

*Poverty Eradication
in Southern Africa:*

INVOLVEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY
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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
AND ANGOLA

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POVERTY OBSERVATORIES

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Nuno Vidal



Associação Cultural e Recreativa
CHÁ DE CAXINDE

Media XXI

FIRST PUBLISHED IN LUANDA & BRUSSELS BY

Chá de Caxinde, Media XXI & Firmamento

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ISBN: 978-989-96447-4-8

N. DL: 335831/11

Layout & design: Elsa Pereira

angola.conference@gmail.com

www.africanarenas.net

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is the result of an auspicious combination of efforts and the collaboration of myriad institutions and interviewees who gave their valuable time and contribution to help in the elaboration of this study. The field research was conducted by the author in Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo during the months of June and July 2010, within the Southern Africa Trust (SAT) project on 'National poverty monitoring structures and the proposed SADC Regional Poverty Observatory'. A previous report was produced by the author for that project and this book derives in large part from that research and report.¹

The author would particularly like to thank Robert Mabala (Conseil National des ONG de Développement de la RD-Congo), Semkae Kilonzo (Policy Forum – Tanzania), Reginald Munisi (Consultant on MKUKUTA to Policy Forum – Tanzania) and João Pereira (Civil Society Support Mechanism – Mozambique) for their corrections, valuable comments and suggestions on the text.

Special thanks are due to the United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC) for the international conference organised in its Brussels office to launch this book in order to discuss the theme and issues raised in it.

A word of recognition and gratitude is also owed to Clare Smedley and Steve Kibble for their great copy-editing work in a very limited period of time.

Finally, it must be noted that the author's work and the UNRIC conference takes place within a long-standing project of research-action developed since 2004 by the University of Coimbra, the Angolan Catholic University and the Angolan NGO Action for Rural Development and Environment (ADRA-Angola) together with several other civil society organisations (CSOs), with the support of Christian Aid – UK, Open Society Angola and, more recently, Norwegian People's Aid and the ESCOM Foundation.²

¹ Vidal, Nuno, *Civil society participation in the SADC regional poverty observatory and national poverty observatories. Four case studies: Mozambique, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola*, a report to the Southern Africa Trust (Johannesburg: SAT, 2010).

² www.ces.uc.pt/conferenciaangola or www.africanarenas.net

ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA-Angola	Angolan NGO Action for Rural Development and Environment
AU	African Union
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme
CACS	Councils for Social Listening and Coordination (<i>Conselhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social</i>) in Angola
CI-SNLCP	Inter-ministerial Commission on Implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy in DRC
CBO	community-based organisation
CSO	civil society organisation
CSO-JPE	CSO Joint Platform for Engagement in Tanzania
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECP	Strategy to Fight Poverty (<i>Estratégia de Combate à Pobreza</i>) in Angola
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
EU	European Union
FBO	faith-based organisation
FCS	Foundation for Civil Society
FONGA	Forum of Angolan NGOs
HIPC	heavily indebted poor country
IBEP	questionnaire on the well-being of the population used in Angola (<i>Inquérito Integrado ao Bem-Estar das Populações</i>)
ICP	international cooperation partner
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INE	National Statistics Institute in Angola (<i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i>)
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme in DRC
LDC	least developed country
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	multiple indicator research questionnaire used in Angola (<i>Inquérito de Indicadores Múltiplos</i>)
MINPLAN	Ministry of Planning in Angola
MKUKUTA	see NSGRP
MKUZA	a poverty reduction strategy for Zanzibar

MMMP	MKUKUTA Monitoring Master Plan
MMS	MKUKUTA Monitoring System
MP	member of parliament
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NPES	Tanzanian National Poverty Eradication Strategy of 1998
NPO	National Poverty Observatory
NSGRP	National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty of Tanzania – also known as MKUKUTA
PAF	Mozambican government's performance assessment matrix
PAPs	<i>Parceiros do Apoio Programático de Moçambique</i> – the Programme Aid Partners in Mozambique, or G19
PARPA	<i>Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta</i> – name in Mozambique for the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PES	Mozambican government's <i>Programa Económico e Social</i> – social and economic programme
PMIDRCP	Municipal Programmes for Rural Development and the Fight against Poverty (<i>Programas Municipais Integrados de Desenvolvimento Rural e Combate à Pobreza</i>) in Angola
PMS	Poverty Monitoring System
PO	Poverty Observatory
PPO	Provincial Poverty Observatory (called for in Mozambique)
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRGSP	Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy Paper
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSIA	Poverty and Social Impact Assessment
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RPO	Regional Poverty Observatory
RPRF	Regional Poverty Reduction Framework
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SAT	Southern Africa Trust
UNAC	<i>União Nacional dos Camponeses</i> – the Mozambican Peasants' Association
UNCSAC	United Nations Civil Society Advisory Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRIC	United Nations Regional Information Centre
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SUMMARY

This book presents an analysis and evaluation of CSOs' participation in national/regional mechanisms for the monitoring and alleviation of poverty, with special emphasis on the 2008 Southern African Development Community (SADC) project of a Regional Poverty Observatory (RPO) and the National Poverty Observatories (NPOs) present throughout the region. The research was based on four case studies – Mozambique, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola. These case studies demonstrate several specific characteristics but also many similarities in crucial areas, allowing us to understand general tendencies and enabling us to perceive several obstacles that need to be overcome in order to make CSOs an effective partner for development and poverty eradication in the region. The research study is also intended to contribute to making mechanisms such as the RPOs and NPOs more efficient and effective in the alleviation and eradication of poverty in the region, and hence in improving the life of the poor.

The study is mainly focused on CSOs' participation in poverty eradication mechanisms, although it also discusses the role of other stakeholders such as the international cooperation partners (ICPs)³ and the private sector, and their relationship with CSOs and governments in tackling poverty.

In fact, the whole strategy of participation within the RPO process seems to be structured around four main actors – governments, ICPs, CSOs and the private sector. In practice, the effectiveness of mechanisms for CSOs' participation and involvement in RPO and NPOs seems linked to three factors:

1. the relationship between government and ICPs, and the type and scope of ICPs' inner structure;

³ In this work the term international cooperation partners (ICPs) includes international governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as bilateral cooperation, i.e. all organisations that are donors to the governments of the countries analysed in this work and/or to these countries' civil society.

2. the relationship between government and CSOs and the type and scope of CSOs, inner structure;
3. the relationship between government and the private sector, and the relationship between the private sector and CSOs.

In the first case, i.e. the relationship between government and ICPs, examples vary from countries where ICPs do have a strong and effective leverage over governments (clearly in the case of Mozambique and Tanzania, but also in the DRC) and cases where they have weak influence and leverage (Angola). Cases vary from where ICPs have more coordinated action, effectively pressuring the government for civil society inclusion (Mozambique, Tanzania and DRC), to places where ICPs have more difficulty in coordinating their policies, prioritising their governments' political agendas and strategies (Angola). Cases vary from where ICPs have their own favoured CSOs that they support according to particular agendas (e.g. Angola) to places where ICPs more or less support civil society as a whole (Mozambique, Tanzania and to a lesser degree the DRC). In general terms, CSOs' participation is more effective in cases where ICPs do have leverage and act in more coordinated ways.

In the second case, i.e. the relationship between government and CSOs, the effectiveness of CSOs' participation and intervention seems to depend on the manner in which government and CSOs approach each other. There is a dominant mindset of suspicion between governments and CSOs due to a long history of constraints emanating from the single-party regime period. This is exacerbated by the intervention of CSOs into political issues at the time of transition. Governments in general are keener to accept a social service delivery model from CSOs rather than interventions into policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes. Governments also harbour doubts as to the technical capacities of CSOs and suspect that their agendas are close to political opposition movements. A better working relationship between CSOs and the government seems to depend on getting rid of this climate of suspicion (Mozambique is the best of the four cases in this respect, Tanzania and DRC show some positive signs, while Angola is the worst). A better working relationship also seems to depend on the level of capacity shown by CSOs themselves in terms of working out their ideas, coordination and presentation of sound and well-structured proposals for specific programmes and policies.

In the third case, i.e. the relationship between the government and private sector and between private sector and other stakeholders, cooperation between these bodies in the national poverty alleviation programmes has encountered some obstacles to achieving full effectiveness. In general, the private sector is still over-dependent politically on the governments and prefers a direct and exclusive relationship with the government. This ignores the wider development forums, and relegates the relationship with other stakeholders in those forums to a secondary status.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a structural problem for most African countries and has been the primary target for development strategies since independence. More specific and technical attention has been devoted to addressing the symptoms of poverty (through monitoring and evaluation) throughout the 1990s (within the so-called transition processes) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). A new international awareness and commitment towards poverty eradication occurred with the 2000 Millennium Summit, which helped to take forward national and regional policies, by working out strategies and gaining some momentum.

Despite real growth in GDP, both absolute and per capita, for the southern Africa region prior to the 2008 global financial crisis, and despite decreasing inflation, there is a major and generalised problem of deeply unequal distribution of resources and wealth.

The SADC region still faces serious poverty – 45% of the region’s population lives on 1 US dollar a day, and life expectancy has declined from 60 to 40 years in less than a decade. The situation in the region has been compounded by a number of factors including hunger, malnutrition, landlessness, food insecurity, global issues, natural disasters, gender inequalities, exploitation, marginalisation, high morbidity, intra and inter-state conflicts arising from political governance challenges, resource constraints, corruption and weak macro-economic governance, and the negative impacts of globalisation and unequal power in trade regimes. High HIV and AIDS prevalence rates add to these problems, with an estimated 11.7 to 18.8 million people of the region currently living with HIV. Most of the SADC countries are unlikely to achieve several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).⁴

⁴ See *The SADC Region Poverty Profile, Summary Background Document*, SADC International Conference on Poverty and Development (Pailles, Mauritius: 18-20 April 2008); also SADC Council of Non Governmental Organisations – Poverty and Development Programme; available at www.sadccngo.org

Poverty eradication is an official priority focus for SADC. SADC Treaty Objective 1(a) states that the organisation seeks 'to achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration'. The SADC region has therefore developed and is implementing its Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), a framework for development which assigns top priority to poverty eradication, achieving high and sustainable economic growth and deepening economic integration. A Regional Poverty Reduction Framework (RPRF) has also been developed in order to make the overall goal more effective. The implementation of these broadly encompassing and general frameworks and strategies implied the integration of specific activities for poverty eradication, starting with the need for regional monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (M&E).

At the SADC level, M&E is considered a critical component of specific national poverty reduction strategies and an area where indicators need to be harmonised across countries and to fit with agreed regional policies in macro-economic strategy, trade, income, infrastructure and the social sector (education, health, social security, etc.). Inter-country poverty monitoring and analysis would bolster the coordinated fight against poverty, facilitating harmonisation of indicators, standards, methods, reforms and execution of national poverty reduction strategies. It would also allow inter-country comparative performance analysis, creating healthy competition for best practice in poverty alleviation/eradication policies. Moreover, it would assist in monitoring the region's progress in attaining MDG targets by member states.

It is within this context and to satisfy these needs that, in April 2008, SADC Heads of State signed the Declaration on Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development during a SADC international conference on Poverty and Development held in Mauritius. Article 3(i) of the Declaration resolved that SADC would establish a regional 'Poverty Observatory' (RPO). This RPO is intended as a forum where all stakeholders working in poverty eradication at the regional and national levels – government, civil society, business and the international cooperating partners (ICPs) – meet to evaluate and monitor the implementation of the Regional Poverty Reduction Framework (RPRF).

The RPO will have regional and national structures; at the regional level there will be a specialised independent structure hosted by the SADC Secretariat (in Gaborone), creating synergies with the SADC Statistical Programme (dealing with the harmonisation of statistics and capacity building of the

national statistical systems of Member States) and the Macro Economic Convergence Programme (focusing on Member States' economic growth).

The RPO will act in coordination with national poverty monitoring observatories, acting as country nodes (sometimes also known as focal points) providing information to the RPO, and coordinating the work undertaken by relevant ministries at national level. National Poverty Observatories (NPOs) will be institutionally overseen by the ministry in charge of the coordination of poverty reduction strategies (usually ministries of planning and finance).

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are expected to play an important role within these structures at the national and regional level, as important stakeholders working on poverty eradication. Technical support to the RPO and NPOs (country nodes) is also expected to be provided by specialised institutions (research centres, regional thematic networks, universities, etc.).

There is acceptance and space for CSO participation and contribution to poverty alleviation policies and development programmes from the national to the regional dimension. This will fit with international forums on poverty eradication. It is now up to civil society to make the most of this opportunity – which might not be an easy task.

Although the SADC Treaty (Art. 23) provides for the involvement of people of the region and key stakeholders in the process of regional integration, civil society participation in such processes is far from effective. This is due to several factors – including CSOs' lack of national and regional coordination or understanding, their lack of capacity to respond to broader regional issues, the sometimes hostile and suspicious attitude of many governments towards CSOs (the latter being seen as politically suspect), and the lack of appropriate preparation to discuss very specific/technical issues. Given that the issues under discussion encompass several areas (environment, health, education, macro-economics, etc.), requiring very specific/technical analyses, there is a need for a qualitative participation in specialised discussions based on careful preparation and coordination among the most suitable CSOs working in each specific area.

CSOs' capacity to influence the national/regional development agenda depends upon their ability to face and overcome these obstacles. The RPO/NPO structures and the space created for CSO participation might represent a significant step forward.

For the purposes of this study, CSOs are defined as the wide range of non-governmental and non-profit organisations existing and acting in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic principles.⁵ This concept should not be confused with the more recent concept developed by the European Union – ‘non-state actors’ – which encompasses the CSOs and the private sector.

Selection of case-studies and methodology

Taking into consideration the objectives of this project, budget limitations and time constraints, four case studies were selected for baseline research – Mozambique, Tanzania, DRC and Angola. Mozambique is often seen as an example of a relatively successful case within the regional context, having evolved from the national poverty observatory to a development observatory with increasing influence on public policies. Tanzania is also pointed out as having a good level of CSO commitment and for becoming better coordinated, supported by ICPs and accepted by the government. The DRC has put in place an ambitious plan to institutionalise mechanisms for CSO coordination, bringing together the contributions of local and national CSOs to have a greater influence on government policies. Angola was included for being at the opposite pole, with a high level of fragmentation and division among CSOs, an acute lack of CSO participation in government development strategies/policies, and non-existent permanent dialogue structures between CSOs and government for poverty eradication programmes.

In addition to the main selection criteria set out above, the case-study countries have the advantage of balancing linguistic and geographical factors, including anglophone, francophone and lusophone countries in different areas ranging from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean.

The methodology for this study began by reviewing the existing written information on the Regional Poverty Observatory process and national poverty observatories or other poverty M&E structures/programmes/policies in SADC member states, with special focus on the four case studies. A set of questions was established to guide the research in each country:

⁵ <http://go.worldbank.org/4CE7W046K0>

- What kind of M&E structures to measure and assess poverty exist in each country, and how are they organised?
- What kind of CSO participation exists (in terms of both strength and quality) in those structures?
- What kind of strategies exist in each country for the engagement and participation of CSOs in national and regional poverty observation structures?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of those structures and strategies?
- What lessons can be learnt from these case studies in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of CSOs' participation in national and regional poverty M&E structures?

A second stage comprised a month and a half of field research in the four selected countries. A pre-established strategy / methodology for field research was followed, including documentary analysis, and a series of interviews with key stakeholders, i.e. government officials, civil society members, donor community, faith-based organisations, trade unions, women's organisations, private sector, and scientific research centres.

Opinions of interviewees and informants were collected on how they envisioned CSO participation in national and regional poverty observatory structures, and how such participation could be improved and made effective, bearing in mind the final and main goal: alleviating/eradicating poverty and ameliorating the living conditions of the poor. Selection of key informants and interviewees was made through several processes, before and during field research. A first selection was based on the identification of stakeholders through previous documents and projects of several organisations working in the selected countries. A second stage took place during the field research itself, based on information collected and/or specifically mentioned and suggested by other interviewees in the course of interviews or contacts. This in turn drew from the criterion of having complementary and opposing perspectives.

Such a process of selection of key stakeholders and informants is always subjective; evidence based on a relatively small number of selected interviews offers a relatively weak basis for generalisation and sound conclusions. In order to minimise such weaknesses, a careful cross-checking of information

and data was carried out, sensitively challenging interviewees with differing criticism, opinions, arguments and evidence from other interviewees. A careful reading of documents on those themes proved crucial in cross-checking information.

Structure

Bearing in mind the overall objectives of this study and the central questions at the heart of the research, a set of structural guidelines was designed:

- a) background assessment of the prevailing international development thinking and strategies;
- b) analysis of the state of CSOs' participation in the country by highlighting the provisions made in official texts and through expert opinion;
- c) identification of the official structures for monitoring and evaluation of poverty in the country, highlighting how these structures are organised;
- d) analysis of CSOs' strategies for participation in these structures;
- e) stakeholders' expectations and participation in poverty observatories;
- f) proposals for improved CSO participation in national poverty monitoring structures and in the proposed SADC Regional Poverty Observatory;
- g) recommendations on policies to improve CSOs' participation and engagement at the national and regional levels.

Guideline a) is examined in Chapter 1. Guidelines b), c) and d) are dealt with in Chapter 2 (see 2.1 for Mozambique, 2.2 for Tanzania, 2.3 for DRC and 2.4 for Angola). Guideline e) is addressed in Chapter 3, while guidelines f) and g) are part of Chapter 4.

1

BACKGROUND: DOMINANT DEVELOPMENT
THINKING AND STRATEGIES⁶

Development assistance strategies have been predominantly influenced by two major currents of thought – neo-liberal and neo-Marxist. During the first transition phase (late 1980s/1990s) civil society held a central role in development assistance (mainly influenced by neo-Marxist perspectives such as participatory development, *empowerment* and development from below), but this phase ended with NGOs conceding their role to the state, with a gradual acceptance of neo-liberal currents of thought. The latter was embodied in so-called *institutionalist thinking*, promoting institutional support to beneficiary states through the national budget. Civil society is now expected to exercise a supportive and complementary role, by contributing to government policies, but abandoning demands of a more political nature. The notion of civil society has gradually been losing ground to the wider and more flexible concept of ‘non-state actors’.

In face of the phenomenon of so-called Failed States (with derelict institutions, lack of development and socio-political instability), institutionalist thinking called for the improvement of and heavy investment in the modern bureaucratic-administrative state. Civil society was viewed within an instrumentalist and functional view of democracy, from a micro, short-term and sectoral dimension. It faced a multiplicity of gradualist reformist functions, from the implementation of social projects for needy populations, to monitoring authorities and public services in specific sectors (health, education, environment, agriculture, food security, etc.).

This current of thought gradually prevailed in the late 1990s throughout major international organisations and donor agencies (European Union,

⁶ Deeper analysis of development thinking since the 1980s to the present day can be found in Vidal, Nuno ‘The international institutionalization of patrimonialism in Africa. The case of Angola’, in Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal (eds) *Southern Africa: civil society, politics and donor strategies* (Lisbon: Media XXI & Firmamento, 2009), pp. 19-44.

United Nations, World Bank, IMF, United States Agency for International Development – USAID –, bilateral cooperation and development agencies, and innumerable international NGOs) and became apparent in various state-building programmes dealing with the national budget, notably the World Bank PRSPs. During the first decade of the new century, these strategies were further evident in such key aid strategy documents as the Declaration on Harmonisation adopted in Rome (February 2003), the Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development Results (February 2004)⁷, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008),⁸ the Cotonou Agreement of 2000 & 2005 and the Millennium Declaration (2000).⁹

Such strategic repositioning was operationalised throughout this decade in different programmes (especially the European Union), where the major new idea was the gradual substitution of the concept of civil society by the concept of non-state actors, including traditional CSOs, churches, trade unions, and the private sector.¹⁰ In this way, the private sector would apparently become more involved in making the corporate social responsibility agenda a reality, becoming jointly accountable in solving the social problems of the poorest, together with strengthened support to the agricultural private sector. The latter is seen as the new strategic driver of poverty eradication and sustainable development, reflected in key international documents such as the UN World Summit of 2005. This proposed the launch of an African Green Revolution. The Cotonou Agreement revision of 2005 purported to strengthen ACP agricultural and rural development organisations through the EU-ACP Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation. The

⁷ The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness expresses the international community's consensus on the direction for reforming and managing aid delivery to achieve improved effectiveness and results. It is grounded in five mutually reinforcing principles: *Ownership*: partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies, and coordinate development actions; *Alignment*: donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions, and procedures; *Harmonisation*: donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent, and collectively effective; *Managing for results*: managing resources and improving decision making for development results; *Mutual accountability*: donors and partners are accountable for development results. The Declaration on Harmonisation and the Marrakech Roundtable report are available at www.aidharmonization.org/

⁸ The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, located at www.oecd.org/

⁹ See, 'The Cotonou Agreement'; *Partnership Agreement ACP-EU*, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, revised in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005 (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006), located at <http://ec.europa.eu;> *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, General Assembly Resolution A/55/L.2, 18 September 2000, located at www.un.org/millennium/summit.htm; *The Cotonou Agreement, A User's Guide for Non-State Actors*, compiled by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (Brussels: ACP Secretariat, November 2003) accessed from www.acpsec.org.

¹⁰ See *The Cotonou Agreement, A User's Guide for Non-State Actors*, compiled by The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) (Brussels: ACP Secretariat, November 2003) located at www.acpsec.org

2009 G8 meeting in L'Aquila looked to renew the commitment of the donor community to the African Union (AU)/New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). Finally the 2010 Abuja Conference provided an endorsement of the African Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development Initiative – 3ADI – through the stimulus of private companies.

Table 1: International/regional milestones of poverty eradication policies/strategies

Details of international/regional milestones	Year
Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers – PRSPs. IMF/World Bank-inspired macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes. Designed to promote growth and reduce poverty, these are in many ways the substitutes for Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). These programmes were compulsory for gaining World Bank loans under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). Conditions include: structural adjustment lending, the Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative (SAPRIN), Poverty and Social Impact Assessment (PSIA), PRGF, letters of intent.	1990s
UN World Summit for Social Development – pledged to beat poverty, with the goal of full employment and the fostering of stable, safe and just societies as their overriding objectives.	1995
Millennium Summit – First Objective: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; reduction of absolute poverty 50% by 2015.	2000
African Union (AU) New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): first long-term strategic objective – elimination of poverty in accordance with the Millennium Summit.	2001
The Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries): objective – to substantially improve the living conditions of more than 600 million people living in 49 LDCs by 2010; to reduce by half the number of people living in hunger and extreme poverty by 2015; to promote sustainable development in LDCs.	2001

Details of international/regional milestones	Year
SADC Consultative Conference on 'Institutional Reform for Poverty Reduction through Regional integration', to propose and adopt: 1) a Regional Poverty Reduction Framework (RPRF) with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound) targets and a clear Monitoring and Evaluation plan – this framework was to focus on specific programmes and actions to strengthen Member States' poverty reduction programmes and help them meet their set MDG targets; 2) Establishment of a SADC Poverty Observatory.	2002
Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP): established by the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)	2003
Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) – SADC: acknowledges that poverty eradication is the chief goal of SADC and that combating poverty is the overarching priority of its integration agenda. As a priority intervention area, the aim of poverty eradication is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development that will ensure poverty alleviation with the ultimate objective of its eradication.	2003
UN World Summit – Review Progress on Millennium Declaration: countries to adopt and implement by 2006 comprehensive national development strategies to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs; to launch an African Green Revolution and endorse the operational goal of universal access to HIV / AIDS prevention, treatment services by 2010.	2005
World Bank Africa Action Plan: conceived to help African countries achieve MDGs; it is being restructured to reflect the new international global scenario created by the 2008-2009 financial crisis.	2005 (to be restructured in 2011)

Details of international/regional milestones	Year
<p>Cotonou Agreement between ACP States and EU: reduction and eventual eradication of poverty and the gradual integration of ACP into the global economy, adhering to the aims of sustainable development; promotion of participatory approaches, involvement of civil society, the private sector and other non-state actors. ACP governments are sovereign in determining their own development strategy, although non-state actors and local authorities should be consulted with regard to its formulation.</p> <p>The Cotonou Agreement focuses particularly on the private sector as an instrument for sustainable economic development. A new comprehensive programme has been introduced under the Cotonou Agreement in order to support the private sectors of the ACP countries with new tools such as access to funding via the European Investment Bank. The ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) operates within the framework of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement with a mission to strengthen policy and institutional capacity development and information and communication management capacities of ACP agricultural and rural development organisations.</p>	2000, 2005 (signed in 2000, revised and reformulated in 2005)
<p>SADC International Conference on Poverty and Development: establishment of a Regional Poverty Observatory (RPO) to monitor progress made in the implementation of actions in the main priority areas of poverty eradication. The RPO was envisaged as a forum where all stakeholders working in poverty eradication at regional and international levels meet to evaluate and monitor objectives, targets and actions that have been specifically assigned to public and private sectors within the SADC Poverty Reduction Programme.</p>	2008
<p>G-8 meeting in L'Aquila, Italy: renewed the commitment of the donor community to the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme established in 2003 to help African countries reach a higher path of economic growth through agriculture-led development, which eliminates hunger, reduces poverty and food insecurity, and enables expansion of exports. This programme has set an annual agricultural growth target of 6% to achieve the MDG of halving poverty by 2015.</p>	2009

Details of international/regional milestones	Year
Abuja Conference: Heads of State, prime ministers and agriculture and industry ministers from 44 African countries, as well as heads and representatives of financial institutions and international organisations endorsed the African Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development Initiative, or 3ADI. The plan aims to generate employment, income and food security in Africa by developing agribusiness and agro-industries, by stimulating small and medium enterprises together with large-scale agro-enterprises, as the latter can have major poverty reduction impacts. Private enterprises had to be stimulated, technology and innovation expanded, innovative financing mechanisms introduced, infrastructure and energy constraints removed. African states, through the African Union, have pledged to invest a minimum of 10% of budgetary resources in the agricultural sector	2010
Summit on the MDGs to accelerate progress towards all the MDGs by 2015, recognising the many inter-linkages between the MDGs and setting out a number of cross-cutting interventions to drive progress across all the goals: in particular, investing in expanded opportunities for women and girls and improving access to energy.	September 2010

A broad partnership strategy for development was supposed to come into existence, involving the state, donors and non-state actors, visible internationally in such generalised and depoliticised objectives as the MDGs (2000), focusing more on symptoms of poverty (insufficient education, gender inequality, infant mortality, deficient maternal healthcare, HIV and malaria, environmental issues), than on its causes (political-economic structures and power relations at national, regional and international levels).

