

CHAPTER 3: THE CURRENT SITUATION OF POVERTY IN MOZAMBIQUE

A large number of African countries acknowledged that the newly proclaimed political independence was not sufficient to face the poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment that their people were immersed in (CdC, 2004:9). This means that they recognized that their states were living in a state of poverty. For a better understanding of the situation in each country, as is the case with poverty in Mozambique, it is necessary to comprehend the perceptions and the policies used to alleviate it.

3.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE POVERTY IN MOZAMBIQUE

The problem of poverty in Mozambique is approached from different perspectives, according to the philosophical, economical, political and theological viewpoints. This leads to different opinions about the correct definition of the concept and the causes of poverty in Mozambique, and the consequent relativity to identify the really poor in Mozambique. Because of the “linking of poverty, development and inequality in the development studies” (Graff, 2007:6), these concepts will be approached jointly.

3.1.1 Concept of Poverty in Mozambique

Currently the measure of poverty that is used is “the amount of money necessary to provide a household (of six people) with very elementary necessities to stay alive” (Graaff, 2007:7). According to Graaff the elementary necessities are food, clothing, fuel or lighting, washing, rent and transport. In his description of the basic necessities he did not include medical care and schooling as defined by United Nations as declared in articles 25 and 26 (Vorster, 2004:120).

Williams (1998:3) defines poverty as “a complex amalgam of physical and spiritual pain, which robs the person and the community of dignity and meaning as much as it deprives the body of nourishment, shelter and beauty”. The innovation in this definition is the appearance of the spiritual side of man that is seen as deprived from its freedom.

The ethical differences in the political systems, which interpret and implement the poverty alleviation policies in each country drive it according to their beliefs. Williams (1998:37) says that “capitalism believes that society as a whole will benefit most from private ownership, the sovereignty of the manufacturer and consumer, and totally free market”. This thought is aimed at the benefit of the minority, in aid of the poor and those that are suffering.

Contrary to capitalism, socialism believes that “all members of society of course have an obligation to work to the best of their ability for the good of all” (Williams, 1998:82). The socialist thinking is closely related with some Christian theologians’ thinking that advocate the communalism based on the common meal in the holy supper, although they recognise the atheism of the powers of communism and humanism in socialist thinking (Jones, 1994:33).

Politicians can use poverty to enforce their power over the citizens. Alcock (1997:5) confirms this argument in saying that “poverty is largely, if not entirely, a product of social policies, or social and economic policies, pursued by states in order to control and discipline their citizens”. The social policies are what make poverty not just a state of affairs, but an unacceptable state of affairs (Alcock, 1997:4).

In this way, it can be said that “poverty is about exclusion and power, about relationships and loss of self-respect, it is about lack of choice and limitation of freedom” (Williams, 1998:3). The results of this exclusion are the feeling presented by Davidson and Erskine (1992:11) who said that:

At the heart of a relative perspective on poverty is a concern with the ways in which those living in poverty are excluded from participating in society and from the benefits, which accrue to the majority of the people.

With these universal definitions and perceptions, in what way can poverty be defined in Mozambique? And in what way can poverty be measured in Mozambique?

Wilson *et al.* (2001:271) say that “poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon whose causes definition, perpetuation and management have a political and institutional dimension arising from the combined action of economic, social, political, institutional and cultural factors”. With combination of these factors, poverty in Mozambique can be defined as the incapacity of individuals to provide for themselves and their dependents the minimum basic conditions for their subsistence (MPF, 2000:12). In this definition, it can be asked what the origin of the referred incapacity of the individuals is? Or what causes the incapacity? And how it is faced?

In accordance with this perception, for about 60% of the national citizens, poverty is associated with the impossibility of the covering of vital necessities, i.e. the indigent situation, and for the remaining; the poverty derives from a low income, or social disparities, or from the political situation (RAP, 2004:23).

With the abovementioned definition in mind, the Mozambican Government defined as priority in its five-year program “the reduction of the absolute poverty levels, aimed to eradicate it in medium term and the best hold of the people’s life, with incidence on education, health, rural development and employment” (MPF, 2000:12). The priorities defined by the Mozambican Government shows that poverty is measured more by access to the public services than well-being in it, although the access to the public services contribute to the personal well-being, it does not guarantee that people will feel better, as it will be demonstrated later.

3.1.1.1 Measures of poverty in Mozambique

The measurement of poverty depends on the perspectives of those leading this issue. According to Alcock (1997:115) poverty can be measured in two ways: quantitative or qualitative. The quantitative measuring of poverty uses the “statistical techniques to count the number of people in poverty or to measure the extent of inequality” (Alcock, 1997:115).

