In general, a separated, sectoral and short-term approach without sustainability considerations eats up limited capacities in terms of money, motivation and human resources. But also the basis for sustainable growth is weakened:

- The overexploitation of natural resources leads to irreversible losses of fertile land (e.g. by soil erosion), biodiversity and traditional knowledge;
- inaction on natural resource management (NRM) and other preventive environmental actions can cause economic losses on the long-term (e.g. reducing productivity of agriculture);
- inadequate environmental services (e.g. sanitation or insufficient access to safe drinking water) can cause a general reduction of productivity and create necessities of increased public expenditure to mitigate these negative impacts (e.g. in case of diseases, health infrastructure, etc.);
- environmental problems can change the whole political and social structure (e.g. causing migration) and even result in violent conflicts (e.g. about water); these changes might influence the basis parameters of poverty reduction strategies substantially;
- livelihood insecurity and persistent exclusion from opportunities leads to apathy;
- ultimately, the poor become more vulnerable and poorer.

However, an important question was how the PRSP-process can be seen as a contribution to sustainable development. Can it be integrated in processes or strategies towards sustainable development or else, be a first step towards these?

Comparing PRSPs with strategies for sustainable development, e.g. National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) processes, some members of the group were sceptical: PRSP can – in their opinion – never become NSSD. Following their arguments, sustainable development is only possible on the basis of independence. The external influence in the PRSP process – as a conditionality for debt relief – limits the ownership and inde-
pendent development of strategies. Another objection was that the dominant priority of poverty reduction inhibits the more holistic vision of sustainability.

Particularly some of the key elements of long-term sustainable development strategies (e.g. market access) are, in the opinion of some participants, not included in PRSPs. In general, the planning horizon of PRSPs is much shorter.

On the other hand it was stated that poverty reduction is an important step towards implementing sustainable development. The importance of PRSPs for poor countries (especially for the HIPC countries) can not be ignored, so that they have to be taken into consideration when we speak about sustainable development. PRSP is also an occasion to promote a better integration of other aspects of sustainable development.

5.5.2 Country experiences

To get a more concrete picture of sustainability considerations in PRSP-processes, the experiences of the different countries in this field were analyzed. The experiences from the different countries show that there are some successes regarding the sustainability of PRSPs:

- In most of the countries a high level of government commitment can be observed.
- There is an increased sensitivity for problems of the poor.
- There are more strongly concerted efforts for poverty reduction.
- In some countries, existing environmental action plans were considered during the elaboration of the PRSP.

In Ghana, for example, the PRSP-process was led by the president himself. A successful attempt of improving sustainability of PRSP can be observed. The PRSP was truly "home-written". National and district budgets are linked to program PRSP priorities.
Mauritania showed particular examples of ownership, e.g. in the resolution of land tenure by indigenous organizations.

In Mongolia, the PRSP-process was built on the results achieved with NPAP: goals and prospects have already been successfully concerted, a national capacity building for implementation of the National Poverty Alleviation Program (NPAP) was created, and national institutional mechanisms for implementation of NPAP have been established.

In Senegal, the principles of PRSP are coherent with those of sustainable development. They were built on the achievements since the beginning of the Rio process and follow a consensual choice concerning the strategic axis. There is a link between the three-year budget for the specific investment and the national budget. The 1st phase beneficiaries are willing to assume their relevant responsibilities.

But still a lot of challenges remain to be tackled in the future. As a result of the discussion, the working group stated that sustainability challenges in the light of PRSP have two main dimensions:

**How to improve sustainability within the PRSP framework itself?**

- There was the impression that besides a strong government commitment there is still a lack of country ownership. This refers to a low degree of participation of civil society and a dominant role of donor agencies.

- The integration of environmental concerns in the PRSP is still superficial. In many cases respective chapters are included in the paper without sufficient analysis and understanding of the problems. In some PRSPs the environmental chapters seem to be just copied from other papers.

- In the analysis of the existing situation environment-poverty links are not sufficiently considered, especially the negative economic impacts of environmental problems, which can lead to increased poverty. There is a strong focus on income related parameters in the poverty reduction strategies, while income reducing parameters (e.g. environmental risks
through soil degradation, natural catastrophes or losses of non-renewable sources such as forests) are not included. Environmental aspects therefore are often added as additional considerations without linking them to economic analysis.

- There is not enough awareness, particularly among decision makers, about these links. Although in some countries analysis about environment-poverty links are carried out by investigators or NGOs, they are not taken into consideration in the PRSP-process. Generally, there is a low understanding what sustainable development means and needs and therefore no real commitment to it.

- The lack of donor coordination leads to inconsistent approaches and undermines national / country ownership.

- Inadequate governance is a frequent problem.

- The financial sustainability of PRSP-processes in not guaranteed in many countries. Instead of waiting for the next HIPC round, the countries should try to find ways to ensure the funding of participation processes and the implementation of programmes. The role of the private sector is not sufficiently considered in this field.

- Sustainable debt situation is another constraint of PRSP-processes.

- There should be more efforts for "enabling internal conditions" for poverty reduction.

**How and where to place PRSP into the bigger picture of national strategies and policies?**

Besides the improvements within the poverty reduction strategies, however, it is important to analyze them in the bigger picture of national strategies and policies. In this field, there are other challenges to face:

- In all countries (including the industrialized) a lack of inter-sectoral cooperation can be observed. Sectoral ministries negotiate internal sectoral
agreements, asking for sectoral plans. They defend their own "turf" and often resist coordination. In many cases the incoherence is not even known, because of a lack of effective M&E to signal problems of overlap.

- Decentralization and localization of decision-making process and responsibilities could help to generate ownership within the country and lead to more sustainability.

- The countries and donors do not focus on consistency with sustainability and other development strategies. Different time schedules of planning processes make it even more difficult to achieve coherence in the programmes and budgets.

- However, the continuity of the PRSP-process should be ensured, carrying on with existing programmes. The main challenge of PRSP is – as it is true for other strategic programmes – implementation. Often it seems easier for policy makers and donor agencies to write up a new strategy than to implement an existing one.

- Capacity development is needed to create the human resources for any sustainable strategy building process. Generally the national capacity to develop programmes, policies and initiatives is insufficient and weak. That leads to an increased donor "bias" in strategic processes.

- Donor coordination: Often, external agendas push different "fashion" strategies which are not coherent. The reporting requirements do not correspond to each other. If different donor organizations stick to different priorities and strategies, it will be difficult especially for the poor countries to follow a coherent national development strategy.

### 5.5.3 What can be learned from the country cases?

Due to time constraints, the group decided to focus the discussion of recommendations on two major areas of sustainability challenges with respect to PRSP: Improving the poverty-environment linkages in PRSPs, and achieving more consistency with other development strategies and policies.
### Recommendations of the Sustainability Working Group on How to Improve Poverty-Environment Linkages in PRSPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Awareness, information and analysis** | Lack of adequate analysis (income distribution vs. determinants)  
Links between environmental and economic parameters are not understood  
Low environmental awareness of decision makers  
Low performance indicators (short- and medium-term)  
Difficulty in analyzing links between poverty and environmental aspects | Capacity building of decision-makers and responsible actors  
Information about benefits of sustainable use of natural resources  
Costing of environmental activities / damages respect to poverty  
Improved analysis of environment-poverty links  
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of PRSP projects / programmes |
| **Consistency of strategies / policies** | Weak focus on holistic approach to achieving sustainable development  
Sectoral logic of planning procedures  
Driven by single or few Ministries | Incorporate PRSP in sustainable development vision (on which there is consensus)  
Build on / link with existing strategies, mechanisms and processes  
Achieve policy coherence (e.g. support fiscal policies that do not promote profligate resource exploitation)  
Link short-term, mid-term and long-term strategies and effects |
| **Improved ownership** | Often the PRSP guidelines are received as a "straight jacket"  
There are conflicting timeframes: the PRSP-process is built on 3 years periods, while other planning periods (including e.g. national development plans) are based on other timelines  
Donors mostly have no long-term vision; the results and impacts have to be generated quickly – otherwise the approach is changed, new strategies are induced, etc. | The guidelines need to allow for country specific approaches  
They should remove the strict timeframe – making a rolling "learning" process possible; especially in the analysis of environment-poverty links long-term vision is required; sustainability needs time to be accepted |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Multi-stakeholder involvement and coordination | Improve decision-making procedures, rules, systems that allow increased voice of environmental interests  
Put PRSP under multi-stakeholder steering forum  
Promote the participation of the private sector and the poor in implementation  
Improve quality and coordination of technical assistance  
Inter-departmental exchange and coordination within agencies  
Incorporate effective conflict and negotiation management systems |
| Improved implementation and M&E | Decentralize PRSP-implementation and monitoring; poverty-environment links are clearer on decentralized levels  
Incorporate transparent M&E systems, involving parliaments and civil society  
Establish monitoring indicators for poverty-environment linkages  
Invest in environmental projects which generate growth (win-win)  
Increase funds for implementation of inter-sectoral projects |
| Gender | Improve gender aspects of environmental interventions in PRSP |

**Recommendations of the Sustainability Working Group on How to Achieve More Consistency with Other Strategies, Policies, Initiatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country-specific approaches</td>
<td>&quot;Blueprint approaches&quot; (especially externally driven) should be avoided to create the necessary ownership in the countries which guarantee a successful implementation; the countries should build on already existing programmes and identify and prioritize their own needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Donor coordination | Countries and donors should establish donor coordination forum  
High-level commitment in donors to support strategies in a consistent and coherent way |
| Instruments for an integrated approach | Use existing knowledge information  
Implement good governance for sustainable development  
Put PRSP under multi-stakeholder steering forum (Government, civil society, private);  
Harmonize with existing policies, plans strategies  
Strategy development should involve all stakeholders including the poor  
Ensure key staff (donors) stay in posts long-term (institutional memory)  
Undertake comprehensive analysis (environment - social - economic) |
5.6 HIV / AIDS prevention and mitigation

5.6.1 Introduction

HIV / AIDS has reached unprecedented prevalence rates all over Sub-Saharan Africa. Incidence rates continue to rise in South and Southeast Asia and infection rates are increasing in several regions, in particular in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In many countries, poverty is exacerbating the effects of gender inequality, one of the driving factors of the HIV epidemic. Where the impacts of HIV / AIDS are detrimental, poverty cannot be reduced effectively mid and long term. How to avoid the immense social and economic costs, which are threatening the current progress of poverty reduction as a consequence of HIV / AIDS?

This chapter introduces to the Gender-AIDS-Poverty-nexus. It discusses the need and urgency to mainstream HIV / AIDS into poverty reduction strategies. A checklist is proposed as a tool to incorporate HIV / AIDS more systematically into PRSPs and PRS processes.

The module 6 of the gender working group tried to look into how HIV / AIDS can be addressed as a cross-cutting issue in relation to gender and poverty in the context of PRSP. The aim was to build the participants' knowledge of gender-specific risk factors and of the closely-knit interdependencies between gender, AIDS and poverty.

Based on the analysis of risk factors, gender and AIDS were highlighted as important determinants in the context of poverty reduction. The participants learned from the practical experiences of a high prevalence country, experiences, which will be also of relevance to the HIV / AIDS epidemic expected in the transition countries. An instrument was presented as an example and discussed in terms of its suitability for the incorporation of AIDS and gender indicators into the PRSP process.
5.6.2 The relevance of HIV / AIDS and main challenges arising from the epidemic

How significant and relevant is the HIV / AIDS epidemic and its impact to the countries struggling to reduce poverty? In 2001, people living currently with HIV / AIDS totalled a number of 40 Million human beings according to UNAIDS estimates. New infections have occurred in 2001 affecting a total number of 5 million people worldwide. A recent disproportionate rise occurred in the countries of Eastern Europe and Asia. Swiftly the pandemic has won more ground in this part of the world. Of the 14,000 people with new HIV infections every day, more than 95% originate from developing countries. The respective 2000 children are infected mainly through Mother-Child-Transmission. Of the remaining 12,000 newly infected per day half are women and half are young people between 15 and 24 years. These are the vulnerable groups mainly affected by HIV / AIDS that draw the attention to where major efforts in the fight of the pandemic should focus on.

One of the key questions is how gender, poverty and HIV / AIDS are interrelated and what it implies for PRSP. During the UN Special Session on HIV / AIDS, an urgent call of action was expressed to take up gender equality as the "guiding principle" of the global response to HIV / AIDS for every plan and programme. In spite of the fact that cause-and-effect relationships between gender inequality (i.e. the unequal status of men and women) and HIV transmission are being recognized, concrete actions, in the past, were mostly absent from international resolutions and national plans addressing HIV / AIDS. Gender inequality can be analyzed in three dimensions:

- First, social factors and cultural norms emphasize the unequal power status of men and women, the unequal access to education or health services. Traditions often favour dominance of male sexuality, discriminate and rob women of the right to take their own decisions concerning their personal life. Sexual suppression and exploitation of women is often combined with social acceptance of myths and a double moral. The consequence is that women remain at a low social status without power
to discuss sexual matters with men, to negotiate safer sex, being forced to accept unhealthy and unsafe practices. In addition, societies also fail to protect the rights of men and women living with HIV / AIDS.

- Second, a range of economic circumstances contribute to gender- or target-group-specific threats. Vulnerable groups include e.g. refugees, displaced people, certain occupations such as migrant workers, traders or truck drivers. Girls and young women are particularly vulnerable to HIV, because they depend economically and legally on the men in the family. Poverty exacerbates gender inequality, for example, where it drives women to engage in sexual relations to support their families.

- Third, the vulnerability of women is multiplied by HIV / AIDS and its impacts. Women are physiologically several times more susceptible attracting HIV as well as other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) than men and tend to get infected at a much younger age. Women who already carry the major workload in communities have to take up an additional burden due to AIDS for caring persons, substituting losses of labour and care for orphans, elderly and sick. In case of the husband’s death, a women may completely loose the limited access to productive resources and the legal rights she had to the relatives of the late husband. Violence, conflict or displacement multiply the threats of HIV infection for women.

Following are practical examples, which can provide a close-up of the relationship between HIV / AIDS, gender and poverty. The examples chosen are rather simple and easy to comprehend in order to demonstrate the multi-factorial impact on the daily life of human beings in a society affected by HIV / AIDS. They are accompanied by a set of questions to guide interpretation of the given examples. The examples are drawn from different sectors of the society and viewed from different perspectives. Interlinks, contra-acting or reinforcing, between different areas make even those simple examples as complex as the society from which they steam. Areas and issues covered amongst others are: the family, the workplace, traditional society, culture and rituals and particularly vulnerable groups.
HIV / AIDS EXAMPLE 1: A YOUNG FARMER MIGRATING TO THE CITY

A 23 year old man lives on the countryside, third son of subsistence farmer. He has a young family with two children, but as land is not enough for farming and there are no job opportunities nearby, he migrates to the capital in search for work. He stays in the slums, finds a low-paid job in a security company as watchman. He sends most of his money home to his family. As time goes by he sees some professional sex workers and meets some bar maids. During his annual leave he impregnates his wife and also transmits the HIV virus caught during his extramarital encounters. He returns to his job, continues his life, while his wife gives birth. When he returns home a year later he finds a sickening child and a desperate mother. A big share of his income is used for hospital care. He returns to town, after a few months he is informed that his last born has died of diarrhoea and pneumonia. He takes extra leave for the funeral, spends money on entertaining his relatives and notices that his wife has lost weight, coughs and needs medical attention. After some examinations and tests the doctor tells the couple that she is infected with HIV and recommends a test for him, which is also positive. Two years later they are both dead, first she, then he, cared for during their sickness by the elder daughters, who have left school and are now AIDS orphans.