In this way, the state reclaimed its primordial place within donor strategies. The development assistance of major donors became a process of greater alignment and coordination among donors (Paris Declaration principles on ‘harmonisation’ and ‘alignment’),¹¹ supporting beneficiary state budgets and development programmes, with absolute respect for sovereignty:

States shall determine the development strategies for their economies and societies in all sovereignty. (Cotonou Agreement, Article 2)¹²

¹¹ See Part II of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (especially pp.4-7) at www.oecd.org

¹² See *The Cotonou Agreement, A User's Guide for Non-State Actors*, compiled by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) (Brussels: ACP Secretariat, November 2003) Article 2, located at www.acpsec.org

A complementary role was reserved for civil society in partnership with the private sector, given the potential contribution of civil society to national development strategies:

...the Parties recognise the complementary role of, and potential for, contributions by non-state actors to the development process. (Article 4)¹³

While several CSOs could express their views within this process, those present in Accra stated that they were 'disappointed that our views on previous drafts have not been taken into account, and that the Accra Agenda for Action, as it stands, promises little change'.¹⁴

Irrespective of the eventual 'democratic sins' of various regimes, donor strategies generally agreed to work with the holders of state power, 'hopeful' for gradual reform within these regimes through institutional strengthening, assistance and cooperation, and the adoption of legal frameworks and principles based on a legal state in the modern (Western) sense. The process of transition towards democracy in the long term would also hopefully count on the progressive restructuring of regional structures, such as the African Union, and the adoption of general democratic principles for its members, such as respect for human rights and maintaining the practice of frequent multiparty elections.

This strategic repositioning of the state discarded the older and deeper discussion on how national and international power relations are structured and influence poverty and development. The Paris Declaration makes vague and isolated references to the need for engagement in resolving challenges such as corruption and the lack of transparency, but leaves aside deeper issues of governance.

¹³ See *The Cotonou Agreement, A User's Guide for Non-State Actors*, compiled by The ECDPM - European Centre for Development Policy Management (Brussels: ACP Secretariat, November 2003) article 2, located at www.acpsec.org.

¹⁴ See *Civil society statement in Accra warns urgency for action on aid*, Accra, 1 September 2008, p.2; available at www.betteraid.org

Aid strategies became essentially depoliticised and increasingly technobureaucratic. This repositioning of the strategies ended up making it easy for many African governments who had argued for the depoliticisation of civil society, through accusations of not having the legitimacy to interfere in politics (at the level of debate and preparation of public policies), since CSOs did not enjoy the voter legitimacy given to political parties in elections.¹⁵

The dependency of CSOs on external funds and the increasing tendency to channel these funds through the state budget (managed by government institutions and whose office holders have worked for decades in autocratic and clientelist regimes), implies removing the political and confrontational work on governance from some CSOs, and reducing their effectiveness as monitors of government action. In practice, CSOs end up under pressure to reduce their activity to one of providing technical support and resolution of social issues within communities, as they fear reprisals if they offer political critiques of government.

At the same time, and also partly as a result of this, the ‘traditional’ CSOs (mainly NGOs), that emerged in the 1990s and developed in the 2000s underwent a crisis of identity and purpose, in addition to the crisis in funding. Their role as drivers of democracy, accountability watchdogs and central partners of development strategies, has gradually been annulled by the institutionalist development thinking. ICPs started to focus on governmental policies aimed supposedly at directly affecting the poor in very specific sectors and immediate problems (symptoms of poverty). The poor communities are capacitated to organise in so-called community-based organisations (CBOs) for specific, immediate and objective needs (usually of a micro and apolitical nature – building wells, education or health facilities in the village or neighbourhood, improving road access to agricultural fields, providing sanitation in neighbourhoods, etc.).

It is worth recalling the words of the leader of a women’s organisation that we heard in DRC during the course of this research: ‘According to the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action, they want to transform us into consultants to the government, but if they do not support our work in the

¹⁵ Sabine Fiedler-Conradi (2003), ‘Strengthening Civil Society in Zambia’, study conducted to inform a focal area strategy paper, commissioned by the German Development Service (DED) on behalf of German Ministry of Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), Lusaka/ Munich; also Lifuka, Rueben L. & Habasonda, Lee M., ‘A Sociedade Civil e o Poder Político na Zâmbia’ in Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (eds.), *Sociedade Civil e Política em Angola* (Luanda & Lisboa: Firmamento, Universidade de Coimbra & Universidade Católica de Angola, 2008), pp. 385-393.

field we lose our main capital – knowledge – and have nothing to be consulted on. If it is consultancy that they want, they can pay for international consultancy and may well discard us.’

Donors find it difficult to avoid governmental discrimination against politically troublesome CSOs in accessing resources from the national budget since that enters the sovereign area of how governments allocate budget funds. Donors may try to put pressure, but their success in so doing depends on the leverage they have (high leverage in donor-dependent countries such as Mozambique or Tanzania, low leverage in oil-producing countries such as Angola and relative leverage in disrupted – although mineral rich – countries, such as DRC, requiring significant international support for the time being).

2

CASE STUDIES: MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND ANGOLA

2.1 Mozambique¹⁶

2.1.1 Institutional framework for participation

In Mozambique, the process of CSO participation in M&E mechanisms is intimately related to the country's donor dependency and the ICPs' significant influence in development policies. The existing Poverty Observatory (PO) is frequently pointed out as a success story in terms of the relationship between government, CSOs and ICPs, having emerged as a result of the Jubilee movement for the cancellation of foreign debt.

In 1996 the HIPC Initiative to assist heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) launched by the World Bank and the IMF was aimed at eliminating 'unsustainable' debt of the poorest and most indebted countries. The objective was to reduce the debt of these countries to a sustainable limit of 150% of the export volume and 250% of government income.¹⁷ Mozambique was one of the countries that benefited most from the HIPC Initiative, having its debt lowered from \$US5.6 billion to around US\$1.3 billion in 1998. Together with other policies and programmes, the initiative had an immediate positive effect and between 1996 and 2000 the yearly inflation rate decreased from 47% to 2%, and GDP increased at an average of 10% a year.¹⁸

¹⁶ The analysis of the Mozambique case in this work greatly benefitted from the revision and comments of João Pereira (Management Unit Director of the Civil Society Support Mechanism – CSSM; *Movimento de Apoio à Sociedade Civil – MASC*). The author is nevertheless solely responsible for the text.

¹⁷ Negrão, José, *ONGs do Norte e Sociedade Civil de Moçambique*; Cruzeiro do Sul (Maputo: Mimeo, 2003). Available online [www.iid.org.mz/Relacoes_entre_ONG_do_Norte_e_Sociedade_Civil_do_Sul.pdf]

¹⁸ See Araújo, Manuel & Raul Chambote 'Civil Society and Development on Mozambique', in Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, *Southern Africa: Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies; Angola, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa* (Luanda, Lisbon & Brussels: Wageningen University, University of Coimbra & Angolan Catholic University, 2009); also Negrão, José *ONGs do Norte...* op.cit.

Following the devastating floods of 2000, the World Bank and the IMF accelerated debt relief and forgave the total payment of debt service that year. The Paris Club postponed the payment until Mozambique was in a position to pay, and several other bilateral creditors did the same.¹⁹ In order for the country to get final approval from the World Bank and IMF for eligibility for HIPC 2, the following four conditions had to be met:

1. the drafting of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which in Mozambique was called the *Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta* (PARPA), with the active participation of civil society, private sector and the citizens in general;
2. the implementation of a set of social development measures, as well as reforms of the public sector, the legal framework and regulations on economic activities;
3. the maintenance of a stable macro-economic climate under IMF control; and the agreement of other creditors on their participation in debt relief.²⁰

In September 2001, the World Bank and the IMF concluded that Mozambique had fulfilled the four conditions presented in 2000 and that it had taken the necessary steps to qualify for the second phase. Mozambique thus became the third country in the world to reach that phase, following Bolivia and Uganda. Foreign debt was reduced to \$US750 million – some 73% of the initial amount had been forgiven. Debt servicing costs fell from \$US100 million per year in 1988 to an annual average of \$US56 million between 2002 and 2010, representing a reduction of its burden on state revenues from 23% of those revenues to 10% (between 2000 and 2010). It is estimated that this figure will decrease even more (to about 7% between 2011 and 2020).²¹ Savings resulting from the reduction of debt service charges meant that the state had an additional \$US130 million to spend on PARPA activities within the terms of the PRSP.²²

¹⁹ Negrão, José *ONGs do Norte...* op.cit.

²⁰ See Araújo, Manuel & Raul Chambote, 'Civil Society and Development on Mozambique', in Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, *Southern Africa: Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies; Angola, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa* (Luanda, Lisbon & Brussels: Wageningen University, University of Coimbra & Angolan Catholic University, 2009); also Negrão, José *ONGs do Norte...* op.cit.

²¹ Negrão, José *ONGs do Norte...* op.cit.; see also Hanlon, Joe, *Paz Sem Benefícios. Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução de Moçambique* (Maputo, Centro de Estudos Africanos, Imprensa Universitária da Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 1997).

²² Negrão, José *ONGs do Norte...* op.cit.; see also Hanlon, Joe, *Paz Sem Benefícios. ...* op.cit.

The political-economic recipe at this stage was basically the standard neo-liberal package of the Bretton Woods institutions – focusing on the promotion of exports and macro-economic balance. These policies were expected to have a trickle-down effect on the economy and society as a whole. Development policies advocated through the PARPA are clearly imbued with this neo-liberal development paradigm whereby the private sector is the main engine for growth and poverty reduction while the state is expected to enable ‘social development’ (with a current tendency to emphasise the agricultural private sector, following the most recent international trends).²³ Better education and health systems together with employment opportunities would improve the living conditions of the poor.

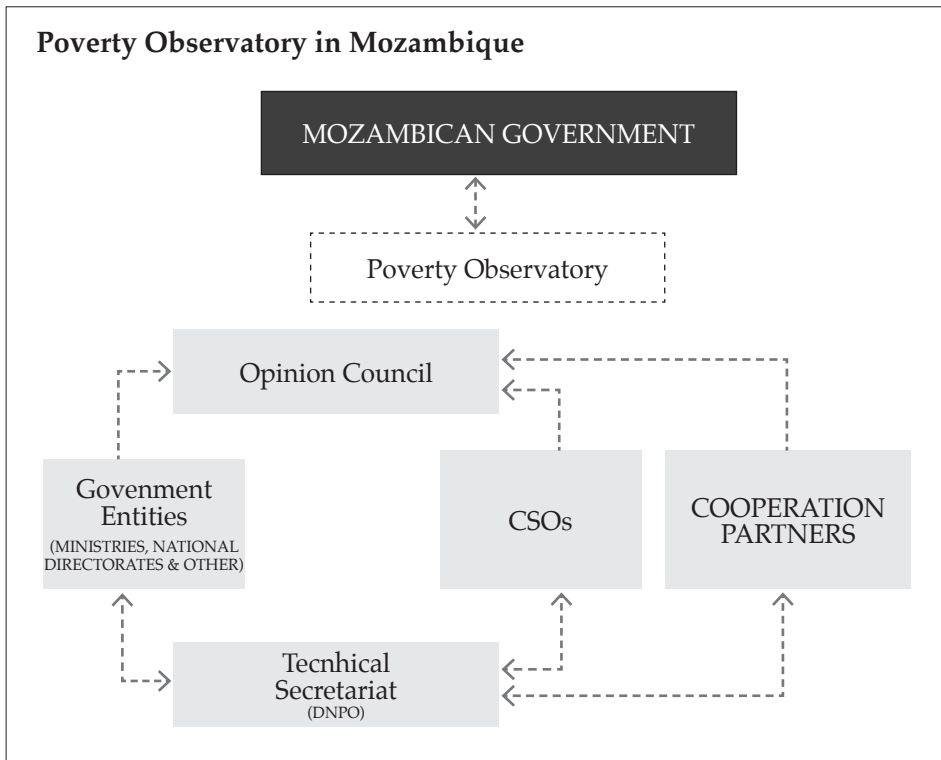
The poverty reduction plan (PARPA I, 2002-2005) did not build in any active participation of civil society, the private sector or the ordinary citizens. Under pressure from the donor community and in an attempt to compensate for lack of CSO participation in previous stages, the government set up the Poverty Observatory (PO) officially launched in April 2003 as a forum to monitor the implementation of PARPA, comprising CSOs, ICPs, private sector and trades unions.²⁴ It is worth noting that the PO is a consultative forum, not a deliberative one, therefore the government holds the right to decide whether or not to take into consideration suggestions and recommendations from CSOs.

The PO structure is made up of two groups: an ad hoc advisory group, known as the Opinion Council, and a permanent body known as the Technical Secretariat. The Opinion Council is made up of 60 members representing the central bodies of the state, CSOs, and ICPs (out of the 60 members, 24 are from selected government bodies and ministries, the remaining 36 members from CSOs, the academic community, faith-based organisations,

²³ See for instance the 2005 Review ‘Progress on Millennium Declaration’ launching an ‘African Green Revolution’, or the 2000/2005 Cotonou Agreement on the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), or the 2009 G-8 meeting in L’Aquila, renewing the commitment of the donor community to the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme established in 2003 to help African countries reach a higher path of economic growth through agriculture-led development. This programme has set an annual agricultural growth target of 6% to achieve the MDG of halving poverty by 2015.

²⁴ After the internal consultation phase was over, the following elements were identified as civil society representatives for the Poverty Observatory in Mozambique: four representatives from faith-based organisations (two Christian and two Muslim); two representatives from trade unions (OTM and independent unions); three representatives from private sector associations (*Associação Comercial*, *Associação Industrial* and CTA); six representatives from third-level organizations (*Fórum Terra*, *Fórum Mulher*, UNAC, GMD, *Link* and *Teia*); four representatives from second-level NGOs (*FDC*, *Kulima*, *ORAM*, *Khindlimuka*); one representative from the autonomous research institute (*Cruzeiro do Sul*).

trades unions, private business community, and ICPs). The selection of CSO members was made by civil society itself. The private sector has been involved since the beginning, but has an increasing tendency to opt for its own preferential channels to the government, such as their confederations and associations. The Technical Secretariat is supported by the Ministry of Planning and Finance (as coordinator of PARPA and other economic and inter-sectoral instruments). The Technical Secretariat functions within the National Division for Planning and Budget (DNPO in Portuguese) funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which also supports capacity building.



Source: ²⁵

Figure 1: Organisational diagram of the Poverty Observatory in Mozambique

²⁵ In Francisco, António Alberto da Silva & Matter, Konrad, *Poverty Observatory in Mozambique: Final Report*, (Swiss Development Agency for Cooperation, 2007), p. 27.

Although the initial setting up of the PO did not envisage replicating this initiative at the provincial level, since 2005 most of the provincial governors have responded positively to the request from ICPs and CSOs to set up Provincial Poverty Observatories (PPOs).

2.1.2 Civil society strategies for engagement /Impact assessment

CSO strategies for engagement and mechanisms for participation

As explained in the previous chapter, civil society is formally represented at the PO national platform through the G20, which is basically a loose network of CSOs. Originally it consisted of 20 organisations (hence the name), but the network has subsequently expanded to include more than 100 CSOs, involved in activities ranging from health and HIV/AIDS to community development, debt reduction campaigning and socio-economic research, among several others. Effective participation varies according to the time and interest of CSO representatives. The G20 aims to be as inclusive as possible and its secretariat announces events in the daily press and invites CSOs and ordinary citizens to participate.

During its first panel meeting in 2002, the 20 CSOs were assigned the tasks of conducting a complementary poverty analysis from the perspective of the poor. This led to the idea of the G20 producing an Annual Poverty Report (*Relatório Anual da Pobreza*). Research for the first report (2004) surveyed 10,000 households in 102 of the 146 rural districts and urban centres. Analysis of preliminary findings was undertaken with the surveyed constituencies during one national and 10 provincial seminars. The research dynamics and structure were then established for subsequent reports, consisting of a combined approach of a nationwide survey with provincial and national seminars. Such an approach is expected to stimulate participation at the local level, whereby relevant stakeholders can raise and discuss local issues and propose solutions to be taken up to the NPO platform.²⁶

The G20 structure was replicated at the provincial level and included the private sector. However, CSO network dynamics at the provincial level are not necessarily managed by G20 provincial structures. Management of such structures varies depending on the specific structures already existing in each province for

²⁶ In Francisco, António Alberto da Silva & Matter, Konrad, *Poverty Observatory in Mozambique: Final Report* (Swiss Development Agency for Cooperation, 2007), p. 27.

CSO coordinated work. This has raised a few organisational problems, as the government complains of the lack of coordination between the local processes and the national level. Provincial inputs do not arrive in time to be properly analysed and presented to the national platform, and to the government annual development programmes approval and budget formulation.

On the other hand, according to the CSOs interviewed, the G20 is an umbrella organisation for CSOs, not a representative structure, and the government must accept it that way. Significant criticism was raised during the course of this research towards the current directorate of the G20, with accusations of the organisation becoming too close to the government, and claiming to speak for all CSOs. According to many CSOs, it is not possible to speak on behalf of all CSOs and the G20 is considered rather a space for CSOs to engage and coordinate. Moreover, the Annual Poverty Report should not impede independent research and reports from its members. This was the case, for instance, of the Mozambique Peasants' Association (*União Nacional dos Camponeses – UNAC*), presenting their own report on their members' situation and concerns to the NPO. The importance of safeguarding such pluralism and flexibility was stressed by several CSOs during field research.

Mozambique is a clear-cut case of major leverage by donors and the international community over the government, meaning that all the dominant international thinking on aid strategies has been put in place by outsiders, covering not only the framework of relationships with the government but also with CSOs. Since transition in the 1990s, the country has been following fairly closely all the policies prescribed by major donors and ICPs – from the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes and the EU and USAID preferential channelling of aid through CSOs in the 1990s, to the priority given to state institutional support and state budget centrality in the 2000s.²⁷

On the one side, this means that levels of external dependency are high, whether for the government or the CSOs. Such reality has an obvious disadvantage to CSOs, given the current donor preference for supporting the state budget and institutions according to the so-called institutional reinforcement strategy. On the other side, it also means – in contrast to other

²⁷ On the historical progress of development thinking see for instance, Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, *Southern Africa: Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies; Angola, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa* (Luanda, Lisbon & Brussels: Wageningen University, University of Coimbra & Angolan Catholic University, 2009).

cases, such as Angola (see chapter on the Angolan case) – the international leverage of donors over the Mozambican government has allowed them to put pressure on Maputo to include CSO participation in government M&E mechanisms such as the PO. As admitted by government members interviewed for this project, ‘frameworks for dialogue such as the PO have been created under the direct and explicit pressure of ICPs, although the government has now understood and properly valued the contribution of CSOs’. External leverage has also permitted an improvement in good governance measures (anti-corruption and anti-patronage schemes) ‘suggested’ by the G19 (group of major donors) as a condition for releasing aid for the 2010 budget.²⁸ There seems to be relatively good coordination among donors in Mozambique, with government as well as CSOs strongly supporting the G20 process.

The new international tendency to focus on agricultural stimulus through the private sector is also being implemented, but raising some concerns among CSOs working in this area. Some CSOs fear that this may merely benefit the same old beneficiaries, namely the political elite which owns large plots of land, and not the peasants and small farmers, i.e. the poor, who were the intended beneficiaries.

Assessing the impact of CSO participation

The Annual Poverty Report exercise has provided a platform for direct inputs from CSOs and the private sector and for their sensitisation on poverty alleviation policies. The G20’s decentralised collection of data and analysis seems to have accentuated wider participation and ownership at the local level.

Based on the 2004 Annual Poverty Report, the G20 made several recommendations to the second panel of the PO such as:

- to widen the definition of poverty;
- to focus the struggle against poverty on employment and self-employ-

²⁸ ‘The ruling party’s power is pervasive. State patronage and corruption are growing. So, too, is organised crime, sometimes apparently with political backing. In July 2010 Mohamed Bashir Suleman, a Frelimo party stalwart and one of the country’s most prominent businessmen, was placed on America’s official list of drug-traffickers.’; in ‘Mozambique’s recovery: A Faltering Phoenix – corruption, crime and unemployment still threaten a notable success story’, in *The Economist* (July 8th 2010) www.economist.com/node/16542671

ment through the promotion of small and medium enterprises, associations and cooperatives (including smallholder agricultural production and processing); and

- to create a development finance institution jointly owned by multiple stakeholders to mobilise rural savings and credit.

These recommendations seem to have been received positively by foreign donors and national government and considered for inclusion in PARPA II (2006-2009). An additional G20 proposal to create advisory councils composed of interest group representatives at different provincial and district bodies led to the agreement that civil society members could comment on proposed legislation at the level of local administration. The preparation of PARPA II comprised the formation of Thematic Observatory Working Groups as well as a Strategic Advisory Committee in which civil society was represented. In order to meet CSOs' demands for more time to prepare the themes, the government also communicated in advance the three basic pillars of PARPA II – Governance, Economic Development and Human Capital – and seven cross-cutting themes (gender, HIV/AIDS, food security, science and technology, environment, demining and natural disasters). G20 committed itself to widening the national consultation on the PARPA II drafts beyond the provincial platforms, with discussions on its second annual poverty report taking place at district level.

In 2007, following a decision from the Nampula Provincial Poverty Observatory meeting, the PO changed its name to Development Observatory. The Nampula participants thought the new name was more inspiring and positive than the previous one.

However, the researcher also heard harsh criticism from several sectors of CSOs. Critics say that the government has ignored most of the really relevant recommendations. One such recommendation was the proposal for PARPA II, made during the preliminary critical reflection on lessons to be learnt from PARPA I, which considered that PARPA II could be made effective if it were transformed into an instrument for public-private partnership between the government and other national actors, since foreigners were the only ones

treated as partners by the government.²⁹ Critics pointed out other mechanisms such as the biannual Joint Review process between the government and ICPs as an example of an effective process, whereby ICPs have the leverage to influence and introduce significant changes to specific government programmes and policies. Civil society is invited to these meetings but only as a non-participating observer. Moreover, even though the PO may discuss some important issues such as the weight of PARPA priority sectors in the state budget, the chance for substantive dialogue is limited by the fact that the PO meets only once a year, for one day. At the end of the plenary sessions there is no public statement or approved guidelines for future policies.³⁰

It is obvious that the PO is far from being able to exert the necessary effectiveness and impact on the Joint Review process, related to the fact that the budget is too dependent on foreign aid, with the government having to listen to ICPs. A clear example is the threat of a 'donor strike' in 2010, posed by a group of Western countries and organisations that comprise the 'Programme Aid Partners' (*Parceiros do Apoio Programático de Moçambique* – PAPs) or so-called G19. Only after the Mozambican government agreed to implement the 35 reforms proposed by the G19 did the aid start flowing again.³¹

In terms of PARPA's M&E, mechanisms such as PAPs or G19 appear to be much more effective than the G20 or the annual Poverty Observatory. The PAPs has developed a methodology to monitor and evaluate the government's performance assessment (PAF), which is a multi-annual matrix of specific priority targets and indicators based on PARPA, updated on an annual basis through the government's Social and Economic Programme process (*Programa Económico e Social* – PES) and agreed through cross-governmental dialogue. Each year the signatories – government and ICPs – attach the agreed PAF to their Memorandum of Understanding approved at the end of the annual Joint Review.³²

²⁹ Also in the same sense see: Francisco, António, *Preparação da Metodologia do PARPA II: Papel e Funções do PARPA no Sistema de Planeamento* (Maputo-Moçambique: Direcção Nacional do Plano e Orçamento – DNPO/ Ministério do Plano e Finanças, 2005).