This measurement cannot provide the real situation of poverty and the extent of inequality although, for instance, it is used in Mozambique. The result of the failure of this technique is the discontentment of the people against the government and the

increase of print media criticism against the patrimonialization of the party state (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:289). This dissatisfaction had been demonstrated through the abstentions in the Mozambican elections where more than 39% of the people did not vote (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:288). Joseph Hanlon (quoted by Wilson *et al.*, 2001:288) heard a common comment before the 1999 elections when people said that: “we voted in 1994 and it did not make any difference; our lives have not improved”. This results in a popular discontentment regarding public services. The following table will demonstrate the level of dissatisfaction regarding public services in Mozambique.

Table 1- Level of discontent with public services (Wilson et al., 2001:289)

	Beira	Montepuez	Xai-Xai	Pemba	Chimoio	Total
Sanitary conditions	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7
Water supply	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.64
Agriculture assistance	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.64
Piped Water	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.62
Water hole/wells	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.60
Health services	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.58
Trash collection	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.58
Road maintenance	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.56
Road construction	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.52
Means of transport	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.52
Market Place	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.48
Secondary School	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.44
Primary School	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.32
Total Mean	0.71	0.60	0.52	0.47	0.47	0.55

Note: 0.0= all satisfied; 1.0= dissatisfied; excluding those who answered ‘don’t know’.

The table shows that supplying services without taking into account the quality of these services did not guarantee the improvement of the lives of people, it is an illusion of development in which “the elite has prospered but the people feel poorer” (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:289). This is what caused the PIB to increase to 9% (Rocha, 2006:97) and the tax of unemployment increased to 60% in 1999 (Rocha, 2006:98), recognizing that the majority of the effects of poverty is related to a lack of money (Williams, 1998:3).

On the other hand it is pointed out that “the trade union leader’s (qualitative) measure of the meagre diet of bread, bacon and fish were worth ‘volumes of statistics’ in its effect on public opinion” (Alcock, 1997:115). If poverty is about exclusion and power (Williams, 1998:3), it can be understood when taking into account the experience of the people living in poverty that have to “describe the impact of poverty on young families suffering disability and with handicapped child” (Alcock, 1997:126).

According to RAP (2004:13), if the problem of poverty in Mozambique is not sited on the impossibility to overstep certain difficulties, then the struggling of poverty is to pass through the struggle against the causes of poverty.

Towards education, for example, the government thinks that “the improvement of the current admission rates and the guarantee of expansion of the school network through building of new classrooms and training and recruitment of teachers” (MPF, 2000:30), will help to reduce absolute poverty.

Through this the Mozambican government want to see all children in school, but is not considering the quality of education. This leads to the fact that there are large classes with more than 75 pupils in each class and with untrained teachers or teachers teaching at improper levels. Other teachers are working for more than tree schools, consequently their preparation is very poor. The question to be asked now is whether this leads to the struggle against poverty or is it creating a new kind of poverty?

Alcock (1997:128) concludes that “however qualitative data can be linked directly to quantitative measures to harness the complementary strengths of measurement and description”. The measurement and concept of poverty can provide a better understanding of its causes.

3.1.2 Causes of Poverty in Mozambique

The causes of poverty in Mozambique are discussed in various ways. The Committee of Counsellors (2004:18) considers the cause of poverty in Mozambique as being “war, the lack of qualified labour and poor management knowledge that rendered impossible the materialization of structuring projects in the agricultural, industrial and construction sections”. The G20 (2004:23) considers the following as the causes for poverty in Mozambique:

- ***Non-satisfaction of the vital necessities-*** to be without food, clothes, a house, to be without anything, living without conditions to survive or to live in the country with calamities;
- ***The causes for the low income-*** unemployment, to not gather money, no possibilities, to be without means for production and to be without land;
- ***The poverty is related to the structural disparities and social questions-*** living unhealthy, physical or mental deficiency and marginalization, being weak for a job, being orphaned, abandoned, widowed or being without an owner;
- ***The poverty derives from the political situation-*** living in a country with war, being abandoned by the state, living by the alms.

Although the G20 is explaining these causes of poverty in detail, it is clear that they are not far removed from each other. In accordance with these approaches to the causes of poverty in Mozambique, it can be asked why poverty in Mozambique continues although the war only lasted to 1992 (Johnstone & Mandruk, 2001:458).

