

**AN EVALUATION OF POVERTY ERADICATION UNDER AGENDA 21  
OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
(WSSD): A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICA.**

**BY**

**P.T MODIBE**

Student NO 1691560

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**SUPERVISOR: DR. KALE EWUSI**

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## Declaration

I, P.T Modibe hereby declare that, the thesis titled: An Evaluation of the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies under Agenda 21 framework of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD): A Case Study of South Africa in the SADC region, has not been submitted at this or any other university. This is my own work in conception and design and all materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature.  .....

P.T Modibe

Date. *21 August 2009* .....

## **Dedication**

This research work is in memory of my late brothers, Lazarus “Lazy” Bota Modibe and Raditsotlhe “Computer” Modibe, my late Grandparents, Ditshele ‘MmaFene’ and Reuben ‘Gampi’ Modibe. May their souls rest in peace.

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## **Abstract**

The study set out to evaluate the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies under Agenda 21 framework in South Africa.

Agenda 21 is one of the five documents produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. It mapped out a plan of action for future global partnership on critical issues of sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The study found out that the goal of poverty reduction under Agenda 21 can only be achieved if there is a progressive commitment and partnership at national and international levels.

It was further established that the delay or failure by rich countries and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in implementing the Johannesburg Plan has escalated the levels of poverty in South Africa and elsewhere.

Based on these findings, the following were made. Poverty reduction remains not only a South African problem but also a global challenge. Without action on critical issues that are the means of implementation such as finance and market access, countries will simply be unable to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets. Investment in good

governance at national and international level will go a long way in the fight against poverty reduction.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

Poverty is a scourge that no self-respecting nation can comfortably condone. Until 1994, the politics and economic policies of Apartheid South Africa systematically entrenched poverty as a way of life in South Africa. Poverty eradication in South Africa is the central theme of our national debate. For the ANC-led government in South Africa, it is core to their electoral manifesto “a people’s contract to create work and fight poverty” and pivotal to its strategy. For Business, it is the subject of much debate between the first and the second economies. For labour, it is the proof of failed delivery over the past ten years. Fifty percent of the populations of South Africa live below poverty line (Pennington, 2004).

It is important to understand clearly what poverty is about. Different ways of understanding poverty lead to different ways of dealing with it. There is however no general agreement on the definition, standard and depth of poverty. In terms of how the government views it, the poor are usually defined as those falling below some standard and, therefore, forming a target group for particular policies. Traditional measures of poverty consider whether individuals or households have adequate food or sufficient income to purchase it. The World Development Report (2000/2001) defines poverty as “pronounced deprivation in well-being.” What is precisely deprivation? It is not only to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not cared for, to be illiterate and not schooled but also to be vulnerable, voiceless and powerless (Palmas, Marysse, 2003)

The Eradication of poverty is one of the greatest global challenges today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly for developing countries. Although each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication the role of international strategies for development cannot be overemphasized. Concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to achieve their sustainable development goals. These goals are related to the internationally agreed poverty-reduction targets and goals, as contained in Agenda 21, the relevant outcomes of other United Nations conferences and the United Nations Millennium Development Declaration (Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002)

Considered as major challenges for the WSSD, poverty and food security are two top-priority issues for Food Agriculture Organization (FAO).At the World Food Summit organized by FAO in Rome in 1996, Heads of State and Government and representatives of 186 countries made a solemn commitment and provided a set of concrete actions to halve the number of undernourished people worldwide, by 2015 which presently stands at more than 80 million. However, FAO has stressed the need for a stronger political will and sufficient financial resources to help developing countries achieve food security (FAO Report, 2002).

In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development brought together tens of thousands of participants, including heads of State and Government, national delegates, business and other non-governmental organizations (NGO's). The Summit focused the

world's attention on actions to achieve sustainable development. Also inclusiveness is the hallmark of Agenda 21, the global action plan for sustainable development agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development-the Earth Summit-held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.Likewise, preparations for the Johannesburg Summit included all groups committed to implementing the goals of sustainable development (Desai, 2002).

Owing to the importance of oceans in the global economy and climate system, it was argued that, the world can achieve lasting and sustainable development without healthy coasts and oceans. Well-managed, productive fisheries play a significant role in global economic development, food security, poverty alleviation, trade, and human health. But since the Earth Summit in 1992, most coastal resources have suffered from overuse and degradation. Current efforts to protect coasts and oceans will fail to achieve their full potential unless they are better integrated in the broader social development agenda that was the focus of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE, 2002).

Johannesburg offered a good opportunity to build momentum to comply with these agreements, and to highlight the importance of healthy oceans in addressing poverty, food security, and population issues (ibid).

The WSSD was the successor of the United Nations Conference of Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the Rio Earth Summit, held in 1992 in Brazil.UNCED was one of the most significant global environmental gatherings as world

leaders recognized that cooperative global action is essential to halt environmental destruction and inequality. This conference acknowledged that economic and social progress depends on the states natural resources and therefore effective measures needed to be instituted to prevent environmental degradation. Rio produced a number of documents to chart the course of sustainable development. The Rio Earth Summit outcomes included the Rio Declaration, which contained a set of principles designed to commit governments to ensure environmental protection and responsible development, and Agenda 21, which was considered the “blue-print” of sustainable development strategies and multilateral environment agreements on bio-diversity, desertification and climate change (Pressend, 2005).

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) brought 179 heads of governments together in Rio de Janeiro. It focused world attention on critical issues of sustainability and natural resources, and mapped out a plan action for future global partnership to achieve concrete goals. Agenda 21 was one of the five documents produced:

- The Rio Declaration on Environmental and Development
- A statement of principles to guide sustainable management forests
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- The Convention on Biological Diversity and
- Agenda 21

Agenda 21 is the plan to implement the agreements of Rio. It guides business and government policies into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (UNDP Poverty Report, 2000).

Agenda 21 is one of the five documents agreed during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro 1992. Signed by 179 Heads of State; it is a blueprint for sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, aimed at providing a high quality environment and healthy economy for all the peoples of the world. Agenda 21 sees sustainable development as a way to reverse both poverty and environmental degradation. A major theme is to eradicate poverty by giving poor people more access to the resources they need to live sustainably, including information and skills. It calls upon governments working in participation with international organizations, business, regional and local governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and citizen groups to develop national strategies for sustainable development in an ongoing process of consultation and global democratization from local to international levels from 1993 –1997 (Agenda 21,1992).

Under the evolutionary process, which Agenda 21 set in motion, sustainable development has become like a prism. Every time you turn it, you get a different “colour”. The sustainable development prism includes the social, political, economic and environmental factors. Until Rio, the phrase sustainable development had not appeared in any prior UN documents, papers or reference books. It should be noted that Agenda 21 sets up the global infrastructure needed to manage, count, and control all of the world’s assets. Included are forests, fresh water, agricultural lands, deserts, pastures, rangelands, farmer’s fields, oceans, and inland waterways, marine environment, cities, housing, sewer and solid wastes, air, pollution, bio-technology-every aspect of living, production and

manufacturing, research and medicine, etc. Today everything is sustainable: sustainable water, sustainable forests, sustainable markets, sustainable agriculture, etc. (Africa Confidential, 2007).

Sustainable development was a core philosophy behind the Programme of Action called “Agenda 21” at the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development-UNCED, now called the “Rio Earth Summit.”

Agenda 21 still stands as the most comprehensive, most far-reaching and if implemented, the most effective programme of international action ever sanctioned by the international community. It is not a final and complete action programme, but one, which must continue to evolve (Veon, 2004).