³⁰ See also in this sense, Hodges, Tony & Roberto Tibana, *A Economia Política do Orçamento em Moçambique* (Lisboa: Principia, 2005).

³¹ G19 is composed of the 19 countries and organisations that contribute more than 51% of funds to the state budget: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Netherlands, EU, Finland, France, Irish Republic, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, African Development Bank and World Bank with associate members, USA and the UN. The G19 has a troika made up (at the time of writing) of Finland, UK and Irish Republic, presided over by Finland. See 'Mozambique's recovery; A Faltering Phoenix – corruption, crime and unemployment still threaten a notable success story', in *The Economist* (8 July 2010) www.economist.com/node/16542671

³² In Francisco, António Alberto da Silva & Matter, Konrad, *Poverty Observatory in Mozambique: Final Report* (Swiss Development Agency for Cooperation, 2007).

The G20 Annual Poverty Report of 2007 (published in March 2008) has made an effort to improve its methodology in order to make it nearer to the Joint Review process of M&E of PAF, but there is still a long way to go. Although it is possible to see an increasing monitoring ability in the Annual Poverty Reports, the same cannot be said of evaluation. Without that increase in the quality of evaluation, G20 participation in the Joint Review cannot be more productive. It is also more difficult to argue for a possible integration of the G20 into the Joint Review mechanism.

The G20 argues that the Joint Review is a highly technical process and the Annual Poverty Report was originally intended to be a multi-disciplinary and quality data tool that complements macro-level surveys in a participatory and problem-solving manner, from the perspective of the poor. It is supposed to be based on the work of CSOs with local communities and their perspectives and specific problems in different regions and on different issues, according to various programmes and experiences in the field.

Although we may in part agree with this argument, given the original requirements made by the PO for CSOs' research, it is important for the G20 to improve technically and upgrade its analysis, drawing it closer to the ICPs' methodology and closer to the PAF requirements. This would render the dialogue between CSOs, ICPs and government much more objective and productive. It would also include CSOs as effective partners in the Joint Review process or other forms of more effective relations between the Joint Review and the PO. At the same time, such an upgrade should not exclude the normal input given by the G20 in terms of the communities' perspective, which remains highly relevant.

According to government members interviewed in the course of this research, CSOs still lack the capacity and competence to discuss technical themes on specific issues. This was perceived in a few meetings where they produced general qualitative statements of a political character but nothing specific and relevant to the thematic discussions. The government also emphasised a problem of timing and coordination between the listening process undertaken by the G20 throughout the provinces and the government's deadline for inputs to arrive. This happened during PARPA II and again during PARPA III. The G20 was involved in the preparation of PARPA III (2010-2013), gathering information throughout the country through its national and provincial mechanisms, but this process suffered from several delays and once again was late in meeting the government deadline for inputs to be integrated into the national budget.

In response to such government criticism, several CSOs admitted that there is still a serious problem of lack of CSO experience in participating in public decision-making processes, along with a certain lack of technical competence in analysing long, complex documents that require a degree of expertise. CSOs complain that background documents for specific discussions on development themes and policies are usually not circulated early enough to allow more detailed preparation by CSOs. They also criticise the government for not providing sufficient and broad-based information on the working mechanisms of PARPA, its decision-making structures, organs and competences to facilitate CSO participation. Without necessarily accepting the accusations, one can only ask whether this should not also be a joint responsibility of the G20 structure.

Another potential weakness of the G20 structure is that the informal sector is absent from the listening process. Given the weight of the informal sector in the economy and the fact that the huge majority of Mozambicans earn a livelihood in a variety of non-formal ways, it would be of utmost importance to hear representatives with the relevant experience and understanding.³³ Another weakness is the lack of direct linkage between the PO and important institutions such as the national parliament. This is a significant gap because the parliament has to discuss and approve the national budget, allocating funds for poverty alleviation programmes. Additionally it is also the institution charged with directly and legitimately representing the people in a democratic system.

Several CSOs expressed a great deal of scepticism towards the current workings of the participatory process through the PO and G20 mechanisms. Their scepticism is mainly based on what they refer to as 'promiscuous political proximity' between certain CSOs' participatory mechanisms and political power holders. Nevertheless, they still expressed some hope that an effective decentralisation of state administration might in the future again boost the initial dynamics of the PO.

According to a few interviewees and some authors, Mozambican CSOs in general are limited in size, have a lack of human resources and technical capacity, poor management and a weak information base. Their accountability tends to be mainly directed toward donors instead of to their own

³³ Instituto Nacional de Estatística – INE, *The Non-Profit Institutions in Mozambique: Outputs of the first national census (2004/5)*, (Maputo: Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2006). www.ine.gov.mz

constituencies (although the same could be said equally of the government). These weaknesses are most visible and obvious in rural organisations, undermining the development of community-based organisations and the participation of grassroots rural communities in public processes. There are several reported cases of lack of transparency and deficits in internal democracy: several organisations tend to be ‘one-man shows’, with a leader that concentrates all decision-making in his own hands and tends to remain in power for years without being (re)-elected.³⁴

Regarding the inclusion of the private sector in the G20 process, this was described by the CSOs interviewed during this research as weak and sporadic. The private sector tends to give priority to its own confederations (industry, trade and agriculture) and the private sector’s specific channels to communicate with the government, leaving the other forums in a secondary or tertiary position. There is still in Mozambique (as well as in all other cases studied in this work) an intimate relationship between business and political power that hinders the private sector from acting in a broader, clearer, more independent and public way with the government.

2.2 Tanzania³⁵

2.2.1 Institutional framework for participation

Tanzania has an unrivalled record of political stability in the region, clearly distinguishing it from other cases in this research. Tanganyikan transition to independence in 1961 was stable and peaceful, and the same happened with the transition to a multiparty democracy in 1992.

As with Mozambique, Tanzania is donor dependent. About 65% of the 2010/11 development budget (36% of the total budget) is expected to be financed by foreign assistance, and Tanzania is the third biggest aid recipient in Africa.

³⁴ Also in this sense, Araújo, Manuel & Raul Chambote ‘Civil Society and Development on Mozambique’, in Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, *Southern Africa: Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies; Angola, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa* (Luanda, Lisbon & Brussels: Wageningen University, University of Coimbra & Angolan Catholic University, 2009).

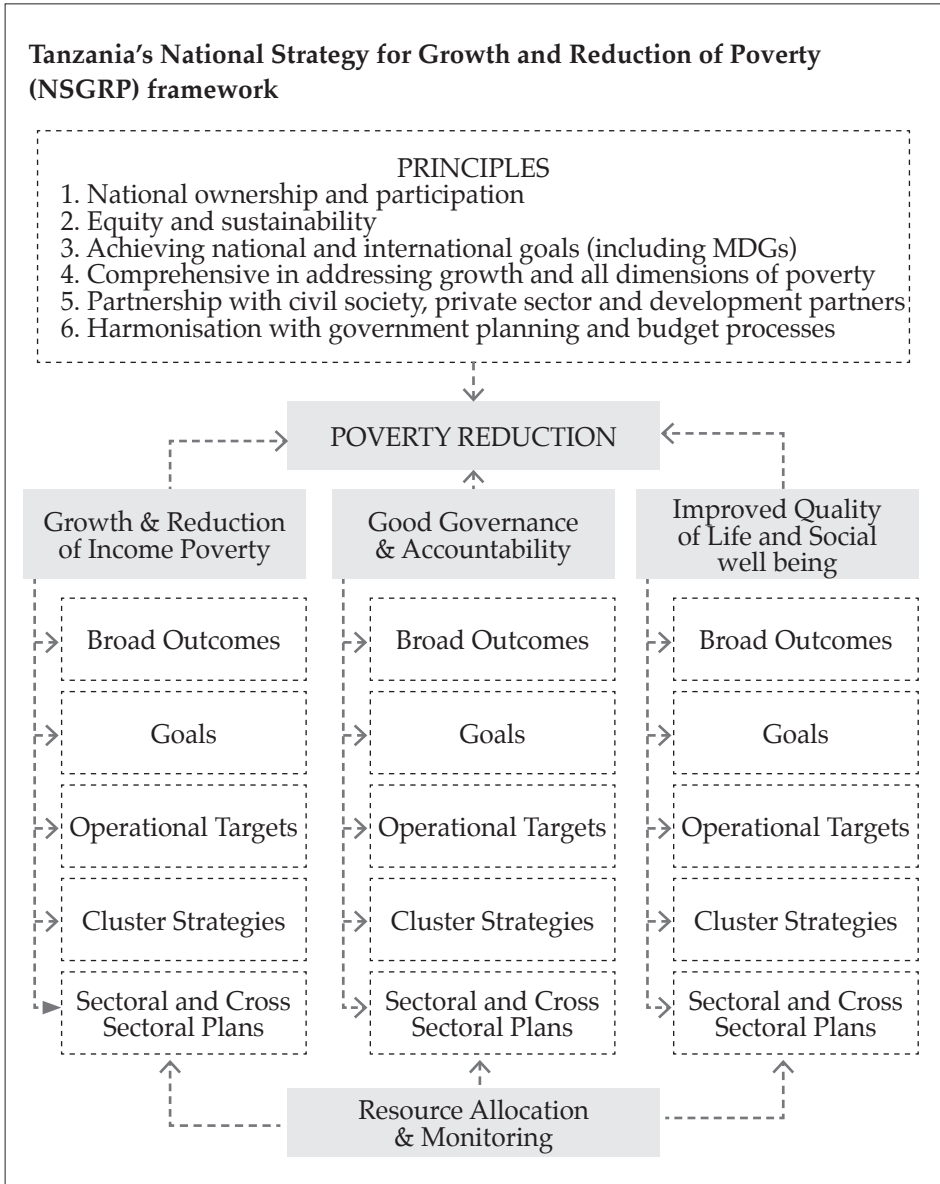
³⁵ The analysis of the Tanzanian case in this work benefited greatly from the revision and comments of Semkae Gad Kilonzo (Coordinator of the Policy Forum – Tanzania) and Reginald Munisi (Consultant to the Policy Forum on MKUKUTA processes). The author is nevertheless solely responsible for the text.

The Tanzanian government has been adopting policies directed at poverty alleviation since 1996 along with macro-economic stabilisation measures. From 1996 to 1999 Tanzania adopted an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). From April 2000 to June 2003, the government successfully completed a first three-year Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) followed by a second PRGF. Other important documents in this process include the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (of 1995/96, first published in 1999), the National Poverty Eradication Strategy (NPES) of 1998, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of 2000 and the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP or so-called MKUKUTA I) of 2005. Similar documents were produced for Zanzibar – Vision 2020 and Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan (ZPRP), both crafted in 2002, and MKUZA I in 2005.

Vision 2025 set the goal of eradicating abject poverty by 2025. NPES was the first strategy that aimed at halving poverty incidence by 2010. For Zanzibar, Vision 2020 set the target of eradicating absolute poverty by 2020 and ZPRP set the target of halving it by 2010.

MKUKUTA (Tanzania mainland) and MKUZA (Zanzibar) are second generation poverty reduction strategies and have been guiding frameworks and policies for growth and poverty reduction in Tanzania in the second half of the first decade of 2000. The final year of both was 2010. These second generation PRSPs aimed at sustaining broad-based growth whilst also emphasising equity and good governance (in three so-called clusters: I – Growth and reduction of income poverty, II – Improved quality of life and social well being, III - Good governance and accountability).

CSO contact with all these programmes started in the 1990s with the political transition and following pressure from the donor community for the inclusion of CSOs.

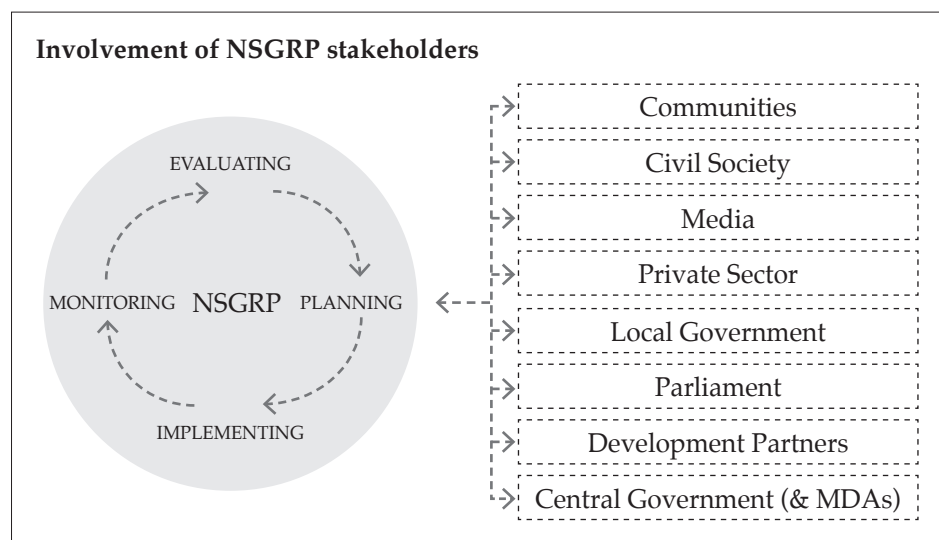


Source³⁶

Figure 2: Diagram showing Tanzania’s NSGRP framework

³⁶ *Growing out of poverty, a plain language guide to Tanzania’s National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP)* (Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam: Produced by Hakikazi Catalyst in Collaboration with Dissemination, Sensitization and Advocacy, Technical Working Group - DSA-TWG - of the Poverty Monitoring System, June, 2005).

The NSGRP, or MKUKUTA I, calls for the involvement of all stakeholders in all stages of the programme cycle as shown below.



Source³⁷

Figure 3: Diagram showing how NSGRP stakeholders are involved and relate to each other

Table 2: Specific roles of actors in MKUKUTA

Stakeholder/Actor	Main functions
The Parliament	The Parliament has an oversight role over government ministries based on the current structure of parliamentary select committees, organised by sector. Members may be included in special working groups where appropriate.
Ministry Departments and Agencies (MDAs)	The government sector ministries are responsible for policy guidance, supervision, coordination, implementation and monitoring activities. The government also guides and incorporates the NSGRP priorities in the guidelines for the preparation of Medium-Term and Annual Plan and Budget.

³⁷ *Growing out of poverty, a plain language guide to Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP)*, (Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam: produced by Hakikazi Catalyst in collaboration with Dissemination, Sensitization and Advocacy, Technical Working Group – DSA-TWG – of the Poverty Monitoring System, June, 2005).

Stakeholder/Actor	Main functions
The Local Government Authorities (LGAs)	At the district level, LGAs (district/ town/ municipal/ city councils, village/ urban) plan and implement programmes within their areas of jurisdiction, in collaboration with other actors, including communities and households, through participatory processes.
Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	CSOs are key actors in poverty reduction and they play an active role in building local capacity and empowering communities. They also participate in monitoring and evaluation at national and community levels, mobilise and enhance community participation, and mobilise community resources for poverty reduction. CSOs also advocate for accountability of their members and government to the people.
Communities	Communities are at the centre of planning, implementation and monitoring community activities supported by government and other actors. They also engage in monitoring the quantity and quality of services delivered to them.
The Media	The media has an important role in informing the public about MKUKUTA as with other development processes. It plays an important role for facilitating interaction and forums for the exchange of ideas.
The Private Sector	The private sector has an important role to play in achieving poverty reduction outcomes because of its central role as the engine for economic growth.
Development Partners (DPs)	DPs work closely with key local actors providing additional financial, technical and other support in the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy geared to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The DPs also facilitate capacity building initiatives within the poverty reduction framework as well as participating in monitoring and evaluation.

Source³⁸

The process of formulating the 2005 NSGRP (or MKUKUTA I) was closely linked to the process of reviewing the first Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) of 2000. The process took place in so-called Poverty Policy Weeks (PPW), a first one being held in October 2003 and a second one in November 2004. The consultation process was divided into three rounds as shown in the following table.

³⁸ *The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty – Roles of Actors* (Tanzania/Dar-es-Salaam: URT, 2006).

Table 3: Consultation process of 2005 NSGRP (MKUKUTA I)

Three-Round Consultation Process of 2005 NSGRP (MKUKUTA I)	
1 st Round	January 2004. Involved the government (setting guidelines for the consultation process, focusing on topics such as poverty, growth, trade, HIV/ AIDS, gender, environment, employment, poverty monitoring, culture and development, communications strategy), local authorities (Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania – ALAT); CSOs and the general public (distribution of a leaflet with a few questions to be answered).
2 nd Round	Consisted of a round of workshops in August and September 2004, followed by a final national workshop on 29-30 September 2004 where reports from previous inputs were built into the next draft of the NSGRP document, which was made available for discussion in the third round.
3 rd Round	Took place during Poverty Policy Week in November 2004 with a national session taking place on 1-5 November, followed by 13 regional sessions. Participants were asked to comment on the NSGRP draft which had been updated as a result of previous consultation rounds. Inputs supposedly enriched the draft document leading to the production of the final version.

A Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) was set up in 2001. Its structure and functions were set out in the Poverty Monitoring Master Plan (PMMP). The monitoring and evaluation process was to involve all stakeholders at all levels under the coordination of the Poverty Monitoring Secretariat (PMS). The system is supposed to ensure that the information for analysis is gathered in a timely manner, is accurate and relevant, thereby allowing its wider dissemination. Several tools were to be used, as can be seen in Figure 4.

Tools and outputs of the poverty monitoring system

- Annual Progress Reports to indicate advances and changes – this will make the NSGRP a living document
- Poverty Policy Weeks and their Reports
- Poverty and Human Development Reports.
- The Tanzania Socio-Economic Database (TSED) for planning of all sectors, regions and districts
- Analytical Reports from the ongoing programme of Surveys and Censuses
- The second MDG Report in 2005
- A Communications Strategy which facilitates (a) a wide range of information dissemination techniques and (b) ongoing feedback from a wide range of stakeholders (this is available online at www.povertymonitoring.go.tz/downloads/new/commstrat.pdf)
- The poverty monitoring website at www.povertymonitoring.go.tz will continue to publish key documents and other emerging information on an ongoing and timely basis.

Source³⁹

Figure 4: Tools and outputs of the poverty monitoring system

The PMS was reviewed in 2005/06 in order to monitor the implementation of MKUKUTA, which is broader, more comprehensive and more outcome-focused than PRSP. The revised monitoring system became known as MKUKUTA Monitoring System (MMS). The MMS was approved by the MKUKUTA Technical Committee (TC) in February 2006 and built on the previous system. The MMS is a national coordination framework for M&E to ensure both prudent and financial management and accountability for the results under the implementation guidance of the MKUKUTA Monitoring Master Plan (MMMP). The MMS consists of three technical working groups on (i) Survey and routine data (ii) Research and analysis and (iii) Communication. The MMS encompasses all attempts at data and information collection, reviewing and reporting, and dissemination and usage in relation to the delivery of government's intended goals and policy objectives, as laid out in the MKUKUTA and other national frameworks. Both the MMS and the MMMP were due to end in the financial year 2009/2010.

³⁹ *Growing out of poverty, a plain language guide to Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP)*, (Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam: produced by Hakikazi Catalyst in Collaboration with Dissemination, Sensitization and Advocacy, Technical Working Group - DSA-TWG - of the Poverty Monitoring System, June, 2005).

Despite the structure created and the official statements stimulating stakeholders' engagement, participation on MKUKUTA remained low, random and tokenistic. According to a recent assessment, the CSOs' level of understanding of MKUKUTA is low to moderate. The involvement of CSOs in the planning of MKUKUTA was more visible at national level than at district levels. The quality of engagement was weak at sub-national levels (district, wards and villages) due to the inability of CSOs and the private sector to coordinate on issues of policy and development, the resistance of local government to open up and listen to non-state actors, and poor communication. The private sector is weaker at this level when compared to CSOs. Even at the national level, members of the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA) said that their constituents and members had hardly been part of the MKUKUTA processes.⁴⁰ Clearly the political dependency of the private sector means avoiding any politically inconvenient attitude that might be construed as hostile to the party in power. Again, as in the Mozambican case, business is much more interested in a discreet and personal relationship with the government than in taking public positions favouring CSOs, who are normally seen as politically suspect, confrontational and donor driven.

There is also the problem of integrating the views of the informal sector, which is huge in Tanzania, with a significant socio-economic impact on the lives of the poor. MKUKUTA is trying to tackle this problem through its first cluster. Nevertheless, representatives of the informal sector are not included among the stakeholders of MKUKUTA. The views and opinions of the informal sector should be integrated into the larger process of civil society contributions to MKUKUTA as this perspective is central to help find solutions in alleviating poverty.

Limited understanding of MKUKUTA was also apparent among the parliamentarians because of their low level of involvement in defining the contents of the MKUKUTA; this was also the case during the preparation of the PRSP. Participation by parliamentarians in the preparation of the first PRSP was limited to a few seminars on particular aspects of the PRSP organised by local NGOs.⁴¹

⁴⁰ *Assessment of participation of local stakeholders in planning, implementation and monitoring of MKUKUTA*, undertaken by Daima Associates Limited, tender no. ME/004/2009-10/HQ/C/25 (Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam: Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, United Republic of Tanzania, 5 March 2010).

⁴¹ *Assessment of participation ...op.cit.*; on the weak participation of parliamentarians see also Gould, J. and J. Ojanen, *Merging in the Circle: the Politics of Poverty Reduction Strategy*, (Helsinki: Institute of Development Studies, University of Helsinki, 2003).

The study concluded that a critical problem blocking the attainment of full and high quality engagement of actors is the dominant mindset of some actors in both the government and CSOs. There is a perception among some government actors (leaders and staff) that CSOs should not be involved in government-led policy, design and planning processes, but merely informed of the outcomes. Such government actors also argued that the weak engagement of CSOs is not due to denial of access, but rather to the lack of capacity of CSOs to engage with MKUKUTA and other policy issues, and lack of coordination among CSOs themselves. CSOs for their part characterise the public sector including the central government as bureaucratic and lacking information-sharing and communication. As a consequence, the CSOs have remained only partially informed, and therefore have engaged poorly with MKUKUTA.⁴²

This research has also found this mindset prevalent, with considerable CSO suspicion regarding the government's willingness to accept CSO participation. The CSOs see the government's agreement to its participation as a grudging recognition of a condition imposed by donors and the international community more than as the government's automatic acceptance of the need to involve CSOs in development processes. In the same way, people related to the government see CSOs as pushed by donors' agendas due to their extreme donor dependence and lack of autonomy. Government also points out that demands for transparency and accountability should be equally true for CSOs, with issues of accountability and lack of legitimacy regarding their constituencies.

⁴² *Assessment of participation ...op. cit.*, Conclusion.

Table 4: Factors preventing more effective participation in MKUKUTA I

Stakeholders	Obstacles to participation
Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information and weak feedback mechanisms. • Low capacity to comprehend policy issues. • Resource constraints in implementing agreed projects. • Weak alignment of people's priorities with MKUKUTA goals. • Decentralisation by devolution has not been well integrated at lower levels and is still unknown in villages and urban settings. • No clear indicators for M&E at the village level; data are sought from the communities and compiled at the district level and then sent to the national level, but communities are not necessary aware that they are participating in the M&E process. • Political polarisation has also constrained people's participation in MKUKUTA. In some areas, communities get contradictory messages from politicians. • In some communities, people are too poor to be able to contribute to the cost-sharing mechanism to all MKUKUTA projects, and this makes them feel too embarrassed to participate apart from giving their own labour.
CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information and weak feedback mechanisms. • Low capacity to comprehend policy issues. • Low understanding of government systems. • Relationship with the government and other stakeholders and credibility issues.
Trade Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to coordinate widely on issues. • Limited resources.
Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatch between academic and national developmental processes.
Professional Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible for targeted financial support. • Resource constraints. • Low capacity of human resources.
The Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low analytical capacity. • Lack of specialisation.
Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of engagement in local issues has resulted in weak engagement and integration of local interests into the national processes, including generic ones like MKUKUTA.
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The private sector is still nascent / weak and lacks time to deal with policy issues. • The contribution of the private sector to tax and non-tax revenues is too little to shoulder the national budget.

Source⁴³

⁴³ *The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty – Roles of Actors* (Tanzania/Dar-es-Salaam: URT, 2006).