Interpreting the first example of a young farmer migrating to the city, one could ask the following questions:

(1) What if the man would have had enough land or employment near home?

(2) What if the wife had an education and worked as a teacher?

(3) What if the man could have afforded to bring his family to town, if his wages would have been appropriate?

(4) What if he and his wife would have been more aware of HIV / AIDS and he had used condoms, after discussing openly his extramarital affairs with his wife?

What if ..., would they still be alive? (This belongs to question1)
HIV / AIDS EXAMPLE 2: A SCHOOL GIRL IN A SMALL TOWN

The schoolgirl in the small town dreams of a life, different from most people she knows. She wants to be someone special. The women in the village where she was born are working hard, having more than 10 children, some of which die before school age. She wants to live a different life. She stays with her uncle, a businessman, who has offered to pay her school fees up to secondary school and even beyond, as a contribution to the welfare of his extended family. She dreams to become a lawyer to fight for justice. She also wants to dress smart like the women in the TV spots and wear jewellery. A friend of her uncle from the same club who comes regularly to the house for a sun downer drink with her uncle is flattering her. He tells her that men will adore her and give her presents. She is quite insecure how to take these remarks, but somehow she likes it that an elder man is interested in her, as she is undergoing the bodily changes of a teenager. One day when her uncle is away on a business trip he invites her to join him on a drive with his new car and fetches her after school. They drive off, quite far and when she asks him to bring her back he presents her with a beautiful dress to wear and earrings. She is excited and confused. He convinces her to follow him to his house to show him the new dress and the earrings. He gives her wine and many compliments. Eventually they have sex, which hurts her badly, but he calms her down and promises that the next times it will be her to enjoy it even more than him. He swears her to silence. She returns home confused, but does not tell her uncle on his return. The encounters are continued and some months later she notices with horror that her belly grows. Her best friend in school tells her about a young people’s health centre. During a visit her pregnancy is confirmed. The social worker convinces her to take an HIV test, which turns out to be positive. Her life and her future are shattered. She has nobody to turn to; she knows her parents and her uncle would be devastated. So she tells her sugar daddy about her problems who calls her a whore and throws her out. She sees no other way then to climb the steep rock near the town and jump.

Again this story speaks for itself, some questions rise concerning the nexus of HIV / AIDS, gender and poverty:

(1) What if she could have stayed with her parents and visit a school in the same town?

(2) What if in school the pupils would have discussed openly sexual behaviour, HIV / AIDS and teenage pregnancy?
(3) Would this have happened if she were a schoolboy?

(4) What if ..., would she be still alive?

The third example depicts a society, which contains of a mix of modern and traditional contextual factors in which most HIV / AIDS affected persons live. Change in behaviour is even more difficult to achieve when traditional matters are involved. The advantage of providing of a social net for a widowed family in a society usually with no pension provided is still valid. Employees are even in a modern society still at hand of their employers if no legal set-up or proper workplace policies are in place.

**HIV / AIDS example 3: The young accountant in a big firm**

The young accountant in a big firm has a big career in front of him. His family had sponsored his way through to college and he is proud to send money home as much as he can. One day bad news arrives: his elder brother has died and has left a widow and six children. As tradition demands, he takes care of the huge funeral with all honours for his elder brother. After the funeral the elders tell him that he has inherited his brother’s widow and has to take care of her and the children. He follows their demands and visits her. They have to have sex to fulfil the ritual of wife inheritance properly; even they are both not too keen on it. He promises to send her money and returns to his workplace. He is now a family man with responsibilities and works even harder. His employer provides an annual health check for his workers, also illegally used for secret HIV / AIDS tests. Two weeks after the check-up he is called to his boss’s office and told that the firm has to cut down on employees and he is one of the first to leave. He asks why it is him to leave, as he was only recently promised a higher position. He tells his boss about his brother’s family he is now taking care of. Only after long discussions his boss admits that he was tested positive and the firm’s health fund cannot afford to support the expensive treatment. “Orders from above”. The young accountant is not willing to accept this as he feels well and could work as usual. His lawyer friend tells him that it is illegal to take secret HIV tests and encourages him to go to court where during preparations he ends up being given a big sum by his employer. But he still looses his job. His lawyer friend employs him under the condition that he keeps silent about his health. His brother’s widow dies meanwhile as well as the last child. He joins a group of PLWA and declares openly his status and demands workplace policies, which protect employees. At home he brings up discussions with the elders concerning wife inheritance and the disastrous consequences for the inheriting brother.
One might ask for example:

(1) What if the brother’s widow could have enjoyed her dead husband’s pension scheme?

(2) What if the ritual of wife inheritance could have been shaped to avoid the sexual encounter as a must?

(3) What if the workplace policies would have been appropriate?

(4) What if ..., would he and his brother’s widow and last child still be alive?

From the presented examples some parts might be refused as not being appropriate for certain countries, some might be recognized as being similar to a former experience. Nevertheless the examples are just there to apply a special view concerning the relationships between poverty, gender specific roles and behaviour and HIV / AIDS.

However, by acknowledging the web of these factors in a society where human beings try to make the best out of their life, policy makers are called for introducing these issues in their national PRSP. If fighting poverty is the ultimate goal, taking these crosscutting issues into account, will make them more effective.

5.6.3 Analysis of experiences addressing HIV / AIDS in PRSP processes

Countries, which are affected by the impacts of HIV prevalence rates above 5% as well as countries at the risk of an epidemic, increasingly recognize the urgent need to place national HIV / AIDS responses at the centre of their development agenda, i.e. to incorporate them into PRSP. This shift from considering HIV / AIDS as an exclusive health issue to mainstreaming HIV / AIDS into PRSP has mainly three reasons:

(1) Progress in reducing poverty is being threatened or achievements are being reversed by immense impacts of HIV / AIDS, affecting all aspects of human, social and economic development at middle to high preval-
ence rates; at low prevalence rates, countries aim at avoiding detrimental social and economic effects by prophylactic measures;

(2) The HIV/AIDS-poverty-nexus and the specificity of the cause-and-effect relationships of AIDS, including socio-economic, cultural roots causes of sexual relations as well as sexual exploitation, must be diagnosed to develop responses that address the underlying causes of HIV/AIDS, comprised of the entire scope of pro-poor policies;

(3) In countries of middle to high HIV prevalence, it has become clear that control of HIV/AIDS will remain ineffective and not be sustained unless national budget allocations reflect a HIV/AIDS strategy that is involving the key sectors and target groups of society.

At present, there are a few cases only where HIV/AIDS—as with gender—has been systematically included into PRSP planning and implementation, even in countries of high HIV prevalence rates. A rapid assessment of eight Interim-PRSPs and four Full PRSPs from Africa revealed that (for details of the analysis refer to the status report “The Poverty-HIV/AIDS-Interface”):

- HIV/AIDS was not adequately integrated into the poverty analysis, i.e. recognition of HIV/AIDS as national challenge was often not matched in the PRSP by a respective analysis or response to AIDS;

- HIV/AIDS was not considered as a cross-cutting issue along with gender;

- poverty and gender, though poverty analysis was increasingly multi-dimensional, were not necessarily linked to the causes and effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic;

- HIV/AIDS was often reduced to a medical and/or health issue, hence responses were inadequate;

- PRSPs did not acknowledge the inter-dependence of the different sectors regarding gender inequality and HIV/AIDS.
5.6.4 Lessons learned and open questions

To effectively respond to the impacts of AIDS, the entire scope of direct pro-poor policies is relevant, beyond access to services incl. prevention, medical treatment or care. Responses to HIV / AIDS, which are based on concepts of vulnerability, therefore, remain incomplete. Political leadership and advocacy to encourage the empowerment of women is considered essential to make any progress in fighting the epidemic. Incorporating HIV / AIDS into national frameworks implies appropriate policies and strategies. All sectors, public or private, formal or informal, need to be actively involved to reduce existing vulnerabilities and to mitigate impacts, e.g. to improve access to land; to create HIV sensitive workplace environments and employment opportunities. Target groups or sectors vulnerable to HIV / AIDS require specific and gender-sensitive measures, e.g. to solve legal rights' issues or to support social change processes.


Following the steps outlined above, a checklist has been presented as a tool to guide mainstreaming of HIV / AIDS into PRSP processes and into the documents, along with other issues, in particular gender. It aims at assisting actors involved in the steering of PRSP processes, facilitating appropriate measures and steps for incorporating, in a more systematic way, HIV / AIDS along with gender issues into PRSP processes and documents. The checklist should provide a flexible tool, to be adapted to the needs and applied depending on the specific HIV / AIDS-poverty-nexus in a given country. It is not intended to follow a rigid format or to provide a fixed set of questions. It rather provides a frame, which is providing orientation in a PRSP process, advancing and complementing current support.
PROPOSED HIV / AIDS CHECKLIST FOR PRSP

**Contribution within the PRSP cycle**

- Development of a format for mainstreaming HIV / AIDS into PRSP
- Poverty analysis: AIDS-poverty nexus
- Targeting of budget allocations in PRSP for HIV / AIDS responses
- HIV-sensitization of PRSP actors
- Footing of HIV / AIDS in national development strategies
- Setting the path for coherent national / sector policies regarding HIV / AIDS

**Background**

HIV prevalence rates >5% or at the verge to a generalized epidemic require targeted responses by government and civil society to reverse the spread of HIV; reduce the vulnerability to HIV / AIDS among specific target groups; and improve HIV treatment, mitigation efforts. Early policy action aims to prevent unprecedented social and economic costs due to AIDS at later stages. PRSP provide an opportunity for embedding cross-cutting issues, such as HIV / AIDS and gender in the national development agenda and to interlink different sector strategies, gender and HIV / AIDS, a potential, which has not been fully brought to bear so far.

**Approach**

Up to now, HIV / AIDS has been largely recognized as a health issue. Accordingly, responses were largely confined to the health sector. Causes and effects of HIV / AIDS extend far beyond human health and aspects of human development; the AIDS-poverty-nexus reveals inter-relationships with social, cultural and economic factors of development. The aim of incorporating HIV / AIDS into PRSP is to establish effective links between PR, national responses to HIV / AIDS and different sector plans and strategies. This should lead to more realistic growth estimates and to HIV / AIDS responses that address more effectively the underlying causes of the HIV / AIDS-poverty-nexus, building on the entire range of pro-poor policies. Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as gender and HIV / AIDS systematically into PRSP should also lead to a greater focus of PRSP processes.

**Expected outcome / contribution within PRSP cycle**

Taking into account short and long-term implications of AIDS-related action at micro-, meso- and macro-levels, including relevant actors and target groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of the checklist</th>
<th>Expected outcome / contribution within PRSP cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Poverty Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Evidence on the Poverty-AIDS-nexus should be sought and brought into the poverty analysis, on which every valid Full PRSP is to be based, i.e. the relation of different dimensions of poverty with AIDS, and – if possible – broken down by: urban-rural, gender, socio-economic strata.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Macro-Economic Framework</strong></td>
<td>Growth targets underpinning PRSP are known to be overly optimistic. Projections should, where relevant, reflect AIDS-related losses or gains in different sectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Goals</strong></td>
<td>IDG / MDGs do not contain a specific target for HIV / AIDS reduction. Nonetheless, PRSPs, esp. in high and in middle prevalence countries, should have a quantified objective as part of the poverty reduction strategy. In low prevalence countries, the PRSP may provide a platform for general prevention activities (sensitization of an audience for the importance of HIV / AIDS containment)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Indicators</strong></td>
<td>Subsequent to the formulation of quantified objectives, measurable indicators on long-term and on medium-term HIV / AIDS-related action are to be incorporated into the PRSP. Quantitative and qualitative indicators need to include human and social factors as well as AIDS-related impacts on public and private sectors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elements of the checklist</td>
<td>Expected outcome / contribution within PRSP cycle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Multi-Sectoral HIV/AIDS Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Coherence of response to AIDS; support of effective and sustainable PRS by addressing underlying factors of vulnerability and long-term effects of HIV/AIDS. Creates a conducive policy environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-sectoral approach: The national AIDS strategy itself may need a broader footing and scope beyond the health sector, in order to get sufficient thrust. Poverty focus: AIDS strategies are to reflect vice versa their own impact in terms of poverty.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Sector Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Sector strategies reflect the national AIDS response and take into account the requirements for coordination of sector policies and strategies regarding HIV/AIDS interventions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and non-health sector strategies and sector programmes (SPs or SWAPs), such as Education and Agriculture, should incorporate AIDS-related issues, in terms of (a) causes and (b) consequences. It is the same kind of adaptation many sector policies or programmes have to undergo in order to properly reflect poverty reduction.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Other Cross-Cutting Issues</strong></td>
<td>The underlying causes of HIV/AIDS are included in the constraint analysis and are reflected in the guiding criteria for the PRSP. Progress is being made towards behaviour changes and empowerment of women.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An analogous adaptation may be needed for national strategies on cross-cutting themes like gender and gender inequality. Political leadership and advocacy to encourage the empowerment of women is considered essential to make any progress in fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8. Costing of PRSP / Budgeting / MTEF</strong></td>
<td>Cost-effectiveness is increased through greater transparency and pooling of capacities and resources. Synergies between interventions across sectors and actors (GO, NGO and private sector) are utilized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of HIV/AIDS-related spending into the budgetary framework; Use of PRSP as lever to set aside part of HIPC II debt relief and/or shifting budgetary priorities; Integration of Global Funds to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) funding into the budgetary process.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elements of the checklist</td>
<td>Expected outcome / contribution within PRSP cycle</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Participation</td>
<td>Representations and / or groupings are included in the process that organize the force of People Living with HIV / AIDS (PLWHA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the participatory process underpinning PRSPs, proper representation of AIDS victims can be essential. Involvement of civil society is critical to address problems of stigmatization and exclusion. Also the direct participation of other social groups belonging to the poorest of the poor is difficult to achieve. Part of their poverty problem may be the practical difficulty to make their voice heard in the PRS process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Monitoring / Poverty and Social Impact Analysis</td>
<td>Should guide reassessments of priorities and budget allocations among sectors and areas, towards appropriate HIV / AIDS responses that are effective regarding target groups, sectors and the locus of poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV / AIDS may become part of as well quantitative as qualitative PRSP monitoring. For instance, where a defined national AIDS strategy exists, PRSP-related Poverty or Qualitative Impact Monitoring (QIM) may serve to check if governmental action on HIV / AIDS is actually perceived as a valid contribution to reduce poverty.</td>
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Lead questions to facilitate discussions of issues related to HIV / AIDS, poverty reduction and the PRSP were formulated to the major aspects of PRSP reflected in the five working groups of the Berlin Conference:

(1) Poverty analysis and monitoring:

What do we need to reflect the socio-economic impact of HIV / AIDS in the PRSP process, especially in the poverty analysis?

Commentary: The link of HIV / AIDS to the analysis of different dimensions of poverty, to the causes and consequences of poverty is important in terms of: (a) Human / social development: life expectancy, child mortality, demographic changes (number of dependants per family, children-headed households), food security, education; (b) Economic development: income, productive assets and savings, human resources, sector outputs / production
costs, economic growth; (c) Taking into account different gender, generational issues and socio-economic strata; impacts to urban vs. rural areas, at micro / meso / macro levels; (→ setting priorities and identifying target groups refer to (2) and monitoring refer to (3)).