Agenda 21 explains that population consumption and technology are the primary driving forces of environmental change. It lays out what needs to be done to reduce wasteful and inefficient consumption patterns in some parts of the world while encouraging increased but sustainable development in others. It offers policies and programmes to achieve a sustainable balance between consumption, population and the Earth’s supporting capacity. It describes some technologies and techniques that need to be developed to provide for human needs while carefully managing natural resources. Agenda 21 provides options for combating degradation of the land, air and water, conserving forests and the diversity of species of life. It deals with poverty and excessive consumption, health and education, cities and farmers. Agenda 21 does not shun business. It says that

sustainable development is the way to reverse both poverty and environmental destruction (WSSDReport, 2001).

The official launch of the Rural Anti-Poverty Programme in South Africa, and the opportunity to review its progress. At the heart of SA's democratic government's mandate is the reconstruction and development of the society, in order to improve the lives of the people whose basic needs were neglected by apartheid. For that reason the government has steadily shifted resources towards social services over a number of years and ensuring that the economy grows in order to sustain these improvements. At the same time the government is also taking special measures to address urgent needs of the poorest of the poor. That includes allocating R300 million towards poverty relief in the last year's Budget (2004-2005), including R85 million for the Rural Anti-Poverty Programme of the Department of Public Works. It is for that reason too that this programme focuses in particular on KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Province, where so much poverty in the country is concentrated (Chidester, James, 2003).

Absolute poverty in South Africa is widespread, and those most affected are people outside the formal labour market-farm labourers, women and children in rural areas, the unemployed, much of the 'informal sector'. These groups also lack political influence. Special efforts e.g. land reform complemented by rural credit and infrastructural investment for small farms, rural, job creation, food aid-will have to be made to reach them, otherwise it is all too likely that -will have to be made to reach them, otherwise it is all too likely that redistribution will occur entirely within the upper ranges of the

income distribution, to already better –off urban workers. Clearly, however, a variety of interests conflict in these debates. Bureaucracies might hope to extend their powers via nationalization, organized urban workers might push for higher minimum wages, and the rural poor might propose extensive and rapid land reform, while middle classes might favour higher government housing and education expenditure (Suckling and White, 1988).

In 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) released the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as a programme for poverty reduction in response to Agenda 21, designed to address the injustices of the past and promote sustainable development in future. Although the programme conceived of wide-ranging social transformation, it was couched in political terms, and seemed more like a statement of moral regeneration than a set policy positions. However, it provided an agenda to which all South Africa's political parties could subscribe. Foreign endorsement was secured and not inconsiderable foreign grants, amounting to approximately US\$200 million, or one-sixth of the first RDP budget, were received by 1995 to assist the programme (Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000).

In 1992, the General Assembly, welcoming the fact that certain non-governmental organizations, on the initiative of one of them (the French-based International Movement ATD Fourth World), had in many states, observed 17<sup>th</sup> October as World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, declared that date the International Day of the Eradication of Poverty (Resolution 47/196). The observance aims to promote awareness of the need

to eradicate poverty and destitutions in all countries, particularly in developing countries, a need that has become a development priority (Press Release, 2006).

The Kenya NGO Earth Summit 2002 Forum and the WSSD Civil Society Secretariat (Africa Desk) in collaboration with the Sub-Regional Points for Eastern Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa and the small islands of the Indian Ocean held the conference titled “African Conference of Civil Society Organisations: Consolidating the Regional Agenda Towards WSSD and Beyond” (Report of the African Conference of Civil Society Organisations, 2002).

The following are some of the key highlights of the issues of discussions during the conference:

1. Poverty eradication constitutes the greatest challenge for African states, being more than ever deeply entrenched and economic disparities widening by the day between and within nations.
2. The need for African to be in charge of all the decisions affecting the continent and put to an end the numerous foreign concepts which are incompatible with the potential of Africa to realize Sustainable Development.
3. The need for integration of the principles of gender and inter-generational equity in the WSSD process (ibid).

The WSSD negotiated and adopted two main documents, the Plan of Implementation and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. The Plan of Implementation

is designed as a framework for action to implement the commitments originally agreed at UNCED and includes eleven chapters: an introduction, poverty eradication, and consumption and production, the natural resource base, health, small islands developing states, Africa, other regional initiatives, means of implementation, institutional outlines of the path taken from UNCED to the WSSD, highlights present challenges, expresses a commitment to sustainable development, underscores the importance of multilateralism and emphasize the need for implementation (Hallman,2002).

The SADC Report says “The prospects of the SADC region achieving the MDGs as planned in the Millennium Declaration are faced with daunting challenges including high levels of poverty, endemic food insecurity, environmental degradation and institutional and resource constraints. These factors are compounded by an unfavorable external economic environment that has resulted in unsustainable external debt, declining terms of trade and inaccessible markets in developed countries. While still possible, meeting MDGs for most countries in the SADC region requires a number of significant and accelerated reforms both at national and international levels”. Among other things, what this means is that the SADC region will have to do more to meet the goals set in the 2000 UN Millennium Declaration. These include poverty reduction, improvements in the health of the people, access to education, gender equality, and environmental sustainable (ANC Today, 2005).

“The theme (SADC Institutional Reform for Poverty Reduction through Regional Integration) is in tandem with our efforts of transforming our organization to make it

responsive to the challenge of poverty reduction. This transformation is expected to make our organization not only effective and efficient but also responsive and proactive to the mounting demands emanating from deeper regional integration as well as in responding timely to global challenges .It is a must that we prevent further hunger, destitution and save lives. Our member states are implementing policies aimed at meeting the humanitarian crisis by inter alia increasing agricultural productivity in the long term, promoting irrigated agriculture as well as increase in resource allocation to agriculture”, Ruthven Margriet said at the SADC Consultative Conference on Regional Arrangements-SADC ([www.tralac.org](http://www.tralac.org)).

Southern Africa has made progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals but the region is facing significant development challenges, notably poverty levels, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. According to a progress report by the SADC, its 14 member states are facing daunting challenges in trying to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Apart from the HIV/AIDS pandemic and higher poverty levels, the other challenges include income inequalities, persistence food shortages, and environmental degradation as well as institutional policy and restraints. The report conclude, that the SADC region faces uneven prospects of achieving the MDGs –differing sharply from country to country-and that significant policy reforms are needed at national and regional level, as well as by the international community, to accelerate the process (Madziwa and Mutase, 2005).

The 2002 WSSD was to be as impressive as the UNCED held to mark the tenth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit and to take stock of progress on Agenda 21 in those 10 years, the run-up to Johannesburg was singularly dismal and uninspiring. The world had, once again, changed. The high hopes of a new era of global environmental cooperation that had been ignited by Rio soon proved false. The industrialized countries of the North had remained unwilling to provide the developing countries of the South with the resources or support that had been implied at Rio, meanwhile the promise of a post-Rio harvest of global environmental treaties and implementation proved unfounded as key states, particularly but not solely the US, dragged their feet on key issues such as climate change. As a result, a malaise had set in well in advance of WSSD which was only made worse by events at the geo-political level, where the global mood had gone soon after the tragic terrorist attack on the US and growing sense on insecurity and violence around the world (Sibley and Cleveland (ed.) 2007).

## **1.2. Rationale of the Study**

The advent of democracy in South Africa promised a lot in terms of the delivery of services. One of the key elements of service delivery was the eradication of poverty in the country. But unfortunately there is widespread poverty in the country, after 13 years of democratic rule. Many national and international strategies and programs have been adopted to address the challenges of poverty. One of them is Agenda 21 of the WSSD aimed at addressing poverty. The study is aimed at evaluating the impact of the implementation of the program.

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

The Research problem is expressed through the following questions:

- What is the impact of the implementation of Agenda 21 in South Africa on poverty reduction?
- What are the socio-economic and political challenges facing the implementation of Agenda 21 in South Africa?