2.2.2 Civil society strategies for engagement /Impact assessment

CSO strategies for engagement and mechanisms for participation

MKUKUTA I was supposed to end in 2010. MKUKUTA II and MKUZA II were being prepared at the time of this research, for implementation in 2011-2015. According to the Strategy Draft Review Guidelines issued by the government in August 2009, civil society umbrella organisations and networks are expected to coordinate civil society engagement in the process.⁴⁴

CSOs responded positively to that challenge. Under the auspices of the United Nations Civil Society Advisory Committee (UNCSAC), a meeting of civil society was called on 6 September 2009 at UNICEF. Around 30 of the CSOs that attended the meeting saw the need to engage and have coordinated participation in the MKUKUTA review process. There was agreement on forming a steering committee to follow up on the issues of CSO-MKUKUTA Review engagement. The Policy Forum (itself a network of 90 CSOs) formed a secretariat for coordination and administrative tasks, including information-sharing, dissemination and harmonising inputs.

In order to have legitimacy and gain a mandate, the steering committee was composed of networks, coalition and umbrella organisations with broad coverage and representativeness, but also local NGOs and some international NGOs. These networks and umbrella organisations are accountable to their constituencies. The steering committee was endorsed in a later meeting.⁴⁵

Some concerns were raised over the inclusion of international NGOs and funding agencies in the steering committee, but the establishing of clear lines of responsibility for different partners seems to have averted such worries. Lines of work made distinctions between capacity building, resource mobilisation and implementation. International organisations assumed responsibility for resource mobilisation and capacity building.

⁴⁴ *Annotated Outline For National Strategy For Growth And Reduction Of Poverty (NSGRP II / MKUKUTA II)* (Dar-es-Salaam: Ministry Of Finance And Economic Affairs, 25 January 2010).

⁴⁵ The Steering Committee composition: 1. Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO); 2. TGNP-FEMACT Coalition; 3. HAKIELIMU; 4. Tanzania Ecumenical Dialogue Group (TEDG); 5. Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA); 6. Shirikisho la VyamavyaWalemavu Tanzania (SHIVYAWATA); 7. Tanzania AIDS Forum (TAF); 8. TACOSODE; 9. Policy Forum (PF); 10. United Nations Association Tanzania (UNA); 11. TENMET; 12. Tanzania Youth Coalition (TYC).

On 18-19 January 2010, under the coordination of the Policy Forum, the steering committee convened a general meeting, bringing together 55 representatives of Tanzanian CSOs and networks, to deliberate on the MKUKUTA implementation reports and the MKUKUTA review studies to be used for the drafting of MKUKUTA II. Preliminary inputs to the drafting process for the second MKUKUTA were then presented on the three clusters and on the funding programme – Growth and Reduction of Income Poverty; Quality of Life and Social Well Being; Governance and Accountability. Analysis of these preliminary inputs shows an honest effort to make specific recommendations based on examination of official documents and statistics as well as independent evaluations, something rarely found in DRC and even less in Angola.⁴⁶

A process of extended consultations from the CSOs' side was initiated on the Zero draft MKUKUTA II, involving regional consultations facilitated by the Foundation for Civil Society (a grant facilitator for CSOs) followed by zonal consultations coordinated through the Policy Forum. There were also thematic consultations which included different sectors and interest groups (environment, disability, youth, gender, education and animal welfare groups). Development actors were consulted in every region in Tanzania, across regions and zones. Over 2,100 actors were heard from in one-to-one consultations and other opinions were gathered through a media campaign entitled *Kila Sauti Lazima Isikike* – 'Every voice must be heard'. A national CSO forum in May 2010 brought together all civil society groups and thematic groups to draw up a common CSO position/proposals for the draft MKUKUTA II. This position paper was then presented to an enlarged meeting of stakeholders that took place in Dar-es-Salaam on 7 June 2010, in the presence of the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, ICPs representatives, permanent secretaries and Members of Parliament (MPs).

The speech of the Policy Forum representative on the contributions of CSOs to MKUKUTA II stresses the need for 'a framework of ethics as well as pragmatic measures that will afford us the necessary trust in our governance structures to deliver what is just, what it must do, and what we need

⁴⁶ *Initial inputs of civil society organizations to the MKUKUTA review process and study findings; CSO National Consultation Meeting on MKUKUTA Assessment Findings – 'Setting the Ground for Planning'* (Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania: Policy Forum, 18-19 January 2010). www.policyforum-tz.org/files/ReportCSOMKUKUTAstudies.pdf

to eliminate poverty and develop as a nation'.⁴⁷ In front of government members and donors, the representative pointed out that 'sadly', MKUKUTA II did not have 'measures for accountability and good governance that are in themselves accountable'.⁴⁸

Assessing the impact of civil society participation

Although the number of CSO networks has been increasing in Tanzania since the 1990s (the country has now more than 228) and despite the efforts of the steering committee, there is still a serious problem of weak coordination and cooperation. A recent report by the Foundation for Civil Society has outlined some of the barriers to CSO networking as shown in the next table.

Table 5: Obstacles to networking by CSOs

Barriers for CSO networking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing and dissemination. This is partly because financial constraints limit awareness of CSOs' work, including engagement with the media.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different levels of organisational capacity of members (potential to gain expertise, human resources, financial resources, etc.).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of common understanding of the problems and commitment to solving them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal ambitions of the leaders.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicisation of CSOs, or issues, spoiling the credibility of CSOs' networking process and discouraging participation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding for networking activities (not directly stipulated in CSOs' projects).

Source⁴⁹

In trying to address this problem, the MKUKUTA CSO steering committee recommended a permanent forum for CSO poverty monitoring known as the CSO Joint Platform for Engagement (CSO-JPE). This is not intended as a formal organisation/network with formal structures. According to

⁴⁷ *Policy Forum speech at multi-stakeholder meeting on MKUKUTA II*, available at www.policyforum-tz.org/node/7443

⁴⁸ *Policy Forum speech ...op. cit.*

⁴⁹ *The State of Civil Society Organisations in Tanzania: Annual Report 2009* (Dar-es-Salaam: The Foundation for Civil Society, 2009).

some steering committee members, moves intending to create more formal structures have been futile in the past due to the distractions that come with formalities of networks within networks – elections, internal power struggles, too much focus on process rather than content, etc. The idea was to keep it simple and light and have everyone channel their technical inputs efficiently, freeing organisations' time so that they can actually do what is within their mandates – augmenting the voice of citizens, tracking the quality of service delivery and participating in decision-making at the local level.⁵⁰

There is also an issue regarding relationships between civil society and parliamentarians. According to a recent study, this relationship is limited due to the fact that some MPs do not live in their constituency, are difficult to track down, and apparently too busy to spend time with the CSOs in their constituencies. Moreover, parliamentarians are usually suspicious of CSOs as agencies that serve the interests of their donors.⁵¹ Concomitantly, the relationship between civil society and private sector is still weak in Tanzania.⁵²

In general terms, the government is showing more openness towards the participation of CSOs and participation is increasingly effective in the country's political and economic reform processes (decentralisation and local government reforms, privatisations, constitutional and legal reform processes) and the MKUKUTA processes, but there is no institutional framework to sustain and manage this partnership at different levels of the government. In addition to the capacity and commitment of central and local governments to engage civil society partners in pro-poor development policies, there is a need to improve the legal framework for CSOs and its enforcement in the country.⁵³

Nevertheless, in the relationship between the government and CSOs one must also note a more recent event, which threatens to harm progress. Immediately after launching the MKUKUTA II, the President's Office Planning Commission announced another national development strategy – *The Tanzania Five Year Development Plan 2011/2012-2015/2016, Unleashing Tanzania's latent growth potentials* – similar to MKUKUTA II, but developed

⁵⁰ Semkae Kilonzo (Policy Forum).

⁵¹ *The State of Civil Society Organisations in Tanzania: Annual Report 2009* (Dar-es-Salaam: The Foundation for Civil Society, 2009).

⁵² Haapanen, Toni (ed) *Civil Society in Tanzania*, Kepa's working papers No. 19, 2007. Available at: www.kepa.fi/palvelut/julkaisut/taustaselvitykset/pdf/19_haapanen_toni_-_tansania.pdf p. 11.

⁵³ *The State of Civil Society Organisations in Tanzania: Annual Report 2009* (Dar-es-Salaam: The Foundation for Civil Society, 2009).

behind closed doors without the participation of CSOs. According to the official statement and announcement, the Plan is the formal implementation tool of the country's development agenda, articulated in the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, MKUKUTA II, the key benchmarks of Long Term Perspective Plan (2011/12-2025/26), as well as the findings of the Review of Vision 2025. The Plan is underpinned by specific strategies to fast-track realisation of the Vision 2025 goals and objectives. Accordingly, the Plan is clearly taking the leading role in development strategies from now on.

For the Presidential Office to brush aside the CSOs' participation in the long dialogue process between them and the government, constructed over the years through MKUKUTA mechanisms, raises serious doubts as to the real commitment and openness of the government towards CSOs; it seems to suggest that such openness in the MKUKUTA II process was due primarily to donors' pressure.

Leaving aside the sincerity of governmental appreciation of CSOs' contribution, a study on the public perception of CSOs in Tanzania has revealed that 81% and 94% of community members and other stakeholders, respectively, perceive them as beneficial.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the same study also revealed several areas of dissatisfaction towards CSO seen in the next table.

Table 6: Public reasons for dissatisfaction with CSOs

Main reasons for dissatisfaction with CSOs
• Lack of transparency on budgets and accountability.
• Inefficiency in project identifications, prioritisation and implementation.
• No participatory approach to planning implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development projects.
• No participatory decision making at management level, and favouritism.

Source⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Public perception on CSOs in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: The Foundation for Civil Society, 2009).

⁵⁵ *Public perception ... op. cit.*

According to the study, CSOs lack mutually accountable procedures and systems. 25% of CSOs do not keep any or some basic accountancy records and 60% of CSOs had not been audited at the time of the Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) research. The problem is even more serious with rural CSOs.

In order to enhance transparency and accountability, some CSOs themselves promoted a code of conduct and 'standards of excellence'. At the same time, and following a trend that can be found in other countries (e.g. DRC and Angola), the government has been trying to implement the NGO Code of Ethics. Among other requirements, this code establishes that NGOs must submit annual financial and narrative reports in order to keep their registration. There are threats of deregistering NGOs that do not comply with those requirements.

Besides these problems, it is worth noting the profusion of documents produced and made available by the Tanzanian CSO sites, by far the best example of all the countries studied in this research. The Policy Forum and the Foundation for Civil Society have been doing a remarkable job on the engagement of CSOs with MKUKUTA. We must also note the relatively abundant and easily accessible information, studies and analysis of government structures on poverty alleviation policies, especially MKUKUTA I and II. It is by far the best store and source of government information provided in the context of the cases studied in this research.

2.3 Democratic Republic of Congo⁵⁶

2.3.1 Institutional framework for participation

The Congolese have been living most of their modern history under authoritarianism, concentration of power and administrative centralisation. Nevertheless, it is amazing to see how resilient and active civil society is and how significant was its role in the country's recent political transition to a more peaceful setting.

⁵⁶ The analysis of DRC case in this work greatly benefited from the revisions and comments of Robert Mabala (Conseil National des ONG de Développement – RD-Congo). The author is nevertheless responsible for the text.

Negotiations under Joseph Kabila's administration to end the second civil war started in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 2001, and included CSO representatives right from the start. A Final Act document, providing for a two-year transitional government, headed by Joseph Kabila and four vice-presidents, included the signatures of five members of civil society. The transitional government was set up in July 2003 in line with the agreement for president and four vice presidents, who represented the former government, former rebel groups, the political opposition, and civil society.

An important reason why DRC's civil society was successful in getting itself included in the process was that it was capable of mobilising a wide group of individuals and harmonising their different agendas. This allowed civil society to speak with a relatively united voice at the negotiations through its delegates, which included several NGOs.⁵⁷

The conflict that began in May 1997 dramatically reduced national output and government revenue, increased external debt, and resulted in the deaths of 1.5 to 3 million people from violence, famine and disease.⁵⁸

Basic living conditions improved gradually with the transitional government, which reopened relations with international financial institutions and international donors, and began implementing reforms. An anti-corruption strategy was elaborated in September 2002 and the DRC was granted access to the HIPC Initiative in July 2003.⁵⁹ Donor coordination was fostered within the humanitarian community through the initiative Good Humanitarian Donorship.

In March 2002 the government produced an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (I-PRSP) and presented it to the IMF in June 2002. The I-PRSP is organised around three pillars, focusing on:

1. peace and governance;
2. macroeconomic stabilisation and the promotion of pro-poor growth;
3. support for community-led development initiatives.

⁵⁷ *In Dialogue Intercongolais Un: Points de Vue des Membres de Pole Institute- Editorial* (Pole Institute, 1999).

⁵⁸ *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 07/330 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2007).

⁵⁹ See also Sumata, C., 'Migradollars and Poverty Alleviation Strategy Issues in Congo (DRC)' in *Review of African Political Economy* No. 93/94 (2002).

Priority actions in the I-PRSP relate largely to establishing minimum economic, social, governmental and political preconditions to initiate a process of pro-poor growth. A full PRSP – the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy Paper (PRGSP) – was published in July 2006, and a new Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility was signed with the IMF in 2010.⁶⁰

The survey conducted for the PRSP in 2005-2006 showed a worrying picture of poverty:

extremely high rates of monetary poverty (71.34 percent of the poor) and inequality (Gini index of 40 percent) which vary sharply by area of residence (61.49 percent of the urban poor have a Gini index of 40 percent, while 75.72 percent of the rural poor have a Gini index of 36 percent), by province (the poorest provinces are in the eastern part of the country), by socio-professional group (with greater poverty in the informal sectors), and by demographic variable (greater poverty among young couples and the elderly). The human development indicators (education, health, access to socio-economic goods and services) as well as indicators on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, living conditions, and social protection, not only confirm the foregoing diagnosis, but also establish that poverty in the DRC is a generalised, chronic, mass phenomenon. ... In view of the above, the DRC would be hard pressed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.⁶¹

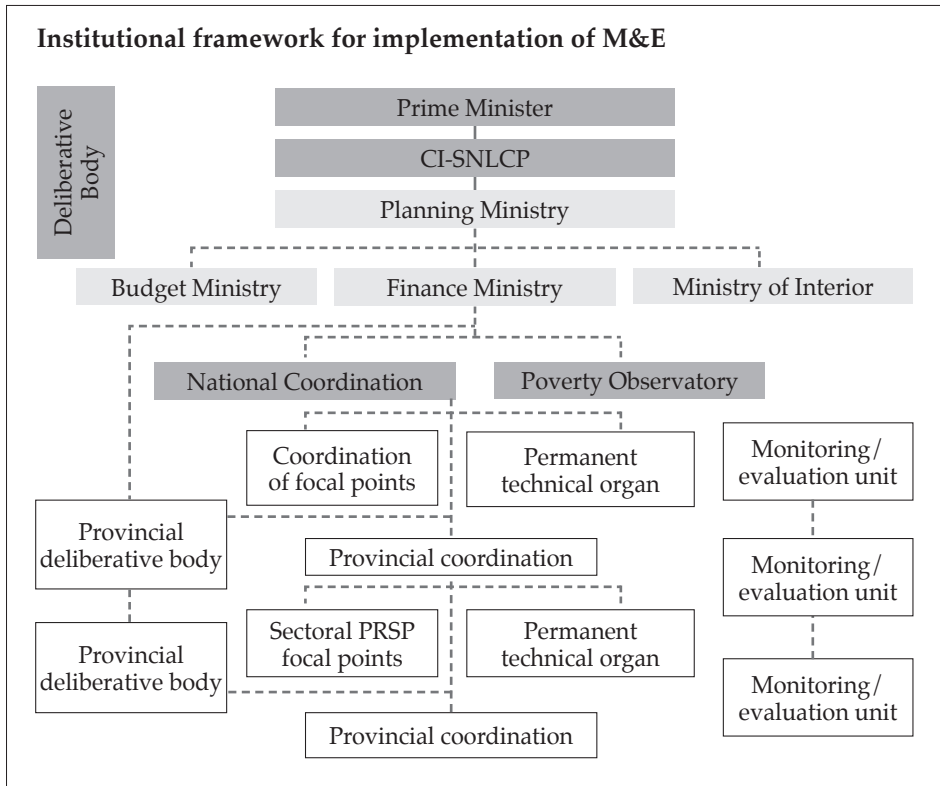
The PRGSP as envisaged by the government recognised that the implementation of the M&E of the Poverty Reduction Strategy was not just a matter for official institutions, but also involved local governments and stakeholders from civil society and the private sector. CSOs were expected to be present at the various stages of M&E. It was recognised that the implementation of the PRGSP required a strengthening of the institutional capacities of the state and its non-governmental partners.

As can be seen in Figure 5 below, the PRGSP framework included: 1) the Inter-ministerial Commission on Implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (CI-SNLCP) responsible for reaching decisions on all questions relating to the process; 2) the Steering Unit for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Preparation and Implementation Process (UPPE-SRP) responsible for day-to-day management of the process and all questions relating to com-

⁶⁰ See also Sumata, C., 'Migradollars and Poverty ...op. cit..

⁶¹ *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 07/330 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2007) p.10-11.

bating poverty; 3) the Technical Committee (CT) made up of the heads of the research and planning directorates of different ministries and representatives of civil society, providing support to the UPPE-SRP and analysing thematic issues;⁶² 4) the Consultative Committee of Partners (CCP), a bipartite structure (government and donors) responsible for evaluating the PRGSP process and mobilising resources; and 5) the local technical committees (CTLs) established to work on a strategy, preparation and implementation in each province.



Source⁶³

Figure 5: Institutional framework for implementation of monitoring and evaluation

⁶² The Technical Committee is subdivided into Sectoral and Thematic Groups: (i) Peace, political governance, and administrative and judicial reforms; (ii) Macroeconomic framework and harmonization of government programs; (iii) Fiscal and economic reforms, (iv) Private sector, wealth creation, jobs, microfinance, and banking sector; (v) Rural development and agriculture; (vi) Education; (vii) Health and HIV/AIDS; (viii) Urban poverty; (ix) Gender, vulnerable groups, and security; (x) Environment; (xi) Community-level dynamics and basic services; (xii) Culture, communications, and new technologies; (xiii) Transport infrastructure; (xiv) Mines; (xv) Energy; and (xvi) Methodology.

⁶³ *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 07/330 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2007), p. 96.

Table 7: Organisational structure for implementation of monitoring and evaluation

Institution	Responsibility	Key tasks
Prime Minister	Chair of the Inter-ministerial Commission on Implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy; assisted by three Vice Chairs: the Minister of Planning, the Minister of Budget, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of the Interior.	Instituting the necessary policies for achieving economic recovery and poverty reduction in keeping with the objectives the government has set in Vision 26/25 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
Ministry of Planning	Dealing with the physical execution of the PRGSP in close coordination with the sector ministries, the development partners, CSOs, NGOs, and the private sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I - Working closely with the national coordination structure for PRGSP implementation; II - coordination with the development partners in connection with PRGSP implementation, periodically reporting to partners on the progress made and problems encountered; III - coordination of NGOs activities in respect of development and establishing practical modalities for NGO-organised participation in PRGSP implementation, especially in local initiatives.

Institution	Responsibility	Key tasks
National Coordination Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support structure and technical organ of the CI-SNLCP; • government focal point for the implementation and monitoring of the poverty reduction strategy; • structure for consultation, partnership, coordination, information, education, and communication (IEC) to assist in PRGSP implementation and M&E processes; • intermediary between governmental structures, bilateral and multilateral development partners, civil society, NGOs, religious groups, and the decentralised development structures at the local level. 	<p>I - Monitor the conduct of the reforms called for in the sectoral and thematic strategies;</p> <p>II - monitor the action plans for implementation of the PRGSP and the communication strategy;</p> <p>III - ensure the harmonisation of the strategies of the external partners and those of the PRGSP;</p> <p>IV - promote coordination among the various stakeholders at the sectoral level in PRGSP implementation;</p> <p>V - strengthen the participatory process in development planning, decisionmaking, and monitoring and evaluation at all levels;</p> <p>VI - establish a capacity building programme for civil society, the national NGOs, and the local development organisations;</p> <p>VII - produce quarterly, half-yearly, and annual reports on PRGSP implementation and disseminate them widely;</p> <p>VIII - sponsor evaluations in areas of interest to it, such as: participation, local initiatives, and best practices to leverage experiences.</p>

Institution	Responsibility	Key tasks
Poverty Observatory or Congolese Poverty and Inequality Observatory (OCPI in French)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent structure attached to the Ministry of Planning, working in synergy with the national coordination structure for PRGSP implementation; • responsible for evaluating poverty in the DRC; • partners include the research and planning directorates of the technical ministries, civil society organisations, religious groups, the media, NGOs, research centres and academic and scientific institutions, the private sector, opinion leaders, labour unions, community development organisations, and the development partners. 	<p>I - Periodically evaluating the evolution of poverty as it relates to the execution of the relevant programmes and projects under the PRGSP;</p> <p>II - developing the instruments and methodologies needed for this evaluation;</p> <p>III - creating a coordination and partnership framework in particular with the INS, the DEPs, and the development partners with a view to evaluating the level of poverty by means of statistics which capture and describe the status of poverty;</p> <p>IV - evaluating the impact of poverty reduction policies and policies aimed at achieving the MDGs;</p> <p>V - informing policies on the evolution of poverty, writing reports on the phenomenon, and disseminating them widely.</p>
Provincial level	Provincial Poverty Reduction Committees – CPLPs	Serve, in the context of the decentralisation policy and continuation of the participatory process initiated during PRGSP preparation, as relays in the mobilisation and participation of grassroots communities in PRGSP implementation.
Local level	Local Poverty Reduction Committees – CLLPs	
SEP	Supplementary mechanism for the Participatory M&E (SEP) of the PRS, collaborating with the public and private sectors and civil society in horizontal and vertical partnerships, to promote transparency, social and public accountability.	<p>I - engage in the M&E of a project, programme or policy;</p> <p>II - share control over the contents, process, and findings of the M&E; and</p> <p>III - identify and/or take corrective measures.</p>

Source⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 07/330 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2007), p. 96.

CSOs such as the NGOs and professional associations should help in building the capacities of grassroots communities to enable them to hold accountable those in charge. These NGOs and associations should also support the capacity building and training activities aimed at developing individual and institutional capacities in the interest of good governance and the improved provision of services.

As we can see, CSOs are considered a central partner in this structure for implementation and M&E. Such a role required a response from CSOs in terms of organisation and capacity building to participate in these mechanisms. Unfortunately, CSO participation in these structures has been meagre or almost non-existent, as recognised by several participants in the First National Symposium of DRC Civil Society in May 2009 in Kinshasa.⁶⁵

According to the PRGSP officers interviewed in the course of this research, there was a first meeting with a few CSOs at the beginning of the process, but CSOs lacked an organised framework to engage in such a demanding structure. From the 15 thematic groups created within the PRGSP process, only two had civil society delegates, i.e. 'Communitarian dynamics' and 'Agriculture and rural development'. A process of CSO coordination was then set in motion to promote more active and structured participation, as we will see in the next chapter.

2.3.2 Civil society strategies for engagement /Impact assessment

CSO strategies for engagement and mechanisms for participation

As stressed by Reverend Père Rigobert Minani, CSOs had two major experiences of engagement. The first dates from 1997 within the context of searching for peaceful solutions to the conflict. By then CSOs grouped themselves within the National Campaign for Peace and Democracy (CNPDP in French). It was the first time that CSO action had a major national and international impact, and the effort represented an important contribution to the consolidation of the peace. A second attempt at greater coordination occurred in 2005-2006 on the occasion of the electoral process, when CSOs were linked to the electoral observation process (CDCE in French). But these were isolated

⁶⁵ In *Symposium nationale de la société civile sur l'efficacité de l'aide au développement et la concertation sur les politiques*, Rapport de Synthèse (Kinshasa: Service de reproduction de la MONUC, mai 2009), especially pp. 9-15.

cases of better organisation related to specific issues, which add little to the medium and long-term strengthening of CSOs' coordination.⁶⁶

Apart from those two experiences, CSO coordination has been left to specific networks such as CNONG (the DRC's biggest network of NGOs). Structured participation and involvement in poverty alleviation/development mechanisms has been extremely weak, random and tokenistic.