(2) Pro-poor growth:

How to define HIV / AIDS as a cross-sectoral issue in pro-poor policies (national priorities, strategies, main 'target groups')?

**Commentary:** Incorporating HIV / AIDS into national frameworks implies appropriate policies and strategies. To effectively respond to the impacts of AIDS, the entire scope of direct pro-poor policies is relevant, beyond access to services incl. prevention, medical treatment or care. All sectors (public or private; formal or informal) need to be actively involved to effectively reduce existing vulnerabilities and to mitigate impacts (e.g. to improve access to land; to create HIV sensitive workplace environments and employment opportunities). Target groups or sectors vulnerable to HIV / AIDS require specific measures (e.g. to solve legal rights' issues or to support social change processes).

(3) Participation:

How to integrate PLWHA groups / organizations in planning, implementation and monitoring of PRS (as a member; as a 'target group')?

**Commentary:** It is estimated that there are over 40 million persons living with HIV / AIDS worldwide in 2002 and their numbers are rising by several thousands every months. In Africa south of the Sahara alone, over 32 million people or up to 10 % of the entire adult population are estimated to be living with HIV / AIDS. This enormous group not only indicates the gravity of the problem but its involvement in HIV / AIDS prevention and control also points to the solution of the AIDS crisis. Like in all other social, economic and human challenges, the solution to overcome the challenge can only be projected with the active participation of this 'target group'. While this is recognized in theory, nearly all countries struggle to go beyond a often timid compassionate and social – welfare type approach in dealing with PLWHA. While policies against the stigmatization and exclusion of
PLWHA will remain important, the real challenge is related to organize the groups of PLWHA into a strong force in prevention and control on national and regional level, building professional capacities for social change policies and working with them as a major force for the democratization process in gender and sexual relations in the societies.

(4) Gender:

How are gender, poverty and HIV/AIDS inter-related and what does this imply for PRSPs?

**Commentary:** In spite of the fact that cause-and-effect relationships between gender inequality (i.e. unequal status of men and women) and HIV transmission are being recognized, concrete actions, in the past, were mostly absent from international resolutions and national plans, addressing HIV/AIDS. Gender inequality is exacerbated by poverty. The causes of gender inequality often lie in cultural norms and expectations that continue to discriminate and rob women of power and that also fail to protect the rights of men and women living with HIV/AIDS. Many women remain at a low social status without power to discuss about sexual matters with men, to negotiate safer sex, even forcing them to accept unsafe practices. Responses to HIV/AIDS, which are based on the vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS, therefore, remain incomplete. Political leadership and advocacy to encourage the empowerment of women is considered essential to make any progress in fighting the epidemic. National responses have to be framed according to the level of HIV prevalence. At high prevalence, sustainable control of HIV/AIDS is to be based on a strategy comprising key sectors and target groups, addressing also gender-specific aspects of poverty, including the human, social and economic dimensions of poverty. It is important to develop prevention measures that target gender-specific sexual behaviour, which are different for men and women.

(5) Sustainable development:

**Commentary:** Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS within the topic of this working group would be possible. However, it was not a priority within this conference.
5.6.5 Recommendations for future co-operation:

The following recommendations for further action of governments, donors and civil society were developed by the working group at the conference:

1. Open debate on HIV / AIDS and gender issues leading to change the invisibility;

2. address research needs on interdependencies e.g. gender-HIV / AIDS-poverty;

3. develop a tool for mainstreaming HIV / AIDS into PRSP;

4. conduct training and capacity building on mainstreaming HIV / AIDS;

5. elaborate indicators for AIDS, gender etc. to monitor the PRSP process;

6. create and / or develop adequate social security systems;

7. set-up mechanisms for coordination between sectors (public, private, civil society);

8. improve the HIV / AIDS-related links between national, regional, and international level including all policy fields;

9. identify and disseminate successful experiences of introduction of HIV / AIDS in PRSP;

10. include people living with HIV / AIDS into participatory processes.
A1 Statements by Ministers

1 Speech by Mrs. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Minister, Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, Germany

I am very happy to welcome you all to this conference, which we are looking forward to very much and with great expectations, and we are glad that participants from 14 countries have come in order to discuss what Mr. Schmitt just outlined on the experience of the poverty reduction strategies and the fight against poverty.

At the beginning, I would like to talk about an issue connected with a political debate that is taking place at present. It is about globalization and the need to shape globalization in a more just, more social way – and also to shape it politically and not to accept it as if it were a process like a natural disaster or something like that. Looking at the European countries, one realizes that many people are afraid of the process of globalization. And you can also see that parties with a populist or even drastically right-wing orientation gain support by playing on these fears. In my opinion, these fears have to be taken into consideration in such a way that we try to shape globalization in a more social way.

But whenever I talk to people in Germany who follow the debate on development co-operation and globalization, I want to make very clear: Think of the feelings of the people in those countries that have not profited from globalization so far, or are even suffering from it to a certain extent; and also think of the fact that if we wish to make Germany a more just, a socially better place, we will not be able to achieve that unless we think of a more just, better, and more socially structured globalized world. We are so closely connected and interconnected that the fears which exist in other countries have to be taken into account too and the fight against poverty is one of the main objectives that has to unite all of us on our planet. And we also have to make sure that the fight against poverty is not only a fight, but an ongoing process.
I would like to call on all political decision-makers to concentrate our financial means on the fight against poverty and to concentrate all our efforts on achieving the Millennium Development Goals of halving extreme poverty by the year 2015 as well as giving all children in the world a primary education. We should use our financial means to reach these goals instead of, for instance, raising military expenditures.

I was personally present at the Millennium Assembly when the heads of state and government decided on the Millennium Development Goals. I thought, and I still think, that all those heads of state and government will hopefully still be alive in the year 2015 – since it is not so far away, it is only 13 years from now – to see if their promises have been fulfilled.

It is also important that we consider the fight against poverty in the context of security. Fighting poverty means giving more security to people, not only in the partner countries but also in our own countries. And this type of development co-operation is an element of security policy which is non-military, which is a long-lasting process but, on the other hand, which deserves all our efforts.

And further I would like to stress – and that has been made clear already by all the initiatives that the partner countries have undertaken – that poverty should not be defined only in material terms. People should be able to lead a life in security, prosperity and personal freedom. Of course, this requires financial income. But it also means that you have opportunities, that you are empowered, that your voice is heard. So the process of fighting poverty is a process which has a very broad approach and is not an approach which is centred only on the social security aspect. About one year ago, when we came back from the Millennium Assembly, our government decided to produce a Programme of Action, on the basis of which we wanted to help to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. And in the three fields I mentioned – empowerment, more security, more opportunity – we have outlined in ten areas what our aims are and how we want to participate with other industrialized countries to achieve these aims.
What has been achieved at international level over the last few years? As Mr. Schmitt mentioned – and I do not need to develop that once more – one of the starting points was the HIPC debt relief initiative. The debt relief process is now underway in 26 countries with a volume of about USD 41 billion (depending on whether you include the bilateral part or not, you arrive at a different figure). And it was this debt relief initiative that gave rise to the national poverty reduction strategies, although I must say, that some countries had been ahead with the first round of the HIPC initiative. Uganda, for instance, had already started its process when the enhanced HIPC initiative was decided upon.

At the Monterrey Conference it was reaffirmed that the Millennium Development Goals were binding for all participating partner countries. We also decided what we are going to do and what the countries are going to do in order to finance the development goals. During the last meeting of the World Bank and the IMF in April, one of the aims was operationalized in concrete terms, that is the question of primary education for all children under the age of 14. A plan has been agreed upon regarding how to achieve this aim and how the World Bank and the donors could give support. We, as the German government, are willing to support the task force on education, and also – specifically related to Africa – to try to support the initiatives that the World Bank itself has started.

Let me also mention, when summarizing what is necessary and has been achieved, the decisions of the European Union on the “everything but arms” initiative. This initiative implies the free access of all the 48 poorest developing countries to the markets of the European Union. This is an example which shows that the European Union is also moving forward.

As I mentioned, in Monterrey financing aspects were also discussed and in this context – even before Monterrey – pressure on financing for Official Development Assistance (ODA) had been growing stronger. The European Union – before Monterrey, and it was then confirmed in Monterrey – agreed to increase ODA by 2006 to 0.39%. All those countries that have not yet reached the average of 0.33% should reach this average. This, I must
confess, caused great debate within our government because if you take it in absolute numbers, it means increasing Germany’s Official Development Assistance from about USD 5 billion by a further USD 1 billion. It might be more, depending on the growth rates that can be achieved. That means we have agreed to help finance the development goals.

But I think we should also look for other innovative forms of financing development. If we want to achieve these aims, we need to mobilize more money than was agreed upon in Monterrey. It is a good first step that the USA promised an additional amount of USD 5 billion of ODA and the European Union an additional USD 7 billion of ODA. But it is still not enough and we have to try to mobilize other innovative means of financing these aims as well.

Further, in Monterrey and also in the WTO it was agreed that there should be a new trade round which takes into account that the terms of trade for developing countries are still completely unjust and that there are so many discriminating rules in the WTO that some of these rules need to be changed, for instance the question of tariff escalation. It was the expectation of the international community in Doha that we should end export subsidies in the agricultural field and give market access to products from developing countries. And in Doha and also in Monterrey we promised to do so.

Taking these promises seriously, I think it is a disastrous decision that has been taken by the US Congress to raise subsidies for the agricultural sector by 70%. This decision goes against the spirit adopted and all the promises made, and I call on the US President to veto such a law! It might really have the most awful reactions and consequences, and therefore we have to be sure that these decisions, which go against all the promises made, are not taken.

Now speaking about the way ahead: As I said at the beginning, we need a new pact – and Monterrey to a certain extent was such a new pact – between developing and developed countries. By the way, I do not know what the situation was in all your countries, but in Germany there was some criticism of Monterrey and the Monterrey consensus. But one has to look
at it thoroughly: It was the first time that all the institutions (UN, World Bank and IMF) cooperated, and that in itself is a positive aspect. Because it is of no use taking radical decisions only to then have the international financing institutions say “we are not interested”.

Further, there is a shift – which we should not neglect – from the “Washington consensus”, as I might call it, which in the years before meant “let the market rule”, to the Monterrey consensus, which says it is not the market alone that can do the job; it is the state, it is the developing countries, it is the developed countries, it is the private sector of course, it is civil society, but everyone has to take his or her responsibility. So this new consensus means, “we cannot leave it to the market”. And by the way, as I just tried to outline, the free market is inconsequential if we see, for instance, the subsidies in the agricultural sector.

So we need a new pact between developing and developed countries if we are to move forward, we need the necessary financing and we probably will also have to do more in the field of debt relief. Because if you look at the economic consequences of September 11 and the aftermath, it is clear that most of the poverty reduction strategies – and I would be interested, of course, to hear some of the experiences during this conference – assume very high growth rates. And if the growth rates go down, obviously there will be problems with the sustainability. Therefore it is necessary for additional funding for debt relief to be provided in order to reach the level of sustainability promised.

I already mentioned the question of making the WTO and world trade more favourable for developing countries. Finally, I would like to mention the PRSP process. I think it is important to note that the PRSP process includes many more countries than those directly benefiting from debt relief. All those countries eligible for IDA grants are also obliged to have poverty reduction strategies. This means that about 70 developing countries – half of the developing countries of the world – are obliged to develop poverty reduction strategies and will do so. Up to now, over 60 countries are working at it – at different stages, but they are all working at it. And it is a
new process including people from civil society also - as we have already seen in many examples, and as will be outlined by the participants of the relevant countries during this conference.

Hopefully – and I will work for that and I am working for that – the PRSP process will also bring about a change for the donor countries. Because you cannot go on carrying out the same projects. What you need to do, and what we are doing, is to use the PRSP process and the PRSPs of the partner countries as the point of reference of our bilateral development co-operation. So you need to change, and we are changing the terms of development co-operation. The people working in the field of development co-operation and the people working in our Ministry know that this means also reshaping some of your thinking. It means that we should integrate our programmes into the programmes that partner countries have developed in the context of the PRSP process and it also means that we have to change our difficult procedures and also the accounting processes and so on. We want to help developing countries and not create bureaucratic problems.

The PRSP process is a learning process, it is a learning process for all of us. Those who say that they already know everything are normally the ones who are not open to such a learning process. I am looking forward to a conference that can give answers to some of the questions I would like to raise at the end of my speech, for instance:

• Can the causes of poverty in the specific fields be sufficiently clearly identified and has this been done?

• What political responsibilities do the strategies propose?

• How can the effectiveness of strategies be evaluated?

• How can economic policy be framed in such a way as to make an effective contribution to poverty reduction?

• Which area – and that is, I am sure, a complicated process in every partner country and not only there – should be defined as the priority area where productivity should be fostered? I know what that means, because there are obviously conflicting interests between different
sectors, and priorities have to be defined. That is, in my experience, a very important point.

- How can the greatest possible participation by civil society be achieved in the countries concerned?

- How can women, in particular, be involved? I was very impressed by our Ugandan colleague's description of the specific development approach to supporting the education of girls and what changes it is making for the development of the country itself.

- And finally: What synergies exist between the aim of poverty reduction and the principle of sustainable development? It is four months until the conference in Johannesburg and one question will be: If we fight poverty, and if we develop the productivity of countries, with what type of energy should we do it? If it is the old type of energy production and consumption, this will mean more problems for future societies and future generations. So the question has to be tackled: How to de-link economic growth, which is needed, from the type of energy production and consumption? That is a major discussion. We cannot take the discussion on Johannesburg and sustainable development in one direction and the one on fighting poverty in another. It has to be combined, these questions have to be discussed together.

Finally I would like to say that we are looking forward to learning about the structures, the strategies and the success of your countries. I hope that the outcome of this conference will be fruitful for the sake of the people, the many millions of children, the many millions of people that are living in poverty and that in this way we will help to change the lives of people and to make their life more socially acceptable and more just. And perhaps we will take a step towards creating a more just and social world, because the saying is: "If many people in many fields and areas of the world make many, perhaps sometimes tiny steps, they nevertheless altogether can change the face, the image of our world, and make it more humane". Thank you for participating in this important task.
2 Speech by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hang, Minister, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Vietnam

It is for me a great pleasure to take part in and address this forum organized in Berlin, the beautiful capital of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Sustainable poverty alleviation and reduction by half of the number of all poor by the year 2015 are major challenges for the international community, and all the more for developing countries. It is in this spirit that we highly appreciate the initiative of the German Government to organize this significant conference which is answering the request of developing countries.

Over the past decade, the Federal Republic of Germany has been one of the countries cooperating most effectively with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in bilateral agreements as well as in direct private investments. The roots of such co-operation date back to the early 90s, when a German inter-agency fact finding mission composed of members of BMZ, KfW, GTZ and Misereor came to Vietnam to assess the poverty situation in the country and offer co-operation and assistance. Around that time, a high-level authority of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam had the opportunity to attend a German-organized Exposure and Dialogue Programme on poverty alleviation in Bandung, Indonesia, where representatives of BMZ, KfW, GTZ, DSE and others were present. This initiated the start of co-operation projects between Germany and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) in the fields of revolving credit for the poor with KfW, Misereor, of advisory technical assistance on poverty alleviation with GTZ. These projects have been implemented effectively. Co-operation efforts between Vietnam and Germany are based on the principle of Vietnam’s ownership, testing innovative mechanisms, successful models of self-help oriented poverty alleviation, thereby facilitating policy formulation for nation-wide replication and contributing to accelerate poverty reduction in Vietnam. During the visit of the Prime Minister of Vietnam in Germany, both Prime Ministers showed their common interest in socio-economic co-operation and made note of the high performances achieved by Vietnam in poverty alleviation.