### **1.4. Aim of the Study**

To evaluate the impact of the implementation of Agenda 21 under WSSD by South Africa.

### **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

1. The impact of the implementation of Agenda 21 in South Africa on poverty reduction.
2. Discussing the socio-economic and political challenges facing the implementation of Agenda 21 in South Africa.

### **1.6. Hypothesis**

- It appears that there are achievements and failures on the implementation of Agenda 21 of the WSSD in the fight against poverty in South Africa.

### **1.7 Study area**

The research was conducted in South Africa because the country has inherited a legacy from the apartheid and the colonial administrations, respectively, which has led South

Africans into the quagmire of poverty and starvation. The study scrutinized among other things, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Growth and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy as to whether they have failed or succeeded in eradication of poverty in South Africa. Also the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) progress on poverty eradication in South Africa.

### **1.9. Ethical Considerations**

The researcher took into cognizance and abided by the Ethics of the Social Science Research to avoid inter alia plagiarism and also look into the following:

- The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of the names of the respondents.
- The respondents were informed accordingly that their taking part in this study is voluntary.
- Access to the findings of this research document will be assured to all the participants.

### **1.10. Significance of the Study**

This study generated a significant contribution in exposing the state of poverty and its socio-economic impacts in South Africa.

Furthermore, it scrutinized the successes and shortcomings of any efforts made to alleviate poverty in the country. Researchers, policy-makers, development practitioners and the government will benefit from this research document.

Moreover, the study recommends policy options necessary to uplift the state of poverty and hence ensure sustainable development in South Africa.

### **1.11. Limitation of the Study**

Due to financial constraints the researcher gathered data or information from accessible institutions dealing with poverty eradication, on-governmental organizations in the vicinity of Pretoria, Johannesburg and Mafikeng. The regional and provincial departments in the North- West province will be visited for information and accessibility of the resources.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1 Literature Review**

The basic intention of a literature review is to give a comprehensive review of previous works on the general and specific topics considered in the research. As Merriam (2001, p.53) suggests, “The scope of the search is determined by how well defined the research problem is, as well as the researcher’s prior familiarity with the topic”. At least to some extent, the literature review foreshadows the researcher’s own study. Literature review gives the researcher a specific coverage of literature segments that bear directly upon the research study and also the presentation of the theoretical framework or orientation

Ten years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the challenges of sustainable development still needs to be addressed from threefold point of view of lack of growth, poverty aggravation and rapid environmental deterioration. Bouteflika (2002) states that despite the growing awareness of the risks posed by such trends on the economic and ecological security of the globe, the main changes needed to bring about an era of sustainable development have yet to be instituted. But the development problematic has already been identified, and the solutions discussed and agreed upon. Agenda 21, as a platform for action, remains topical and fully pertinent. The basic objective is, therefore, to implement the platform in a coordinated manner at the national, regional and international levels, building on the lessons of the last decade.

Bongo (2002) agrees that ten years ago, the historic Rio Summit underscored the necessity of protecting the environment in order to ensure sustainable development for all. Unfortunately, since then, scientific studies have shown that the world's ecological environment has undergone continuous deterioration. We know that there is a relationship between the environment and development; hence we cannot talk about sustainable development without thinking about the world that surrounds us. This means having a healthy and protected environment. The international community must, therefore, mobilize itself and efficiently try to solve problems linked to the environment. The application of the Kyoto Protocol, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, and the total implementation of measures proposed by Agenda 21 are all necessary steps to be taken.

Sustainable development encompasses many challenges. How can we improve people's lives and conserve our natural resources in a world that is growing in population, with ever-increasing demands for food, water, shelter, sanitation, energy, health services and economic security? Desai (2002) points out that inclusiveness is the hallmark of Agenda 21, the global action for sustainable development agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development-Earth Summit -held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Likewise, preparations for the Johannesburg Summit include all groups committed to implementing the goals of sustainable development. The Johannesburg Summit will focus on turning plans into action. The Summit will evaluate the obstacles to progress and the results achieved since 1992 Earth Summit. The Summit presents an opportunity

to build knowledge gained over the past decade, and provides a new impetus for commitments of resources and specified action towards global sustainability.

Edoho (1997) deliberates that Agenda 21 was designed as a tool to enable the global family to tackle the environmental problems. This document is a global plan meant to address economic and ecological difficulties of the twentieth century. It suggests changes and modifications in the way development activities are conducted. The comprehensive nature of Agenda 21 ensures the coverage of all areas of human endeavors or activities. The occasion in Rio gave world leaders, economists, environmentalists, industrialists, and scientists the opportunity to discuss the environmental and developmental issues of the world.

Dr Olver & Dr Ohiorhenuan (2004) further notes that Agenda 21 demonstrated the emergence of a clear international consensus on the range of issues affecting the long-term sustainability of human society, including domestic social and economic policies, international economic relations and co-operation on global common issues. On domestic policies, the developing countries accepting the principle of citizen participation in sustainable development. In chapters on poverty, sustainable agriculture, desertification and land degradation, provisions were adopted calling for decision making on natural resources management to be decentralized to the community level, giving rural populations and indigenous peoples land titles or other land rights and expanding services such as credit and agricultural extension for rural communities.

Poverty is a major area of concern in post apartheid South Africa. The issue is an important feature of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a policy framework adopted in 1994 to lead the country away from apartheid and into a “democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future”. The RDP was subsequently supported by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy (ibid).

Poverty is the main reason why babies are not vaccinated, why clean water and sanitation are not provided, why curative drugs and other treatments are unavailable and why mothers die in childbirth. It is the underlying cause of reduced life expectancy, handicap, disability and starvation. Mbeki (2002) concurs that poverty is a major contributor to mental illness, stress, suicide, family disintegration and substance abuse. Every year in the developing world 12.2 million children under five years die, most of them from causes, which could be prevented for just a few US cents per child. They die largely because of world indifference, but most of all they die because they are poor...

The gaps between the rich and the poor, between one population group and another, between ages and between sexes, are widening.

According to Forgey, Jeffrey, Sidipoulos, Smith, Corrigan, Mophuthing, Helman, Dimant (2000) The National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) said, in its Report on Social and economic Development in SA in 1998 that ‘poverty exists where people do not have at their disposal the means of achieving a minimum acceptable standard of living’. The report highlighted several facets of poverty in SA, drawing on, inter alia, the 1995 October Household Survey. Issues highlighted were:

1. Poverty was related to race: some 61% of Africans and 38% of Coloured people were poor, compared with 5% of Indians and 1% of Whites;
2. Most of the poor (some 70%) resided in rural areas;
3. Households headed by women were much more likely to be living in poverty than households headed by men;
4. Some 55% of the poor were unemployed, compared with 14% among the non-poor and
5. The poor often did not have access to various amenities and social services, such as adequate health care, education and telephones.

Berman (Editor –in Chief)(2004) further indicates that The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was ratified by the Bush Administration in October 2000. In December 2000, under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), AGOA eligible countries received duty free treatment for 1 800 tariff line items. This was in addition to the 4 600 items available to non-AGOA GSP beneficiary countries. AGOA2, which was signed into law in August 2000, served to increase preferential access to imports from beneficiary Sub-Saharan countries. In its first two years, AGOA was credited with increasing Africa's exports by 1000%, creating 60 000 new jobs, and attracting \$1 billion in new investment. In June 2004 the US House of Representatives voted to extend AGOA by seven years to 2015.