A process to create a more long-term, broad-based and structured CSO coordination, was undertaken by faith-based organisations (FBOs) during a meeting convened by MONUC (the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the DRC) for that purpose in October 2006, within the spirit of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. That process benefited from the support of ICPs gathered within the International Group of Civil Society Donors (GIBSOC in French). In order to fulfil the need for CSO participation and inclusion, the DRC government, through the Ministry of Planning, launched a questionnaire on the Paris Declaration indicators in January 2008. It was clear that there was a need for a space or mechanism for dialogue between the government and CSOs over governmental policies and the democratic process. A consultation process on how to structure CSOs was set in motion in August 2008 in all 11 provinces. The consultation process included the donor community, FBOs, national and international NGOs, provincial administrations, local authorities and several ministries. The Ministry of Planning was involved in all stages, providing technical support.⁶⁷

The CSOs heard during the provincial consultation process expressed the opinion that civil society is a democratic space where a variety of actors freely express their opinions, according to their interests and programmes for action. Capacities are expected to emerge from such free and non-hierarchical dynamics and to support participation in the design and implementation of public policies, rendering the government more accountable to its citizens.⁶⁸

More objectively, a clear conclusion was on the need to organise a national symposium of all CSOs (thereby accepting civil society diversity), to promote strategic changes in terms of CSO participation in public policies. A preparatory committee was set up to prepare for the event, which took place

⁶⁶ In *Symposium nationale de la société civile sur l'efficacité de l'aide au développement et la concertation sur les politiques*, Rapport de Synthèse (Kinshasa : Service de reproduction de la MONUC, mai 2009), p.13.

⁶⁷ See *Symposium nationale ...op. cit.*

⁶⁸ See *Symposium nationale ...op. cit.*

in Kinshasa in May 2009, organised by the Ministry of Planning, ICPs, CSOs networks and FBOs. Delegates came from all the provinces to participate together with representatives of public institutions, foreign guests (from Cameroon, Benin and Mozambique) to share their countries' experiences and representatives of the international community, among others. The three themes were the focus of the First National Symposium of DRC Civil Society:

1. the evaluation of aid effectiveness;
2. the definition of a framework for civil society coordination to participate in national policies for development; and
3. the definition of a framework for dialogue on development policies between CSO, government and ICPs.⁶⁹

A follow-up committee was established based on the previous preparatory committee to implement the main decisions of the conference, including a structure for CSO coordination. This structure would be organised:

1. at the local level by community-based organisations (CBOs) and local NGOs;
2. at the provincial level by the existing networks (provincial and thematic); at the national level by 15 thematic platforms tracking the 15 thematic groups of the PRGSP, supervised and coordinated by the National Conference Follow-Up Committee and its secretariat (the number of thematic platforms was later increased to 21 due to the corresponding increase in the Ministry of Planning thematic groups).

Each thematic group has a team leader acting as a contact point between the Ministry of Planning thematic group and the Symposium thematic platform. The team leader and a restricted group of members of the respective thematic platform aim to be in contact with the Ministry of Planning to be informed about the specific programmes and policies that are being prepared. The team leader subsequently convenes a meeting with all the other members of the thematic platform on the need to analyse and debate the specific policies that are being prepared by the government and present proposals, suggestions and / or recommendations. This document will then

⁶⁹ See *Symposium nationale ...op. cit.*

be presented at a meeting with the Ministry of Planning thematic group as the CSOs' Symposium contribution. Each thematic group will comprise a technical commission providing more specific analysis in collaboration with scientific research centres. Members of symposium thematic groups participating in the work of specific ministries are an extension of the Symposium as a whole, being accountable to all its other thematic groups.

This model of thematic groups will be replicated at the provincial and local levels within a decentralised model of coordination and engagement. As approved by the First National Symposium meeting, the national level structure is not intended as a 'super NGO' but a space for coordination, for synergies or strategic alliances.

The whole framework for civil society coordination is based on a 'Civil Society Letter', with defining principles for action. A process of participatory provincial and national hearings and approval for the writing of this letter of principles was due to be started soon after the time of writing by the Follow-Up Committee. The idea of a letter of principles (approximating to the Code of Conduct in Tanzania) seems a wise formula to stress the political autonomy of such structure and ownership by its members. This idea could also be a good example for other CSOs facing problems of mistrust and internal division, where their legitimacy and autonomy are in question (e.g. as in Angola and to some extent Mozambique).

The First National Symposium also pointed out that contrary to current practice, government consultation with CSOs must start at the inception rather than implementation phases. CBOs should be involved in the design of development policies, and their capacities need to be developed. CBOs need to be actors and subjects of a more decentralised cooperation for development.

Assessing the impact of CSO participation

Civil society's political involvement in the areas examined above related to the transition from Mobutu's regime with few regional parallels. However, a seeming major strength ended up as a weakness. As soon as former civil society members became involved in the National Conference process they revealed their political ambitions within the transition government. According to Professor Biyoya, at the time of the National Conference, CSOs emerged with clear standing and autonomy, but soon became 'feudalised' by political power at the national and local level and extremely

dependent on foreign aid.⁷⁰ After a first phase, when they made a major and important contribution to the democratic process, paradoxically CSOs gained a reputation for concealing the political ambitions of ‘politicians in the making’ – of being a kind of a springboard for politics in alternative ways to political parties or as a disguised form of co-option.

Relationships between Joseph Kabila’s government and CSOs that remained politically independent were soon marked by several tensions and constraints as well as attempts at manipulation and instrumentalisation. Repressive characteristics of the past have not disappeared, as pointed out by the Symposium Follow-Up Committee in a memorandum addressed to the UN Secretary General on the occasion of the DRC’s 60th anniversary of independence:

*...we also note a dangerous slide towards the exercising of totalitarian power, repression, violations of citizen rights and liberties with the assassination of journalists and human rights activists, and threats and intimidation of every sort.*⁷¹

The assassination of prominent human rights defender Floribert Chebeya (director of one of Congo’s largest and most respected human rights organisations, the *Voix des Sans Voix* – Voice of the Voiceless) and the disappearance of his driver are still under police investigation, but have immediately resurrected fears from the past among CSOs. Chebeya’s body was found on 1 June 2010, soon after he had visited police headquarters in Kinshasa.

Following other cases in the region (e.g. Angola; see below), the attempts at co-option and manipulation of CSOs by the political power gave rise to an emerging distinction between those CSOs which have a more or less clear pro-government standing (some of them accused by other members of civil society as being creations of the government itself) and those that want to maintain their political independence. Some ICPs do try to distinguish between these types and support the more or less independent ones, especially those that appear to have a stronger base in the communities. However, besides the fact that this is always a subjective judgement, there is

⁷⁰ In *Symposium nationale de la société civile sur l’efficacité de l’aide au développement et la concertation sur les politiques*, Rapport de Synthèse (Kinshasa: Service de reproduction de la MONUC, Mai 2009), p.9.

⁷¹ In *Memorandum of civil society in the Democratic Republic of Congo for the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations* (Kinshasa: Civil Society National Symposium Follow-up Committee of the Democratic Republic of Congo/Civil Society Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 28 June 2010).

also the problem of the new international tendency to channel aid through the state budget in a supposed effort to strengthen state institutions, with ever decreasing funds available to directly support CSOs.

The structure and dynamics approved at the First National Symposium, together with the established 'road map' of assignments, shows some concern and commitment towards transparency, inclusiveness, pluralism and democratic procedures at the national and local level. The process has been in motion since the First Symposium, but is facing some problems and internal criticism.

According to several complaints heard in the course of this research, the National Symposium Follow-Up Committee is somehow beginning to show traits of self-institutionalisation as a mega-structure representing civil society, 'some kind of a civil society National Directorate' and not the space for engagement and coordination as it was supposed to be, according to the First Symposium decisions. For these critics, this can be clearly seen in the general problems of communication, restitution and feedback, not only from team leaders towards 'their' thematic group members, but also from the Follow-Up Committee towards most of the Symposium members. Tasks assigned to the Symposium Follow-Up Committee are delayed in their implementation and members are not being properly informed on what is going on, beyond the inner circle of the Follow-Up Committee.

Although the engagement model in terms of thematic groups was intended to be replicated at the provincial level and decentralised, there is a tendency at the Symposium to see this task as being the creation of new provincial structures for data collection and analysis, despite existing coordination mechanisms and networks that have done this. There seems little point in creating new structures when others have been working effectively in the field for several years. The Symposium should take advantage of existing provincial CSO mechanisms.

The 'letter of principles' process (a politically sensitive issue) is one of a number of initiatives being delayed by the Follow-Up Committee, amid mounting complaints about the close and seemingly detrimental relationship between a few members of the Follow-Up Committee and the government. Most critics believe that the Symposium process is irreversible, but that in order to be effective, a new follow-up committee is necessary to regain CSOs' autonomy and independence.

Alternative structures have already made progress in addressing these problems, such as the New Civil Society (*Nouvelle Société Civile - NSC*), an emerging network of CSOs asserting political independence as its distinctive characteristic, as opposed to organisations such as the Symposium. NSC sees itself as departing from the past image of CSOs as under the feudal sway of political parties. It points out that members of the Symposium performing functions in state institutions or state companies are incompatible with independence. The New Civil Society does not exclude a relationship with the Symposium, but wants to see that relationship as politically independent.

For its part, the Follow-Up Committee recognises some difficulties in terms of feedback and in the practical functioning of the structure, as well as in the workings of thematic groups, but says it is discussing those issues and preparing a meeting with the whole group in order to find solutions. It sees these problems as essentially logistical due to the high workload in the early stages. It sees members' expectations as too high and as demanding an unacceptable speed at this stage. As for the political closeness to the government, members of the committee denied it.

These increasing suspicions and criticism are detrimental to the national symposium structures and processes, as well as for the long awaited civil society participation in public policies. An enlarged and clear discussion on these matters in a mid-term review meeting could push the process forward, overcoming problems and moving on with the road map established at the First Symposium. A good deal of effort and funding was put into this process and expectations throughout the country are high. The DRC development process demands effective and productive participation by CSOs.

Analysis of the Symposium process and our research highlights the weak involvement of the private sector and the complete lack of representation of the informal sector. This is all the more noticeable given that the informal economy is continually on the rise, to the point where it now represents a dominant share of the Congolese economy.⁷²

⁷² *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, IMF Country Report No. 07/330 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2007) pp. 36-37.

2.4 Angola

Introductory note: the Angolan case is very unusual in terms of CSOs' relationship with the government. There are no specific mechanisms for CSO participation in M&E mechanisms on poverty alleviation policies. There is some past experience of the PRSP process begun in 2002 in terms of considering appropriate mechanisms, but this was halted before implementation. More recently in January 2011 a new development programme was announced by the Presidency of the Republic – 'the Municipal Programmes for Rural Development and Fight Against Poverty' (*Programas Municipais Integrados de Desenvolvimento Rural e Combate à Pobreza – PMIDRCP*) entailing the revitalisation of the Councils for Social Listening and Coordination (*Conselhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social – CACS*), created in 2007. As we will see, these councils were intended to be a forum to include and listen to CSOs, but are set up and convened at the local authorities' discretion, somewhat at random. Participation of specific CSOs and the private sector in such councils occurs by invitation of the local authorities to discuss local agendas established by the state administration. Some forums are more inclusive and participatory, but that is solely the result of personal attitude and goodwill on the part of the government officer in charge.

2.4.1 Institutional framework for partition

With the end of the long Angolan civil war in February-April 2002, there followed a new stage in the country's reconstruction. The international donors' conference, which had been discussed since mid 1990s,⁷³ was once more on the agenda. Initially planned for the second half of 2003, the conference became conditional upon the production of a previous Interim PRSP document that the Angolan government was meant to present.

The international community set out several conditions for the Angolan government, namely that:

- donors' financial help should be part of a PRSP;
- Angola should revise its system for public resource management;

⁷³ *Programa de Reabilitação Comunitária e de Reconciliação Nacional, Round Table Conference of Donors in Brussels* (Luanda: GURN, Setembro 1995).

- there should be more transparency in the oil accounts and state budget (by then an estimated 50% of government spending was not recorded in official state budgetary figures);
- the country should reach an agreement with the IMF (in order to get World Bank involved in the country's reconstruction).

Reconstruction costs were estimated at US\$4 billion, of which US\$1.5 billion was earmarked as the international community's contribution.⁷⁴

Within the PRSP model and formula normally suggested by the International Financial Institutions (essentially the World Bank and the IMF), the Ministry of Planning was to lead the project, the Strategy to Fight Poverty (*Estratégia de Combate à Pobreza – ECP*). This was intended to be the main supporting document for the donors' conference. The ECP (PRSP) was also seen as the main reference for post-conflict policies. It was a general document that would be adapted to local context.⁷⁵

Besides the drawing up of a PRSP, the donors' conference imposed several conditions, such as governmental compliance with the international community's demands for more transparency in public accounts, good governance and respect for human rights.

The Angolan government resisted the international community pressures and found a new partner, China, willing to fund the country's reconstruction with oil-backed loans, free from any conditionality.⁷⁶ With the new partnership and the boom in oil prices, the government felt sufficiently comfortable by 2004 to give up on the donors' conference and the financial support that might have been offered. From then on the government asserted its clear autonomy from international community conditionality. Despite sporadic mentions of the ECP (PRSP) in a few government documents and NGO reports, it lost its strategic role and policy guiding character, being relegated to a secondary plan. The donor community also lost any leverage over

⁷⁴ See *External Evaluation of SDC's Humanitarian Aid in Angola*, commissioned by the Africa Division for Humanitarian Aid (HA) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), (Berne, March 2004), p. 5.

⁷⁵ *Estratégia de combate à pobreza, reinserção social, reabilitação e reconstrução e estabilização económica*, versão sumária, Luanda: Ministério do Planeamento, Direcção de Estudos e Planeamento [aprovada pelo Governo a 11 de Fevereiro de 2004] (Luanda: MINPLAN & GURN, 24 September 2003).

⁷⁶ Vidal, Nuno, 'The Angolan regime and the move to multiparty politics', in Patrick Chabal & Nuno Vidal, *Angola, the weight of history* (London: Hurst, 2007), pp. 124-174.

the government. Since then, donors' contributions have been diminishing, currently representing about 0.3% to 0.5% of the state budget, and several donors have been closing down their development programmes.

None of the planned mechanisms that were due to be institutionalised, structured and developed were actually realised, particularly those related to participation and M&E. The ECP lost its importance and potential impact, especially in terms of immediate poverty alleviation. Macro-economic goals and reconstruction of infrastructure became the priority in public policies.

During the ECP formulation stage, the process formally and institutionally tried to take on some of the general PRSP methodological principles and parameters, namely the need for broad-based participative consultation with, for example, communities, CSOs, donor representatives, and international NGOs.

The ECP stressed the need for urgent resolution of the most acute poverty problems and planned to cover a three-year period (2003-2006). This should have represented the basis for a Medium Term Development Plan and for a Long Term Strategy for Structural Development (Angola 2025). In practice, however, it was never implemented and the Medium Term Development Plan ended up being designed by the government and the majority party in 2008 (to cover the 2009-2012 period), in a completely different spirit. It excluded participation by other social actors and political parties, and prioritised macro-economic stability, rehabilitation or construction of infrastructure and institutional capacity building.

As a result of the loss of influence of the ECP, the Medium Term Development Plan and the Long Term Development Strategy (Angola 2025) excluded the participation of CSOs and other stakeholders. In order to avoid such accusation by CSOs the government resorted to a fallacious argument insisting that some of the main points of those development plans and strategy had been assimilated into the 2008 government party electoral programme and subsequent governmental annual plans for social sectors and social service provision. Under this argument, the MPLA 82% win on the 2008 elections was implicitly embodying the society's approval to those plans. According to a speech in October 2011 by the President of the Republic, the Angola 2025 agenda (about which no one has any precise information, beyond a few very generic political-social objectives) is still under implementation

through the governing party's 2008 electoral programme.⁷⁷ Despite the fact that the final and official version of the Angola 2025 programme was never made public, the President stated that the programme was endorsed by a so-called National Consensus Agenda approved in May 2008 during a conference with the intended participation of all social strata. During the course of this research, several CSOs said that the May 2008 conference was completely dominated by the MPLA government, bringing in only a few politically selected members of the opposition, churches, CSOs and unions in a politically cosmetic operation in the run-up to the September 2008 elections and cannot be considered a 'national consensus' in any democratic sense. In addition, besides very generic political-social objectives the so-called Angola 2025 complete programme was not made public at that meeting.

Table 8: Chronology of the Strategy to Fight Poverty – ECP (PRSP)

Event	Date
Interim Draft of ECP (I-PRSP)	May 2001
Preliminary Draft of ECP document: submitted to cooperation partners – institutions of the UN system, World Bank, IMF and EU	September 2001
Publication of the interim ECP (I-PRSP)	15 April 2002
Preparation of the final ECP version, under the coordination of the Ministry of Planning, including a process of intra-governmental consultations at central, provincial and municipal level, a few civil society representatives, rural communities and ICPs	September 2001 – September 2003
Presentation of the ECP to the World Bank, IMF and other ICPs	January 2004
ECP approval by the Angolan government	11 February 2004
Publication of the revised and final version of ECP by the Ministry of Planning	2005

Influences from the ECP process can be found in the 2003-2004 government programme and, to a lesser extent (an indirect/ non-explicit reference), in the 2005-2006 programme. From then on, the ECP influence vanished, and priority was given to macro-economic stability (control of prices, exchange rate, fiscal deficit and GDP) and to the construction/ rehabilitation of infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges, harbours and airports).

⁷⁷ Speech by José Eduardo dos Santos at the opening of the Fourth Legislative Session of the Second Legislature of the National Assembly entitled "The current state of the nation" (Luanda, 18 October 2011).

Table 9: Government programmes reflecting the influence of ECP

Name and main features of programme	Year	Strength of influence of ECP
Government Programme: main programme objective – to fight hunger, poverty and promote social stability through consolidation of the peace, national reconciliation, social integration of demobilised military personnel, internally displaced populations and refugees.	2003-2004	Strong
Government Programme: main programme objective – to consolidate the peace and national reconciliation, to construct an integrated national economy aiming to fight hunger and poverty, and carry out state capacity building to ensure an efficient state administration and justice system throughout the territory.	2005-2006	Medium
Government Programme: consolidation of peace and national reconciliation and construction of an integrated and self-sustained national economy aiming to fight hunger and poverty; state capacity building to ensure the re-establishment of state administration in the whole country; balanced development of the whole territory, development of human resources and the consolidation of the democratic process.	2007-2008	Very weak or only in indirect terms
Medium Term Development Plan: promotion of national unity and cohesion, consolidation of democracy, economic stability, improvement of citizens' living conditions and promotion of private sector; sustainable economic growth with transformation and diversification of economic structures, human development of Angolan citizens, the increasing of employment rates and incomes, recovery and construction of infrastructure and reform of state administration.	2009-2012	Non-existent in any explicit or objective form

Institutional structures of ECP

The planned institutional structures of ECP were established according to the strategy's implementation scope, objectives and M&E, including a national, provincial and municipal level, as shown in Figure 6.

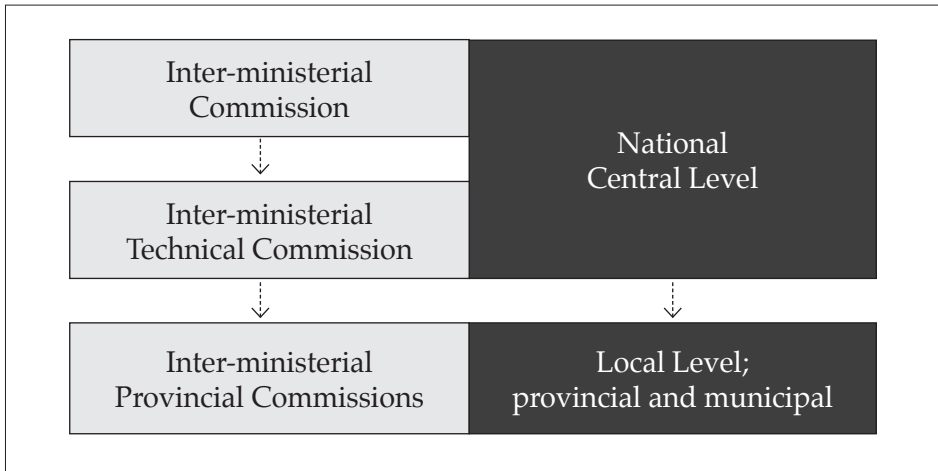


Figure 6: Institutional structures of ECP

ECP Inter-ministerial Commission – National Central Level

Composition: Group of high ranking cadres of the Ministry of Planning (MINPLAN) and the Ministry of Finance (MINFIN), working with the National Statistics Institute (INE). This group is coordinated by MINPLAN.

Function: Commission created by the Council of Ministers to develop the work of the ECP and coordinate its implementation, monitoring and evaluation – overseen by the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly (although in practice effective control was by the Council of Ministers, presided over by the President of the Republic; there is an extreme concentration of powers in the Presidency, and the National Assembly has little capacity to monitor or evaluate government policies).⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Vidal, Nuno, 'The genesis and development of the Angolan political and administrative system from 1975 to the present', in Steve Kyle, *Lusophone Africa: Intersections between Social Sciences* (Cornell, NY: Cornell Institute for African Development, 2-3 May 2003), pp. 1- 16.

Inter-ministerial Technical Commission – National Central Level

Composition: Group of high ranking technicians of the Ministry of Planning (MINPLAN) and the Ministry of Finance (MINFIN), working with the National Statistics Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Estatística* - INE).

Function: Main unit in charge of developing the work of the ECP; collecting and analysing the necessary data, ensuring the logistics for ECP, coordinating practical and functional activities, including management of the consultation process with other stakeholders such as private-sector professional associations, national and international NGOs, local communities, faith-based associations and ICPs. This commission would be directly overseen by the Inter-ministerial Commission coordinated by MINPLAN.

Inter-ministerial Provincial Commissions – Provincial and Municipal Level

Composition: The ECP implementation process planned the constitution of provincial inter-ministerial commissions (bringing together technicians and provincial representatives from different ministries). These commissions would be overseen by the Inter-ministerial Technical Commission.

Function: At the provincial and municipal level, these commissions would be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the ECP.

The ECP document highlighted factors as being responsible for poverty in Angola, as described in the next table.

Table 10: Causes of poverty in Angola, according to ECP analysis

Eight causes of poverty in Angola	
1	Armed conflict
2	Strong demographic pressure
3	Destruction and deterioration of social and economic infra-structures
4	Poor functioning of public services such as education, health and social protection
5	Weak institutional framework
6	Steady decrease of internal production/ provision of basic products
7	Poorly educated /trained human resources
8	Inefficiency of macro-economic policies

Bearing in mind these eight causes of poverty, the ECP established 10 priority areas for intervention as described below.

Table 11: Priority areas for ECP intervention

Priority areas	
1	Social reinsertion (rehabilitation)
2	Security and civil protection
3	Food security and rural development
4	HIV/ AIDS
5	Education
6	Health
7	Basic infrastructure
8	Employment and professional education
9	Governance
10	Macro-economic management

Table 12: Documents characterising poverty and social conditions in Angola and supporting strategies to fight poverty

Details of documents and strategies	Date of publication
Priority Questionnaire on Household Living Conditions (<i>Inquérito Prioritário sobre as Condições de Vida aos Domicílios - IPCVD</i>); exclusively focused on urban areas.	1995
Profile of Poverty in Angola (<i>Perfil da Pobreza em Angola</i> , INE & UNICEF).	1996
Multiple Indicator Questionnaire (<i>Inquérito de Indicadores Múltiplos - MICS 1</i> , INE & United Nations Children's Fund), research carried out in 1996.	1997
Questionnaire on the Willingness and Ability to Pay for Basic Social Services (<i>Inquérito sobre a Disposição e Capacidade no Pagamento dos Serviços Sociais Básicos - IDCP</i>), undertaken in the provinces of Luanda, Huambo, Huíla and Uíge.	1998
Questionnaire to Family Households on Incomes and Expenses (<i>Inquérito aos Agregados Familiares sobre Receitas e Despesas - IDR</i>), undertaken in 2000-2001, in the provinces of Benguela, Cabinda, Cunene, Huíla, Luanda, Lunda Norte and Namibe; this questionnaire focused mainly on urban areas, as war impeded access to rural areas. Sample was composed of 4,700 households, 10% of which were in the rural areas.	2001
Multiple Indicator Questionnaire (<i>Inquérito de Indicadores Múltiplos - MICS 2</i>), undertaken in 2000-2001 in all provinces, providing a general picture of the socio-economic conditions, especially for women and children. Sample was composed of 6,660 households, 39% of which were in rural areas.	2001
Comprehensive Questionnaire on the Well-Being of the Population (<i>Inquérito Integrado Sobre o Bem-Estar da População - IBEP</i>). Questionnaire undertaken by the National Institute of Statistics with financial and technical support from UNICEF and the World Bank, undertaken in 2008-2009 and comprising objectives of MICS (indicators on the conditions of women and children – health, child labour, education, HIV / AIDS, mother and child mortality rate and contraception) and of IDR (consumer prices, estimates of family consumption and its impact on national accounts and features of poverty in the country). This was the first questionnaire covering the whole country, i.e. both urban and rural areas.	2008-2009

The government, at central, provincial and municipal levels, was to be responsible for implementing the ECP and for its M&E, and the ECP Technical Commission would coordinate the M&E. Statistics and analysis would be the responsibility of Technical Commission, in collaboration with the National Statistics Institute, universities, research centres and NGOs.