Alcock (1997:37) discusses the causes of poverty according to two models: the pathological model of social causation and the structural model of social causation. The writer considers the pathological model of social causation the model, which “seeks to relate social status with supposedly inherited characteristics such as intelligence, and psychological approaches, which explain individuals’ (non)

achievements by reference to acquired or developed personality traits” (Alcock, 1997:37).

The structural model of social causation is the approach that does not “focus(es) (not) on individuals as the authors of their own fortunes (or misfortunes); but on structural forces that have shaped those fortunes” (Alcock, 1997:36).

Because the communitarian character of poverty is about “exclusion and power, about relationships and loss of self-respect, about lack of choice and limitation of freedom” (Williams, 1998:3), it can be approached via the structural model of social causation although the pathological model has its relevance.

Vorster (2007:64) classified the causes of poverty at “macro level, on the international scene and, meso level, on specific areas, countries and communities”. The writer directly links the macro level causes to globalisation; he defined it as “the modern process of the integration of international economic structures across national borders and political entities”. Kung (quoted by Vorster, 2007:65) indicates that “globalisation is the great hope for some and the great terror for other”. This idea is demonstrating that globalisation will be hurtful for the poor countries, as it is the case of Mozambique.

On the meso level, Vorster (2007:66) summarizes that “unjust socio-political structures can lead to poverty and drive the poor to bleak existence”. He proved it through mentioning the “socialist countries of Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, where a clear connection can be made between the single party states with state controlled economies, dictatorial powers, few economic liberties to the individual and the increase of poverty”.

Linked to the abovementioned ideas, Van der Walt (2006:29-30) identifies the following causes for Africa’s crisis:

- Inefficient government,
- The international economic system,
- Some aspects of traditional African culture,

- Bad management,
- Lack of education,
- Decline of morality,
- Shortage of appropriate science and technology,
- Population growth,
- Deteriorating environment,
- Incompetent leadership,
- Corruption, tribalism,
- The AIDS pandemic,
- Religious intolerance, and
- The wrong kind of Christianity.

In addition wars influenced poverty in Mozambique, which was already discussed in the previous chapter (see 2.2.3.).

3.1.2.1 Inefficient Government

The paternalism that characterizes the relationship between government and citizens in Mozambique (MSI, 2005) contributes towards incorrect governance as stated by Ellis (2006) when saying that “a profound, long-term effort to reform the political system and address corruption are needed to ensure the country’s stability, economic growth, and democratisation”.

In this regard, ACIS (2005) commenting on the excessive bureaucracy in the public sector remarks that “it is not only that the regulations are complex and require absurd processes and collections of documents and incomprehensible levels of decision-making, but also that the process of moving of documents from one place to another is a further factor which causes extraordinary costs and time periods”.

3.1.2.2 *The International economic system*

The development programs of the West contribute greatly to the lack of development in the third world countries (Van der Walt, 2006:53). This idea is supported by Vorster (2007:65) that commented on globalisation, saying that “the gap between rich and poor countries enlarges and developing countries cannot compete with developed countries, in the international market”. Mozambique as a third world country suffers these effects of globalisation and the free market that is growing all over the world.

In this regard Van der Walt (2006:95) states, that “in spite of increased exports many countries cannot pay their debt to rich countries or supply the basic needs of their own population”. This means that the system is marginalizing the poor countries. One thinks that the opening of the internal market to the world economy is aimed at avoiding their marginalization, because “the belief is that if they do not do so, they are destined to be marginalized” (Van der Walt, 2003:473).

According to the Grupo Moçambicano da Dívida, the Mozambican Debt Group (2008:1) the African Bank for Development imposes policies and exigencies for financing projects in poor countries that African countries are not able to bear. Amongst these measures the IMF fiscal barriers to the countries are included through the restrictive measures of governmental expenses (Mozambican Debt Group, 2008:3).

This group points to the imposition of the Ministry of Education and Culture to contract only 10 000 teachers of the 12 000 teachers necessary for the 2007/2008 biennium as a result of this restriction. The objective of the Ministry of Education and Culture was to reduce the number to 52 pupils per teacher. The objective of the Ministry of Education and Culture had not been reached. According to the G20 (2007:24), the classes contains 75 pupils assisted by a teacher without specific education. Thus, it can be said that the IMF policies are contributing to influence lives of Mozambican people more negatively through these impositions. No one can plan and fulfil his plan without proper money to support it. This weakness also contributes to bad management of other missing officials.

3.1.2.3 Bad management

According to Oppewal (quoted by IRIN, 2007) the "lack of human capacity in the districts is one of the main challenges" in the decentralization process. The problem of human incapacity is often used to justify a lot of the corrupt behaviour and misuse of public resources.