A report entitled Poverty and Inequality in SA and prepared for the office of the deputy president in May 1998, said that about 19 million people or just under 50% of the population could be regarded as poor. These people lived below the poverty line-R353

per adult per month. The report added that about 72% of those poor live in rural areas. The poverty gap (the annual amount needed to uplift the poor to the poverty line by means of 'perfectly targeted transfer money') was about R28 billion in 1995. About 76% of this would have to reach rural areas. According to the report, poverty was not confined to any race group, but was concentrated among Africans in particular: 61% of Africans and 38% of Coloured people were poor, compared with 5% of Indians and 1% of Whites. Three children in five lived in poor households (Sidipoulos, Jeffrey, Forgey, Chipps, Corrigan, Mophuthing, Helman, Dimant, 1998).

Piot (2003) outlined how AIDS can cause individuals and entire families to slide into poverty. The reverse is also true. Poverty, underdevelopment and inability to choose one's own destiny fuel this epidemic. Poverty may reduce an individual's ability to avoid becoming infected, for an example; lack of income may lead people to engage in high-risk, income-generating activities such as sex work. Sex workers may engage in sex without condoms for the sake of higher fees. Poverty is also associated with lower education, which may, in turn, be associated with lower awareness of measures to prevent HIV infection. Also the poorer the individual, the less likely that individual will be to have access to treatment, care, preventative interventions and education. Action against AIDS must be part and parcel of poverty reduction and development strategies. Development cannot be sustained without addressing the challenge of AIDS.

Trends in income inequality have an important bearing on wider dimensions of human development as well as on income poverty. As Watkins, (2005) argues that moves

towards greater distributional equity could sharply reduce the rate of income poverty, with attendant benefits for the MDGs and wider development goals. Improved distribution can enhance development through pathways: one static and the other dynamic. At any given growth rate the larger the share of any increment in economic wealth that is captured by the poor, the higher the ratio of poverty reduction to growth referred to as the poverty elasticity of growth. This is static effect. Dynamic effects emerge when changes in distribution affect the growth rate. Extreme inequality can act as a brake on growth. This effect is especially strong for asset inequality.

May, Govender (1998) indicates that poverty is characterized by the inability of individuals, households or communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living. Poverty is perceived by poor South Africans themselves to include alienation from the community, food insecurity, crowded homes, usage of unsafe and inefficient forms of energy, lack of jobs that are adequately paid and /or secure, and fragmentation of the family. In contrast, wealth is perceived to be characterized by good housing, the use of gas or electricity, and ownership of a major durable good such as a television set or fridge.

‘Inequality’ can be defined in terms of being the opposite of ‘equality’, a state of social organization that enables or gives equal access to resources and opportunities to all members.

However, there are a number of possible objectives for policy aimed at reducing inequality, such as increasing the relative income share of the least well-off, lowering the

income 'ceiling' (the income earned by the most well-off), facilitating upward mobility, promoting economic inclusion, avoiding perpetuation of the advantages conferred by wealth, and achieving more favorable comparisons against international yardsticks.

Poverty is not a static condition; individuals, households or communities may be vulnerable to poverty as a result of shocks and crises (uncontrollable events which harm livelihoods and food security) and long-term trends (such as racial and gender discrimination, environmental degradation and macroeconomic trends) (ibid).

The first democratic government inherited a nation, which was characterized by high levels of poverty reflected in its racial and regional dimensions. New Agenda-South African Journal of Social and Economic Policy, (2001) shows that according to a 1993 World Bank /UCT household survey, between 30 percent and 50 percent of households could be regarded as poor, depending on the definition used. Moreover, 75 percent of the poor lived in rural areas. Co-existing with these high levels of poverty are extreme levels of inequality of income and wealth. South Africa has long been at the top of the inequality league with measured Gini coefficients up until the 1980s being second to that of Brazil.

How are poverty and inequality changing since the advent of the country's first democratic government? Some recent evidence suggests that the gulf between South Africa's rich and poor has widened since 1994. This has been ascribed by some analysts to the growth in equality stemming from world trends, including industrial restructuring

in the face of fierce international competition combined with a decreased demand for unskilled labour and rising demand for professional skills (ibid).

Ramcharan (2003) argues that the capability approach defines poverty as the absence or inadequate realization of certain basic freedoms, such as freedoms to avoid hunger, disease, illiteracy, and so on. Freedom here is conceived in a broad sense, to encompass both positive and negative freedoms. Thus, a person's freedom to live a healthy life is contingent both on the requirement that no one obstructs her legitimate pursuit of good health-negative freedom, and also on the society's success in creating an enabling environment in which she can actually achieve good health-positive freedom. The reason why the conception of poverty is concerned with basic freedoms is that these are recognized as being fundamentally valuable for minimal human dignity. But the concern for human dignity also motivates the human rights approach, which postulates that people have inalienable rights to these freedoms. If someone has failed to acquire these freedoms, then obviously her rights to these freedoms have not been realized. Therefore, poverty can be defined equivalently as either the failure of basic freedoms-from the perspective of capabilities, or the non-fulfillment of rights to those freedoms-from the perspective of human rights.

Agenda for Development-United Nations, (1997) maintains that peace and development are closely interrelated and mutually supportive. Development should also be pursued in its own right. Development is indispensable to the achievement and maintenance of peace and security both within and among nations. Without development there can be neither

peace nor security. There is complementarity between the processes related to the Agenda for development and the Agenda for peace. For peace and stability to endure, national action and effective international cooperation are required to promote a better life for all in larger freedom, a critical element of which is the eradication of poverty. The critical socio-economic situation in Africa is of priority concern. Africa is the only region where poverty is expected to continue to increase substantially. Much of the continent suffers from, inter alia, inadequate physical and institutional infrastructure, poor human resource development, lack of food security, malnutrition, hunger, widespread epidemics and diseases, unemployment and underdevelopment.

Annan, (2003) points out that extreme poverty remains a daily reality for more than 1 billion people who subsist on less than a dollar a day. Hunger and malnutrition are almost equally pervasive: more than 800 million people have too little to eat to meet their daily energy needs. For young children, lack of food can be perilous since it retards their physical and mental development and threatens their survival. More than a quarter of children under age 5 in developing countries are malnourished. Overcoming poverty and hunger is possible. In more than 30 countries; hunger was reduced by at least 25 percent during the last decade. Fourteen of these countries are Sub-Saharan Africa, the region hardest hit by hunger and malnutrition. Efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger are frequently set back by conflicts and natural disasters. Hunger and poverty, in turn, can provide fertile ground for conflict, especially when combined with factors such as inequality and make being made prepared to cope with disasters more difficult. The MDGs apply to all people, whatever their circumstances. Promoting the MDGs in

humanitarian emergencies and post-conflict situations can help create a sound foundation for development over the longer term

Annan, (2005) concurs that the struggle against poverty among older persons, aiming towards its eradication, is a fundamental aim of the International Plan of Action on ageing. Although global attention has recently been focused more actively on poverty eradication targets and policies, older persons in many countries still tend to be excluded from these policies and programmes. Where poverty is endemic, persons who survive a lifetime of poverty often face an old age of deepening poverty. Older persons with disabilities are also at greater risk of poverty than the non-disabled older persons partly because of work place discrimination, including employer discrimination and the absence of workplace accommodation of their needs. Gender inequalities and disparities in economic power sharing, unequal distribution of unremunerated work between women and men, lack of technological and financial support for women's entrepreneurship, unequal access to, and control over capital, in particular land and credit practices have constrained women's economic empowerment and exacerbated the feminization of poverty.

In many societies, female –headed households including divorced, separated and unmarried women and widows are at particular risk of poverty. Special social protection measures are required to address feminization of poverty, in particular among older women (ibid).