Through an effective implementation of the comprehensive renovation policy initiated by the Vietnam Communist Party, Vietnam’s economy achieved between 1991 and 2000 a high and relatively stable growth rate of 7.5% per year on average. In 2000, the GDP was 2.07 times the level of 1990. The average GDP per capita translated into US Dollars was USD 400, but much higher using an equivalent purchasing power.

The poverty rate, based on the national poverty line, was reduced from 30% in 1992 to 20% in 1995 and further down to 17% in 2000, attaining set government targets. Vietnam was rated by the International Community as one of the countries with a relatively fast decrease in poverty rate. The Human Development Index (HDI), from position 122 out of 174 nations in 1995, moved to position 113 in 1998, 110 in 1999 and 108 in 2000.

Vietnam also focused on infrastructure improvement for the delivery of basic social services and implemented with success the "20/20" Initiative.

The encouraging performances above-mentioned were due to the following factors:

- Vietnam has been consistent with its comprehensive renovation process, maintaining a high, relatively stable and pro-poor economic growth rate while shifting economic structures towards industrialization and modernization.

- "Hunger eradication and poverty reduction" has been identified as a major strategy of the Party and Government, with a high priority in socio-economic development towards integral human development. Hunger eradication and poverty alleviation is not only a highly ranked determination goal of the Government, but it has been popularized, raising the potential and the active participation of all social levels, of the poor themselves, of social mass organizations and companies, research institutes, etc., becoming a wide social movement in scope and depth throughout the country.
- Positive achievements are seen in infrastructure development for the delivery of basic social services, especially in health care, education, water for livelihood, electricity down to village/commune level.

- For the period 1996-2000, the Government decided to implement a series of National Target Programmes, and prioritized resources accordingly: hunger eradication and poverty reduction, employment, socio-economic development of communes in special circumstances. After several years of implementation, these programmes have contributed to improved basic infrastructure and social services in poor areas, ameliorating the living conditions of the community.

- Hand-in-hand with economic renovation and public administration reforms, in which priority is given to the poor, special attention is also paid to people's participation as reflected in the Grassroots Democracy Decree, applying the principle: "People are informed, discuss, supervise", increasing the sense of responsibility of authorities at all levels as well as improving the effectiveness and efficiency of poverty alleviation efforts.

- International, multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental organizations have lent efficient support and co-operation in terms of technical and financial assistance, as well as in sharing of experiences and best practices in the field of poverty alleviation. This is an important factor in Vietnam to expand international co-operation with other organizations and implement the ongoing National Target Programme on Poverty Alleviation and Employment 2001-2005 and its own Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (now in the last stage of drafting with the broad involvement of stakeholders and the donor community, to mention a few: WB, ADB, UNDP, DFID, GTZ, etc.).

**Difficulties and challenges**

- Despite the fast pace of poverty alleviation, sustainability remains at a low level, as the poverty line in Vietnam is still low. and a wide percentage of the population is just slightly above the line, with inadequate
incomes and limited room for savings and investments in production. The unemployment rate in urban areas is still high (6.44%) and the rate of labour time used in rural areas still low (73.86%).

- The poverty incidence remains high, and living standards are still inadequate.

- The gap between the rich and poor and between regions, especially those with a high concentration of ethnic minorities, tends to increase.

- Although infrastructure in poor communes has been considerably strengthened, the volume of investment needs remains a major concern.

**Orientation in poverty alleviation for the period 2001-2010**

The international community has committed itself to reduce by half the number of poor world-wide by 2015. At the same time, the Vietnamese Government has set for itself the objective of reducing by two thirds the number of poor households by 2010, eliminating chronic hunger, ensuring essential infrastructure in poor communities and the delivery of basic social services to the poor.

To reach the said objective, Vietnam has committed itself to implement the localized International Development Targets (IDT). In the formulation and implementation of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (C-PRGS) and the National Target Programme, it will continue to strive for a broad participation of government agencies, organizations, with consultations at grassroots level, using participatory methodologies. It will concentrate on the effective implementation of its own C-PRGS, of which the focus is the National Target Programme on Poverty Alleviation 2001-2005 (already approved by the Government), requiring the convergence of all resources:

- To further maintain a growth rate of over 7% per annum, and keep the direction towards pro-poor economic growth, agricultural and rural development remaining a high priority. To adjust the structure of public expenditures, increase the ratio at commune and district levels but reduce
it at provincial and central levels. Special attention shall be given to public administrative reforms, equity between groups, regions and gender-related issues.

- To take the initiative in international integration, especially in trade, with various policies and approaches to protect the poor.

- To continue implementing policies and approaches directly assisting the poor, poor households, communes and provinces through the National Target Programmes on poverty reduction health care, education, etc., in order to

  provide opportunities for economic development, encourage wealth formation together with self-help spirit to overcome poverty through policies in support of credit, agriculture-forestry-fishery extension, production tools and land, infrastructure development for production such as irrigation and electricity, development of non-agricultural occupations, especially in post-harvest processing and markets, etc.;

  further facilitate infrastructure development in rural areas, especially for the delivery of basic social services to answer the most basic needs of the poor; encourage support of the poor in health care, education, culture, housing and access to clean water, increasing the educational level of the population, as these are the keys to long-term, sustainable poverty alleviation;

  develop social safety nets for more effective, sustainable support to disadvantaged, vulnerable groups and the poor through policies and approaches geared towards minimizing the risk factor, ensuring stable living conditions and developing community integration;

  further expand international co-operation (technical and financial) and in sharing experience; strengthen a three-pronged co-operation approach: multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental. Special importance shall be given to co-operation with non-governmental organizations in carrying out the bottom-up, participatory approach.
To realize the commitment of the international community and the objective of the Vietnamese Government in sustainable poverty alleviation, we hope that the German Government and other developed countries will contribute in maintaining economic stability throughout the world, and increase their support to poorer countries to intensify the fight against poverty. We hope that developing countries further strengthen their co-operation for an exchange of experiences in order to learn from one another best practices in poverty alleviation.
3 Speech by Ms. Rocío Tábora, Vice Minister, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Honduras

Let me briefly give some information on the particular situation of Honduras and its PRSP. The PRSP of Honduras is very closely linked to a large scale national reconstruction and transformation process after hurricane Mitch had devastated our country in October 1998. Since its beginning the PRSP was related to the so-called “Stockholm Principles”, which were agreed upon among international donors and the countries affected by “Mitch”. These principles laid out a couple of criteria for sustainable development including, for instance, good governance and decentralization.

The Honduran PRSP was prepared and designed by the former Honduran Government, approved by IMF and World Bank in October 2000. The new Government, being in charge since the end of January 2002, inherited this document, a strategy with lots of obligations and responsibilities but with very little money.

During the first 100 days of the new Government, we completely adopted the document and its outlined strategy and immediately started with its implementation. One of our first concrete activities was to present, discuss and approve the law of the fund for poverty reduction, which is a prerequisite of the IMF for its structural programme. We are now about to set up the national committee of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). This committee will be composed of representatives of the Government and different groups of civil society such as gender groups, labour unions, rural groups, private sector, etc. Two donor representatives will be participating as observers. The Fund will be responsible for the use of the funds for poverty reduction.

We are also providing the necessary institutional framework for the implementation of the PRS, defining mechanisms for a decentralized implementation, defining indicators and designing a special gender approach policy as well as a strategy for sustainable development. These two policies have to complement and coincide with the PRS harmonizing the international cooperation.
We strongly believe that the PRS can only be successful if being complemented and accompanied by a sound policy of modernization of state and strengthening of democracy. Other main priorities of our Government are to improve the management of social matters and of our human resources, especially in the areas of education and health. Another key issue for us is to generate transparency in all governmental acquisition transactions.

The main overall challenge for our new Government is to design and formulate a macro-economic policy which coincides with our PRSP.

As a long term goal, after the physical reconstruction after "Mitch" has been completed, we will have to implement the political and social national transformation. Our main aspect of this is to decrease paternalism in favour of building up a new empowered citizenry. But the most important of all is that Hondurans believe and remain confident in one thing: that it is definitely possible to reduce poverty and create a better life for all.
4 Speech by Mr. Luvsandagvyn Enkhtaiwan, Vice Minister, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Mongolia

First of all I would like to express my great gratitude to all organizers for inviting the Mongolian Delegation and for the excellent organization of the International Conference on such important issues as poverty alleviation and poverty reduction strategies.

The problems of poverty and poverty alleviation are today problems not only of those countries but also of the world community generally. The worldwide experiences of last periods have led to the conclusion that the only way to overcome problems is the joint co-operation and collaboration of national governments of developing countries with industrial countries and international agencies and their assistance.

Mongolia is facing the wide scope of economic and social problems of the transition to the market-oriented economy and as developing country as well. Over the last decade, Mongolia has relatively successfully implemented this transition to the market economy by creation of basic dimensions such as liberalization of prices, privatization of state owned enterprises, establishing a legal environment for open trade and economic policy. As a result of these fundamental changes, there are some positive changes in the economy compared to the initial stages of transition: recovery of national industries leading to the annual average growth of 3.5%. However, the economic growth has deteriorated by national disasters which occurred during the last two years.

The inflation level has been brought down to single digit, overall budget deficit declined sharply reaching 5% of GDP, and the international reserves increased to the level of 14 weeks of import coverage. The macro-economic situation has stabilized, which needs to be sustained further. Currently, as a result of structural reforms in the economy, 70% of GDP is produced by the private sector.

While these improvements have occurred at a macro-economy level, there were no substantial increases in living standards of the population. In addi-
tion, the unemployment rate has increased and the scope of poverty has broadened. The results of living standard measurement surveys, undertaken jointly with international agencies (1995, 1998), revealed that poverty has become evident in Mongolia and 36% of the population is below the poverty line.

The difficult weather conditions (draught) through the last 2-3 years have hit the Mongolian herders hard; during this time, over 10 million animals died, which influenced negatively not only the economic but also the social situation of the country. Approximately 30% of the GDP is produced by cattle breeding. At the same time the social conditions of the rural population were dramatically changed, people became without their existential cattle stock poor and unemployed, they were compelled to move, to migrate to the cities and towns. As the big negative feedback of those migration processes, the unemployment rate increased highly and now is according to the official statistics 4.7%, but some unofficial sources say up to 17%.

The poverty alleviation and poverty reduction strategy papers were developed by the Mongolian Government and approved by the World Bank Board of Directors on September 27, 2001. Their main goals are:

- to ensure macroeconomic stability;
- to provide private sector led growth;
- to distribute equally the benefits of this growth;
- to create a favourable environment for sustainable human development;
- to decrease the unemployment rate up to two times by creating a wide range of job possibilities.

By reaching macro-economic stabilization targets such as medium-term economic growth at 4.6%, medium-term inflation rate at 5.6%, exchange rate fluctuations within 2% per annum, overall budget deficit at 6-7% of GDP, current budget deficit at 7% of GDP, the poverty alleviation and poverty reduction policy succeeded.
Considering the locked geographical location, small market size, vulnerability to external and climatic shocks, the Mongolian Government has set up policy priorities in implementation of appropriate industrial and external trade as one of the main challenges for the pro-poor growth policy in Mongolia. This policy contains

- recovery and support of national industries; the main area of focus is to support raw material processing industries, increase production of goods with higher value added, enhance competitiveness of goods;

- promotion of export-oriented industries and supporting the tourism sector as the main revenue-earning industry;

- infrastructure development;

- improving management and structural adjustment in the economy: banking, financial and social sectors, extension of financial services to rural areas;

- narrowing urban-rural gaps and acceleration of the decentralization process in the country; the regional development concept of Mongolia was adopted and implemented as a new approach for economic management of a country with a vast territory, e.g. creation of a favourable environment for market access to rural population, improvement of pastoral risk management;

- ensuring a better access and quality of education, health and other basic services for the sustainability of human development, through increase of public resource allocation such as free basic services, direct financial measures such as budget provision for special categories of students tuition and dormitory payments (herders, low income families, families with many children, etc.);

- implementing policies towards employment creation with special focus on public works;

- creation of a favourable business environment by promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);

- maintaining an appropriate social safety network.
The Government of Mongolia set a goal to enhance the economic structure and capacities based on comparative advantages in line with the world globalization process and international development goals. This ultimate goal can be achieved with strong international support. The strategy and programmes such as Poverty Reduction and Growth Facilities, Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Financial Sector Development Programme, agreed with international financial institutions, are key policy documents for the Mongolian Government. The Mongolian Government commits itself to implement the proposed policy objectives with a broad participation and collaboration with all stakeholders, including civil society and private sector.

Presently the Mongolian ministries and institutions are working to develop the Full-PRSP involving the civil society as intensively as possible. For the past two years, the newly established Poverty Research Unit has been strengthened to analyze the real situation to avoid information error or to correct the previous data in order to develop precise documents and papers.

The main obstacles in strategic policy development are:

- Lack of national experience in poverty reduction strategy development;
- data/information gaps;
- lack of efficient mechanism for participation promotion;
- vulnerability of Mongolia’s economy to external shocks.

For the bilateral and international co-operation and collaboration we see important challenges to formulate and implement pro-poor growth policies, to improve public expenditure management, to enhance the participatory approach of civil society, to improve monitoring and supervising of poverty reduction strategy implementation, to enhance national capacity in areas of strategy development.

The long history of Mongolian-German co-operation contains intensification and efficiency of assistance in chosen areas of economy, such as the implementation of economic reforms and reconstruction, sustainable development of rural areas, natural environment preservation, renewable energy produc-
tion, which are fully adjusted to the objectives of the poverty alleviation and poverty reduction strategy of the Government.

As participant of the International Conference on PRSP and as Mongolian Vice Minister for Finance and Economy I would like to take the opportunity to thank the German Government, the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, all German agencies and people involved, for the great support and professionalism they gave and give.

The main instruments for the further development of strategic policy of developing countries must be closely co-ordinated, adjusted and complemented with the goal to alleviate and reduce the poverty and its influences by involving, participation and support of civil societies.

I am very confident about lessons learned, efficient discussions and sharing experiences to each other with and between all participants from representative countries during the Conference in order to achieve most progress on the way to poverty alleviation and poverty reduction.

I wish best results and success for the Conference.
5 Speech by Mr. Ramiro Cavero, Vice Minister, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Bolivia

First of all, I want to thank and congratulate the German Government and the GTZ for the organization of this seminar and for the hospitality that we have met here in Berlin.

As a way of introduction, now Bolivia has 20 years since we recovered democracy; and there are 17 years that we have implemented a new economic model, that means a social market economy. The latter is understood as: if the market is working very well in some place, Government has to leave the market alone; but if the market is not solving the problems, the Government has to intervene.