Again, the paternalistic relationship that occurs in this country (MSI, 2005) contributes towards the misuse of technical knowledge and alters it to answer to the politician's will, resulting in non-transparent management.

3.1.2.4 Shortage of appropriate science and technology

The gap between rich and poor countries referred to by Vorster (2007:65) concerns the advantage that rich countries have in relation to poor countries. The appearance of new technology in the world penalises the African workers that had no good training to face this reality. It is seen as results of "the stronger international competition, changing technologies, and a larger service sector – all of which tend to weaken the demand of low-skilled workers" (Darby, 1996:24). When this happens in a poor country, the poverty is increased, especially in families living in the rural areas. It is difficult for them to follow all stages of the technological development.

3.1.2.5 Population growth and the AIDS pandemic

Despite increased vaccination rates and better access to basic health services, life expectancy remains 46 years (Herron & Botha, 2001:138). Herron and Botha (2001:138) state that being an epidemic of enormous proportions, it is recognized that AIDS is causing death and it is destructing the lives of the people, families, and communities, and restricting the proper development of the nations. Given this difficult context, even if Mozambique can successfully reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the medium term, the present prevalence rate of 12.6% will eventually translate into large costs.

To overcome these challenges, donor resources and private investments are needed if Mozambique is to maintain its economic growth, reduce poverty, and stem the spread of HIV/AIDS.

3.1.2.6 *Incompetent leadership*

In Mozambique there were profound and simultaneous transformations “from planned to market economy, from autocratic party-state system to pluralist democracy, and from civil war to peace and stability” (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:268) making Mozambique an example of a successful changing program.

Because of the influence of the autocratic party-state spirit and the misunderstanding of the market economy, many government officers involved themselves in grand corruption, which is testified by “exertion of political control over juridical outcomes” (MSI, 2005). Recognizing the problem, Armando Guebuza (quoted by ACIS, 2005) stated in his inaugural address to the nation that “bureaucracy, the spirit of ‘*deixa andar*’ (letting things go) and corruption are the obstacles to development”, which could be understood as the incompetence of leadership that existed in Mozambique.

3.1.3 Corruption

Armando Guebuza (quoted by ACIS, 2005) in his inaugural address to the nation mentioned corruption as one of the obstacles to development in Mozambique. The USAID (2005) identifies as a “procedural weaknesses that contribute to pervasive corruption at administrative level- the near-daily bribes required to pass through police roadblocks, register a child in school, deal with various inspectors, or get faster treatment at a clinic...”. These procedures are often happening daily in Mozambique.

Many Non-Governmental Organizations and interested academics are attempting to explain and define corruption in Mozambique and in Southern Africa, with the usual conclusion that poverty is strictly linked to corruption (USAID, 2005; Wilson *et al.*, 2001; Neild, 2002). Neild (2002:6) defines public corruption as “the breaking by public persons, for the sake of the private financial or political gain, of the rules of conduct in public affairs prevailing in a society in the period under consideration”.

It is supposed that demanding or accepting bribes, kickbacks or favours are corrupt practice (Allan *et al.*, 2002:19). Because various kinds of corruption exist, Van der Walt (2003:401) defines political corruption as “the unsanctioned, illegal, unethical and unauthorized exploitation of one’s political or official position to use public resources or goods for personal gain that is for non-public ends”.

In Mozambique, corruption is defined as “the abuse of public power for private gain” (MSI, 2005:17) and there is a distinction between public-private corruption and private-private corruption. According to the MSI (2005:19), corruption can be divided into the following broad categories:

- Fraud
- Facilitation payments and bribes to avoid fines;
- Commissions;
- Tax evasion; and
- Illegal trade (counterfeits, smuggling, etc).

The MSI (2005:19) comments that sometimes fraud involves a syndicate which extends outside the borders of Mozambique which is amongst others evident from the “murder of Antonio Siba-Siba Macuacua who was appointed to resuscitate Banco Austral in the wake of massive mismanagement and fraud to benefit politically (and criminally) connected individuals ... and the escape from custody of politically-connected suspects, in the murder trial of journalist Carlos Cardoso who was investigating a separate bank fraud case” (USAID, 2005:14).

Many companies recognize that corruption “directly affects those companies that pay bribes and commissions. Indirectly it affects all business since corruption raises costs generally and creates an atmosphere of illegality which permits illegal trade and fraud to flourish” (MSI, 2005:21), contributing to dishonesty and low integrity in the workplace, with the perpetrators feeling that their actions are acceptable, while other people are concerned about the morality of their actions (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 2005:243).