For centuries, this kind of poverty has been regarded as a sad but inescapable aspect of the human condition. Today, that view is intellectually and morally indefensible. Annan, (2005) shows that the scale and scope of progress made by countries in every region of the world have shown that, over a very short time, poverty and maternal and infant mortality can be dramatically reduced, while education, gender, equality and other aspects of development can be dramatically advanced. The unprecedented combination of resources and technology at our disposal today means that we are truly the first generation with the tools, the knowledge and the resources to meet the commitment, given by all States in the Millennium Declaration, "to making the right development a reality for everyone and freeing the human race from want". The MDGs have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest, becoming globally accepted benchmarks of broader progress embraced by donors in developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike.

Annan, (2005) deliberates that the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has developed a system for providing credit, often in very small amounts, that enables rural poor people to overcome poverty. Since 1978 IFAD has invested more than \$8.3 billion in 676 projects and programmes, benefiting more than 250 million people. All IFAD funds, come from voluntary contributions from countries. Africa continues to be a high priority for the UN. In 2001, African Heads of State adopted the continent's own plan, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was endorsed by the General Assembly in 2002 as the main framework for channeling international support into Africa. The continent receives 33 percent of UN System expenditure for

development, the largest share among regions. All UN agencies have special programmes to benefit Africa.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Dependency theory**

Dependency Theory developed in the late 1950s under the guidance of the Director of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, Raul Presbisch.

Presbisch and his colleagues were troubled by the fact that economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poor countries. In deed, their studies suggested that economic activity in the richer countries often led to serious economic problems in the poorer countries. Presbisch 's initial explanation for the phenomenon was very straight forward: poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries who then manufactured products out of those commodities and sold them back to the poorer countries. Therefore, poorer countries would never be earning enough from their export earnings to pay their imports (Ferraro, 1996).

Underdevelopment in the Third World is a major concern. South Africa like any other country in the developing world is manipulated and exploited by the highly industrialized countries because we depend on foreign aid, trade and investment from them and this exacerbates dependency on the highly rich countries. The issues of poverty eradication, sustainable development and environmental degradation as enshrined in Agenda 21 of the WSSD are yet to implemented because the powerful and rich countries of the north are

moving slowly in this regards hence the perpetuation of dependency on them by poor countries. Poverty and starvation cannot be alleviated because there is no political will and sufficient financial aid and resources to help developing countries. Dependency is one of the major obstacles and challenges facing underdeveloped countries today.

Defining liberalism as –Democracy, Human Rights, The Rule of Law, Market Economy, An Open, Tolerant opportunity laden and Participative Society: understates in some ways, the fundamental liberal commitment to the preservation of life. It is the very unacceptability of this inequality of opportunity distribution, which drives the desire for Social Liberalism. All too often, liberalism has been accused of being “the will of the strong and the survival of the fittest” and as this relates to our lives, this would mean that, as a result of the injustices of colonialism, that only those who benefited under colonial system would prosper in colonial environment. However, liberalism in South Africa has come to be defined as a reactionary recourse to a robust refusal to engage and participate, believing that, in an imperfect system, participation is skewed in favour of those in control. But this is true in all ideological systems, such that those who contribute constructively are heard; while those who sit on the sidelines and complain are ignored .It is therefore nonsensical for liberals to complain rather than to contribute, just because “those in control” are not self declared liberals (Govender, 2007).

The Rio Earth Summit advocated for acknowledgement and respect for liberal rights of everyone in the world. The conception of Agenda 21 as of the five documents of the Summit was a commitment shown by world leaders that poverty eradication and starvation, sustainable development should take center stage in their discussions. There is so much exploitation and manipulation in the international system because economic policies favour the already rich liberal countries of the north. Africa is marred with civil strifes, wars, diseases like malaria, Aids and Tuberculosis, and poverty because of underdevelopment. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening everyday and hence underdevelopment. Agenda 21 should be used as a barometer by liberals in ensuring that these maladies facing countries in the south are curbed.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) provides an avenue for Africa and negotiates with the west for a new place in international political economy as well as creates opportunities for the region to take ownership of its development process. NEPAD's approach is to strengthen regional formations and subsequently create an African common market as envisaged under the 1991 Abuja Treaty. It is of course, of no coincidence that the elites promoting NEPAD most energetically spring from states at the forefront of advancing liberalization and the neo-liberal package within their own territories: South Africa is currently busy implementing its own self imposed structural adjustment programme known.

### **2.2.2. Liberalism**

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liberal commitment to the preservation of life. It is the very unacceptability of this inequality of opportunity distribution, which drives the desire for Social Liberalism. All too often, liberalism has been accused of being the “will of the strong and survival of the fittest” and as this relates to our lives, this world would mean that, as a result of injustices of colonialism, that only those who benefitted under colonial system would prosper in colonial environment. However, liberalism in South Africa has come to be defined as a reactionary recourse to a robust refusal to engage and participate, believing that, in an imperfect system, participation is skewed in favour of those in control. But this is true in all ideological systems, such that those who contribute constructively are heard; while those who sit on the sidelines and complain are ignored. It is therefore nonsensical for liberals to complain rather than to contribute, just because “those in control” are not self-declared liberals (Govender, 2007).

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## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Explanation of variables**

This chapter gives a general overview about the causes of poverty in South Africa. It also looks at the programmes put in place by the government to address poverty and also the failures and achievements.

#### **3.1. Causes of Poverty in South Africa**

ANC Display Document (1996) indicates that the primary cause of poverty is lack of income, and the main cause of a lack of income is lack of work. More than 70 percent of South Africa's poor working –age adults are unemployed. Unemployment is therefore the core cause of poverty in South Africa, and it has a clear race dimension. Unemployment among black South Africans is 38 percent; among coloureds, it is 21 percent; among Indians and among whites, it is four percent. The poverty line was defined in 1995 as an urban household (two adults and three children monthly income of less than R840. In 1993, the poverty line for a rural household was defined as a monthly income of less than R740.

Nwoko (2007) states that about 25,000 people die of hunger or hunger related cause, according to the United Nations. This is one person every three and half seconds. Unfortunately children, it is children who die most often. Yet there is plenty of food in the world for everyone. The problem is that hungry people are trapped in severe poverty. They lack the money to buy enough food to nourish them. Being constantly malnourished, they become weaker and often sick. This makes them increasingly less

able to work, which then makes them even poorer and hungrier. This downward spiral often continues until death for them and their families.

Shah (2007) reiterates many developing countries are in debt and poverty partly due to the policies of International Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Their programmes have been heavily criticized for many years for resulting in poverty. In addition, for developing or third world countries, there has been an increased dependency on the richer countries of the north. This is despite the IMF and the World Bank's claim that they will reduce poverty. Following an ideology known as neoliberalism, and spearheaded by these and other institutions known as the "Washington Consensus" (for being based in Washington DC), Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) have been imposed to ensure debt repayment and economic restructuring. But the way it has happened has required poor countries to reduce spending on things like health, education and development, while debt repayment and other economic policies have been made a priority. In effect, the IMF and the World Bank have demanded that poor nations lower their standard of living.

Robinsons (1999) further agrees that one of the SAPs is that developing countries must increase their exports. Usually commodities and raw materials are exported. Poor countries lose out when

- Export commodities (which are cheaper than finished products)
- Are denied or effectively blocked from industrial capital and real technology transfer

- And import finished products which are more expensive due to the added labour to make the product from those commodities and other resources.

This leads to less circulation of money in their own economy and a smaller multiplier effect. Historically this has been a partial reason for dependent and poor nations. This was also the role enforced upon former countries under colonial or imperial rule.