During the last 10 years, Bolivia has been growing at an average rate of 4% per year, with a low inflation and macro-economic stability. One result, for example, is that we have increased the saving (investments) from 7% to more than 20%. Or, as another example, direct foreign investment has increased from almost nothing in the early nineties to almost 10% of the GDP today. In the last two or three years, we have been facing an economic slow-down. Not only because of the international crisis but also because Bolivia decided to eradicate the illegal coca leaf, which is meant to go into the cocaine production. This means a loss of almost 3% of the GDP each year and a permanent impact on the economy. However, the figures from the last months of this year seem to indicate that the economy is recovering. During the last two years, we hadn't hardly any growth, but during the first months of this year we have been growing by nearly 3%.

During the last 10 years, almost all of the social indicators have been improved, not only in education, but also in health, among others. In fact, if you look at the human development index ranking, we have moved from position 122 to position 104. So, Bolivia has improved not only in its own development indicators, but also in its position compared to other countries. The percentage of poor has reduced from 70% to less than 60% during these past ten years. However, this progress has been very different bet-
ween urban and rural areas. In urban areas, the percentage of poor people is less than 40%, whereas in rural areas 9 out of 10 are still poor.

With all that background, Bolivia has received the first debt relief in 1998 (under the HIPC I initiative). In HIPC I, we made the compromise with the international community, the donors and organizations, that we would invest this money in health, education and poverty reduction in the rural sector. Several goals were set. After a little more than one year, we had reached all the goals we agreed with the cooperating partners, and that is the reason why Bolivia could receive a second debt relief ("HIPC II"). The starting point for HIPC II was the National Dialogue, which involved people from all over the country. There were representatives from the social and productive sectors, as well as politicians and government authorities. This actors faced one main agenda: How to fight against poverty and, of course, where to invest the money. After a long dialogue process between thousands of people, we arrived at three main conclusions:

- The first one was that the money has to be assigned directly to the municipalities. At that level, municipalities will administer the money in a participatory process within the communities, the decision to be taken is where and on what to invest the money. Mainly there are two important sectors in which to invest: The social sector (health, education, basic sanitation, water, etc.) and the public infrastructure which is aimed to support the productive sector (roads, irrigation, electricity and so on).

- The second, and maybe most important decision, was to distribute the money among municipalities taking into account poverty indicators. This is the first time in Bolivia that we use poverty indicators to assign money among the municipalities. The importance of this is not only that assigning money according to poverty indicators is the best way to fight against poverty; but also, because it empowers the democracy process. In the past, people chose not to vote for the one they thought was the best mayor, but for the one with more lobbying power in the Government, therefore it would be traduced in more money for the municipality.
Now, with the use of a formula to distribute the money, people will vote for the one who they really think is going to be the best mayor.

- The third conclusion that we drew in the national dialogue was that civil society, together with the Catholic Church, have to put in place a mechanism that will help both Government and civil society to control the use of funds. This means to check in particular, whether the decisions taken by the municipalities have been made in a participatory way and are not just the decisions taken by the mayors or certain groups of persons.

Based on these conclusions, we wrote a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and transformed it into a “national dialogue law”. With this law, we fulfil four of the most important principles to fight against poverty:

- The first principle is that you need more money. This money comes not only from the debt relief but also from additional resources from the cooperation to the municipalities.

- The second principle is that this money has to be better distributed; and the best way of improving the distribution of money is, of course, to use poverty indicators.

- The third principle is that the money has to be better used; and that means that the people who take the decision on where to invest the money are not from the Central Government, not from the Ministries, are not special firm managers, but the people in the communities. Within a participatory process they have to decide how to spend the money, because they know better than anyone what necessities they have, and which are their priorities. We know that they are going to make mistakes, but they will learn from their mistakes and, with the time they will improve.

- The last principle is that the money has to be better controlled. We have a lot of organizations from the Central Government who control this, but it is better if the civil society works together with the Government in controlling the money. From the communities, from the local level, where different people are involved in controlling the money, up to the national
level, it has to be agreed with the Government on the main indicators for a proper monitoring of the strategy and its implementation.

This is the law which has passed the Congress about nine months ago and which is now in the process of being implemented. At the end of each month, the treasury transfers the agreed amounts of money to the accounts of over 300 municipalities in Bolivia, this is the core principle, the heart of our Bolivian strategy against poverty.

However, it is not enough to transfer money to the municipalities by a better distribution process. We need more than that: If we invest in health, education, roads or irrigation, we invest in the capacity of people to produce new and better products. For these products, we need access to the markets. It is of overriding importance for us that world markets are open to Bolivia. I talked about the cocaine eradication; cocaine was a product that had a lot of preference, no tariff was imposed on it at all, no subsidies to fight against, and no commercial barriers were set. So, if we want to substitute cocaine by other products, we want at least to see the conditions that cocaine had.

The other point we want to be maintained are the concessional resources. It would be better if they increased, but at least they should not be reduced. Bolivia is a country with a per capita income of nearly USD 1,000 per year, however, we think that we still need concessional resources for more years. We have a lot of gas reserves, but this project will probably start yielding in 2007 or 2008; so, in the meantime, we need concessional money to keep coming to the country. It would be desirable if all money from the development co-operation passed through a process like the HIPC one. Can you imagine how much time and resources we would have to spend if we had to negotiate with more than 20 countries? 1% of the GDP, USD 100 million every year, spent on different projects, in over 300 municipalities, and maybe, these negotiation will take 20 years. In the case of the HIPC, in contrast, it was very quick and the money is today already available in the municipalities’ accounts. So, today, we are facing two procedures: With the HIPC it is very easy, the money goes directly into the municipalities. In contrast, with a normal process to assign the money from the co-operation
to different projects, and within different bureaucratic processes, it takes too much time. So we come to the conclusion that it would be better to have only one mechanism for all the money.

Facing globalization, we have fears and hopes. We have fears if globalization means that tariffs are ‘globalized’ in all the countries, if it means the increase of subsidies and the increase of barriers to the markets. To get to Berlin, it takes more than 14 hours by plane, however, once you got there, you do not feel far from your country: You can make a phone call, you can read newspapers on the internet, and due to the time difference, I can read the newspaper of the day even before people in Bolivia are getting up. But within Bolivia, there are places to which it takes to get only 3 hours by car, however, once you got there, you have no telephone, no internet facilities, and you feel more remote as if you were in Berlin.

This is why we hope that globalization will be a way of getting access to new information and communication technology. We hope that globalization means to reduce the ‘digital gap’, because this kind of globalization will really help us to reduce poverty.
6 Speech by Mr. Abdulrahman Tarmoom, Vice Minister, Ministry of Planning and Development, Yemen

I am pleased to participate in this conference to represent my country. Cordially I thank the German Government for giving us this opportunity to attend this conference.

Yemen is a least developed country with a per capita income of less than USD 400. Its rate of population growth is one of the highest in the world – around 3.5%. Its natural resources are very scarce with a per capita of water of 137 cubic meters representing only 2% of the international rate, one of the lowest in the world.

As per the 1998 Household Survey, 17.6% of the population live under the food poverty line and 41.8% under the upper poverty line, which means that 6.9 million people out of 18.3 million are suffering from poverty and other different poverty dimensions.

The main causes of poverty lie mainly (in addition to high rate of population growth and scarce natural resources) on the weak performance of the economy: During 1990-1994 the public budget deficit was 15% of GDP; high inflation rate of 50%; unemployment rate of 12%; and acute decrease of the local currency value. In addition, there were external and internal shocks – the 1990 Gulf War, the return of 800,000 emigrants from the oil producing neighbouring countries, and the 1994 civil war.

During the period of 1995-1998, the Yemeni Government, with the support of the donor countries, the World Bank and IMF, implemented the economic and financial reform programme to stabilize and avoid further deterioration of the economy. The Government could achieve reasonable and acceptable success to improve the economic and financial situations: budget deficit dropped to its lowest rate of 2% of the GDP; inflation rate decreased to a range of 4-10%; local currency value stabilized; even so, the rate of economic growth remains low and the poverty increases in Yemen.
Early 2000, the Government of Yemen started negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF for the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and to become one of the PRSP countries. The preparation of the PRSP was divided into two stages: One, the preparation of the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (the IPRSP). The preparation of the IPRSP was completed in March 2000 and the document was approved by the Yemeni Cabinet in April 2000. Before the presentation of the IPRSP to the World Bank and the IMF, the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Ministry of Finance made their contacts with international organizations and the donor countries to agree on the final version of the IPRSP that should go in line with the Government Programme, the comprehensive reform programme and the general framework of the Second Five Year Plan (2001-2005).

The preparation process also involved the different Government Officials, civil society, NGOs, women organizations, academics, political parties, and the private sector. Surveys have also been conducted to reflect the views and opinions of the poor. Further updates were made and finally presented to World Bank and IMF in December 2000. The Executive Board of Directors of both institutions approved and accepted the IPRSP in February 2001 as a good basis for the preparation of the full PRSP.

In a second step, a Technical Committee was formed with the responsibility of preparing the full PRSP, under the direct supervision of the Minister of Planning and Development. The committee included members of all institutions directly related with poverty issues. The main sources of the PRSP preparation were based on the previous activities, mainly:

- The Interim PRSP;
- the Second Five Year Plan;
- the comments made by the World Bank and IMF on the Interim PRSP;
- the seminars, workshops, and conferences.
The preparation process of the full PRSP enlarged and widened the participation of all concerned parties in the Yemeni society, of international organizations and donor countries. Several seminars, workshops and conferences were conducted to discuss the strategy and to listen to the different views and comments of the participants. Additional surveys were undertaken to enrich the strategy. The draft full strategy is now ready and under discussion with the World Bank and IMF. It is expected to be completed at the end of this month.

The Government is also organizing a general Government-Donor meeting before the final submission of the document to the World Bank and IMF.
7 Speech by Mr. Chris Kassami, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Uganda

First of all, I would like to chain my colleagues in thanking the German Government for organizing this very informative review of the PRSPs. Secondly, I want through you, Mme Minister, thank the German Government for all the assistance that you have given to Uganda in the fight against poverty, and also for you putting poverty on the top of your agenda.

The PEAP/PRSP

The PRSP process in Uganda started before the PRSP: Long before the Bretton Woods Institution chose PRSP as a mechanism for fighting poverty, the people of Uganda had decided that despite an average growth of 6% over a period of seven years, despite economic stability, despite an inflation rate of under 5%, they were dying of poverty. The message was written on the wall: “Poverty is killing us”. And it is this outcry against poverty that led a mechanism of consultation, using civil society, the political elite, the communities, through a participatory programme, to try and work out a mechanism for fighting poverty. This mechanism, which was known as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan and which started in 1995 and ended in 1997, saw poverty as a total problem that you could not fight with a measure here and a measure there, but which required a total strategy. Poverty was seen as more than income poverty; poverty was seen as deprivation, having nowhere to go, not being respected, and not having enough income. It is for this reason, after consultation, that the Ugandan Government decided to prepare the plan for the eradication of poverty, popularly known as PEAP, which set the goal of trying to reduce absolute poverty to 10% by the end of the year 2017. The programme the Ugandan Government drew up after consultation had four pillars:

- Creating a framework for sustainable economic growth and structural transformation; here it was realized that poverty can only be fought if growth rates increase to at least 7% per annum; the target, therefore,
was to increase growth to an average of 7% per annum and to reduce inflation to at most 5% per annum.

- It was also realized that poverty can only be fought in a stable environment; the second pillar towards fighting poverty was to ensure good governance and security; here, the key areas include
  - the democratization process of Uganda,
  - the observance of human rights,
  - improvement in service delivery, which included a public service reform,
  - improvement in the procurement process where a lot of resources were lost, and
  - improvement in the management of public finances.

- The third pillar was to try to directly increase the ability of the poor to raise their incomes; in case of Uganda, since about 85% of the population live in rural areas, the major instrument chosen was modernization of agriculture; so, modernizing agriculture became the pillar that would try to transform the rural areas and improve rural incomes.

- The fourth pillar in the fight against poverty were measures that would improve the quality of life of the poor; this included primary education, primary health, provision of water, and in health, apart from primary health, the fight against AIDS which was a major scratch, increasing poverty and reducing rural income. So, AIDS became one of the cross-cutting issues to address poverty.

As an implementation mechanism, the Government chose a strategy that had four major instruments:

- One of these instruments was the sector-wide approach and district plans and investment programmes; it was realized that investments are interrelated, e.g. investments in primary health are related to investments in water, as water-borne diseases is the major cause of poor
health; similarly, investments that try to deal with infant mortality are related to education, because an educated mother looks better after her baby, will go to a delivery hospital and therefore reduce infant mortality; so because of this, there was a need to look at expenditures not as individual expenditures but in terms of sectors; hence, the sector-wide approach became an important instrument in the implementation of the PRSP.

- Another important instrument was the medium-term expenditure framework, which started as far back as 1992; the MTEF, as it is popularly known, aimed at ensuring that resources go in key areas that fight poverty, so that the MTEF allocated resources follow strictly the four pillars of the PEAP; and the monitoring of the MTEF was in line with the monitoring of the PEAP.

- A third instrument was the Poverty Action Fund, or PAF; in 1998, when we got the HIPC resources, it was decided that HIPC resources would be put in a fund that would be used to address the two pillars of PEAP “increasing income” and “improving the quality of life”. As a result of HIPC 1 and HIPC 2, we saved about USD 90 million in debt service; these funds were put into the PAF. But apart from the funds from the HIPC savings we also put in our own resources – in other words, the Government put resources into the PAF to address rural poverty. This also encouraged donors to put resources into PAF, so that we found that the PAF was over 35 % of the total budget, 35 % of which were financed by the Government, 34 % by HIPC resources, and 31 % by donors. This became a major instrument for fighting poverty.

- Lastly, another instrument was the annual plan. The annual plan is an attempt that tries to operationalize the PEAP: Every year again, we allocate resources ensuring that they are within the MTEF, that the PAF is provided for, and that the resources will go into the PEAP areas.

Now, a number of achievements have been made in following this path: Rural poverty, absolute poverty, which was 56 % in 1992/93, reduced to 44 % in 1997 and further to 35 % in the year 1999/2000. This shows that
emphasis on poverty helps in the fight against it. Although we are far from our goal of 10% by the year 2017, there is at least an indication that poverty is reducing and that the resources that are being given both by donors – like Germany – and through HIPC are actually addressing poverty.

Another achievement has been made in primary education: Primary education enrolments increased from about 2.5 million in 1995 to currently about 6 million. An important aspect of the Primary Education Strategy, of the UPE, is that it has removed the distinction between boys and girls in the access to schools. To us this is very important in the fight against poverty: We have data showing that homes which have a spouse with at least four to five years of education have better incomes than those that have none. By removing the segregation between girls and boys in terms of access to education, we are actually increasing our ability to reach our goal of reducing poverty.

Whereas health figures give a mixed picture – numbers that refer to mortality, life expectancy, nutrition levels of children – a major success has been in the field of fighting AIDS: The prevalence of AIDS has decreased from 30% in the early 90s to currently 6%, and our intention in the medium term is to reduce it further by 20%. This clearly shows that resources in the health sector that are put towards behavioural change do actually work, that scratches like Aids can be fought, provided that enough attention and resources are put to it.

Despite these achievements, a lot remains to be done:

- One, of course, is deepening decentralization and building capacity at the local level to absorb resources, and to account for them. In this endeavour – we are of course building capacity and accountability – we also rely on civil society to help us in monitoring and reporting.