The dissatisfaction of people forced the recently elected government to change their policy to include acting against corruption as a component of struggling against poverty. "The recent sacking of some officials for incompetence may be an indication of political will to follow up on these words" (USAID, 2005:8). This is creating a perception different from the previous regime, not to simply placate the need of donors and public dissatisfaction.

Jolke Oppewal (2006), who represents a group of 18 donors providing direct budget support, commented that financial procedures were commendable but warned both the government and donors that the anti-corruption strategy needed to be put into action.

The remainder of the problem indicates that a profound change of mentality is needed, not only a change in policy, as is clear from the word of Oppewal (2006) saying "last year the central government gave US\$300 000 to each of the country's 128 districts, to be used for investment in small economic activities. After criticism that some of the funds were used to improve housing for local officials, the consensus amongst donors was that more needed to be done". Oppewal (2005) concluded in this regard that "a lack of human capacity in the districts is one of the main challenges in the decentralization process".

These attitudes can be changed through good ethical standards, through understanding that sins have doomed this place to destruction (Mic 2:10) and that Mozambicans should "not allow their faithful servant to rot in the grave" (Acts 13:35).

3.1.4 Tribalism

Tribalism is a bad legacy that remains amongst Mozambicans. Mozambique was confronted with tribalism at the beginning of its nationalism. Although the tribal movements for national resistance against colonial occupation can be considered the pioneers of tribalism (Isaacman & Isaacman, 2006:95), "the national liberation movement, Frelimo, that was formed in 1962 by an urban elite dominated by young

students and professionals from the south of the country” (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:277) chose southern people as dominant in the decision making of that group.

Although, the ethnic diversity in Mozambique is an element of importance in the factors that constitute elements for a cultural identity on the level of population groups (Afonso, 1995:93), it remains an issue that create division amongst people on different levels of the Mozambican life. To clarify this influence on Mozambican life, the following table will provide information of the results of the 1994 elections.

Table 2. Distribution of deputies on National Assembly, according to results of first elections (Mazula, 1995:458-459).

Provinces	FRELIMO	RENAMO	União Democrática
Cidade de Maputo	17	1	-
Província de Maputo	12	1	-
Gaza	15	-	1
Inhambane	13	3	2
Sofala	3	18	-
Manica	4	9	-
Tete	5	9	1
Zambézia	19	29	2
Nampula	20	32	2
Cabo Delgado	15	6	1
Niassa	7	3	-
Total	129	112	9

As it can be seen from table 2, FRELIMO had won in five provinces, Maputo, Gaza, Inhambane, Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Maputo-city and RENAMO had won in five provinces, Sofala, Manica, Tete, Zambézia and Nampula (Mazula, 1995:459).

One can now ask why is this regional tendency prevalent? This tendency continued into the following elections and it demonstrates the regionalism and tribal influence on it, where FRELIMO is cited in the south and the two Northern provinces, while RENAMO assured the central provinces because its president is from Sofala, the Central province.

Tribalism in the Mozambican is evident from the tendencies of their development. Because of the use of the Chichewa Bible in the Tete Province and Nyimbo za Mulungu as useful material for the Reformed Church (Hendriks, 2004:131), it is growing in the North of this province, where Chichewa is spoken and in the South nothing is happening. This is a demonstration of the rejection of the superiority of the Chewa tribe in the areas where other languages are spoken.

Donors also acknowledged the progress in decentralization and the efforts to reduce regional differences amongst the bad inheritance of tribalism in this country (Oppewal, 2006). The asymmetry on regional development is considered by Mazula (1995:461) as the reality of the inequality of opportunities and unequal development.

This can provide a picture of the difference in treatment amongst the people that brought “clear indicators of strong social discontent in the municipal elections” (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:285). This discontent behaviour must be understood against the background of the discrimination that had “be used by opportunists wishing to exploit situations to gain power and influence in their communities” (Mashau, 2006:175).

When social exclusion and consequently asymmetry occurs, the excluded regions and people remain in poverty, while the favoured are much better. This caused the appearance of the “proposal of federalism, as the enlarged reflexive will of the major decentralization and participation not only to govern on administrative point of view, but above all on the political power and on the development of the regions” (Mazula, 1995:460).

The abovementioned causes of poverty, a wrong kind of Christianity and wars that characterized the Mozambique historical background summarize the headings of the causes of current poverty in Mozambique. A wrong kind of Christianity and the decline of morality will be discussed in detail in chapter 5, when it will be analysed as the task of the church in the struggle against poverty in Mozambique.