Laidlaw (2001) concurs that exporting commodities and resources are seen as favourable to help earn foreign exchange with which to pay off debts and keep currencies stable. However, partly due to the price war scenario, commodity prices have also dropped. Furthermore, reliance on just a few commodities makes countries even more vulnerable to global market conditions and other political and economic influences. More than 50 developing countries depend on three commodities or fewer commodities for over half of their export earnings. Twenty countries are dependent on commodities for over 90 percent of their total foreign exchange earnings.

Tan (2007) also indicates that the commodity crisis is the principal challenge to the achievement of economic and social development, and ecological sustainability in the majority of developing countries today. Commodity prices have plunged dramatically in the ten years since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and have almost consistently continued to spiral downwards since then. The commodity crisis encapsulates many of the controversies surrounding the debate on sustainable development in particular the disjunction between the interests of the north and the needs of the south. While

commodity producers in the south shoulder the brunt of declining prices, the main beneficiaries of these low prices consumers are located in the north.

Stilwaggon (2001) says that although there are numerous factors in the spread of HIV/AIDS, it is largely recognized as a disease of poverty, hitting hardest where people are marginalized and suffering economic hardship. IMF designed SAPs, adopted by debtor countries as a condition of debt relief, are hurting, and not working. By pushing poor people even deeper into poverty. Saps may be increasing their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infection, and reinforcing conditions where the scourge of HIV/AIDS can flourish. What will take to prevent HIV transmission and to treat people with HIV/AIDS are no less, but no more, than what has been needed all along in sub-Saharan Africa and other poor countries. It would have been cheaper to provide the infrastructure, the nutrition, education and the medicines before HIV/AIDS, but it is still a bargain calculated in both compassionate and cost-effective terms.

Wilkins (1998) says in per capita terms South Africa is an upper-middle-income country, but despite this relative wealth, the experience of most South African households is of outright poverty or of continuing vulnerability to being poor. In addition, the distribution of income and wealth in South Africa is among the most unequal in the world, and many households still have unsatisfactory access to education, health care, energy and clean water. The Poverty and Inequality Report (PIR) reviews the extent and nature of poverty and inequality in South Africa, and assesses the current policy framework for the reduction of both.

### **3.2. The plans and the solutions of alleviating and eradicating poverty**

Some poor people will be helped by job creation and pro-poor economic growth. On their own, neither income generation nor social grants can make a definite impact on poverty. Chronically poor households, however, also need measures that make them less vulnerable to risk, shocks and exploitation, such as;

- Increased direct access to the resources for basic household food production
- Sustainable strategies for making social services appropriate and affordable
- Development of the density and depth of civil society through community based organizations and ensuring safety from violence
- And strategies that address the long –term impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The most important obstacle to escaping poverty was the lack of access to basic economic resources like land. In addition, prices for staples such as maize are now set on world markets, so that poor households are directly affected by international currency changes global trade liberalization (<http://www.id21.org/getweb/Insights46art2.html>).

According to the UNDP Poverty Report (2000), South Africa finances most poverty reduction activities through its regular government budget. The Department of Finance has also set up a special Poverty Relief Fund, able to mobilize some external resources. Other government departments can obtain resources from the fund only if they have already made their budgets more pro-poor. This arrangement can increase incentives for a regular focus on poverty in all government programmes. Many countries /governments,

even with the best of intentions, simply do not have resources to overcome poverty or the discretion to use them for that purpose. Governments have great difficulty in reporting how much funding goes to poverty reduction .For most assessments of national poverty programmes no reliable statistics could be provided for such funding.

Tibbett (2003) says they are all at it these days. George Bush wants to “attack global poverty”, Tony Blair is up for “attacking the causes of global poverty” and the remaining G8 leaders are apparently engaged in “the fight against global poverty”. Meanwhile, The World Bank is “fighting grinding poverty”, the World Trade Organization is “reducing poverty on world –wide basis”, and the International Monetary Fund, bailiff to the developing world, is “actively combating world poverty”.

The everyday language of radical campaigners has suddenly become the preserve of global policy-making and politics. And it’s not just the patter that appears to be changing. Rich countries are falling over themselves to cough up new money for HIV/AIDS relief, while institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF have undergone some collective soul-searching and EU has even declared that its recent farm deal is good for poor countries.

The IMF and the Millennium Goals Report (2003) also argues that the MDGs have been endorsed by the UN, world leaders; the World Bank, regional development banks, developing country governments and the IMF.They set minimum standards to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against

women. With aid at current levels however, many countries will not even meet these minimum standards. The MDGs will only succeed if the IMF considers the following issues;

- Designing their new program in poor countries, the IMF should take 12 months to work with partners identifying the optimal financing package for achieving the MDGs, and the ideal level of aid. The IMF should actively engage with donors and support the governments in lobbying for optimum levels of donor assistance.
- At the end of the 12-month period the IMF and other PRSP stakeholders should seek broad agreement on an optimum macroeconomic framework. This scenario, rather than a conservative ‘baseline’ scenario, would then become the basis of the IMF program, fully aligned with the PRSP and the country budget.
- Any prediction of declining aid flows in IMF program targets should be fully justified based on clear and transparent analysis and evidence from donors.

According to the Global Policy Report (2003), global consensus around the achievement of the MDGs has elevated the development targets to the new “gold standards” of the international development cooperation. Increasingly donor policy and performance is measured against the global effort towards reaching the goals. The humanitarian imperative behind the Millennium Declaration and the reiteration of unanimous political support in the Monetary Consensus, the G8 Kananaskis declaration, and a host of other UN and international communiqués places a new onus on the full range of development agencies-civil society organizations, bilateral donors, recipient governments, inter-

governmental and multilateral institutions-to respond in good faith with full commitment to the achievement of these targets.

Daily Trust (Nigeria, 2003) indicates that poverty at individual and national levels cannot be eradicated like polio or small pox because it is implicated by our mental, physical, emotional, religious and cultural states of being. It is more complex than getting a vaccination shot in the arm. It however, can be alleviated or its ravaging effects can be ameliorated, and thus there is room for well-designed poverty alleviation programmes to address the root causes as well as the impact, symptoms, and manifestations of poverty. Good poverty alleviation programmes take time to design, and need intelligent planning, human and technical resources, and a well-established administrative capacity to implement.

Many of Nigeria's poverty alleviation programmes are papering over cracks on the walls of poverty to disguise or hide the symptoms. Even when we adapt or adopt World Bank programmes, we entrust the implementation to people who do not understand "poverty" and will not recognize alleviation solutions if they met them in a room.

Global Policy Forum ID21 (2004) indicates that PRSPs have been introduced in most of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Potentially they bring a worthwhile change in the way aid for poverty reduction is delivered. They could help overcome the tendency for developing aid to repeatedly reinforce the problems that it is meant to solve. PRSP processes are meant to enable poverty reduction policies that national governments have

real commitment to, be backed by political leaders, and be more effective and sustainable as a result. But does the reality match what is emphasized in reports and speeches?

Experience with PRSPs has confirmed the need for a substantial transformation of aid relationships. The way that donors behave can either support or frustrate national poverty reduction efforts, and this needs to be addressed.

Agenda 21 Report (2007) indicates that Agenda 21 covers the broad field of sustainable development. The action programme was envisaged as the tool for implementation the principles enunciated in the Rio Declaration. It offers clearly articulated objectives, targets, strategies, activities, costings and an allocation of institutional roles. Agenda 21 has a preamble that is important in setting its contents. A key clause in the preamble states that Agenda 21 “reflects a global consensus and political commitment at the highest level on development and cooperation. The preamble further notes the disparities between the rich and poor and urges nations to work together in a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development. In order to assure a safer and more prosperous future, environment and development issues need to be dealt with in a balanced manner.

