicator?
- Who would use or benefit from PMP, NGOs, Parliament, Government, etc?
- How would stakeholders be involved in the PMP?
- How would capacity building in poverty monitoring be achieved?

In addition to the questions, participants also raised the following issues:

- Diversity of views: some participants feel that the PAP system can be used, while
others feel that a completely new plan should be develop.
• Link to national budget, annual monitoring cycle needs to be integrated with the budget cycle.
• The need to meet short and medium term demands for monitoring poverty

9.1.4 B1: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

• Institutionalise a list of indicators
• Fit the PMP into the budget cycle in order to secure funding
• Incorporate private sector and civil society information
• Create a task force to look at data supply and demand
• Run a cost-benefit analysis of the PMP whereby NSO, NEC, and the MoF examine the costs and a secondary task force examines the benefits
• Create a balanced, rolling plan on a three to five year cycle to avoid bunching of surveys.

9.2.0 SESSION B2: PLAN FOR STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Group B2 looked at the current statistical system in Malawi with the aim of proposing a new system in line with NSO’s STRATEGIC PLAN 2002 – 2006. The discussion was preceded by presentations summarised below.

9.2.1 B2: BACKGROUND TO AND THE SET-UP OF NSO

Giving background information on NSO the following points were highlighted:
• The 1967 Act gives NSO the mandate to collect and manage official statistics in Malawi
• The common service of NSO was abolished but has recently been reinstated
• NSO has a headquarters consisting of four technical divisions and three regional offices.

9.2.2 B2: OPEN DISCUSSION ON STATISTICAL SYSTEM

• Participants noted that MASEDA as a database has several indicators. They wanted to know how standards would be maintained when monitoring these various indicators.
• Participants also wanted to know whether the Statistical Office could consider monitoring the administration costs that go into the implementation of poverty reduction projects. As observed only 30% is used for technical purposes whilst 70% is used for administration.
9.2.3 B2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STATISTICAL SYSTEM

With regards to the structure and mandate of NSO, the following issues were raised for consideration:

- A Review of the 1967 Statistics Act as soon as possible
- Mandating NSO to be the official producer of statistics in Malawi
- Empowering NSO to undertake standardisation, quality control and coordination of statistical data to be reflected in a revised Act
- Establishing stronger linkages and networking with other Ministries, Parliament, District Assemblies in line with decentralisation and other stakeholders.
- Performing a formal data user assessment which will include cost, timeline and agencies to be involved, leading to the creation of a concrete statistical system
- Developing a Statistical Master Plan based on the needs assessment and setting up a harmonised and centrally-coordinated Unitary Statistical System
- Making NSO a one stop centre for statistics through MASEDA

9.3.0 SESSION B3: INFORMATION SHARING AND DISSEMINATION

Group B3 started by sharing a common understanding of what it means to share information effectively and the specific steps that need to be taken. The session noted that information sharing was diverse because there are many stakeholders involved.

9.3.1 B3: OPEN DISCUSSION ON INFORMATION SHARING AND DISSEMINATION

The group discussed the importance of information sharing and dissemination with regard to poverty monitoring and evaluation. After the initial discussions, the group emphasized the importance of a number of issues including the following:

- Evaluating the information that is currently available and what would be needed in future
- Determining the information requirements for specific target groups
- Defining the aim of poverty information analysis and dissemination; performing the analysis accordingly and where desirable engage a multi-disciplinary team in joint analysis of data
- Developing strategies to facilitate dissemination by listing all the stakeholders and improving the users’ understanding of the information through training on how to use the available information
- Determining the channels through which the information should be disseminated i.e. media, workshops, meetings, electronic mechanism etc with special attention given to the language and messages so as to be compatible with the target group’s ability to comprehend
- Promoting continuous interaction of users and producers of statistics, translating data into meaningful information that should hinge on the ultimate goal of statistical production.
9.3.2 B3: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFORMATION SHARING AND DISSEMINATION

Several recommendations were made to specifically address the issues outlined above.

- The group felt that it was very important to have an interim implementation committee on analysis and dissemination to oversee the implementation of the activities proposed in the discussions.
- Institutionalise list of indicators
- Reporting to fit budget cycle
- Incorporate private sector and civil society information
- Include non-survey information
- Balance consultation and effectiveness
- Create a small task force of parties to look into supply and demand
- Develop a joint exercise on costing
- Make use of other working groups

9.4.0 SESSION B4: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Group B4 was charged with the responsibility of reviewing the current institutional framework for poverty monitoring and evaluation and to bring up recommendations for improving its performance. The group’s discussions were preceded by presentations summarized below.