Table 13: Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the ECP

Type of Monitoring	Components	Instruments
Monitoring progress	Programming and implementation	Reports on the implementation of the state budget Reports on the financial implementation of sector projects and programmes
	Results	Balance sheet of government plan; financial report of sector projects and programmes
Monitoring the impact	Quantitative impact	MICS IDR
	Qualitative impact	Participatory rural poverty assessments – PRAs

Table 14: Organisational structure for monitoring and evaluation of the ECP

Objectives	Instruments	Institutions	Frequency
Monitoring the implementation progress	Reports on the implementation of the state budget	MINFIN	Annual
	Annual balance sheets of the government programme	MINPLAN, MINFIN and sector ministries	Annual
Monitoring the quantitative impact	MICS	INE	Every 5 years
	IDR	INE	Every 5 years
	Sector statistics	INE and sector ministries	Still to be determined
Monitoring the qualitative impact	Rural participatory diagnosis	NGOs, MINPLAN	Every 2 years
	Thematic studies	INE, Universities, MINPLAN	Annual
Evaluation of significance and efficiency	Studies and enquiries	MINPLAN, INE and sector ministries (for each specific area), universities, NGOs, research centres and institutes	2006 and then every 5 years

The general evaluation of ECP would be the responsibility of a group of representatives of several stakeholders: the government structures at central and local levels, the National Assembly, CSOs, private sector and representatives of communities. An ECP evaluation report was due to be completed by the end of 2005, analysing its effectiveness and identifying necessary adjustments and corrections, as well as providing inputs for the government's Medium Term Development Plan. However, as previously explained, the ECP was abandoned and the report was never produced.

According to the ECP document, the consultation process was meant to be bottom-up. The process was meant to start with working groups discussing specific themes, proceeding with joint analysis and debate, and concluding with wider seminars for the presentation of the working groups' findings

and general coordination.⁷⁹ However, in practice the dynamics were clearly top-down, as shown by the process description and reported by the CSOs involved.

Table 15: Planned mechanisms for CSO participation in the ECP process

Designation	Function
Thematic meetings and working groups	To bring together a group of professionals or individuals specialised in a specific area (e.g. education, health, environment); these groups would be constituted within the organs of central state administrations represented at the ECP Technical Commission.
Cross-thematic meetings and working groups	To bring together professionals and individuals from several different areas to analyse cross-sector priorities and coordination.
Seminars and conferences	To allow the dissemination of research and work findings on specific themes or cross-sector analysis for target groups. This kind of seminar would have a cross-sectoral and global character and was planned to take place after the thematic working group meetings and consultations with central and provincial state administrations. These meetings were meant for the sharing of information on progress and work to civil society and other stakeholders, and to gather their contributions and suggestions/recommendations.
Workshops	To take place within state administration at central and provincial levels in order for the participants to become familiar with the issues at stake in the ECP, programmes and priorities, concepts and mechanisms for consultations and participation. Meetings, working groups and workshops were planned to be interactive mechanisms of consultation, prioritising the direct participation of all those involved. Seminars and conferences would be more appropriate for dissemination of information to and knowledge-sharing with bigger groups.
Participatory Rural Assessments (PRAs), questionnaires or interviews	The PRA would be the principal mechanism for the participation of rural communities.

⁷⁹ See *Estratégia de combate à pobreza, reinserção social, reabilitação e reconstrução e estabilização económica* (Luanda: MINPLAN & GURN, 2005), p. 100.

Within the compromise of an enlarged and inclusive participatory approach, the ECP stressed the contribution of the following participants:

- private sector – represented by professional associations, helping to fight poverty through partnerships with communities and state administrations at central, provincial and municipal levels;
- ‘organised civil society’ – organisations and representatives of civil society should act as intermediaries between government and local communities, with an important role in disseminating information and implementing specific projects;
- universities – contributing through data analysis and impact evaluation of poverty reduction policies, thereby participating in M&E processes;
- media – publishing and disseminating best practice in poverty reduction programmes, and promoting public involvement in the implementation of ECP specific programmes.

According to the ECP, consultation mechanisms created throughout the implementation process were to be institutionalised, ensuring that programmes, projects and policies had the participation of the authorities and local communities. In practice, however, with the suspension of the ECP in 2004-2005, these mechanisms, by then still in their early states, were not institutionalised and participation was blocked.

In addition to these planned mechanisms for participation, in 2007 the government (through Law 2/07) established the Councils for Social Listening and Coordination (*CACS – Conselhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social*), convened by local authorities at the provincial, municipal and communal level. These councils were meant to listen to CSOs and the private sector and help to solve local community problems, basically related to economic development. Some CSOs initially saw the CACS as a space for civil society participation and an opportunity to initiate a broader participatory dynamic within the expected decentralisation process.

Nevertheless, the CACS experience revealed a different reality. CACS are set up and convened at the local authorities’ discretion, somewhat at random; participation of CSOs and the private sector depends on being specifically invited by the local authorities to discuss local agendas established by the state administration. In some cases the councils do function more democrati-

cally, but only as a result of individual attitude and goodwill on the part of the specific government official in charge. The decentralisation process is being adjourned and no one knows when the first local elections will take place, if ever. General elections are due to take place 2012 (when the party with the most parliamentary seats will be entitled to nominate the President of the Republic), and only after that is there likely to be any consideration of local elections.

2.4.2 Civil society strategies for engagement/Impact assessment

The ECP participation mechanisms and processes were attractive, but the actual practice revealed a different reality. CSOs criticised the way the government conducted the whole process, particularly the Ministry of Planning and the Inter-ministerial Commission (itself directed by the Ministry of Planning) – characterised as top-down and restricting any effective and meaningful participation.

Participation of a few selected CSOs in the ECP raised the issue of legitimacy and representation of the organisations involved, and even the consultation process with local communities was done indirectly, through a few organisations selected by the inter-ministerial technical commission.

According to the official version, the process of consultation of local communities took place through an NGO, *Mãos Abertas*, selected by the Ministry of Planning. Curiously, no one in the civil society world appeared to have heard of this NGO, and no one is now able to find its office or members (in fact no one even knows who its members were). This organisation was supposed to undertake the consultation process with communities with the help of technicians from a Ministry of Planning programme, the Fund for Social Support (*Fundo de Apoio Social – FAS*), partly funded by the EU and the government itself. The initiative was reportedly carried out in several villages and communes in all provinces.⁸⁰ The participation of other NGOs in this process was weak to almost non-existent, and the selection criteria were dependent on how close the NGOs were to FAS and the implicit or explicit authorisation of the inter-ministerial commission.⁸¹

⁸⁰ In *Estratégia de combate à pobreza, reinserção social, reabilitação e reconstrução e estabilização económica* (Luanda: MINPLAN & GURN, 2005), p. 101.

⁸¹ *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Credit for the Third Social Action Fund Project (FAS III)*, World Bank report no. 25671-ANG (Washington: World Bank, 27 June 2003).

During a 2002 UK seminar on ECP (for MPs, members of the technical commission and some selected representatives of civil society chosen by the commission), the problem of legitimacy – or lack of it – was raised, and it was concluded that there was a distinct need to draw up a strategy and consultation plan according to representation and legitimacy criteria, in order to broaden the spectrum of civil society and local communities' participation.

The basic problem with representation and legitimacy within CSOs is essentially political and continues to this day, closely related to several attempts on the part of the government/ regime to control criticism coming from CSOs. The government has been prioritising some over others, and limiting the scope of participation and public intervention to the minimum necessary to satisfy the demands of the 'international community' for participation, without creating too many problems for the government itself.⁸²

Regarding the CSO consultation process, the project of synthesis and monitoring of PRSP reported as follows:

Three months were given to NGOs to comment on the interim draft of ECP, although at first it seemed as if the MINPLAN was merely expecting to have the agreement of NGOs. The NGOs did a few participatory consultations replacing the government in this matter, but the results have not yet been incorporated in the ECP process.⁸³

CSOs (mainly NGOs) complained that in June 2001, when they were meant to make their contributions on the interim ECP (I-PRSP), members of government structures were reluctant to organise the hearing. Contributions were restricted to social matters, excluding macro-economic issues and structural adjustment policies, which clearly have a major impact on poverty. Several NGOs referred to the existence of two parallel processes, one for social issues within the context of the ECP, encompassing some public participation, and the other on macro-economic and structural adjustment matters, discussed within the context of the IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF), excluding public participation. This meant that neither CSOs nor the members of the National Assembly were allowed

⁸² See Vidal, Nuno, 'Social Neglect and the Emergence of Civil Society', in Patrick Chabal & Nuno Vidal, *Angola, the Weight of History* (London: Hurst, 2007), pp. 200-235.

⁸³ In *PRSP Monitoring and Synthesis Project*, Overseas Development Institute (London: ODI, 8 May 2003), p. 4.

to discuss the structural adjustment package that clearly marked the final version of the ECP and the IMF PRGF.⁸⁴

According to the former director of the National Statistics Institute (INE), Mário Adauta de Sousa, the ECP suffered from several weaknesses, including:

- the lack of a priority list and sequence for actions, projects and programmes;
- the lack of identification of target populations, running the risk of indiscriminately impacting the poor and the non-poor, as the conceptual framework at the basis of ECP was basically reliant on economic growth, leaving aside the pro-poor growth concept and the pro-poverty eradication concept;
- the consultation process was dominated by a bureaucratic top-down model;
- there was no broad-base or broad-scope ECP consultation process;
- the ECP strategy was not specific in determining the roles of key stakeholders, such as CSOs, parliamentarians and local state structures;
- The prevailing top-down consultation model carried forward by the government was not capable of promoting the ownership of the ECP by those it was designed to benefit and by the general population. Neither the CSOs nor the private sector had any significant participation in the design of the ECP;
- there was no gender breakdown of poverty data or within the post-conflict context;
- gender issues were treated in a marginal way, instead of being considered a central challenge to any meaningful intervention on the fight against poverty.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ In *Rethinking Participation, Questions for Civil Society about the Limits of Participation in PRSPs*, an Action Aid USA/ Action Aid Uganda Discussion Paper (Washington DC: Action Aid, April 2004); *Ignoring the Experts: Poor People's Exclusion from Poverty Reduction Strategies*, Christian Aid Policy Briefing, prepared in partnership with INESC, Rede Brasil, Mozambique Debt Group, LINK, CEDLA, UNITAS, October 2001.

⁸⁵ In *Report of the International Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategy in Africa, a new imposed conditionality or a change for a meaningful development policy?*, Southern Africa Regional Poverty Network (Lusaka-Zambia: 7-18 June 2002).

Overall, the ECP process did not reach any significant levels of participation, information and public discussion, in order to make it a real national project to earn the commitment and adhesion of public institutions, the private sector and civil society. In simple terms, the mechanisms planned in the ECP were not put in place by the government.

After the ECP, no other government structure or mechanism was ever put in place for civil society participation in government anti-poverty programmes and policies.

According to members of the Ministry of Planning, civil society is too weak and fragmented to provide a sound and structured contribution to highly technical and specific issues and policies. Even international processes such as the MDG progress reports (responsibility for which was taken on by the Ministry of Planning and promoted by UNDP-Angola) have marginal, random and institutionally unstructured mechanisms for civil society consultation. The most recent stakeholder meeting before the next MDG progress report (expected to be published in 2011/2012) was attended by only three CSOs, invited informally (almost personally) on the eve of the meeting by the promoter (UNDP-Angola).⁸⁶ The only credible research centre in the country – Centre of Studies and Scientific Research of the Angolan Catholic University – was not invited, despite the fact that it has many research programmes/reports on poverty and is internationally funded. It is also noteworthy that this research centre has never been consulted or listened to by any governmental institution whatsoever. The UNDP facilitators of the MDG report justified the absence of CSOs in their meetings and workshops, citing the fragmentation of civil society and its lack of a representative structure to which the other stakeholders can speak.

CSOs responded that that channels to communicate with CSOs are well known, mailing lists are circulating all the time, there is the National Civil Society Conference created in 2007, with structures and mechanism for information sharing, including an interactive public site with permanently open forums to discuss many public issues and open to new themes and discussions by all those who might want to register and participate.⁸⁷ Moreover, several CSOs refer, for example, to the public proposal containing recommendations for the future constitution (a proposal sent to the

⁸⁶ According to interviews in June 2010 between the author and members of CSOs present in that meeting, and according to the UNDP representative at that meeting.

⁸⁷ <http://cns2009forum.bligo.com/content>

National Assembly) that came out of a CSO meeting convened on 2 April 2009. Those recommendations were completely ignored, as the September 2008 legislative elections gave the governmental party a majority of more than two-thirds of parliamentary seats, enabling it to unilaterally approve the new constitution without even feeling the need to open the constitutional process to public discussion. Nevertheless, according to CSOs, that document demonstrated the capacity of CSOs to express a solid, reasoned opinion on very specific issues.

The problem, according to CSOs, is the lack of political willingness on the part of the government and its leverage over international structures and organisations, starting with the UNDP and all others who prefer to make political concessions rather than be excluded from partnerships with government structures in a country that is rich in oil and has increasing strategic importance internationally.

According to a leading academic of the Angolan Catholic University, one clear example of such leverage is the recent acceptance of government statistics (through the INE, the National Statistics Institute) by the UNDP, whether for future reports on human development or MDGs.⁸⁸ The first two national reports on progress towards the MDGs, in 2003 and 2005, concluded that at the existing rate, the country would fail to meet the objectives for 2015; there was poor progress towards almost all the objectives, and a doubt that they would be met.⁸⁹ However, after years of progressively deteriorating relationships between the UNDP and the Angolan government, the UNDP decided to make a concession to the government in order to improve these relationships. Therefore, the next MDG report will be produced by an inter-ministerial commission with the support of a consultant and the UNDP office, but working with government statistics that served to produce a highly unreliable questionnaire on the Well-being of the Population (*IBEP-Inquérito Integrado ao Bem-Estar das Populações*). According to that questionnaire 40.2% of the population has access to electricity, 42% of households have access to drinking water, 59% have adequate sanitation and 87% of urban households have access to adequate sanitation. Such numbers lack any credibility for

⁸⁸ Pinto de Andrade, Justino, 'A crise financeira de 2008 em África e em Angola', in Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade, *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento em Angola* (Luanda & Lisbon: University of Coimbra, Angolan Catholic University and Chá de Caxinde, 2011).

⁸⁹ *The UN System in Angola MDG Strategy Outline, Draft 2, Work in Progress, March 2007, p.3; also, Angola, Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio, relatório de progresso 2005* (Luanda: Angolan government and PNUD, 2005); *Angola, Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio, relatório MDG/NEPAD 2003* (Luanda: Angolan government, Ministry of Planning, UN System in Angola, 2003).

those who know the reality of the Angolan situation, and may represent a gross manipulation of data.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, that same data will be part of the new MDG report and according to the Ministry of Planning, the questionnaire will be taken into account in the next UN Human Development Report.⁹¹ Consequently, one can readily expect the next report to show a significant improvement in Angola's performance, even though it may bear no relation to the actual situation of the population. It is within such a context that we may understand the October 2010 statements by the UN Coordinator in Angola saying that Angola is on the right path to achieve the MDGs in 2015.⁹² It is also worth noting that there has been no census of the population in Angola since the colonial period. A first post-colonial census is expected to be carried out in 2012.

The Angolan CSO world has in fact been characterised by fragmentation and, with rare exceptions, failure to engage in sound endogenous and sustainable capacity-building. This was the result of three main factors. First, the government has consistently attempted to control, manipulate and interfere in CSOs from the early 1990s to the present, from the creation and/or funding of its own CSOs to the discriminatory awarding of 'public utility' status and corresponding funds from the state budget, favouring some CSOs over others according to political criteria. Second, there was limited involvement of donors and international organisations, short-term and project-by-project. Third, there is a long record of competition for funds between CSOs and a preferential allocation of funds from each donor or group of donors to their 'favourite' national partners according to their own criteria and strategic interests. The same can be said about donors' cyclically changing development priorities, usually moving from one fashionable area to another without taking into consideration the specificity of each country and the dynamics already in place. The capacity-building deficit is much more serious for smaller national organisations that never manage to go beyond the status of being sub-contracted by international NGOs to implement or jointly implement small parts of bigger projects.⁹³

⁹⁰ *Inquérito Integrado sobre o Bem-Estar da População (IBEP) 2008-09* (Luanda: Ministério do Planeamento, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, August 2010).

⁹¹ Statements of the Ministry of Planning, Ana Dias Lourenço, reproduced by Angop-news agency, 16 March 2011.

⁹² Statements by Koen Van Ormelingen in Luanda, 20 October 2010, www.ao.undp.org/news149.htm

⁹³ See Vidal, Nuno, *Angola: Preconditions for Elections*, a report for the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa – NiZA (Amsterdam: NiZA, 2006).

In terms of the international political context the Angolan case differs from the cases analysed above: the government has relative leverage over international organisations (governmental and non-governmental), rather than the other way around. Foreign interests and institutions compete for very lucrative business in Angola, especially within the oil sector, and we cannot find the same level of coordination between ICPs as found in the other cases explored. There are several cleavages, according to myriad geostrategic interests. This reality endows the Angolan government with enormous room for political manoeuvre.

Following the international tendency of the mid 2000s to support state institutions (institutionalist thinking) through the state budget, ICPs started to defend a 'constructive engagement' strategy for the relationship between CSOs and the government. An appeal was made for unity within civil society, on the grounds that CSOs in Angola are weak because they are divided and cannot present a concerted position and concerted proposals to the government. The constructive engagement approach favours a unifying structure for CSOs, which in its simplest expression argues for the strengthening of representative structures that allow CSOs to speak with one voice in its 'constructive engagement' with state institutions.

However, some CSOs and activists reacted negatively and challenged the call for unity of civil society allied to a strategy of 'constructive engagement'. Given that governmental structures believe that CSOs should abstain from involvement in political issues, the CSOs and activists argue that the above strategy in the medium-term has a double impact: first, inducing CSOs to engage in activities increasingly oriented towards aid delivery and apolitical in nature; second, a homogenisation of discourse and approaches that facilitate the subjugation of the individual positions of independent NGOs through collective federal and representative structures, more easily co-opted and manipulated by political power.

Two contradictory positions have emerged within CSOs (mainly NGOs), between those favouring a 'reformist' strategy (believing that one could reform institutions from within, collaborating with governmental structures in various projects – unconditional constructive engagement), and those who believe that engagement with governmental structures should be selective and cautious, based on human rights principles that should never be sacrificed,

while always protecting the right of CSOs to political opinions and expression. This politically conscious position is more critical than cooperative.⁹⁴

These opposing sides within civil society were to express their grievances in a new process/mechanism for CSO coordination that emerged in 2007, and was initially promoted by the EU Delegation in Angola – the National Civil Society Conference.

The First Angolan National Civil Society Conference was organised by one of the first CSOs networks, the Forum of Angolan NGOs (FONGA), from 6-8 November 2007. The theme was 'Constructing Unity in Diversity', with the objective 'to improve knowledge of each other [CSOs], and thus capacity to coordinate civil society efforts in order to promote national development'.⁹⁵ The conference took as its basis the poor level of information-sharing among CSOs, as reflected in the lack of capacity to take joint public positions on crucial socio-political and economic issues, as well as a poor capacity to influence public decision-making processes.

Reading the First Conference recommendations, the reformist perspective appears to have prevailed, stressing the need to unite CSOs, collaborate with government and represent civil society through constructive engagement:

*It is necessary to guarantee quality civil society representation within the councils being created at different levels. Autonomous constructive engagement with the government is essential to avail of this space for dialogue and negotiation.*⁹⁶

The Second Conference was held in Luanda from 25-27 November 2008 without FONGA, which had withdrawn from the process due to criticism over its inability to prepare and organise the conference and the lack of legitimacy of its own structures that had not been elected for several years.⁹⁷ This Second Conference again highlights differing opinions and perspectives on how CSOs should act and relate to the government. On the one

⁹⁴ Vidal, Nuno, 'Landmines of Democracy: Civil Society and the Legacy of Authoritarian Rule in Angola' in Jeanette Minnie (ed.), *Outside the Ballot Box: Preconditions for Elections in Southern Africa in 2005/6* (Windhoek: HiVOS, NiZA-Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa & MISA-Media Institute of Southern Africa, November 2006), pp. 65-87.

⁹⁵ In *Conclusões da Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil*, 2007, unpublished, p.1

⁹⁶ In *Conclusões da Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil*, 2007, unpublished, point 3, line g), p.3.

⁹⁷ In *Report of the Second Angolan Civil Society Conference, 2008/2009* (Luanda: Conference Coordination Group, July 2009), p. 38.

side are those more willing to engage closely with government, through civil society representative structures and mechanisms – which might be termed the reformist stance. On the other side are those expressing strong reservations regarding a closer relationship with the government, fearing a possible manipulation of structures that monopolise civil society representation and running the risk of becoming disconnected from their constituency and associates, losing legitimacy and becoming an easy prey for potential cooptation by political power.

While not questioning the need for some engagement with government and state institutions, the second group argued over the necessity to impose conditions on such relationships to ensure that CSOs autonomy remained safeguarded, thus avoiding cooptation. They also stressed the need to bring past errors to an end, such as civil society structures without legitimacy, transparency or constituency, characterised as restricted enclaves of opinion and analysis of elitist milieus only influenced by abusive external interferences.⁹⁸ They clearly oppose a reformist stance, being much more cautious and suspicious of the government.

Opposition to a ‘reformist’ stance (from both national and international NGOs) is clearly in the minority, with less external support and increasing constraints to access funds. Nevertheless, in order to avoid any possible political manipulation/cooptation of CSO coordination structures coming out of the national conference process, the Second Conference plenary voted for a methodology with some gradualism and safety mechanisms – a first stage focused on the improvement of working relationships between CSOs, intensifying cooperation and coordinating among themselves in order to solidify mutual trust; a second stage eventually progressing to the institutionalisation of complex structures capable of officially assuming broader-based positions, depending on how the first stage evolved. The conference also assumed the need to uncompromisingly safeguard CSOs’ endogenous and autonomous agendas, action principles and guidelines.⁹⁹

Bearing in mind those concerns, the Second Conference approved a new organisational/working structure reinforcing the need for a dynamic and

⁹⁸ The author participated in the Second National Civil Society Conference, collaborated in preparing the methodology and organisation of discussion, and edited the final report; see Vidal, Nuno, *Relatório da II Conferência Angolana da Sociedade Civil, 2008/2009* (Luanda: Grupo de Coordenação da Sociedade Civil, July 2009).

⁹⁹ In *Relatório da II Conferência Angolana da Sociedade Civil, 2008/2009* (Luanda: Grupo de Coordenação da Sociedade Civil, July 2009), p. 6-8.

interactive process rather than some kind of mega-structure for CSO national representation. This is intended as a space for discussion, information-sharing and coordination among CSOs, with a rotating coordinating group (elected on a yearly basis), mainly composed by the CSOs of the province, elected to organise the subsequent conference and implement the decisions taken by the previous conference. The organisational process of the national conference is composed by as many municipal conferences as possible and it is hoped – by 18 provincial conferences (one for each province). Themes-discussed at the national conference are intended to reflect and sum up all the conclusions and recommendations coming out of the sub-national level conferences. This structure was approved at the Second Conference – November 2008 – and has been implemented and functioning since then.

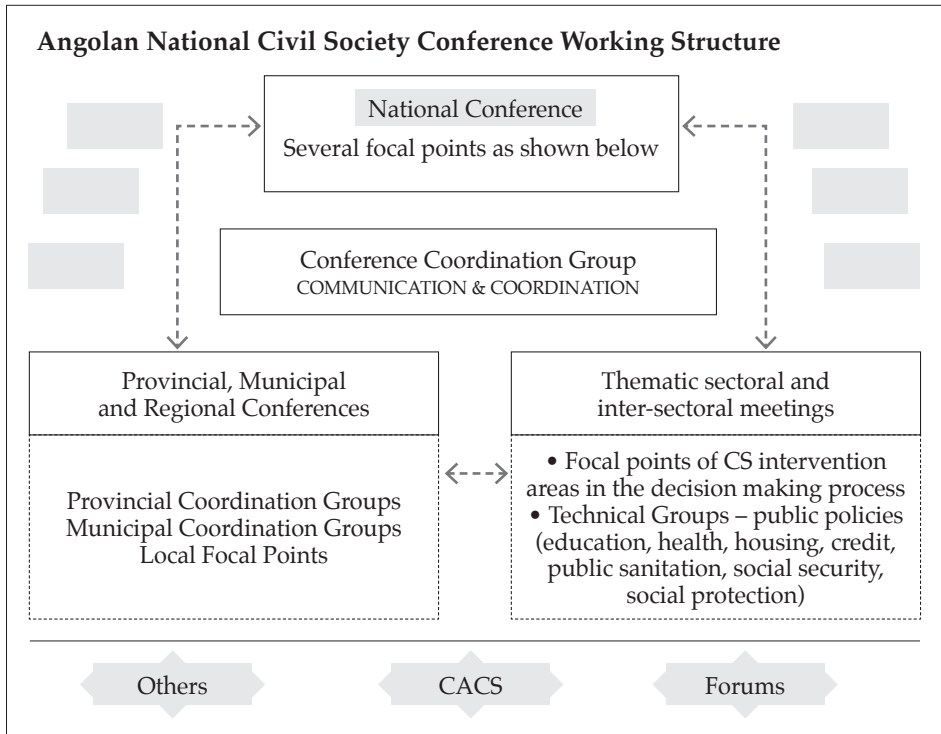


Figure 7: Structure of Angolan National Civil Society Conference

Besides the reference to the Councils for Social Listening and Coordination (CACS), the National Conference structure also refers to forums proposed by the private sector – the Angolan Industrial Association – as spaces for an inclusive and participatory dialogue, called Forums for Development, yet to be implemented in any significant way throughout the country.