- We also review the PEAP/PRSP every two years to ensure that resources go where they are meant to and that expenditure is actually having an impact. We are also sharpening our monitoring indicators: We have taken a number of indicators from our household survey and tested
them statistically for their relevance to poverty. We have chosen a few indicators that we think by following would sharpen our focus and improve our monitoring capacity.

- The third one is to strengthen the role of parliament, because the parliament is the voice of the people, parliamentarians are the watch-dogs of the people; however, they must have the capacity not only to appraise where the resources are going but also to monitor them. The parliament has been given a research office, a new budget law has been passed, and the parliament is provided with information on the budget and is trying to ensure that resources go where they are needed. Of course, to be able to do this, goodwill is not enough; it needs assistance, machinery, mechanisms and processes, which have to be created to make parliament an effective tool for the fight against poverty.

Other challenges relate to areas outside our own control: One, there is a challenge to the donors. I think the donors must make partnership work. Our experience has shown that a project here, a primary health care centre there, and a primary school in another area is not a fight against poverty. Poverty is total and pervasive. It must be fought with a clear strategy. That means, donors must agree to a strategy, they must look at our budget, look at our expenditure, and see whether it is actually making sense in the fight against poverty. Once they agree, let us agree on a joint monitoring mechanism, and based on this, resources can be allocated. I know that visibility is a very important aspect of donor-recipient relationship. But I dare say that long-term outcomes are more visible than a short-term school here, a primary health care centre or a sports stadium in the next field. I think it is more visible to come and tell you that the prevalence of AIDS has reduced from 30% to 6%. I think donors should be proud and take pride in that, rather than to look for a primary school or a primary health care centre. This needs a change of attitude, a learning process, and indeed co-operation that is based on trust. It also means that more investments will have to be made in building the necessary capacities that will make the programme approach work.
Another challenge is the challenge of trade, which you, Mme Minister, have talked about. As I said, our strategy was to increase growth by 7% per annum; but this cannot happen while commodity prices, especially prices that affect us – exports –, have dropped by about 70%. Clearly, this is a challenge. The challenge for donors is not only to talk about liberalization of trade; donors must liberalize "what is good for the goose, is good for the gander". There are USD 300 billion that are put in agricultural subsidies – this must stop if we are going to have fair trade. This money can be used to build capacities to fight poverty and to make agriculture in poor areas more competitive. This will indeed raise the standard of living more than all the aid put together.
A2 Statements by civil society representatives

1 Statement by Mr. Warren John Nyamugasira, NGO Forum, Uganda

I did participate in the process of that review and I was in that January Washington meeting that Mr. Page referred to. I think it is probably a deliberate choice of words on his part to say that it was not an independent review, what probably could mean that they have taken more the things that the staff said than what we, the outsiders, said. Because I think there was a lot of contribution, both written and oral, to the process of the review.

My sense was that PRSP was a good initiative, that it was bringing back to the fore issues that most people, including civil society, had wanted to be recognized as central in the development process but had got marginalized. The positive things that Mr. Page has mentioned I would not disagree with. In the main I would say that PRSPs, to some degree, have shifted power – I quoted it in January: participation as a power-sharing, power-seeding process, and therefore, participation as a power-sharing formula if you like. In my view, then, we had taken away more power from Government, or rather Governments had given up more power to civil society than the Bretton Woods Institution had done to Governments and other partners. But that is a different discussion.

What do I see as outstanding issues, especially based on the Ugandan experience, which – as Mr. Kassami said yesterday –, actually predates the formal launching of the PRSPs?

- The first important issue for me is that PRSPs, in some respects, have captured internal processes that predated PRSPs. In the case of Uganda, we were doing something equivalent to PRSP but we had eventually been required to put it in a PRSP format. In my view, that was not necessary. I think it could have been acknowledged and waved through as essentially qualifying for whatever we needed to qualify for, which was the next stage of the HIPC process. And I think it would have
been more empowering to say "yes, what you are doing really qualifies already".

- The second issue is the one you came up with in the review process: What has really changed? Is poverty at the centre of the development process yet? I would like to submit that poverty has moved towards the centre, yes, but really at the centre is the neo-liberal macro-economic framework.

- Third and last, and probably linked to that, is the issue of alternatives. I heard Mr. Page in another forum say there is no credible alternative to the neo-liberal economic framework, and he is probably right. But I think what that means is that not enough has been put into generating alternatives. I think not enough has also been put into trying to do things differently out of existing options. I think even within existing policy options there is a whole range from which Governments could have more leverage to choose from, but not yet really being allowed to do so. This has led to self-censorship: "I know what Washington really wants, and I give it to them; I do not wait to be bothered and rejected and then do it again". If you know what is needed to unlock the resources necessary, then you give it to them.

What I think we ought to be doing is to really move the process of approving a PRSP to in-country, so that the key players sit around a panel or committee – whatever you call it – and decide that this PRSP is good enough for our domestic situation, this is what we want to do and everyone else comes and supports it, instead of sending it to Washington.
2 Statement by Ms. Barbara Unmüßig, President, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Germany

I would like to refer to the question 'did participation really change the content?', and my knowledge is based on an analysis of the first five full PRSPs of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Tanzania and Uganda. This analysis was done by a non-governmental German organization "WEED – World Economy, Ecology and Development – and I am announced here as President of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation. I am president of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation for seven weeks and I was, to some extent, responsible for that analysis of the five first full PRSPs. So the analysis I am referring to has much to do with my former job and my former life, and it has very much to do with what WEED continuously did on the assessment of the macro-economic structural adjustment and those issues.

First of all I would like to mention some observations we made, reading the five full PRSPs. This is on ownership and guidance by the Bretton Woods Institution: We are very surprised about the similarities in these strategy papers. The similarities are very strong; this is true for the overall structure, which is of course not surprising since the countries follow the same guidelines provided by the Bretton Woods Institution, but it is also true for the poverty analysis of the five PRSPs. The focus is mostly on income. Dimensions such as inequality, social integration, empowerment, gender issues and especially environmental issues are less pronounced in the strategies. These dimensions are mentioned in the analysis part of the strategy papers. However, the issues do not really make it into the strategy parts of the PRSPs.

The second point I would like to address: All five analyzed PRSPs lack a clear analysis of past macro-economic reforms and their impact on poor people. This is surprising for us, because – as Mr. Page mentioned – we have an experience of 20 years, more than 20 years of structural adjustment reforms, and every country undertaking now a PRSP was somehow going through several structural adjustments. I would like to have seen a deeper analysis of what went wrong in the past, what is the lesson we can learn from the past.
The third point is: It is the concept of the PRSPs to integrate macro-economic stabilization and structural policies into poverty reduction strategies. What we found when we analyzed the full PRSPs is that there is a deep lack of integration of macro-economic stabilization and poverty reduction policies. Whereas the intended micro-economic steps and the poverty impact of different degrees are being discussed in the PRSPs, the macro-economic context has apparently been outside the debate. Macroeconomic stability as one or even the central prerequisite for growth, and growth as a prerequisite for poverty reduction is treated as given. Big issues like financial market reforms, like trade liberalization, like privatization issues, are a given framework; again, poverty is more seen as an add-on than as a real integral part of the analysis, how PRSP, how development would like to shift.

There is obviously no real change in the overall direction of growth strategies. Questions such as distribution, equality and sustainability are not really discussed, I mentioned this already. All countries want to reach higher growth rates and want to do so by mainly relying on export growth. Dependencies on world market prices and possible trade-offs with food security and environmental concerns are ignored in most of the five PRSPs we analyzed. Even in cases where countries explicitly state that they want to achieve economic growth that is less dependent on external shocks – like this is the case, for example, in Burkina Faso –, they still plan an increase in exactly that type of exports that are highly vulnerable. It is especially very problematic that several PRSPs plan on the same economic sectors for strong export growth: The five PRSPs are focussing export orientation on cotton, on fish, gold, coffee, fruits and flowers.

We also see that there is almost no inter-regional assessment. There are countries doing the same approach, and it is not really looked at the trade-offs that if you advice the same guidance, if you give the same advice again for export orientation even for the same products, I think it is a repetition of the mistakes we made in the past.
I will leave it at this; I would like to contribute more on this, but my conclusion is that we have really an achievement in participation, but the participation is really not focussing on the content. Most of the civil society groups we are working with have hardly had any impact on the content of the PRSP. And as I told you, we analyzed the five first full PRSPs, there is a working paper out there, a 150 page analysis which goes into all details of the advice of the PRSPs.
3 Statement by Mr. Hector Cordova, Vice President, Mecanismo de Control Social, Bolivia

Two years ago, the Catholic Church of Bolivia organized a jubilee forum 2000. There, many institutions participated to show their necessities. Some months later, the Government organized another institutions’ meeting to identify the necessities of the people. Together with them, the Government outlined the PRSP for our country. This document was criticized by many institutions, but it is our strategy paper. The critics go basically against the indicators’ definition and the problem simplification.

After this dialogue, the Government made a law, the 'Dialogue Law'; in this law, they defined the social control as a right to know, survey and evaluate the results and impacts of public policies, a participatory process of decision-making, and the right of information access and tools analysis with the objective to improve the justice and equity, the resources and knowledge access. This is the first time that civil society participated in a domain that was closed before, but the civil society did not participate directly in the elaboration of the PRSP; when the Government was writing the Dialogue Law, there were many meetings to consult the civil society, but there was a problem: The civil society did not want to assign the resources of the HIPC programme to education and health. But the Government’s intention was to assign these resources to cope with the deficiencies of the teachers and doctors in the municipalities. After a long negotiation, the law was approved accordingly. But the civil society sees that we have other necessities. The problems in health and education are big, but the civil society sees that we have other necessities that are not covered by the assignment of HIPC resources. But now we want to participate in the follow-up.

We have many challenges: How to cope with poverty and ensure that HIPC resources are used adequately? How to represent civil society, if we do not know how the Government makes public policies, and if we are ignorant of the ways of international co-operation and its conditions? How to build a viable structure that has social support? How to make our job without the Church’s influence? How to finance our operations? How to define the
indicators that interpret in a right way what society lives every day? How to prioritize the subjects that we cannot follow up to avoid the dispersion of our limited resources? There are many challenges and now we are working to organize the civil society. We want to participate in the decision-making, in the construction of the public policies.

Now we are living in an electoral process in Bolivia; next month, we will have a new Government. And we hope that the next Government will get the same position of the present Government. I must thank our Minister, Ramiro Cavero, because he works closely with us. He gives us all information that we need to make the social control.
4 Statement by Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Member of Parliament, Member of Forum for Women in Democracy, Uganda

In fact, Mr. Page has made it easy for me, because in his presentation he makes an admission that PRSP processes have ignored, have not involved parliaments. I think there is a power thing here: Parliaments are elected, they have legitimacy because of the process of election, they also have power to determine budgets and to set economic policy. So it is quite surprising that this participation, which the lending institutions have been very eager to flag as important and as an achievement, did not involve parliaments that have the role of setting economic policy and determining expenditures and spending priorities. I think we have to look into this box of participation a little more closely and see whether indeed participation is leading to real ownership.

When I look at the situation of Uganda, sometimes I am a little bit amused because civil society in my country is shaping up but is still very weak, very weak in capacity, very weak in terms of linkages with the grassroots, and weak in ability to articulate policy issues. What has happened is that when the PRSP process was starting, the organizations that had capacity to engage in economic policy analysis were the international NGOs, not the local NGOs. The international NGOs had the role of organizing the local ones, of facilitating the local ones to engage in a policy dialogue with the Government and with the lending institutions. So you can visualize a situation where here on one side is DFID, for example, i.e. the British Government talking as a donor, and across the table is Oxfam, a British NGO, talking as a recipient, as civil society. The lenders were talking between themselves! On the one side they were civil society, on the other they were donors. It is important that participation means that civil society, that the indigenous organizations are truly enabled to engage in these issues, and in that respect, I am quite pleased to be sitting next to someone who is truly enabled, Warren Nyamugasira, who leads our national NGO Forum. I think he would agree with me that there is still a lot of work to be done to
build the capacities of civil society, so that they can speak for themselves and not speak with the assistance of the donors.

This is the same with parliaments. Parliaments, too, lack capacity to engage in their own independent policy analysis. There is need to build that capacity, so that they, too, can play their proper constitutional roles of being a check on the Government in terms of policy formulation and its implementation.

I do agree that now, because of the PRSP processes, poverty is at the centre of our parliamentary discussions. On budget issues, for example, it is true that parliamentarians talk more about the needs and priorities of the poor. But I also agree with Warren here, that many of the concerns we have as parliamentarians, concerns of the poor, do not filter through sufficiently. Issues such as promoting foreign direct investments, privatization, deregulation of the utility sector and the whole economy, controlling inflation, controlling fiscal deficits, all these discussions, we engage in them with the Government, but without any input from civil society and without any issues of the poor coming through.

Many of us in civil society – now I am talking as a civil society activist – have been anxious to ask people who shape economic policy to reflect more on the gender dimensions of economic policy, to reflect more on the fact that men and women in our countries are not placed in the same positions of the economy, that the impacts of poverty are felt in some respects differently by men and women. All these issues, if indeed there was true participation by civil society, would be at the centre of the discussions on poverty and economic policy, but I am afraid they are filtering through rather slowly, again because of capacity issues and even questions of legitimacy.

There is another advantage that I see: Through the PRSP processes, more people at the grassroots have been organized and trained, in a little way, to monitor how resources are flowing and being spent on services for the poor. This is positive. We see at least a wider group of concerned citizens
beginning to question whether resources have reached the primary school, the health centre, the road, and that is going to increase the effectiveness of development assistance.

As a parliamentarian I feel that although the PRSP processes have marginalized parliaments such as ours, somehow they have refocused our debates on the goal of poverty eradication. We have more allies in civil society to monitor and track how resources are being spent on the poor.
5 Statement by Mr. Seth Vordzorgbe, DevCourt Ltd., Ghana

Civil society and donors and private sector interactions – if we go back to Agenda 21 after Rio, there is a section saying the role of major groups, and major groups were described to include women, farmers, labourers, private sector, NGOs, etc., so I would prefer to talk about major groups and not just civil society organizations. The issue is I think a question of self-interest. If I take off from where Madam left off in terms of the Bretton Woods Institution not being very willing to talk to parliaments as a first stop one would expect them to do, it is a question of the stage of political development of our countries: Where we defined Government to include the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary, what is the relative rate of development of those three arms of Government? Who actually governs? Who sets the rules? She alluded to the fact that the executive branch may even not want to talk to the legislature. And that is happening in a lot of countries: Situations where the legislature does not have the capacity to make any meaningful impact. Yesterday night we had Mr. George Bush sign into law, which Congress passed, to increase substantially by two thirds the subsidies to their farmers. Why? Because they are a strong lobby group. So it is a question of the kind of political influence that you exert as a group.

If I relate that to the question of interaction: The private sectors in our countries are weak. In the same way, the civil society groups are weak. We ignore that as a fact. When you analyze them – which I have done some years ago –, when you look at them, the whole issue of economic governance is not being taken care of. If we talk about governance, let us really look at the political aspects, at the structures for setting our economic policies and how we manage our economic institutions – there is a lot of defects there. So, in relation to PRSPs, I think we ought to ask ourselves: What are we looking for? If we talk about sustainable growth, are we looking at how to engender sustainable growth? In which case we need to recognize that poverty reduction is only one aspect of achieving sustainable growth. Or we are accepting a more narrow focus, asking ourselves how we
can make our PRSPs themselves more sustainable? Which of the two are we talking about here? This is a question we need to answer ourselves. I think we need to do a lot to engender the kind of relationship that would make those aspects of the major groups that I mentioned play a greater role in refining the fortunes of our countries.