**Cabinet Committee on the Economy**
The session noted that there is a CCE responsible for the Economy. The composition of the committee is as follows:

- His Excellency, the State President (Chairman)
- 10 ministers, including Minister of Finance
- RBM Governor
- Director-General NEC.

The main roles of this committee in MPRSP are:

- Policy decision-making
- Agenda setting for economic development.

**MPRSP Steering Committee**
Below the Cabinet Committee on the Economy is the MPRSP Steering Committee. It consists of:

- Principal Secretaries of Ministries represented in CCE, other Ministries and NEC
- Commissioner of Census and Statistics
- General Manager of RBM

The group observed that the composition of the steering committee does not reflect the involvement of stakeholders in MPRSP implementation.
The role of the MPRSP steering Committee is:
- Making recommendations for management decisions to CCE
- Implementation of decisions

**Technical Working Committee**

A Technical Working Committee works below the Steering Committee. Its membership is as follows:
- Government of Malawi: Ministry of Finance, NEC (Chair), NSO etc
- Donors
- Civil Society: CONGOMA (one group for each pillar of PRSP)
- Researchers of major sectors (CSR, CERT…)
- Media
- Local Government (one for each region and Malawi Association of Local Governments)
- Key Parliamentary Committees (Budget & Finance)
- PAC, Agriculture,
- NO private sector

The Role of the Technical Working Committee includes:
- Coordination of Monitoring & Evaluation System
- Provide Analysis
- Other roles? Discussion Forum (Stakeholders Committee?)

The TWC reports to:
- MoF, NEC and NSO provide reports to TWG
- The group observed that there were no mechanisms for reporting by others/stakeholders

**National Steering Committee**
- It is placed in NEC as interim M&E measure
- to be included in TWG?

### 9.4.1 B4: OPEN DISCUSSION ON INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

After the presentation the following questions were asked:
1. What is the relationship of this structure to “outside world” (civil society, parliament…)?
2. How to relate internal Information System institutions?

### 9.4.2 B4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Although no official arrangements were sanctioned as result of the workgroup, a suggestion for the following structure was made:
Proposed Institutional Set-Up for MPRS Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The emerging issues regarding the MPRS institutional set-up included:
- Establishment of one Secretariat to coordinate both the MPRS implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation
- The Technical Working Committee to be replaced by a Stakeholders’ Committee
- Four Technical Working Committees (TWCs) to be formed reflecting the MPRS Pillars
- The MPRS Secretariat to provide linkage between the Stakeholders’ Committee and the Steering Committee as well as to serve the Minister of Finance
- The Minister of Finance to provide policy briefs and other matters to the Cabinet Committee on the Economy
- MOFEP, NEC, NSO, Parliamentary Committees and Committees on cross-cutting issues to be represented on all four Pillars.

A Cabinet paper was expected by the end of September to resolve the institutional arrangements, following several papers by each of key ministries and consultation with stakeholders.
10.0.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of day three which marked the end of the workshop, participants came up with conclusions and recommendations mapping the way forward for monitoring and evaluating poverty with special reference to the MPRSP. The conclusions and recommendations followed on four areas:

- The plan for a national statistical system.
- The Poverty Monitoring Plan.
- The Institutional arrangements for poverty monitoring and evaluation.
- Analysis and dissemination of information.

10.1.0 A NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

The Workshop noted the importance of developing a comprehensive and well-coordinated national statistical system in Malawi with the NSO as the main hub. To do so, however, there was need to come up with a national statistical plan. The workshop also noted that in order to come up with the national statistical plan there were some activities that need to be done first.

10.1.1 RECOMMENDATION FOR A NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

The following activities were recommended:

- Reviewing the current Statistics, 1967 Act so that Malawi system may be aligned with the regional best practices
- Identifying producers and major users of statistics and hold consultative meetings so that their interest and needs may be synchronised
- The need to conduct formal user needs assessment was emphasized
- The workshop also agreed on the need to develop a Master Plan for the Statistical System based on the needs assessment
- Setting up a unitary statistical system, which is harmonised and centrally co-ordinated, is another important activity that should be pursued
- Participants also agreed on the need to establish comprehensive and integrated Databank in NSO=>MASEDA for all users.
- Participants noted that MPRSP indicators were readily available in MASEDA. They recommended that MPRSP should modify and use such a single database instead of re-inventing the wheel in conformity with their requirements.