3.1.5 Who is the poor in Mozambique?

This question was asked by Alcock (1997:23), when he was researching poverty in Britain. For him, the identification of particular individuals or groups disproportionately experiencing poverty may suggest that policies should be focused or targeted on them in particular. The main problem in focusing on the true target of poverty alleviation programs in Mozambique remains here.

The concept of absolute poverty used by the recently elected government (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:274) is based on “the amount of money necessary to provide a household (of six people) with very elementary necessities to stay alive” (Graaff, 2007:7). Surely, this perception is materialistically driven since it considers money as the solution to the poverty problems in Mozambique.

The flavour of money makes people forget their spiritual side (Berkhof, 1985:110) and then people see money as a solution to all their problems. The result of this is that “many people are convinced that we are experiencing a crisis in our society today due to a lack of morality” (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 2005:13). They consider this crisis to have developed to such an extent that it is faced with acute personal and social danger.

The danger in which Mozambicans are emerged is the state of corruption in this country (ACIS, 2005; USAID, 2005; Wilson *et al.*, 2001; Hanlon, 2002). According to USAID (2005), corruption was evident in the governmental sectors, governmental functions and institutions. These government officers are not included in the group living in poverty, because the poor is seen as a person with an income of less than a dollar per day (Sachs, 2005:10).

Therefore these people do not make norms that reflect the circumstances for moral worry, searching for good and avoiding damage (Coutinho, 2006:49). The commitment to make everything normal is pronounced when they swear that (Coutinho, 2006:38):

“I promise that, when I exercise the healing art, I will always show me faithful to the precepts of the honesty, of the charity and of the science Never, I will serve the profession to corrupt the customs or to favour the crime”

Then, it can be seen that the main worry in Mozambican society is a shortage of morality as “many people are convinced that we are experiencing a crisis in our societies today due to a lack of morality” (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 2005:14). In this way violence, criminality, road accidents, promiscuity, rape and the AIDS pandemic is increased, as a result of the shortage of morality (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 2005:15-17). With this perspective in mind it is evident that the real poverty in Mozambique is related to the shortage of morality that drives the people to falsity, corruption, theft, over-ambition and irresponsibility.

The poor in Mozambique can be divided into two groups: (1) spiritual poor- those that have the basic physical necessities, but are spiritually blind and oppressed (Luke 4:18-19); (2) the material poor- that people without conditions to supply their physical necessities (Williams, 1998:3).

In summarizing this perception of poverty it can be said that the spiritual richness and the richness of this world is different. In this regard, the Bible says that “listen, my dear brothers and sisters! God chose the poor people of this world to be rich in faith and to possess the kingdom which he promised to those who love him” (Jas 2:5).

3.2 THE ACTUAL POLICIES FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY IN MOZAMBIQUE

Poverty alleviation in Mozambique did not start with the recently elected government. For a long time projects had been developed and policies defined to implement projects aimed at lifting the country from poverty or underdevelopment. These projects had their own constraints, causing Mozambique to be poor currently.

3.2.1 The main projects towards poverty alleviation

The Mozambican Government defined many strategies for poverty alleviation along time. The influent projects aimed to alleviate poverty in Mozambique can be seen as those which started to be implemented in January 1987 known as PRE '*Programa de Reabilitação Económica*' (Economic Rehabilitation Program), aimed at the structural adjustment of the economy to that defined by the IMF and the World Bank (Rocha, 2006:94).

In 1990 "the Poverty Alleviation Unity (PAU) (that was) produced a national Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)" (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:274). Later, new measures were added as "the supporting of the agrarian familiar sector and orientation to this sector of State's investments, supporting actions to poverty reduction, rehabilitation and development of economic infra-structures in the rural zones and the reinforcement of institutional capacity of the state institutions" (Rocha, 2006:95-96).

To fight against extreme poverty the government adopted as its "central objective the Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PRAP), in 2001 which was aimed to promote human development and create a favourable environment for rapid, inclusive and ample growth" (Dumas, 2005), and the fundamental areas that were focussed upon were education, health, agriculture and rural development; basic infrastructure, good governance and macroeconomic and financial management.

Some social movements, such as 'Campanha Terra' and 'Grupo da Dívida', then came into being to criticize the government of being able to profoundly influence policy-making (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:275), although the influence of some of them was not as expected e.g. the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) that had conflicting results "with the financing donor's development programme" (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:275).