Maybe I can take these three minutes to make some comments on the presentation by Mr. Page, because I think that runs through the whole thing and that is why we are here. We talk about a shift in the nature of the relationship between the Bretton Woods Institution and our countries – well, I think that there have been some changes in the nature and form of conditionality, but the same structure of relations exists. And also in-country, the relation between the Minister of Finance and other Ministries, I think you yourself see, there is some kind of hierarchical structure: There are primary players, and there are secondary players. That is a fact.

Putting poverty at the centre of national economic development strategies – that maybe so in the sense that we are talking about it a bit more now. But is PRSP the best instrument to address that? When we talk about the fact that there is now an agreement between the donor community for countries to implement national strategies for sustainable development – this was actually called for ten years ago and, in fact, the international community agreed that by 2002 or 2005 all countries in the world should be implementing and assessing this. Are we anywhere near that goal? No way, we are not nearby. In fact, I dare say that the PRSP process is now coming back home to the roots, it is now coming back to do what has been required under Agenda 21 in the first instance.

I think the problem of the fact that economic strategies and systems that we implement are not achieving the objectives in terms of sustainable growth and all – I think this is basically a result of the fact that in the older days we used to have political economy. Now, we have divorced the political from the economy. And all we are doing is try to re-link the two again. If we had adopted the holistic approach of political economy from the beginning, we would not have to be struggling hard now, to ask questions like: What are
the transaction costs to Governments to try to increase participation? Participation would have been a natural way of the Government to go anywhere. So there would not have been a need to ask: Why are they not doing that? I think also that for the Bank and Fund the way forward is good to change the behaviour, analysis, and the means of programming resources, etc. The question of the tension between national ownership and how to provide direction to the Governments – I mean it is also a question of how you tell Governments what to do. The power of suggestion is both the carrot and the stick, but it must respect countries’ sensitivities.

And I think also that we all need to take a holistic view of this whole process, because, after all, the PRSPs are part of a programme, and there are other elements of that programme which are not components of the PRSP. So if you are talking about poverty reduction and poverty elimination, perhaps a fall in the price of coffee on the international market, which the PRSP does not address or will not address, is of more importance for poverty than that PRSP itself. Floods in Mozambique, requiring risk management and disaster management, something like that happens; the PRSP is not dealing with that, but it wipes away years of effort. I want to urge that we take a holistic view of the issue.
A3 Assessments by representatives of multilateral donor agencies

Participants of the panel discussion:

- Ms. Raundi Halvorson-Quevedo, OECD;
- Mr. Mohamed Ben-Senia, IFAD;
- Mr. Pamesh Shah, World Bank;
- Mr. Karsten Hinrichs, BMZ

Moderation:

- Mr. Christoph Beier, GTZ

Mr. Beier: As you know, in the morning we gathered some cards from you, so that we really have your questions to the people representing the donor agencies. Now I try to start with the most prominent block of these cards:

Mr. Shah, is the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) the last strategy for the poor countries, or will there be another one in the next three years? How do you mitigate the cost of moving from one development paradigm – or approach – to another for the developing countries? What are you planning: Is the Poverty Reduction Strategy the answer for the poor countries, or will you have something new for us in the next three or five years, and how should we deal with this shift of strategies and paradigms?

Mr. Shah: I would not agree that this is a paradigm shift; I think we have started learning from actual country experiences and development paradigms based on experiences. I think our colleagues – Bolivians and others – were working on these approaches for the last five to ten years, deriving these principles from the actual approaches which have worked, and seeing what has not worked; so it is more an inductive kind of paradigm
development, it is a function of country experiences what we are seeing here. There is something organic about this process, which we have not seen in the past.

But having said that, I think donors are fickle-minded in general. The World Bank is a kind of shareholding corporation, a membership organization of about 150 countries with very diverse sets of interests, which keep on changing as the political systems in these countries change. So we are a reflection of what the world's societies like. I do not think you can say that there is a difference between World Bank as a bureaucratic institution and World Bank as a political institution. But what I can assure you is that there is a more broad-based support within the Bank as an institution for continuing this approach for at least the next ten years.

*Mr. Beier:* Let us go a little bit more into this question: Seeing that we have more and more other and alternative approaches and initiatives like, for example, at the moment the NEPAD – the new initiative for partnership for African Development –, how is PRSP linked to those initiatives, how do you coordinate with the programming initiatives, which we have multi-fold in the donor community?

*Mr. Shah:* I think that is a very important point; I think we are very clear that there will be a number of initiatives, which will develop as result of political leadership in Africa, as you mentioned NEPAD, or other kinds of leadership, which will emerge over a period of time. The important thing is to keep the guiding principles in mind and allow different approaches to influence the country-level processes. Now, if NEPAD is used as a kind of enabling mechanism, under which a lot of indigenous capacity building takes place in countries on local institutions, strengthening Government structures – I do not see that as opposed to what PRSPs are also trying to do. So I think there is some congruence, and there is some differentiation there.

But we have to consciously now try to weave indigenous political processes. This is quite a challenge, because in the countries themselves, at the front end, you have a number of bureaucrats and people who handle these programmes, and I think they are faced with a more difficult problem: There
is a political process trying to come up with a set of programmes, there are the international financing institutions and donors coming up with different programmes; so I think it will call for a much higher coordination of converging interests and for not losing momentum on the key guiding principles, which I think in NEPAD and PRSP, when we analyze it, we do not find them essentially in concurrence; but it allows us to build on positive experiences, which are more indigenous, as opposed to only working on principles which are coming from outside. But we have to be sensitive to this issue of increasing indigenization of policy-making, and we cannot stifle this by PRSP.

*Mr. Beier:* Ms. Halvorson-Quevedo, representing the group of bilateral donors, how are donors going to ensure real donor coordination, so that they do not support at the same time inconsistent strategies or, what we heard before, every five years new strategic approaches? We heard about the NEPAD, but we have at the moment some kind of mushrooming of international programming approaches for development co-operation, let us only have a look at the international conventions. How does this all come together, how should our partner countries deal with these international programming approaches? In other words: Who is coordinating the coordinators, who is programming the programmers? What is the answer of the OECD to this?

*Mrs. H.-Quevedo:* Well, I think it is actually a very appropriate question for me to address, because one of the principle functions of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is to group all the 22 bilateral donors, and we also have the World Bank and the IMF and the UNDP, who are observers in this group. We group all of this community together with the exclusive purpose of trying to improve coordination among these donors and trying to improve the way that they work together with one another and with partner countries. A large part of our work is developing policy guidance; we do this in mutual exchange with one another and it is based on what we have learned over time in terms of good practice. We also increasingly consult with our partner countries when we develop this kind of policy guidance. So we have a good basis from which we can work together in a more coherent way.
The problem that we face in the DAC is ensuring that the staff of the agencies are aware of this guidance and actually use it. Therefore, we are now putting a lot more emphasis in DAC's work on dissemination, on sharing with the staff of the 22 member agencies the results of our work, and helping them understand the value that would be to them and the work they undertake, to keep in mind these principles, these recommendations, these good practices for development co-operation that we develop, sometimes over a long period of time and with a great deal of effort.

I think that on another level there is a keen awareness among bilaterals that there are a large number of frameworks out there and that the continuing emergence of new frameworks, new coalitions and new programming options and concerns is something that we need to keep clearly in balance. This is a huge challenge, not only for the bilateral community but also for the multilateral community, because there is often a feeling among our partners that it is a pretty cluttered policy environment. It is extremely difficult for them to understand how they are supposed to interact with the international community, given the multitude of frameworks that exist: PRSP, NSSD, now we have new emerging issues related to effectiveness, measuring performance, all of these issues. We need to keep this in mind and do what we can to ensure coherence from one policy to another. When we developed these poverty reduction guidelines, we dealt with this issue front on, and one of the chapters deals with how donors can work as better partners with developing countries. There is a whole section in there on how we can help each other, all other partners, to square the circle when it comes to making sense of all the frameworks that exist.

Mr. Beier: What if we look a little bit broader? There is another question, which is even more challenging to this issue of coherence and consistency: How to link PRSP with the WTO issues? The countries you are representing are sitting in the WTO as well and they are talking about issues which are quite relevant for the countries, especially those who would like to send their products to the European markets. So what is the answer to this very prominent problem?
Ms. H.-Quevedo: This is an extremely important issue, in fact it is so important that in these poverty reduction guidelines, which took three years to produce, we have a whole section that is dedicated to this issue of policy coherence. It goes beyond trade policies – trade policies are directly very important to growth in partner countries, and that results in poverty reduction – but there are a host of other OECD member country policies that have an impact on developing countries. In these guidelines, we took on board all the different policy areas that our OECD countries have, to try and understand how they can help and how they can hinder development in the developing world. In these guidelines, we gave ideas to donor staff on how they can interact with their parallel homologues in different agencies and ministries in their own governments, how the bilateral agencies can interact more effectively with the trade ministry, what kind of mechanisms are most useful, what kind of information can be provided, how can we involve civil society and the private sector in these efforts.

In the OECD, for five years now, there has been an intense interest in policy coherence. A number of very important documents have been written. The OECD is a forum where many different policy communities meet, and they decide common policies. As I said we had extreme difficulty, but we have now, over the past two years, made considerable headway in gaining recognition by the trade community, by the labour community, by the finance ministries in OECD countries, on the importance of policy coherence, on our policies towards the world. It is an uphill battle, we are making progress. Right now, today and tomorrow, there is the yearly ministerial meeting that is taking place in Paris, and on the agenda of this year’s meeting is trade and development. This is the first time in the history of the OECD, which is now about 45 years old, that development assistance ministers have travelled to Paris and have participated in the ministerial discussions. And they are participating in this discussion on trade and development, which is taking on board in a very explicit way the Doha agenda.

Mr. Beier: A lot of efforts, obviously, but what about the results? Mr. Hinnichs, still regarding coherence and coordination, does it make sense that bilateral donors cancel debts while the World Bank immediately gives new loans to the same country?
Mr. Hinrichs: Well, I think it makes some sense, because to cancel that is under a programme – HIPC countries, which we all know quite well –, and the target is to bring indebted countries down to debt sustainability. That sustainability is defined as something where these countries should, number one, get as much concessional finance as possible but, number two, be able to accommodate a certain portion of debt. The World Bank was mentioned and the question – it is not the IBRD debt but the IDA debt, which is very concessional.

Having said this, we must face some difficult points in it: One is that we can see that under present international economic conditions, quite a number of the HIPC countries will perhaps not have that sustainability after the completion point, which was expected. There is some discussion about this situation and one very prominent member of the international political family, President Bush, has drawn a certain conclusion: he wants IDA to give 50% of the finance as grants, because he argues that debt sustainability will be a problem for many of these countries and second, going down to the level of sectors, he says there are some sectors, especially the social sectors, which do not generate a real income on which the loans can be served. So I think this discussion will not leave us; for the time being, we have the instruments we have. We have not yet concluded the 13th replenishment of IDA because of this political objective of the Americans I have mentioned. The agenda is a very long one, and the question which has been raised is not simple to answer – as I was not able to answer it just with a yes or no –, it will remain on the agenda of the bilaterals and multilaterals.

Mr. Beier: Most of these questions are not so easy to answer, as I have seen. Mr. Ben-Senia, how do you, as an organization which attaches also a lot of funds to poverty reduction, coordinate with others in funding PRSP implementation? Are there any ideas in IFAD regarding this question?

Mr. Ben-Senia: I am glad that you mention that; maybe some of our friends here do not know exactly what IFAD is. It is an international organization, a funding agency, which has a mandate to reduce poverty. We are very happy that many other people now have joined the bandwagon and I think
that poverty is essential to the destiny of human kind. IFAD is a very small organization and it did not realize immediately the opportunities that the PRSP process was offering it as an institution. In fact, I was the precursor, I started working with Mauritanian friends, not so much on the preparation process of the PRSP, because we do not have the capabilities and the field presence, but as soon as we were convinced that they were serious about poverty reduction, we immediately designed a programme to implement their PRSP in most of the poorest areas of Mauritania. The Government liked the programme very much and is co-financing the programme from the debt reduction package.

I am saying this because we are really in the process now of defining what IFAD should be doing within the PRSP framework. It is an emerging issue in IFAD and we just finalized our strategic framework. I would like to specify the main objective of this framework: Enabling the rural poor to fight poverty. This is in line with the long-term tradition in IFAD to focus the development effort on the grassroots organizations of the poor. We feel that no proxies, no other forms of representation can really bring the poverty at the fore, unless the poor become themselves stakeholders who have a say in policies and institutions. This is the other part of our strategic framework: It is the first time that IFAD recognized a need for it as an institution not just to do small community development projects but to become involved and involve its constituencies out there in the rural areas in the policy dialogue, in the kinds of institutions that should be developed in the country. We feel that we have a lot of things to contribute. We have very serious limitations both in terms of analytical capacity and in terms of presence in the field, but we feel that a lot can be done through what we have constructed as beneficiary organizations at the grassroots level.

Mr. Beier: Mr. Shah, still on this issue of coordination and finance: The discussion of PRGF – the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility – was missing in the discussion of PRSP; should there not be a closer link between the facility and the poverty reduction strategy and its implementation?
Mr. Shah: I think we have another stakeholder here who seems to be absent in this meeting: the IMF, which has its own strategy and everything. If you wanted to discuss PRGF, you should have an IMF representative at this place. However, at operational level I think we are working now more closely with the IMF than we have ever worked in the last 20-25 years. But that is not easy, because there are differences in the assessment of the Bank and the IMF at this stage. We should be very frank about that. But what is emerging is that the lack of the growth focus and the linkage with the macro-economic framework is emerging as a very important content deficit in PRSPs. I think we recognize that, but analytical frameworks which combine macro-economic growth stability, growth and equity, are not existing right now; most of the frameworks are very much focused on one of the aspects and really do not take into account the trade-offs and interactions which would happen. The traditional macro-economic models are not able to integrate the interactive processes. So there is a whole new analytical work now being developed, which will allow us to look even at areas like trade, which was mentioned recently; trade-poverty linkages is a very major issue, which might become more important than other issues over a period of time. But what I would say clearly is that there are countries which have looked at growth and poverty in a more integrated kind of manner, and that is the thinking we need to build in more and more as we go into this process.

We also find one more major deficit in the PRSP: Lack of local private sector involvement in this whole process. Participation has become too centric only on the organized capital cities’ civil society, has not taken into account the country institutions which might be involved in growth agendas and things like that. So I think the content is derived from the process; if the process is focused on only social service delivery, the growth agendas are not getting reflected there. So I think the nature of the process will have to change, the analytical frameworks will have to change significantly, so that the growth facility part becomes integral in the discussion.