### **3.3 Achievements and failures of Agenda 21 of WSSD in the fight against poverty**

ANC Online (2007) states that since 1994, South Africa has been implementing the RDP, which reflects the objectives of Agenda 21. It is for, reason also that the WSSD is an opportunity to share both our successes and our failures in trying to achieve these complex goals with limited resources. We have many practical examples to lessons from that speak to the objectives of Agenda 21;

- The goal of equity and poverty eradication has also been pursued through providing more equitable access to natural resources, with significant changes made in the areas of water, fisheries and land.
- At the more local level, South Africa has made significant strides in the achievement of sustainable development objectives.
- We have established the structures for democratic participation of local communities in the preparation and implementation of plans for sustainable development; through the process of drafting Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).
- One of the most remarkable achievements is the building and transfer of low-cost housing through the National Housing Programme. As of June 2001, over 1.1 million units had been delivered, accommodating 5.7 million people. This represents a phenomenal 14% of the population of the country.

Report of the Johannesburg Summit (2002), states that the eradication of poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly for developing countries. Although each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication and the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. Concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to achieve their sustainable development goals as related to internationally agreed poverty-related targets and goals, including those contained in

Agenda 21, the relevant outcomes of other United Nations conferences and the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

WSSD Report of the African Preparatory Conference (2001), further argues that while Africa is an indispensable resource base that has been serving all humanity for many centuries, poverty in Africa stands in stark contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. The process of globalization has further marginalized Africa and this has contributed to the increasing incidence of poverty in the continent. It is in this regard that the New African Initiative calls for reversal of this abnormal situation by changing the relationship that underpins it. Achieving the poverty reduction goals of the Millennium Declaration is a joint responsibility of the North and South. It requires adoption of a comprehensive approach that addresses key priority areas, including: the removal of obstacles preventing the access of exports from developing countries to the markets of developed countries, debt reduction/cancellation, and a review of the conditionalities of the Bretton-Woods Institutions and promoting industrial growth especially through small and medium-sized enterprises.

Bianchi (2004) indicates that Concord, an umbrella network of more than 2000 European development agencies says that progress towards the MDGs agreed in 2000 to halve poverty and improve education and health by 2015 has been "pitiful". The NGOs are calling for aid increases that are "real, additional and focused on poverty reduction." They also oppose moves by European donors to include counter-terrorism and other initiatives within aid programmes.

Walker (2004) concurs that a new international report warns that most developing countries will struggle to meet agreed United Nations targets for tackling problems of poverty. The joint study by the World Bank and the IMF says the MDGs are unlikely to be met on current trends. The report calls for urgent action by richer countries to take the lead and address root causes of poverty. The report assesses progress towards internationally agreed objectives for reducing poverty. The MDGs include halving the proportion of the population in extreme poverty, ensuring primary education for children and reductions in child and maternal deaths by 2015. On current trends, the report warns, most developing countries will fail to meet most of the goals. It says the rich countries need to show leadership by living up to the promises they made two years ago at a conference for development.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study the researcher utilized a qualitative approach to collect data. The qualitative method refers to a variety of approaches to educational research that involve evaluation of various strategies such as close study and participant observation (Kloep&Tarifa, 1994).

Monton (2001) defines a research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct a research. This definition suggests that a research design focuses on the end product, and this requires the formulation of a research problem as a point of departure for focusing on the logic of research.

Hysman (1993) further regards a research design as a blueprint according to which data is collected to investigate the research hypothesis or question in the most economical manner.

#### **4.1 Methods of data collection**

According to Reid (1994:9), data may be collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations of direct interaction and using available materials such as case records and archives.

Qualitative research methods such as interviews and examination of available documents and personal observation formed the core data collection methods. Qualitative research method produces knowledge with certain characteristic that must be taken into

consideration when interpreting the data and presenting the findings of the research. It is thus obvious that a qualitative research method has its own strengths and limitations.

Babbie (19992) defines literature review as the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. As such, it involves extensive and critical examination of publications relevant to the research project. Literature review focuses only on the information that has direct relevance to the study.

A massive collection of secondary data from documents, other research findings and surveys from relevant government institutions and research institutes such as AISA, Human Science Research Council (HSRC), and South African Poverty Reduction Network (SARPN) augmented data collected by the researcher.

Greef (2002:292) regards interviewing as the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. However, when conducting interviews researchers are challenged to establish rapport with participants, coping with unanticipated problems and managing volumes of data.

## **4.2 Methods of data analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative research can occur before the data collection process has been completed. As Coffey & Atkinson (1996) suggests, in qualitative research, “we should never collect data without substantial analysis going on simultaneously”. Most of the data and information concerning the study was qualitative in that it was based on secondary sources such as journals, research studies, occasional papers, Internet access, and publications.

An in-depth interview with one official from the Department of Social Development from the Moses Kotane Municipality in the Bojanala Region was conducted in order for the researcher to solicit more information about the research topic. This is because the Department of Social Development deals with issues and cases of poverty and also the implementation of government’s policies.

The cornerstone of an interview is that it awarded the researcher to get an insight into the feelings, attitudes and opinions of the interviewee concerning the topic. This mode of qualitative data collection afforded the researcher to explore the non-verbal cues of the respondent. A face -to -face interviews gives the interviewer an opportunity to notice reactions of the interviewee. A second interview with a known reformed young man who did time in prison and vindicated the researcher’s assertions that there is link between crime and poverty or that poverty leads people to criminal activities.

Content analysis helped the researcher to go through the collected data systematically. When well done, content analysis yields required results because it is an unobtrusive means of analyzing interactions.

#### **4.3 Ethical considerations**

The need to protect the statutory rights of members of the social community or groups being investigated or evaluated helps avoid undue intrusion, obtaining informed consent and protecting the rights of privacy of individuals and social groups ([www.unesco.org/etheiss.htm](http://www.unesco.org/etheiss.htm)).

The research should be conducted in such a way that it maintains the integrity of the research enterprise and does not diminish the potential for conducting future research. As such, a research should avoid intrusion into the lives of the individuals or communities they study. It is against this background that concerted efforts were made to ensure the safety of those participating in the research study. Confidentiality of the respondents was a priority and highly maintained and their participation was voluntary.

#### **4.4. Limitations of the study**

Securing interviews with relevant people or sources was a principal hurdle for this study because of their busy schedules and also time played a role but data collected from secondary sources augmented the desired objectives of this study.

#### **4.5. Scope of the study**

It was pivotal for the researcher to only concentrate in conducting the research in South Africa mainly because Agenda 21 under the auspices of the World Summit on Sustainable Development took place here.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Conclusions, Findings and Recommendations**

This chapter focuses on the conclusions, findings and recommendations of the study. It highlights the economic impediments experienced by poor countries in the failure of the implementation of Agenda 21 and its commitments in South Africa. Conclusions of the study are drawn from the research findings and the recommendations policy-makers are also made.

#### **5.1. Conclusion**

An effective attack on poverty depends on the rate of economic growth in poor countries without growth, the additional jobs and better availability of services needed to lift poor people out of poverty will not materialize. This view is widely shared, all the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, for an example, have centrality of measures to enhance growth in national poverty reduction efforts. However, the impact of growth on poverty reduction is reduced if income inequality is high. Therefore, increased attention should be placed on how the benefits of growth are distributed and on identifying and supporting actions that generate pro-poor growth. Inequality by gender or other social and economic categories is another major factor degradation and rapid population growth. An emerging and absolutely critical poverty issue is HIV/AIDS.

These factors can all lead to inadequate economic growth, which is major cause of poverty. Others include equity defects, economic policy and market failures, capital

flight, low savings and investment and distorted incentives, all which lower productivity and income. Debt overhang, both domestic and international, is another key catalyst. The globalization and liberalization of economies, the pillage of the multinationals that repatriate their benefits to the rich countries are also causes of poverty.