Because the majority of Mozambicans depended to a large extent on agrarian activity, "the new land law of 1997 might have been the most important pro-poor reform put in place under the new government" (Wilson *et al.*, 2001:281).

Beside this, Rocha (2005:98) indicates that the principal investments are made in agriculture and agro-industry, followed by tourism, mineral resources, transportation,

communications, energy and industry. Examples of these projects according to him are the MOZAL, which congregates an industrial park of Bebeluane and a zone of exportation processes and the construction of more dams along the Zambezi River (Rocha, 2005:99). Therefore, many projects are currently worked on and some of them are successfully developed. The problem with these projects is concerned with the definition of priorities and its implementation.

3.2.2 The priorities and the implementation

The priorities in the struggle against poverty in Mozambique were defined according to the time and situation. During the war for national liberation, education was seen as the basic political-ideological condition to determine the success in the struggle against colonialism (Mazula, 1985:108). Currently, many interested in the issue of poverty and the economy of Mozambique recognizes that “the economy of this country is based on agriculture, which contributes to almost 45% of national total income” (Rocha, 2006:94).

As it is stated by Darby (1996:9) “it seems that improving the quantity and quality of education is the best single program for increasing incomes in general and especially for those who are poor”. The Mozambican government sees the “human capital concerns the key elements for human development, which are education, health and other basic conditions” (CdC, 2004:13).

The emphasis on education by the Mozambicans arose from the main recommendations of the United Nations millennium project that defines that the large scale program for the creation of workers on a local community level must aim to assure that every local community until 2015, according to Sachs (2005:14) obtain:

- Specialized knowledge in the areas of health, education, agriculture, nutrition, infra-structures, water supply and sanitation, and environmental management;
- Specialized knowledge in matters of management of the public sector; and
- Adequate formation to promote equality amongst man and woman and their participation.

In accordance with the UN's objectives, the Mozambican government focuses its antipoverty efforts on education, health and nutrition, agriculture and land possession, employment and access to the basic social services (MPF, 2000:15-16). Darby (1996:9) confirms this when he mentions that "education, community empowerment, job training and social interventions" are the in-depth approaches to alleviate poverty.

But the implementation of the programs is a serious constraint to the development of Mozambique. It is affected by "grand-corruption — the participation of elites in self-dealing and other efforts to consolidate and protect their hold in power and wealth" (USAID, 2005:5), as a critical problem in Mozambique. In the request for protection for instance, some misused the public budget to benefit their political parties (Siteo, 2008:6). The recognition of the influence of corruption by NGOs was evident to Oppewal (2007) when she warned, "Both, the government and donors acknowledged that the anti-corruption strategy needed to be put into action".

The international community is contributing to corruption and state capture in Mozambique. In this regard Hanlon (2002) argued that "donors are rejecting appeals from honest Mozambicans to do more than simply pay lip service to the need to curb corruption because they need the myth of the Mozambican success story".

Thus, it can be said that the implementation of projects do not achieve the expected results because it is affected greatly by corruption at different levels. It is also true that the Mozambicans are interested to struggle against poverty and corruption in governmental levels and civil society, but they are constrained by the lack of morality that it is extended over the Mozambicans' behaviour in injunction to the actions of some non-governmental organizations that operate in this country.

3.2.3 The constraints of poverty alleviation in Mozambique

Main projects to alleviate poverty in Mozambique were designed and the people believed that it was time to lift the country out of poverty. The question to be asked is what happened to obtain that belief?

The words of Oppewal (quoted by IRIN, 2007) on “the lack of human capacity in the districts as one of the main challenges for development”, and the affirmation by Armando Guebuza (quoted by ACIS, 2005) that “bureaucracy, the spirit of *‘deixa andar’* (letting things go) and corruption are the obstacles to development” should be understood as the basic obstacles to Mozambican development.

Although they have a Socialist ideological orientation, the Frelimo Party continued to be a heterogeneous power with diverse sensibilities, integrating Marxists and liberals, military, intellectuals and technocrats, many of them saw in Frelimo the way to accede to diverse places and benefits (Rocha, 2006:82).

Again, aimed to reinforce their positions, some of them were confusing the position of the State with the Party in power. This was demonstrated by the recent contest Nr 06/DPPFI/UGEA/08 which was publicly thrown for the production of five thousand of pennants of the Frelimo party, 3 thousand chemisettes without collar and 520 chemisettes with collar, which had to be paid by state funds. This action can create the idea that if unqualified people occupy high positions of leadership, they are not capable to do what is needed for that position.