10.2.0 POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

One of the planned outputs of the workshop was the prototype of the Poverty Monitoring Plan. This was to be developed through the various inputs and discussions at the workshop. Some pertinent issues were raised in the workshop as presented below:
Participants wanted to know what happens if indicators move in different directions when the conclusions about poverty trends in such a case are not clear. Participants wanted to know the capacity factors that need to be considered when designing a Poverty Monitoring System. Participants also debated the optional size of the unit that will do the poverty monitoring and analysis.

Behind the development of a PMP are guiding principles set by a consultative process including all stakeholders. It must demonstrate commitment to make monitoring transparent and accountable.

Key objectives in developing a PMP include the following:
- Summarise the information needs for the PMP
- Identify the information sources
- Describe how flows of poverty information will be managed
- Embody flows in institutional frameworks
- Specify the PMP outputs
- Design and cost a training program
- Prepare a 3-year budget to coincide with the PMP
- Ensure the Plan is consistent
- Specify when and how PMP may be revised and amended, as per experience

10.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POVERTY MONITORING PLAN

Participants came up with the recommendations that are summarised below:
- Institutionalising the list of indicators.
- Reporting must fit in with budget cycle so that poverty monitoring plan can secure funds.
- Incorporate private sector and civil society information (data), e.g. business survey
- Use non-survey information, e.g. progress on reforms and programmes.
- Find the right balance between consultation and effectiveness.
- With respect to capacity building, encourage on the job training and perhaps inter-country exchange,
- Set up small task force (National Statistical Office, National Economic Council, Ministry of Finance and other interested parties) to examine data supply and demand.
- Make use of some or all of the Working groups.
10.3.0 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Institutional arrangements are critical for any successful monitoring and evaluation programme. The workshop discussed these in detail both in plenary and groups. At the end, the workshop agreed that there were two outstanding issues with regard to the institutional arrangements for monitoring and evaluating poverty in Malawi: the MPRSP secretariat and funding arrangement.

- **MPRS Secretariat**
  With regard to the secretariat, the workshop agreed that more work need to be done in the following items:
  - Composition
  - Mandate
  - Location
  - Reporting Lines

- **Funding arrangements**
  - MPRS Secretariat
  - MPRS Stakeholders Committee
  - Working Groups

10.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Having noted the outstanding issues, the workshop then recommended that the activities listed underneath should be implemented soon after the workshop.

- Summary of outstanding issues (produced by National Economic Council by 1 August)
- Summary paper sent to key Government Departments (Ministry of Finance, National Economic Council, Office of the President and Cabinet, National Statistical Office, Ministry of Poverty Alleviation, Office of the Vice President, Local Government) in advance of technical level meeting 2nd week of August (chaired by National Economic Council).
- Recommendations sent to a wider stakeholder group (1st week of September for discussion at a half day stakeholder forum (mid September).
- A Cabinet Paper should be ready by end of September for submission.

10.4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

The Workshop noted that a lot of work is being done in data collection and analysis but this does not reach a wider audience. On analysis, the workshop came up with the following recommendations:

- Ensure that analysis covers input, output, outcome and indicators of the MPRS and include causal and correlational aspects of the poverty trends.
• Ensure harmonization and standardization of concepts, definitions and 
classification of poverty data for all sectors. Provide support to common data 
bank, e.g. MASEDA.
• Ensure adequate capacity and resources to undertake analysis.
• Undertake and ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to analysis.
• Establish a stable and consistent multi-sectoral task team for analysis and 
dissemination.

10.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

• Identify stakeholders, their information and dissemination needs.
• Develop a dissemination schedule and feedback/evaluation process.
• Package information appropriately for each target audience taking into account 
the profile of possible users.
• Ensure provision of adequate resources to maintain dissemination (human, 
financial, material: equipment, data collection tools etc).
• Adopt and maintain a coordinated, integrated approach with common 
dissemination standards (alternatively, central dissemination host).

10.5.0 WORKSHOP CONCLUSION: THE WAY FORWARD

The following are elements to be considered for the way forward:
• Consolidate the proposals by all stakeholders of the MPRS
• Develop and maintain appropriate institutional arrangements.
• Marshal adequate resources.
• Win political support.
## APPENDIX I

### PAPERS AND PRESENTERS AT THE WORKSHOP

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### LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

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