In order for these forums to play an effective role as participatory and inclusive mechanisms for CSOs to contribute to development policies, they must allow CSOs some autonomy and permit the private sector to choose their own representatives. Otherwise, the sense of mistrust towards the government's intentions with these forums will remain, and prevent any effective and committed participation.

Some participants to the second national conference stressed the need for more research and analysis on the realities they work with. There is a considerable amount of data and experience that is not properly treated and analysed. Conference participants also mentioned the lack of information-sharing among CSOs, accusing international NGOs of not sharing reports and research they produce or to which they have access. Engagement with research centres and universities may help avoid this lack and provide CSOs with more systematic treatment of data and analysis, also allowing a more sustainable capacity building and preparation of contributions to specific government policies and strategies.

The Second Conference stressed the need for CSOs to closely monitor a number of public processes seen as especially relevant for democratisation and development, such as:

1. the constitutional process – which unfortunately completely excluded the participation of CSOs, given the two-thirds majority of seats obtained by the party in power, MPLA, in the September 2008 legislative elections, allowing it to alter the constitution as it pleased;
2. the decentralisation process – which is moving at a very slow pace, without a clear definition of its direction by the government and with some participation of some CSOs at the level of the so-called Informal Group on the Decentralisation process led by the Ministry of the Interior;
3. the future electoral processes – presidential elections were expected to occur after the legislative elections of September 2008, but with the approval of the new constitution, the President will be elected indirectly – by the parliament – in the 2012 legislative elections;
4. local elections – although there is no official forecast of a possible date.

The Third National Conference took place in the province of Benguela in November 2009 and the Fourth National Conference took place in Huambo

province in November 2010. Several municipal conferences have already taken place in 2011 in the run-up for the Fifth Conference, scheduled to take place in Malange, November 2011.

From the conclusions of the Third and Fourth Conferences, discussions seem to have been much more focused on organising aspects such as the follow-up of the implementation process of decisions and recommendations coming out of the Second National Conference. This M&E process should be the joint responsibility of the outgoing and newly elected coordination groups. The last conferences emphasised the need to focus more on municipal conferences, which are closer to communities' problems; local populations should be stimulated to actively participate in municipal and provincial conferences.

However, since the Third Conference in Benguela, progress have been hard; divergences among the two opposing sides within CSOs have become accentuated, and several respected members of civil society have distanced themselves from the process, creating some discomfort and lack of enthusiasm. Contrary to Benguela, the Huambo conference was characterised by renewed mistrust and constraints from provincial governmental structures, having created a climate of intimidation. At the time of writing, the Malange conference was in serious danger of not taking place, several preparatory provincial conferences were being systematically delayed and again there was a less than sympathetic attitude on the part of the Malange provincial governmental structures.

Bearing some similarities to what happened in Tanzania, the Angolan Presidential Cabinet for Civil Affairs (*Casa Civil da Presidência da República*) decided to create a new programme to fight poverty and assigned it to a Secretary for Social Affairs for the Presidency of the Republic. The new programme was launched in January 2011 under the title of the Municipal Programmes for Rural Development and Fight Against Poverty' (*Programas Municipais Integrados de Desenvolvimento Rural e Combate à Pobreza – PMIDRCP*), and the poverty eradication strategy was put under the charge of a sub-section of the President's cabinet – the Presidential Secretariat for Social Affairs. The idea is to fight poverty through administrative 'deconcentration', whereby more funds from the state budget will be directly allocated to the municipal administrations. The programme emphasises the need for capacity building of municipal administrators in how to administer and manage the expenditure of the state budget, in order to implement the local development programmes according to the pre-established parameters and rules.

The PMIDRCP have several components, but the emphasis is on the reorganisation of rural trade, stimulating agriculture production at household and local level to promote food security in poor communities. Other components comprise access to water and housing.

According to the programme, the Ministry of Planning will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of municipal programmes. Society (defined in general terms) is meant to participate through the revitalisation of the CACS, as the programme defines these councils as observatories of the PMIDRCP and a favoured partner for dialogue between society and public authorities. Reference is made to society in general terms, but not to CSOs, which may not augur well for CSO participation, leaving the same arbitrary behaviour of local authorities unchanged regarding the selection of participants for the CACS.

Several interviewees expressed the opinion that the current programme seems to be another top-down development programme, passing responsibilities to the local level and trying to assure that state funds reach municipalities more rapidly and directly, avoiding the intermediate levels of state administration, where a significant part of funds are affected by corruption. With general elections due in September 2012, there is an urgent need for the political power to effectively deliver.

Probably remembering a long history of unfulfilled promises and several restrictions, a few CSOs decided to put forward the project of an independent Civil Society Poverty Observatory. The project was publicly presented and discussed in a conference on 'Development and Poverty Eradication in Angola and Southern Africa', which took place in Luanda on 28 July 2011. The Observatory is intended to monitor and evaluate the government policies on poverty eradication, presenting proposals to influence public policies and thereby increasing CSO involvement in those processes. The Observatory does not exclude the participation in CACS and other forms of coordination with the government structures, but the Observatory is meant to be independent. Its structure will be flexible, avoiding mega-structures or institutionalised functioning, being essentially a forum for coordination, M&E and public intervention of all interested CSOs. The Observatory is also supposed to benefit from the coordination and engagement with similar observatories in the Southern Africa region.

A more recent indicator of the way the government sees CSO participation in public policies can be seen in the events of 11 August 2011, with the

detention upon arrival at Luanda's International Airport of CSO leaders and delegates to the 7th Southern Africa Civil Society Forum, and their subsequent deportation without explanation. The forum is an annual event held by CSOs in the SADC country that will be hosting the SADC Heads of State Summit. Those detained and deported included the Executive Director of SADC-CNGO (Conference of NGOs). Surprisingly or not, the government's attitude did not generate much solidarity among Angolan CSOs, as the SADC-CNGO was seen in the previous months as behaving positively towards the Angolan government, preferring to cooperate with a zombie – FONGA, the living-dead, government-friendly network of NGOs, mentioned above, rather than other more independent and legitimate structures, such as the national conference.

Given all the above constraints, CSO cooperation inside Angola is still in its early stages and the coordination with regional processes is a distant prospect. The organising structure of the national conference reflects that reality. Relationships and coordination with regional counterparts, whether thematic networks or regional mechanisms for CSOs participation, are weak, sporadic, random, and dependent on specific invitations coming from abroad to specific organisations or individuals. These organisations or individuals are usually selected according to personal indication by international NGOs working in Angola.

As for the relationship between CSOs and the private sector, this is non-existent. Apart from the fact that some oil companies are now channelling some social corporate funds to support a few initiatives – most of them managed by CSOs close to or at least not overtly criticising the government – there is no significant relationship. It is worth remembering that any meaningful business is under direct or indirect political control by the government, and is scarcely able to survive without that support/authorisation, a factor adding to the constraints and political attempts mentioned above to control CSOs.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ See Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal *Southern Africa: Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies; Angola, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa* (Luanda, Lisbon & Brussels: Wageningen University, University of Coimbra & Angolan Catholic University, 2009).

3

STAKEHOLDERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN POVERTY OBSERVATORIES

As we will see in this chapter, in all four cases under scrutiny there is an enormous lack of information on the RPO process, whether at the level of CSOs, governments, ICPs or even the private sector. One of the fundamental premises for more effective participation of CSOs in poverty alleviation strategies and policies is the coordination among CSOs themselves. Such coordination (as analysed in previous chapters) is still weak in most of the cases, and therefore participation of CSOs in national processes of public policy decision-making processes remains poor. Participation in regional processes in any significantly coordinated way is lacking or unsatisfactory in all cases.

When the RPO is explained, expectations on its effective role vary widely between CSOs and the government, revealing a long path of political suspicion between the two, and the obstacles that still exist for more effective and productive cooperation between major stakeholders.

3.1 Mozambique

Most stakeholders are not aware of the RPO process, and government members and some CSOs have a generic notion of the process and the concept. The G20, however, has a more clear perspective due to recurrent contacts with the Southern Africa Trust (SAT).

We can clearly see that different stakeholders have different expectations towards the RPO. The government members contacted in the course of this research consider CSO contributions within the PO very useful and productive, but remain clear that the RPO should be a mechanism for comparative analysis of data collected in member countries (mainly conducted by government-related structures), sent by the node/ focal point to the ministry responsible. The RPO should serve as an official database, sharing informa-

tion, producing statistics, allowing ranking comparisons, trends, sharing best practice and harmonising indicators and research methodologies, but not accepting CSOs' direct contributions, reports or data that are not official (i.e. that are not government-certified data, issued by the focal point).

When asked about the expectations towards the new regional mechanism, most of the CSOs interviewed immediately expressed the desire that the mechanism might be some kind of a replica of the national PO structures, with an annual event where CSOs have a seat and can participate and present their findings, as well as compare them with similar processes in other member states. In those terms they find it very useful and even expressed some excitement about the idea. When alerted to the fact that it might not be an organisation structured in those terms, there was some disappointment, with CSOs expressing their fear that the RPO might turn into a mere official information database on poverty, whereby CSOs are formally assumed to have been heard in national consultation processes, but effectively marginalised, as usual.

According to that perspective, national processes for CSO participation within structures such as the PO and the G20 would progressively tend to be considered not as spaces for CSO participation, but structures for CSO regional representation, which is something that most CSOs heard in the course of this research do not want. For instance, according to the Peasants' Association (UNAC), even at the national level, CSOs have remained clear in the G20 that they are free to undertake their own research and analysis and present their independent reports at the national PO event. UNAC has already presented a report in these terms, totally independent of the G20 Annual Report. They argue that the RPO should have a space for direct participation of CSOs and participants should be selected by their peers in democratic and transparent national processes.

3.2 Tanzania

There is little knowledge of the RPO process among CSOs, whether individual organisations, networks, umbrellas or even the steering committee. Most of the ICPs did not know about the process, and nor did research structures working on poverty and closely related to the Poverty Eradication Division of the Ministry of Planning, such as the Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) or the Economic and Social Research Foundation.

When the process was explained and interviewees asked about their expectations, the reactions were very positive, although these people had different answers according to their socio-professional background. People within the civil society milieu expect that the RPO might bring added pressure to bear on the government to institutionalise structures for CSO participation at all levels of state administration. It might also provide an extra stimulus for the coordination process among CSOs that is under way through the steering committee, enabling it to become more structured on a long-term basis. As for the research centres working with the government on poverty issues, the opinion was that this might be a good opportunity to harmonise and standardise indicators and research methodologies on poverty, as well as to serve as a database for poverty alleviation in the region and comparison between and among member states. The ICPs saw this process as useful, but warned of the need to have a good system of data collection and analysis – through reliable statistics – in order for the RPO to be effectively useful and not just a political legitimising mechanism disguised as a technical structure. Political independence of the RPO is therefore seen as fundamental both by the ICPs and the CSOs.

3.3 Democratic Republic of Congo

The DRC government and CSO structures (the Symposium and other networks) have some information on the Regional Poverty Observatory process. This is mainly due to the SADC summit held in Kinshasa in September 2009, including a parallel meeting with CSOs and discussing the RPO process. It is also due to the work that has been developed by organisations such as the Southern Africa Trust (SAT) with CSOs in DRC.

Government members interviewed during this research had high expectations for the RPO, seen as a potentially efficient mechanism to promote deeper regional coordination in terms of development and poverty alleviation policies. The sharing of experiences, information and dissemination of best practices and the harmonisation of indicators and data collection/analysis mechanisms is seen as a very positive endeavour, helping governments in the region to move forward and find the best solutions in a timely manner. According to these members, it is also positive that CSOs can benefit from this process, finding the necessary stimulus for a more coordinated participation and capacity building. They also expressed some concern over the fact that SADC is too anglophone-centred, leaving the francophone and lusophone countries marginalised. More events and leading responsibilities should be passed on to non-anglophone countries in order for these countries to feel more included and participate more in the SADC dynamics.

On the CSO side, the RPO process is seen as a good opportunity to push CSOs in the DRC towards more structured intervention, placing added pressure on the government to open more room for CSOs to participate in the existing governmental structures, programmes and policies. Sharing information at a regional level, with regular evaluations, progress reports, regional meetings and recommendations within an enlarged process where several stakeholders can participate, is seen as beneficial by both the government and CSOs.

Several CSO members expressed the need for a transparent and really inclusive implementation of the RPO, as governments sometimes have a tendency to control and manipulate these structures as they do with CSOs at the national level. According to most of the opinions heard, the RPO should also be a space, a forum for coordination and partnership between stakeholders to take forward the M&E system on poverty in Southern Africa.

According to the new constitution, adopted by referendum in 2005 and promulgated in 2006, the DRC would be a decentralised semi-presidential republic, sharing power between the central government and the provinces. The existing administrative divisions (11 provinces including Kinshasa) would be subdivided into 26 new provinces by 2009, but so far the administrative division remains unaltered and the political-administrative system remains highly centralised in Kinshasa and the Presidency. As also found in other cases analysed in this research, CSOs have high expectations of the new administrative division and the subsequent decentralisation, seen as a driver of inclusiveness, balanced development and an effective way to tackle poverty at the local level. According to CSOs, the RPO process might also give an extra push to the decentralisation process and all its expected positive effects.

3.4 Angola

There is a general lack of information on the RPO, whether within the government structures in charge of poverty alleviation policies, within CSOs or even ICPs. No one interviewed in the research in Angola had any clear idea of the RPO process. Most of the CSOs contacted do not have any information on the RPO process and even the government structures dealing with poverty do not seem to have any precise idea, but immediately characterised it as: 'another important and necessary measure taken at the SADC political level, but failing to be properly disseminated at the national level to create a sense of local/national ownership and commitment' leading to

the 'usual outcome, whereby several of these processes and decisions fail in the follow-up/ implementing stage at the national level'.

However, after a brief explanation of the RPO process, the reactions were positive, and government members do expect the RPO to be a regional forum to share information on best practices and policies in order to help member countries to tackle the problem of poverty in the region. It might also be helpful in harmonising poverty indicators. CSOs (the reformist wing) expected the process to be an extra stimulus for national coordination and engagement processes within civil society, in order to give them more room to participate at the national and regional levels.

ICPs also expect this structure to open more space for dialogue between the government and other stakeholders and for a closer cooperation and transparency in processes such as the MDGs and the UN Human Development Report. There were a few problems between international organisations and the government in the past at a time when the government considered those reports as portraying a false (i.e. bad) image of the country. The government became more involved in the production of those reports, but such proximity led some CSOs to cast serious doubt on the more recent data and information collected and provided by the government to those reports, such as the more recent IBEP (Questionnaire on the Well-Being of the Population: see above).

The climate of suspicion between government and CSO is thick, and grievances are difficult to overcome. The RPO structures could help in this sense, but there was no intention on the part of the government to create and effectively respect the functioning of such structures, arguing that CSOs are weak, disorganised and lack the technical capacities to participate in highly complex themes and policies. The recent and deplorable incident at Luanda International Airport on 11 August 2011, with the detention and subsequent deportation of CSOs leaders and delegates attending the 7th Southern Africa Civil Society Forum, brings little prospect of a change of attitude on the part of the government in the short term towards CSO participation in politically relevant public issues.

3.5 General remarks

The whole idea of participation in the RPO and NPO processes seems to be structured around four main agents: governments, international cooperation partners, CSOs and the private sector.

In general terms, effectiveness of mechanisms for CSO participation and involvement in RPO and NPO seem to be related to 3 factors:

1. type and nature of the relationship between the government and ICPs, as well as the relationship between ICPs themselves;
2. type and nature of the relationship between government and CSOs, as well as the relationship between CSOs themselves and capacity building;
3. type and nature of the relationship between government and the private sector, as well as the relationship between the private sector and other stakeholders, namely CSOs.

In each of the cases analysed in this book, CSOs' effectiveness in participative spaces depends on the existing combination of all these relationships and characteristics, together with the existing socio-political-economic background.

The relationship between the government and ICPs, and the type and scope of ICPs' coordination:

- a. Cases vary from countries where ICPs do have a strong and effective leverage over governments (clearly the case in Mozambique and Tanzania and a bit less, but still perceptible, in DRC) and cases where they have lower influence and leverage (e.g. Angola).
- b. Cases vary where ICPs have a more integrated status, effectively pressuring the government for civil society inclusion (Mozambique, Tanzania and DRC), and places where ICPs have more difficulties in coordinating their policies, prioritising their member countries' political-economic agendas and strategies (Angola).
- c. Cases vary where ICPs have their own chosen CSOs to support (mainly those that do accomplish with specific agendas; e.g. Angola) and those where ICPs are able to coordinate their positions and strategies and

more or less support civil society as a whole (Tanzania, Mozambique and DRC). Coordination among CSOs is easier to achieve in cases of better coordination between ICPs agendas and strategies.

The relationship between the government and CSOs and the type and scope of CSOs' coordination:

- a. Relationships between government and CSOs are usually difficult in countries with a long history of authoritarian and single-party monolithic regimes, characterised by an excessive concentration of power and administrative centralisation. This applies to all the cases studied, despite the official political/economic setting (Mozambique, Tanzania and Angola with an historical background of socialism, while DRC has come from a 'capitalist/liberal' setting).
- b. In general, governments are keener to accept a 'social service delivery' contribution by CSOs rather than effective participation in policy formulation, implementation and M&E processes.
- c. There is also a more or less explicit prevalent mindset of suspicion between governments and CSOs, due to a history of constraints to basic freedoms (of speech and association). Governments usually tend to see CSOs as a disguise for political agendas of the opposition or donors. This applies to all cases analysed in this report. In Mozambique the relationship between stakeholders is now much better than the rest, but started within the same parameters. In that case, CSO participation in government policies and programmes to tackle poverty was the result of an initial pressure from ICPs and the leverage they have in the country. The increasing cooperation and work between government and CSOs partially and progressively dissipated the climate of suspicion. Today the government sees it differently and accepts CSOs as valuable partners with useful contributions. Such a change of attitude took place in the members of the Mozambican government heard in the course of this research. The Mozambican case might serve as an example on how changes of attitude can occur through joint work and commitment. The Tanzanian case seems also to be evolving in a healthier direction, although the Angolan case is by far the worst in terms of relationships between CSOs and government. The DRC is somewhere in between, but with good signs of increasing openness from the government. Again, ICPs seem to have a great deal of influence in the best cases.

d. A better working relationship between CSOs and the government and the dissipation of a climate of suspicion also seem to depend on the capacity shown by CSOs themselves in terms of engagement, coordination and presentation of sound and well structured proposals for specific programmes and policies. The more organised and technically prepared CSOs are, the more respect, credibility, acceptance and legitimacy they earn from other stakeholders. ICPs' and governments' support towards CSO capacity building might also create a difference. On the other hand, in cases where political power has invested strongly and aggressively in strategies to manipulate civil society, there is a lot of mistrust among CSOs themselves, rendering their contact and cooperation extremely difficult (e.g. Angola and, more recently, the DRC, which seems to be following a similar path).

The relationship between government and the private sector and the relationship between the private sector and CSOs:

a. Business is intended to be a natural stakeholder in this broad partnership/alliance to fight poverty, but so far the private sector has been finding difficulties in mingling with other stakeholders in the poverty alleviation processes. This has essentially to do with the fact that the private sector is too dependent on specific political relationships with the government to approach development in general national terms (Angola and DRC are obvious examples, but Tanzania and Mozambique are also cases of political dependency of the private sector). Therefore, the private sector usually places itself somehow apart, having its direct channels to relate to the government, outside the larger development forums and relegating the relationship with CSOs to a secondary level.

b. Apart from big multinational corporations, which are more or less involved in so-called Social Corporate Responsibility, national businesses do not have linkages with CSOs. Even these multinational corporations have their own privileged access to governments and also suffer from more or less disguised political constraints.

In sum, CSOs' effectiveness in participative spaces, whether national or regional, reflect in great measure the existing combination of all the above characteristics and relationships, as well as the historic background and current context in terms of socio-political-economic relationships, which in all the referred regimes is pretty much based on a neo-patrimonial rationale – a major structural problem to be solved.

4

PROPOSING STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POVERTY MONITORING STRUCTURES

4.1 National level

4.1.1 Mozambique

Strategies specific to CSOs

- The G20 should find a way to better integrate and coordinate the annual hearings/survey processes throughout the country, the PO national platform and the state budget process, in order to have the local/national inputs ready in time for government inclusion in its programmes and national budget.
- The G20 should invest more in capacity building to raise its technical competences to discuss very specific subjects and counter the government's argument that CSOs do not have the capacity to discuss deeper issues that require technical preparation. It should find a better way to organise its members in due time according to thematic areas to be discussed by the government and ICPs on the PAF. It should identify, mobilise and competently prepare the best professional capacity available among civil society actors to specific technical/thematic discussions.
- Serious effort and investment should be made in improving the G20 site (www.g20.org.mz), which is not updated with the most recent documents, is not functional and lacks interactivity. In this particular issue the site of the Tanzanian civil society umbrella organisation and coordinator of civil society contribution to poverty alleviation programmes – the Policy Forum – should be regarded as a reference (www.policyforum-tz.org).

- The G20 should find ways for a more effective and productive inclusion of informal sector representatives in its hearings and surveys throughout the country and within its structures for participation in the PO national platform.
- CSOs must tackle existing problems of transparency, accountability and legitimacy within their own members in order to earn more credibility towards their own 'constituencies' – the communities they work with –, the government and ICPs. Demands for increased government accountability and more participation and inclusion in decision making processes must start from unpolluted and exemplary CSOs. A code of conduct for CSOs such as the one being discussed in Tanzania and a similar document in the DRC might be a good starting point.

Strategies specific to ICPs

- Strong international support is still crucial to the CSOs' role of holding governments to account through specific programmes and projects in this area. As is well known, the political system has problems of representation of constituencies, especially the poor, with low levels of electoral turnout and a fragile system of checks and balances. CSOs do have an important role to play in a functioning relationship between those governing and the governed.
- ICPs made a crucial contribution to the PO process, but it is now necessary to take it to the next level and support a closer coordination of the PO with the Joint Review, pressuring the government to allow CSO membership in the Joint Review process. This would co-exist with the PO but would strengthen the effectiveness of CSO recommendations and liaison between the two mechanisms.
- An increased qualitative and quantitative participation of CSOs with improved research methods and ever broader coverage requires capacity building and funding. Alternative sources of funding of the required magnitude are difficult to get, especially from the private sector. Support for strengthening of state institutions and stimulus to small and medium private agricultural enterprises should not represent a diminishing support to CSO capacity building, networks and programmes with communities.

Strategies specific to the government

- There is a need for a more effective collaboration/ coordination between the PO national platform, budget formulation and the Joint Review process. A final position document with commitments regarding future policies and steps should be approved at the end of each PO national meeting and Joint Review meeting, showing some level of coordination and linkage between the two.
- In order to obtain more effective and valuable contributions from CSOs to the poverty alleviation strategies and programmes, CSOs must be given access to background documents and reasonable time to analyse them and prepare their participation in more specific technical meetings.
- Effective and sustainable development (including the alleviation and eradication of poverty) requires the commitment of the whole population alongside government and state institutions, especially those institutions that are meant to represent and discuss the problems of the people in the most direct form – such as the parliament. Moreover, it is the parliament that discusses and approves the annual plans and budget, including the poverty alleviation programmes and policies. A closer relationship between the PO and the parliament might help the legislative organ to get a closer sense of the local communities' reality and expectations.
- Some form of representation of the informal sector within the PO must be accepted, as that sector represents the main source of income for a significant proportion of Mozambicans, and especially for the poor.