An attempt to clear the non-qualified people from high positions of government brings tremendous and destructive reactions. The recent examples of these reactions set fire to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, because it was interpreted as an attempt to wipe out the corruption evidences through destructing data of that ministry.

The strikes against the increased price of public transport were also understood as creations of the later forsaken members of government (Sitoe, 2008:6). Thus, it can be said that the efforts to improve the population’s quality of life through poverty reduction programmes have been hampered by high corruption levels (Dumas, 2005), which have distanced the State even farther from its public objectives.

3.3 THE CHRISTIAN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The Christian Ethical perspective on poverty alleviation in Mozambique is linked to the understanding and the preaching of the gospel in the community that drives the attitude of the hearer. Questions about what kind of message is preached and what the Christians are doing are some issues to be raised.

3.3.1 The message of liberation in Mozambique

The message of liberation that Christ preached (Luke 4:18; John 8:36) was necessary to people involved in poverty alleviation programs. Departing from the causes of poverty in Mozambique it can be seen that sin is influencing the prevalence of poverty (see 3.1.2). Recognizing this state of affairs, the government involves the church in programs of poverty alleviation. But, the results of that are not visible. If the Word of God creates new spiritual life there where the human being spiritually died (Hayford, 2001: XIV), what are the Christians doing to alleviate poverty in Mozambique?

The Mozambique government invited all Mozambicans to reflect on the country's future for the long term (CoC, 2004:9). Thus, a group of citizens established the Committee of Councillors (CoC) that was founded in 2001 for political, social, religious, racial and professional heterogeneity (CoC, 2004:9). The inclusion of the religious component in this group can be understood as the recognition of the government of the importance of the church in the struggle against poverty and the causes of poverty in Mozambique.

This opportunity is in contrast with the situation that the church experienced when the "government policy between 1975 and 1982 was the exclusive propagation of Marxism, 'all-out war on the churches' and 'destruction of religious superstitions'" (Johnstone & Mandruk, 2001:458). These later actions of recognition of the importance of the church in the programs of poverty alleviation can be seen as an opportunity for the church to introduce the moral principles to those people that are involved in the poverty alleviation program.

The calling of the government to the church in its programs can be seen as God's calling to the church to act on her mission, in all areas of Mozambican life. Poverty is a special challenge to the Christians in Mozambique.

3.3.2 How can Christians face the poverty in Mozambique?

According to the teachings of the Bible, Jesus testified that John the Baptist was not a shy, vacillating and instable man, but he had a powerful and inflexible testimony of trust (Ryle, 2002:75). From a Christian ethical point of view it can be said that poverty in Mozambique is the result of low levels of morality (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 2005:14). A fundamental orientation back to the pure teaching of the Bible is thus needed in Mozambique.

The materialistic ethics that is advocated by Mozambicans is the poison that causes the murder of people struggling with trust, as in the murder of Antonio Siba-Siba Macuacua (USAID, 2005:14). Christians should however be able to accept the suffering to be "obedient to the will of God throughout his life and death" (Vorster, 2007:19).

For Mozambican Christians, it is very difficult to follow Christ as it is stated above. According to USAID (2005:7), there is a "general culture of not complaining about corruption because there is both a fear of retribution and a desire to avoid problems, especially given the popular perspective that there are few, if any, feasible ways to combat the problem". However, while man remains on the earth, he can expect many adversities in his life. But, his prevalence in trust is a guarantee for his future victorious life.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Poverty in Mozambique is faced differently by different people. The state has a different concept of poverty than the civil society. The oppositional political parties also differ in their opinions of the concept of poverty in Mozambique, the causation and the proposed solutions to alleviate this problem.

The causes of poverty in Mozambique can provide a picture of why poverty is continuing to affect this country. The low morality and lack of ethical principles provide prevalence to poverty. Norms of behaviour are needed that can change the actions of people at different levels of society. These changes must occur amongst the government officers, teachers, in business, the police, juridical system, employment, customs and other public services that are affected by grand corruption.

Corruption is the main factor that contributes to the prevalence of poverty in Mozambique. The current government is attempting a struggle against corruption. But, these attempts are weakened by some of the governmental officers that are fighting to maintain the status quo. Corruption is the result of the lack of ethical norms. Corruption is also encouraged by the spirit of paternalism that was established in mind of many Mozambicans and contributes to discriminate against some people and is beneficial to other.

Poverty is ongoing in Mozambique. The Mozambican government will need to interact with non-governmental organizations, churches, employers, businessmen and others to face the problem of poverty and to change the minds of people.