Agenda 21 recognized that too often, economic, social and environmental factors are considered separately when decisions are made, and that this has a direct impact on the actions of all groups in society, including governments, business and individuals. In setting out proposed actions, Agenda 21 therefore, emphasizes the need to integrate economic, social and environmental considerations in addressing the challenges we face today and responding to the needs of future generations. Local Agenda 21 proposes a sustainable environmental policy that ensures the conservation of resources. One of the pitfalls of the Local Agenda 21 is that poor governments are required to finance their programmes and with the debt crisis in the third world, their programs will be difficult to achieve.

## **5.2. Findings**

It is important for the South African government and non-governmental organizations to work together to make achievements out of the implementation of Agenda 21. The focus should be on the programs concerning key issues such as poverty, education, water, agriculture and health. Awareness has increased and progress has been made at the national and international level in confronting poverty reduction and achieving

sustainability. Other activities encompassed within Agenda 21 are women empowerment and gender equality, The MDGs and the Johannesburg plan.

The commitments to sustainable development and poverty reduction which were agreed upon were:

- Determination to ensure that our rich diversity, which is our collective strength, will be used for constructive partnership for change and for achievement of the common goal of sustainable development.
- We welcome and support the emergence of stronger regional groupings and alliances, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to promote regional cooperation, improved international co-operation and promote sustainable development.
- We committed to ensure that women's empowerment and emancipation, and gender equality are integrated in all activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.
- We undertake to strengthen and improve governance at all levels, for the effective implementation of Agenda 21, the MDGs and the Implementation of the Johannesburg Plan.

One of the respondents indicated that the high level of crime in South Africa is due to the fact that many households are living in abject poverty and starvation. Many go to sleep without food and do not have access to resources. The government's programs in dealing with poverty in South Africa are failing the poor because of bureaucracy. Service delivery is a problem hence the indulgence in crime.

The World Food Summit, FAO presented a first draft of a paper entitled “Anti-Hunger Programme” (AHP). The AHP recommended a twin-track approach to hunger reduction: combining investment in agriculture and rural development with direct food assistance for the most needy. In order to accelerate hunger reduction and achieve the World Food Summit goal of halving the number of hungry people by 2015, the paper identified some areas of priority: 1. increased agricultural productivity in poor rural communities; 2) development and conservation of natural resources; 3) expansion of rural infrastructure and market access; 4) generation and dissemination of knowledge; and 5) enhancement of access to food for the most needy.

The major limitation of Agenda 21 has been the lack of the necessary means of implementation particularly financial commitments made in Rio. We therefore emphasize the importance of mobilizing in a coherent manner all available sources, including new and additional resources, for the financing of development, inter alia domestic resources, foreign direct investment, debt relief and official development assistance. Existing debt relief measures for African countries should be evaluated appropriately, taking into account the special needs of Africa, especially those countries that have high debt burdens, including Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPDCs). The cancellation of debt for the poorest countries should be considered to allow them to concentrate their resources on poverty reduction programmes.

City Press (2007) notes that the African Union (AU) plans to establish an investment bank in the next three years as part of an effort to raise an annual \$25 billion for

development projects. Maxwell Mkwezalamba, AU Commissioner for Economic Affairs, said in an interview that the resource-rich continent was increasingly growing frustrated with the failure of wealthy countries to live up to their pledges to double aid for Africa by 2010.”It is frustrating to note that our partners have not lived up to what they have committed themselves to do, that’s why we are going to develop some mechanisms to try and look for our own funding”.

It was also indicated by one of the respondents that partaking in criminal activities is not a choice for many of our youth in South Africa but rather an unavoidable situation they find themselves in. Crime is one of the main dilemmas of South African young democracy and that failure to address poverty heightens the situation.

Southern African economies have structural serious impediments such as limited resource flows and declining terms of trade, which in turn hinder development as well as effective mobilization and utilization of scarce resources. The much-vaunted external flows of resources into the regional economies through foreign direct investment, trade receipts, external support and debt relief have not been realized. This is more so in those countries that have been under the support of the BrettonWoods Institutions (IMF and the World Bank). The failure therefore to realize significant flows of external resources in an environment characterized by free market forces does not auger well for economic adjustment programmes that are based on external financial resources. In this context, NEPAD, just like other previous programmes may fail to live up to expectations. This shows that the Nepad initiative does not necessarily present an alternative development

paradigm from previous models and initiatives in support of the Africa's development agenda.

NEPAD is an ambitious programme designed to facilitate Africa's development through both state intervention and market forces. It reflects the desire of African leaders to extricate the continent from poverty and underdevelopment on the basis of a common vision and firm and shared conviction with the support of the industrialized countries. Thus serious commitment from continental leadership and massive injection of investments from the richer nations would provide the impetus for growth and development. NEPAD has therefore the following as its main goals:

- To achieve and sustain an average economic growth rate of 7% per annum for the next 15 years.
- To reduce poverty between 1990 and 2015 by half.
- To reduce gender disparities in the enrolment of primary and secondary education by 2005.
- To reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015.
- To ensure the availability of reproductive health services by 2015; and
- To implement sustainable national development strategies by 2005 so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The world has to take actions and improve efforts to work together at all levels to improve access to reliable and affordable energy services for sustainable development

sufficient to facilitate the achievement of the MDGs, including the goal of halving the proportion of people in poverty by 2015, and as a means to generate other important services that mitigate poverty, bearing in mind that access to energy facilitates eradication of poverty. This would include actions at all levels to:

- Develop national energy policies and regulatory frameworks that will help to create the necessary economic, social and institutional conditions in the energy sector to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services for sustainable development and poverty eradication in rural and peri-urban areas.
- Enhance international and regional cooperation to improve access to reliably, economically viable and environmentally sound energy services, as an integral part of poverty reduction programmes.
- Strengthen the contribution of industrial development to poverty eradication and sustainable development

The Highly Industrialized countries of the north, Bretton-Woods institutions (IMF and World Bank) and big business should put more effort to achieve the three main objectives of the MDGs:

- Eradication of poverty
- Improve living standards based on sustainable patterns of consumption and production; and
- To ensure that the benefits of globalization are shared by all.

Partnerships between governments, business and civil society should be a key instrument to deliver the commitments made in Johannesburg. These partnerships will bring with

them additional resources and expertise, and will help to mobilize action at all levels. Policy makers should also look into the vulnerability of women and children, for an example, elderly widows and unsupported female and child-headed households, and street children. In many societies, these groups are the poorest of the poor and require special attention in policy action for poverty reduction.

According to IDPM-UA Discussion Paper (2003) unsupported women are found in large numbers in the cities of Third World countries, and often suffering extreme poverty. It is estimated that 30% of households worldwide are women headed. The poor themselves define the “poor” as the ones that are deprived of all kind of support, they do not have anyone or anything to rely on and these are not necessarily the ones defined as “poor” according to poverty lines.

It is against this background that governments and other stakeholders should work together in order to push back the frontiers of poverty. Promotion of democracy, good governance, uprooting corruption, dealing with diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis and service delivery will go a long way in addressing acute poverty in the country. Combating poverty can be seen at the same time as a slogan and a real priority of the international institutions and the national development actors. An important evolution of poverty reduction strategies, hopefully bridging slogan and real policy, are the reforms in 1999 of the strategies of the Bretton-Woods institutions and thus evolution from the Structural Adjustment Programmes to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

The SAPs should not be used by the IMF and the World Bank to put Third World countries into the quagmire of poverty but rather help in the fight against poverty and starvation.

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