4.1.2 Tanzania

Strategies specific to CSOs

- CSOs must continue to find more efficient, effective and productive mechanisms for liaison and coordination in order to render their participation in public development policies more effective and useful. The process begun with the steering committee and its recently recommended CSO Joint Platform for Engagement (CSO-JPE) might be the right path in this direction, provided that legitimacy and accountability of those structures is ensured and safeguarded, as well as its effectiveness in technical and political terms. These two objectives might represent a dilemma common to the other cases studied in this work – on the

one hand, the attempt to reach a more effective participation requires closer integration, coordination and technical capacity in the analysis, monitoring and evaluation of specific issues as delineated by the official programmes; on the other hand, according to several members of CSOs, it is also important to avoid traditional mechanisms and structures for legitimacy and accountability (i.e. formally elected/representative structures), keeping a loose and flexible structure without formal functioning structures in order to prevent the usual problems of political cooptation, inner power struggles and distance from the communities' real problems.

- CSOs face the challenge of finding ways to accelerate capacity building by their members, to be more proactive, innovative, engaged and led by the communities' demands, a role which requires joint effort from CSOs themselves, the government and the ICPs. A closer relationship with academies and prominent research centres working on poverty in the country, such as the Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) and the Economic and Social Research Foundation, might be very helpful.
- A closer relationship between civil society and the private sector might also be useful in terms of providing alternative funding, although the existing political dependence of the economic sector might hamper this aim (the same happens in the other countries studied in this report).
- CSO sustainability also requires enhanced transparency and accountability of the civil society sector itself. The project of a code of conduct and standards of excellence among the CSOs, along with the government's NGOs' Code, might help. The ICPs can also play an important role in supporting these CSO processes of internal reorganisation.

Specific strategies for ICPs

- Given their leverage, ICPs must keep up their pressure on the government structures to include and accept an increasing contribution of CSOs in development programmes such as MKUKUTA.
- ICPs should also pressure for an institutionalisation of mechanisms to sustain and manage the partnership between CSOs and government at different levels of the government administration, as well as pushing for an improvement on the legal framework of CSOs and its enforcement in the country.

- ICPs must keep their support (financial and capacity building) towards the steering committee coordination process, and CSOs in general, for better coordination, engagement and participation in public development policies. Their leverage within the civil society background also allows them to press for increasing accountability and transparency of CSOs throughout the country towards their constituencies and donors, keeping clear accounts on financial movements and reporting on the activities undertaken.

Strategies specific to the government

- There is an increasing openness on the part of government towards CSO participation in poverty alleviation programmes such as MKUKUTA, but there is no institutional framework to sustain and manage this partnership at different levels of the government administration. There is a need to improve the legal framework of CSOs and its enforcement in the country.
- The Presidential five-year development plan, presented right after MKUKUTA II, without any participation by CSOs, might represent a step backwards in the relationship that had been progressing between CSOs, the government and other stakeholders within the MKUKUTA structures.
- Parliamentarians should seek a more direct involvement and collaboration with CSOs and the private sector in their efforts to participate in poverty alleviation policies. It has been noted in a few documents that parliamentarians' involvement in poverty alleviation programmes has been weak.

4.1.3 DRC

Strategies specific to CSOs

- CSOs through the Symposium must demand full inclusion according to the planned PRGSP mechanisms for civil society participation in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the poverty reduction and growth programme. Those planned mechanisms were designed in ways that are extremely favourable to CSO participation and inclusion. Those spaces must be claimed and filled by CSOs.

- CSOs' lack of coordination and technical competence have hampered an effective and productive participation in government mechanisms and development programmes. CSOs have been practically absent from these mechanisms and processes. The Symposium process is a major opportunity to reverse this scenario.
- The First National Symposium was carefully prepared within a countrywide and broad-based consultation that greatly enhanced legitimacy. That is a very important capital that cannot be wasted. CSOs must keep up with transparency and democratic procedures at the heart of the Symposium process, respecting and implementing the approved roadmap, investing more in capacity building of its members towards a more careful and technical preparation of the thematic groups. The Symposium must safeguard its political independence, respecting the original decision of not becoming a 'super NGO' representing the civil society as a whole or substituting provincial networks, acting in a decentralised manner in collaboration with provincial or national CSOs networks.
- The Follow-Up Committee should be more regularly accountable to the Symposium members and invest more time and effort in communication, restitution and feedback mechanisms to its members. There are clear problems of communication within the enlarged Symposium structure, more regular restitution meetings between the Follow-Up Committee and the broader group are urgent, as well as more effective communication with provincial networks and individual members.
- A first step towards a better communication and interaction with members and other stakeholders should be the creation of a website for the Symposium managed by the Follow-Up Committee. This is probably a simple mechanism to start tackling the communication, feedback and restitution problems. It would also help to improve coordination and transparency on the work that is being done and facilitate interaction on consultative processes that are delayed, such as the Letter of Principles of civil society. The website of the Policy Forum in Tanzania could serve as a good example.

Strategies specific to ICPs

- ICPs played a central role in pressuring the government for a more inclusive attitude towards CSOs. ICPs still have the leverage to keep this pressure on the government, pushing for the effective implementation of the PRGSP's planned mechanisms for CSO participation.
- ICPs should keep up their committed support for the Symposium process, demanding effectiveness on feedback throughout the Symposium structures, transparency and political independence at all levels; demanding timely implementation of the First National Symposium approved roadmap. A follow-up of the Symposium process might be very helpful.
- According to several CSOs heard in the course of this project, ICPs have been helping CSO coordination through the Symposium process, but following the new international tendency they are increasingly channelling their funds to reinforce state institutions, state budget and the agricultural private sector (that has not been reaching the poor farmers, but larger agro-businesses). Some women's organisations complain that their funds were reduced by more than 70%.
- CSOs interviewed during this research insisted on the need for capacity building support from ICPs: funding for such actions is crucial for their contribution and participation in the development processes of the country.

Strategies specific to the government

- The government should put into practice the mechanisms envisaged in the PRGSP for CSO engagement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, especially at the level of the PO.
- The government should stimulate the Symposium process, opening its structures and programmes to more effective participation by the Symposium thematic groups. Lack of CSO participation is partly due to CSOs' weak coordination, but could also greatly benefit from the implementation of the mechanisms planned under the PRGSP.

4.1.4 Angola

Strategies specific to CSOs

- Improved coordination and cooperation among CSOs is necessary for self-reinforcement and capacity building to influence public decision-making processes and hold the government accountable. Better coordination with other CSOs to reach a common position and stronger negotiating stance is a necessary condition for a better and more productive relationship, not only with the government but also with the ICPs.
- CSO capacity building in technical areas related to development programmes is necessary for a valuable civil society contribution to public policies and development strategies. An alliance with research centres and academies might prove helpful creating this capacity and coordinating the contributions of CSOs in a more technical and organised manner.
- The national conference process and structure can be a positive step for a better coordination among CSOs and their capacity to influence public policies, as long as they respect the principles and spirit at the basis of its creation – a space for discussion and coordination of common positions, not a mega-structure to represent the national civil society and even less to elect some kind of a civil society president or ‘CEO’ that ICPs or the government can easily have access to. At the same time, the conference must proceed towards a higher level of coordination at each national conference, with an approved agenda on crucial and important issues being discussed at the government level, such as the decentralisation process or the ‘poverty alleviation’ policies and strategies.
- CSOs’ national coordination processes and attempts to influence national public policies should run in parallel with a strategy for deeper and coordinated action at the regional level, learning from their counterparts’ best practices, coordinating with them in a more sound and sustainable way, and increasing their participation in regional mechanisms open to CSOs such as the African Union and the SADC.

Strategies specific to ICPs

- Despite the leverage of the Angolan government over the so-called international community, due to the increasing strategic importance of oil and the competition between Asian and Western countries to secure strategic natural resources, 'Western' international organisations (governmental and non-governmental) should try to adhere to principles on the defence of democratic participatory processes. Pressure must be maintained on the Angolan government for the inclusion and consultation of civil society and other key national stakeholders, starting with the communities themselves, in the fight against poverty and in view of economic and social development.
- Support to CSOs must be maintained despite the new tendency to put the state back on centre-stage with institutional capacity building and channeling aid through the state budget. Support to institutional strengthening of state administrative-bureaucratic machinery is important, but cannot be done at the expense of silencing more critically or politically inconvenient opinions (either of CSOs or ICPs themselves).
- Incentives must be made to promote national CSOs' autonomous agendas, principles and organisational sustainability. ICPs, and donors alike should restrain their tendency to think and act on aid and cooperation strategies as extensions for the promotion of their member countries' strategic interests (economic, cultural, social, political etc.). ICPs should pay close attention to the recommendations coming out of the Second National Civil Society Conference (the one with more important strategic/organisation decisions) and help the approved path. Better coordination is also needed at the level of ICPs themselves, in order to help CSOs' long-term sustainability and to increase ICPs leverage on the government.

Strategies specific to the government

- It is becoming clear that there is a serious level of mistrust between government and most CSOs. Government attempts to control CSOs since the beginning of the transition period in the 1990s has fuelled such mistrust and made for a difficult relationship. Those attempts became obvious with the creation of several pro-government CSOs, and discriminatory behaviour towards the most politically inconvenient ones (including the granting of the status of 'public utility' to some organisations, thus disadvantaging others). The government should abstain from this kind of behaviour, as it does not

foster the climate of mutual trust needed to bring together all social actors behind the national development effort to end poverty.

- Mechanisms for effective participation must be put in place and respected by the government. The setting up of the Councils for National Listening and Coordination – the CACS – cannot depend on arbitrary goodwill of the local administration. CSOs and members of the private sector in those forums should be selected not by local state administrations but by the civil society and private sector organisations themselves in a democratic spirit.
- The independent analysis of research centres and academies must be valued and stimulated by government institutions. So far this type of collaboration is non-existent.

Table 16: Cross-cutting/general recommendations on strategies to improve civil society participation

Cross-cutting recommendations	
To CSOs	CSOs must continue to find more productive mechanisms for coordination in order to render their participation in public development policies more effective and useful.
	CSOs must tackle existing problems of transparency, accountability and legitimacy within their own members in order to earn more credibility towards their own constituencies – the communities they work with – the government and the ICPs. A code of conduct for CSOs such as that being discussed in Tanzania or the CSOs’ Letter of Principles in DRC might be a good example to follow.
	CSOs must invest strongly and fiercely in capacity building and coordination to raise their technical competence to discuss very specific subjects and counter the usual government argument that CSOs do not have the capacity to discuss complex issues that require technical preparation (e.g. Mozambique, DRC, Tanzania and Angola). It should identify, mobilise and competently prepare the best professional capacity available among civil society actors for technical discussions. This improvement requires joint efforts by CSOs themselves, the government and the ICPs. It might be very productive for CSOs to have a closer coordination and interaction with research centres and academies in very specific (technical) issues.
	CSOs should include members/representatives of the informal sector in their hearings and surveys throughout the country and within their structures for participation in the NPO processes. This sector is the main source of income for most of the poor and should be represented; it is not represented in any of the cases analysed here.

Cross-cutting recommendations	
	<p>A serious effort and investment should be made to significantly improve interactive websites. Sustainability is also about networking, lobbying and pursuing shared goals in a coordinated way. The Tanzanian CSOs' coordination network seems to have understood this reality and is taking the most out of it. CSOs in the other countries should learn from the Tanzanian case.</p>
	<p>A closer relationship between civil society and the private sector might be useful in terms of providing alternative sources of financing for CSOs, although the existing political dependence of the private sector might impede this strategy.</p>
	<p>CSOs coordination structures must keep up with transparency and democratic procedures along with political independency, avoiding the temptations of becoming a mega-structure representing civil society as a whole; they should act in a decentralised manner in collaboration with provincial or national CSO networks. These expectations were common to CSOs in the four countries.</p>
	<p>CSOs' national coordination processes should run in parallel with a strategy for deeper and more articulated action at the regional level, learning from their counterparts' best practices, participating more in regional mechanisms open to CSOs such as the AU and the SADC. The RPO structure might help in this regard (see diagram with proposed RPO structure at the end of this chapter).</p>
To ICPs	<p>ICPs must keep their pressure on governments to include and accept an increasing contribution of CSOs in development programmes.</p>
	<p>Strong international support is still crucial to the CSOs' role as holding governments accountable. CSOs do have an important role to play in a productive relationship between rulers and ruled, helping to express the needs and demands of the poor. Governments usually reject this role of CSOs; ICPs might help, pressuring for a friendly attitude from governments towards CSOs.</p>
	<p>Support from ICPs for institutional strengthening of state administrations and stimulus to the agricultural private sector (according to the current international trends, e.g. the Africa Green Revolution launched at the review of the millennium declaration in 2005) should not represent a decrease of funds to CSO networks and programmes with communities in several other areas such as political and civil rights. Several CSOs heard in the course of this research complained about decreasing funds resulting from a shift of interest of ICPs, towards the agricultural private sector and strengthening of state institutions.</p>
	<p>ICPs should advocate for the institutionalisation of mechanisms to sustain and manage the partnership between CSOs and governments at different levels of the state administration: ICPs should also push for an improvement in CSOs' legal protection frameworks and its enforcement as partners in poverty alleviation policies and strategies.</p>

Cross-cutting recommendations	
	Incentives must be placed in the promotion of national CSOs autonomous agendas and principles in order to assure their long-term sustainability.
	Support must be given to CSOs' capacity building for a better organisation and effective and competent participation.
To governments	In order to obtain more effective and valuable contributions from CSOs to poverty alleviation strategies and programmes, CSOs must be given access to background documents and a reasonable time period to analyse them and prepare their participation in more specific technical meetings.
	A closer relationship between the NPO structures and national parliaments might help the legislative body to get a closer sense of the local communities' reality and expectations.
	Some form of representation of the informal sector within the NPO structures must be accepted as that sector represents the main source of income for a significant proportion of the population in these countries and also within the region, especially the poor.
	There is a need to fight the mindset prevalent within government structures that does not see CSOs as equal partners in development strategies and is suspicious of CSOs' agendas.
	Independent analysis by research centres and academies' must be valued and stimulated by government institutions, providing national and international credibility to the RPO and NPO processes.
	Institutional frameworks for an official and effective participation of CSOs at different levels of the government administration must be created in cases where they do not yet exist.
	Mechanisms/structures planned for engagement by CSOs with government in the decision-making, implementation and M&E of poverty alleviation programmes and policies must move beyond the theoretical and be actually implemented (e.g. DRC, Tanzania and Angola)
	The government should abstain from any attempt to interfere in or influence CSOs' internal engagement and coordination processes and structures. Such attempts will be immediately perceptible to CSOs and will ruin the entire process, without any benefit to the government or the country's development programmes and poverty eradication efforts.

4.2 Regional level

As we have seen, the Regional Poverty Observatory process might represent a good opportunity to boost effective participation of CSOs in poverty alleviation and eradication policies and efforts, provided that there is effective and productive coordination between different stakeholders.

There are already a few organisations, more or less related to the SADC, that are seeking to increase coordination among CSOs at the regional level, and to facilitate the relationship with the SADC policy decision-making bodies. There are organisations such as the SADC Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (SADC-CNGO), the Southern African Trade Unions Coordinating Council (SATUCC), the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FCCSA) and its programme on the Economic Justice Network (EJN), the Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), and many others. These organisations are striving to coordinate civil society engagement at regional level, and some of them are increasingly engaging in the RPO process, pushing for federative and representative bodies for CSOs at regional level, especially in the CSOs' relationship with the SADC. One example of this is the agreement signed between the SADC-CNGO, SATUCC and the FCCSA (including FCCSA's programme on economic justice, the EJN).¹⁰¹

These organisations may well help to improve CSO coordination at national and regional levels. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the field research for this study revealed high levels of suspicion on the part of many CSOs about mega-structures of a federal nature at the national level, and even more so at the regional level. Representation has always been a problem for CSOs: it is by definition an arena for collective action around diverse issues and interests, purposes and values, and is flexible in time and space. Representation is in itself a problem for individual CSOs in relation to their constituencies (the communities they work with), and an even bigger problem for federal-type structures that are supposed to relate to higher (governmental) decision-making bodies. These processes of so-called representation from the local level to the national and regional levels must be seen with major caution.

¹⁰¹ See *Pact of Regional Apex Organizations* signed on 30 March 2010 by SADC CNGO, SATUCC and FCCSA, available at www.satucc.org/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=6

There is also the fear expressed by many CSOs, in all the four countries under scrutiny, that such mega-structures might make it easier for governments to politically manipulate and co-opt them – as they have often done in the past. An attempt to assimilate the new-born national structures into existing regional bodies, in an effort to take the lead in the process, could damage the whole project of committed, engaged and significant involvement by CSOs. Recent structures, such as the DRC Symposium, the Angolan National Civil Society Conference or the Policy Forum in Tanzania, that are fighting hard to maintain their stance as honest coordination forums, can easily lose credibility if they are incorporated into existing structures that are detached from the reality of the majority of CSOs in each country. Even the Mozambican case is under criticism and suspicion, with accusations of being ever closer to the government.

These national processes are being constructed and structured with a new spirit of inclusiveness, participation and transparency, and are trying to make a break from the past, with suspicion about top-down structures that were usually politically manipulated by governments and regimes. Rapid, unconsidered assimilation into existing structures created for different purposes in different contexts may ruin these efforts. It is worth remembering that several attempts of this sort – building regional mega-structures for CSO representation – collapsed in the recent past (e.g. Southern African Regional Human Rights Network – SAHRINGON, having reached a very high level of involvement and engagement in early 2000s).¹⁰²

From the analysis of the four cases under scrutiny, it becomes clear that a major effort and investment must be made by the SADC to inform all the stakeholders about the RPO process and update this information in a timely manner. There is a need to improve the information and communication mechanisms and flows within the RPO process. Most of the stakeholders knew little about the RPO process, and are unable to be engaged and committed to a process that they are not familiar with. This lack of efficient and effective information and communication may also account for the current differing expectations of the various stakeholders towards the RPO.

An annual regional assembly of non-state actors convened with the purpose of feeding and directly informing the RPO/SADC secretariat might be useful

¹⁰² This and several other examples can be found in *An Assessment of Human Rights Defender Initiatives in Southern Africa*, a report for the Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa (NiZA), by Ahmed Motala, Nuno Vidal, Piers Pigou and Venitia Govender (Amsterdam: NiZA, June 2005).

for a closer relationship of national non-state actor participation processes with the RPO process. Selection of non-state actor representatives to the annual meeting must be based on democratic procedures at the provincial and national level.

In order to ensure that data used and disseminated by the RPO is credible and reliable and that participation of non-state actors is effective, democratic and transparent (free from political manipulation in member countries), an independent evaluation team to certify the effectiveness of civil society participation and quality of data collection could also be created at the regional level, working directly with the RPO secretariat.

These mechanisms to ensure transparency and democratic procedures would help to dissipate the suspicion between governments and CSOs, as well as stimulating the engagement and participation of all non-state actors, and CSOs in particular, towards the poverty eradication objective and the RPO process.

The RPO structure could also integrate a few mechanisms to ensure the support of the ICPs to the whole RPO process, whether at the regional and the national and sub-national levels, helping and supporting a more effective and productive coordination among CSOs themselves, and between CSOs and the governments, as well as the engagement between CSOs and the private sector.

Table 17: General recommendations to the RPO process and structure

General recommendations to the RPO process and structure	
1	There is an urgent need for significant investment in information and communication about the RPO process. With few exceptions, most stakeholders in the four countries under study – whether government structures, CSOs or ICPs – were unaware of the RPO process.
2	The RPO must stand as a completely politically independent structure, as several governments in the region have a long tradition of attempting to manipulate such structures. Any political influence or manipulation by government members will irrevocably ruin the credibility of the structure, as well as the credibility of the data produced and the whole process. Considerable scepticism already exists regarding the ability to maintain independence.
3	The RPO should contract independent evaluation teams to make random, unannounced visits to member countries to check on the reliability of data collection processes as well as on the effectiveness of participation mechanisms for stakeholders, and their legitimacy and representation. This would strengthen the independence and credibility of the RPO.

General recommendations to the RPO process and structure	
4	The RPO structure should be closely coordinated with national research centres and academies dedicated to poverty eradication issues. The participation of research centres in the process, as a cross-check and complementary to the focal points, might be a good way of ensuring credibility of data and analysis.
5	The RPO structure should include an organ (such as an annual regional assembly of non-state actors) for direct participation and intervention by stakeholders closer to the SADC decision-making bodies; participants would be selected by their peers in democratic and transparent national processes. CSOs, governments, private sector and ICPs would be able to meet once or twice a year to discuss progress and findings on these processes and programmes.
6	More events and leading responsibilities should be passed to non-anglophone countries to increase the sense of inclusion of these countries and enable them to participate more in the SADC dynamics (e.g. Angola and the DRC). Some criticism was expressed in Angola and the DRC regarding the fact that the SADC is very anglophone- focused, leaving francophone and lusophone countries marginalised.

Recommendations coming out of the analysis developed in this book and set out principally in Chapters 3 and 4 can be seen in Figure 8 below, which proposes a structure for the functioning of the RPO.

Proposed Structure for the Functioning of the RPO

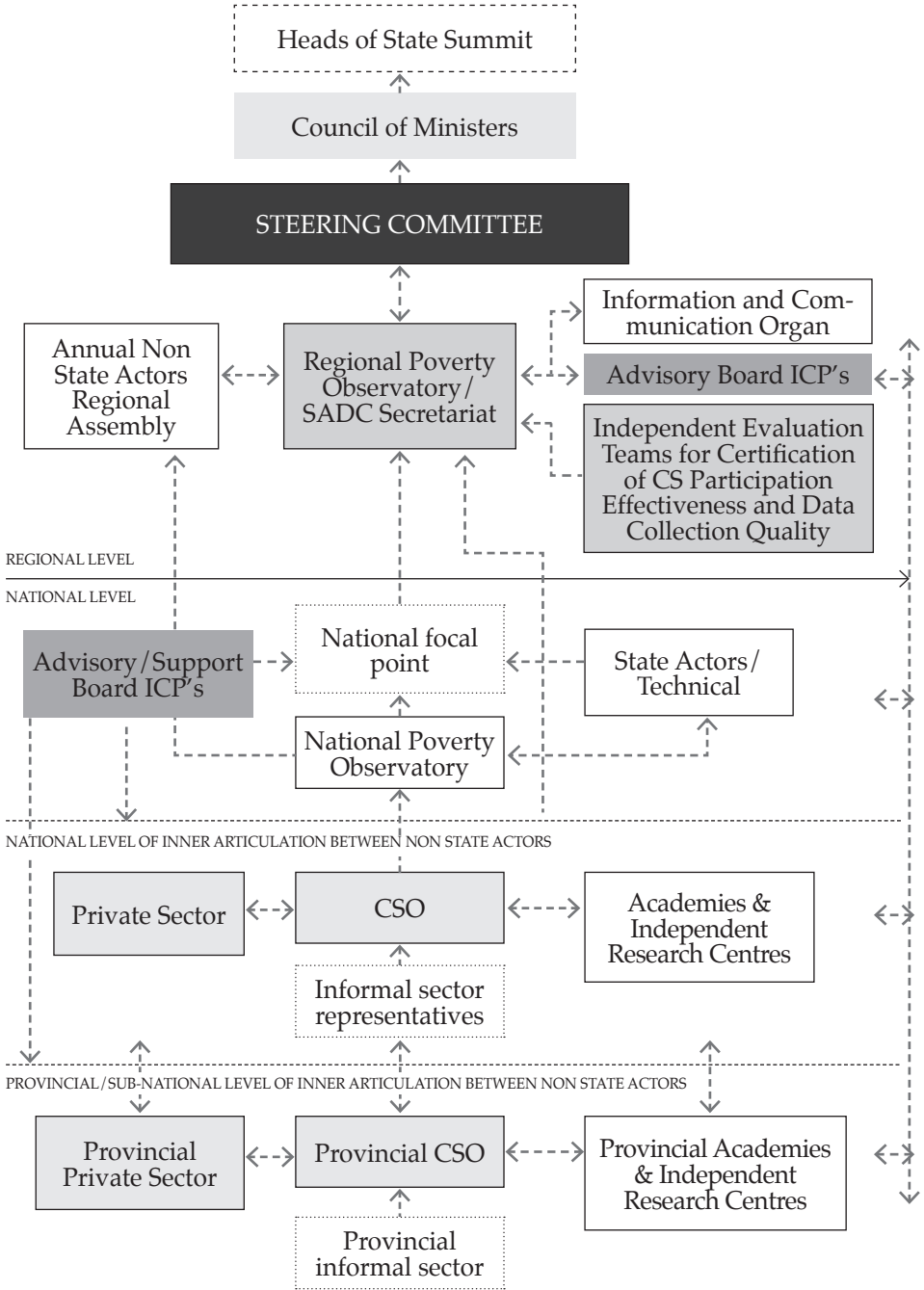


Figure 8: Proposed structure for the RPO

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