Mr. Beier: To end the question about the funding: What are the international donors doing to attach in a consistent and coherent way the available funds to the poverty reduction strategy implementation, which we foresee in the next future in the countries represented here?
Mr. Shah: First, the funding instrument which the Bank is developing for supporting PRSPs is the Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC). This is already being done in collaboration with many other donors in different countries; in Uganda, for instance, we are discussing the possibility of KfW co-financing the PRSP itself. I think it is very early days; we have only started working on four credits till now – out of 45 countries that have prepared PRSPs. We are very much keen that other donors and partners, not only bilateral aid donors, but even private sector keeps an active part in terms of defining what support it is going to give. To us, a lot of development investment support will come from bilaterals and others, but a lot of growth support will come from the development of local private sectors and from investments by private sectors in this process. It is utopian to think the whole PRGF is going to be handled only by bilateral and multilateral donors; but what we are trying to do differently here, I think, is to include other donors in the process of designing the support credits. And we would encourage all the donors to actively participate in that process; but what I would like to emphasize is that a lot of bilateral donors are still sticking to their own strategy assistance frameworks. We are aligning all our country assistance strategy frameworks to PRSPs, and you will see in the next two years’ time that the country assistance strategy in the Bank will not be implemented without alignment with PRSP. I think other bilateral donors have to play their part, if they want harmonization in that.

Mr. Beier: Mr. Hinrichs, how is the BMZ reacting to this invitation by Mr. Shah?

Mr. Hinrichs: In this case, the answer is very easy, because the Minister has decided that all our bilateral programmes must be aligned with the PRSP. And there is nothing outside PRSP. I think the same thing should be true for all donors and for the World Bank and for IDA, because it is difficult to believe that there can be two different development strategies in a developing country. Everything which is outside the PRSP, should not be counted on the ODA account at the DAC.
But just as a footnote: In the IDA 13 replenishment discussions, I think the IDA team was not completely convinced that everything from IDA should go into the PRSPs. But now there is no doubt about that. The document, which has been finalized – only the replenishment has not been finalized yet – and can be looked up in the internet, is by the way a document which shows how the donors want the money to be spent in the developing countries. All the 35 or 40 pages are characterized by the implementation of the PRSP procedure.

In all modesty, just adding to my first statement, the Minister has said yes, but it is not so quick and so easy to implement.

Mr. Beier: Is it still a long way, for the OECD members as well?

Ms. H.-Quevedo: Thank you very much for letting me come in very quickly on this. In these poverty reduction guidelines that I mentioned we had a policy statement that accompanied it. It is a political commitment that all the Ministers made, which is that donors must support country-owned, country-led strategies for reducing poverty and that they need to base all their programming on the needs and priorities that are identified in these strategies. This is located in that publication that is out on the table. It is something called the ‘action agenda’. These are the priority areas where the bilateral agencies are now going to be working to support poverty reduction more effectively. I am illustrating this to you, because we want very much our partner governments and civil societies to be aware of the fact that the bilateral community has committed to these kind of things. We will be following up in the DAC, when we conduct our aid reviews of the DAC members, to try and understand how our agencies are in fact aligning behind this new paradigm and this new approach to development.

Mr. Ben-Senia: I was saying that IFAD’s role and strategy is emerging, but what is already for sure is that IFAD’s support strategies to countries will have to be within the PRSP process. In every country where there is a PRSP process, PRSP is the framework for defining our support.
Mr. Beier: Even if we achieve that poverty reduction strategies will be used as a focus to attach funds, there still seem to be doubts in how far these strategies are really country-led. The question is: How do you resolve the tension between country ownership and donor advice? So what about the question of ownership?

Mr. Hinrichs: I simply do not know. I think that is a tension which you cannot resolve, and it is a double-bind situation for all donors, because on the one hand, most of us are deeply convinced that ownership is necessary; on the other hand, as bilateral donors we are accountable to our parliaments, and our parliaments want to see results. In addition, we have a lot of laws, rules and guidelines, which we have to respect. How can we implement that? I think there is only a vague idea and that is partnership. If we can really negotiate with the developing countries and coordinate with the developing countries and all other donors in full partnership, we will be able to come to a solution.

The other, maybe a little bit more precise answer could be: Let us look at the instruments we have and let us go away from the project-by-project approach and try to go more in the direction of basket financing and programme financing, and even budget financing in cases where it is appropriate and where the safeguards are respected. Mr. Shah said something about the PRGF and the PRSC, but the fact that there are only four PRSCs so far shows that this is not so easy either. However, I think we have to review all our instruments under the problem which was posed by this question.

Mr. Beier: Ownership, partnership and participation – there is a very concrete conclusion, which was ranked quite high by one of the working groups: Decision-making processes related to the assessment of PRSPs should be more collaborative and involve devolution to a multi-stakeholder institutional mechanism within the countries. What is your reaction to this clear advice, Mr. Shah?
Mr. Shah: This is an advice which I give to my management team every day but it is not accepted so easily; in that sense, I am a collaborative stakeholder. I am glad that you are raising this issue. The whole issue is that there is a tension between us, being a financial institution that has to have due diligence within the institution to do some processes, and participatory processes where assessments are more happening at the country level. I think we at the World Bank have a major challenge to convert from being a pure financial institution to being a developmental institution. And this is the centre of this challenge: When you become a developmental institution then you do not use only the financial mechanisms of accountability, you use more developmental mechanisms, which are in-country. And I think we should start with those countries which have more well developed systems of accountability and give it a try. Personally I would feel that the Bank would be very uncomfortable in doing it in all the countries at the same time. It needs to take the plunge, and do it in countries where a significant amount of in-country monitoring of these processes is already happening and see whether we need such elaborate external assessment processes in places where a large number of stakeholders have already done self-assessments. But I think there is a long way to go; you need a good mechanism where these things are discussed in a very transparent and open environment in the country. If I put, instead of my participation hat, my World Bank hat on, I see very clearly that you need some enabling conditions for this to happen. But I am sure that the trend is going to be in that direction, and I will take this recommendation very strongly to my own management and make a bigger case that it comes from a number of stakeholders here.

Mr. Beier: Hopefully this will work. Still, another question to you: Seeing the World Bank becoming a development agency, seeing that you want to take multi-stakeholder perspectives seriously, indigenous perspectives of the countries you are working with, what about your ability and willingness to take these perspectives really seriously, beyond the Washington consensus, I would say? There is a challenge for donor countries to allow for different macro-economic approaches, for example concentration on small and medium business, not on transnational companies, or domestic production,
not export orientation. In how far will the World Bank take these different perspectives seriously, accept them and deal with them?

Mr. Shah: I think not only the World Bank is faced with this challenge, but the discipline of macro-economics per se. A lot of people who are trained as macro-economists find it more difficult to take these different options. If you go to a typical macro-economist in the Bank, he has a checklist of five things, and that is common across all countries. It does not take into account the nature of concentration of small entrepreneurship and different kinds of things, so I would not deny that. We have a group of about 20-25 macro-economists in the Bank, who are looking at these alternative frameworks, and I should confess that we are struggling.

I think we need to bring in independent thinkers across the globe, from both South and North, to think about these issues and develop these options. I am very glad to see that a number of civil society organizations and others are trying to diversify into it. But it is a fairly complex area, because the predictability of the outcome of these approaches does not have an empirical base. At this stage, it is more based on hypotheses. You do not have any countries where you tried an approach and something else happened. So it is more and more a function of prediction and forecasting, as opposed to being a function of empiricism. As we do not have empirical evidence, you have to create assumptions and different models of what strategies to take to achieve different kinds of outcomes. The only thing I can tell you is that we have a dedicated group in the Bank working on this, but we are nowhere close; in absence of a framework, the strategy is to keep it restricted, and not to open it up. So we are a little bit apprehensive to open up something which we cannot handle subsequently at a different stage.

However, we would welcome very much a learning event, where we focus more on what are these macro-economic options, what are the various ways of bringing various macro-economic options really up-front. A lot of new learning has to happen in that area before they can be converted into procedures and processes.
Mr. Beier: Ms. Halvorson-Quevedo, another card is related to questioning the role of blueprints, questioning the role of economically dominated answers to development problems, for resolving the problems of the poor. Is it not contradictory to insist, from the donor side, on cost recovery and cost sharing in education and health while talking about poverty reduction? This is a little bit linked to the other question: In how far do we accept universal policy approaches to the problems we are dealing with in the various countries that are represented here?

Ms. H.-Quevedo: We recognized at the outset today that the bilaterals are actually a very diverse community. I could not say that every single bilateral agrees with this particular position on cost recovery for basic health and basic education. In fact, there is a diversity of experience in the industrialized countries about how to develop. In the PRSP process, in fact in the review that took place, this was one of the major points that was communicated by the bilateral community to the staff of the Bank and the Fund. We want to be involved in a dialogue at the country level on the options for the way that macro-economic policy is formulated and going to be structured. Because we ourselves have experience that can be valuable, that we have found to work, and we would like these ideas to enter into the policy debate within countries. Up to this point, in the very initial stages of the PRSP design, it has not been possible for this kind of exchange to take place in all country settings. We hope that, as a result of the review, there will be space opened up so that new ideas can emerge from the bilateral community as well, because there is a diversity of views about how to proceed, what the priorities are, what the position should be on cost recovery and issues of this nature. So we are hopeful that, as a result of the review and as a result of meetings of this kind, we would come to the conclusion that it is so important for there to be multi-stakeholder involvement in the discussion on the in-country dialogue. We hope there will be a change in this regard.

Mr. Beier: Mr. Ben-Senia, you wanted to add something?
Mr. Ben-Senja: I just wanted to add one comment on the question of ownership. We live in the real world and ownership cannot be achieved in a real sense unless there is a minimum of independence. One of the major development problems of the poor countries is their dependency on flows of foreign capital and ODA. Therefore, it should be part of the strategies to reduce the dependency on foreign flows of money. Otherwise, you will never have ownership. Some of us come from poor countries: Who will make our efforts?

So we have an understanding for that need for ownership. We can mend a little bit, we can improve here and there, but the fundamentals of ownership are related to the lowered dependency on ODA. This cannot be achieved in five years, it cannot be achieved in ten years, it has to be set as a target, as a major development objective, and it has to be realistically seen how you can achieve it. Of course, we are all interdependent; but for you to have ownership of what you do in your own country, you have to rely less on outside resources. This is a paradigm.

Mr. Beier: There seems to be a strong commitment to the issues we are talking about, to poverty reduction strategies. The next question is more rhetoric, I would say, because it is a result of one working group: Is it feasible to talk about achieving anything under the PRS approach without political will? The answer of the working group, of course, was no. There has to be political will on all sides if we want PRS to be successful. Mr. Hinrichs, how do you see, how do you recognize that the partner countries you are cooperating with have the political will to really alleviate poverty within the PRS framework? Can this be measured or seen?

Mr. Hinrichs: No, perhaps not, but in most of the countries where we as a donor country have a co-operation we have been present for a very long time, we have some knowledge about different political parties in the countries, and we have some experiences to what extent there is political will. But what we have also experienced is that, even if there are deceptions, we were convinced that the political will for a certain policy is there, and three years later we had to state that we were wrong. So there are no
easy solutions for that; perhaps that in the PRSP process, by the means of participation as broadly as possible, one gets more information, and in moving forward step by step there is the test whether the will is there. But it is not at all easy.

Mr. Beier: Mr. Shah, talking about the political will and how we can see this; yesterday evening I have seen the results of the “pro-poor growth” group and one of their important issues has been whether poverty reduction strategies deal with sensitive political issues, for example access to resources for poor and marginalized people, access to land – very old, very political, very sensitive questions, which the societies we are talking about have been dealing with for a long time. Could it be an indicator for seriousness and political will of donors and partner societies if such sensitive issues are coming up in the strategies?

Mr. Shah: I think this is a very valid point. I would say that those countries that have gone through this process for a longer time have taken up very controversial issues like these. I just saw the PRSP of Mali, which has a complete chapter on corruption. You would not have thought that a strategy would deal with that. Uganda’s strategy talks about those sensitive issues very explicitly. But essentially we are still struggling; if we do our analysis for adjustment lending, we do not make a good analysis of the internal political economy. There is a lot of analysis done which is under the table and never gets into the documents.

But what I would say is that access to land has emerged as an issue in all the consultations that took place at the grassroots level. There is some amount of sanitization in the PRSP when these consultation findings are put together, and we are losing out those issues at that point of time. It is a function of the political process in the country at that stage, whether the government wants to raise those issues, which stage of the political process it is. If it is having an election in the next six months, it is difficult to raise those issues, because ultimately it could mean to commit hara-kiri. Mongolia, for instance, had that problem: They had a major challenge with the herder community, and the election was coming, and there was a major issue they could have put in the PRSP but they were worried that this would
be blown out of proportion and would be converted into an electoral advantage by other parties. These are very real issues for which, I think, there are no easy answers.

When the findings from participatory processes, in which legal tenure rights, access to land, lack-of-access-to-credit kind of issues have kept on coming, get converted into policy options we seem to be going back to the same old thing of social service delivery and health and education. Why does every PRSP, in spite of starting with a very broad agenda and something on empowerment, opportunity and security, end up getting into a very narrow part of it which is opportunity of service delivery? We have to do more in terms of broadening those processes, so that the growth agenda, the empowerment agenda, and the opportunity agenda are really coming and converted into options at that stage.

It is our fault also; I think, our response systems have tended to neglect other possible options, because the Bank traditionally was an infrastructure and service delivery institution and predominantly financing for that. It has to make that reconciliation that it has to fund other legal requirement processes and the like in order to make those assets work. Bilaterals are doing more on that; I must confess that they might play a bigger role there, because their financing is open-ended and can have less conditionality.

Mr. Ben-Senia: It is a political economy problem. In the PRSP process we are almost asking Governments to take policy options within a very short period of time, while we know the more contentious the policy options the more difficult they are, because there are national stakeholders who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. The only solution can be a negotiated solution, and negotiations take a long, long time. So, instead of asking governments to position themselves with respect to particular issues, we just tell them "if it is important, put it on the agenda", and programme for a process of negotiation to address this political issue rather than "give us the solution right now, you are going to take the land from the rich and give it to the poor now or next year". I think there is a process implication of the political dimension of the PRSP that has not been taken into account in designing how to work within the PRSP process.
Plenary 1: I thought it would be unfair for those of us who came from far to leave without letting you know what the intellectual current has been – or is becoming – at least in the Sub-Saharan African continent. The central issue that is becoming increasingly apparent is that donors are becoming too powerful. You are becoming so powerful that you have created a big rift between state and society. Anyone who has done any economics would tell you that if development is to take place, it is going to take place by the effort of citizens of any society. When citizens are completely separated from the state and the state listens to donors rather than to its own citizens, there is not going to be any development. And one of the things that has been happening over the last twenty years is that our Governments rather listen to you than to their own citizens. I think donors have to start to think broadly about the issue of development rather than concentrate on these specific issues. The general atmosphere has to be there for development to take place.

Let me give a number of examples that have generated serious cynicism, at least in Africa. One: the question of consistency, the consistency of donors, whether there are really principles donors stick to or whether it applies from country to country depending upon the degree to which donors like that particular Government. Democracy: Is it a universal principle that we aspire or is it a principle that we want to follow only to those countries that we do not like. The issue of democracy becomes a very serious issue in Zimbabwe, it is not a serious issue in Saudi-Arabia or in other places. What are we after? Are there certain universal values that countries ought to follow? Another inconsistency – economic policy: Free trade is good, is that the universal policy? Or is it a policy that applies only to poor countries? When we are told to implement free trade policies, in the same week we hear that one of the most powerful countries in the world says I want to protect my steal industry. What kind of message are we passing along? If I am a developing country, if I sit in Ethiopia and ask myself what kinds of policies should I follow, would there be some general principles that are important for development, or would it be what I am told to follow by the World Bank and the IMF? These are very important issues that donors simply are not comfortable in addressing, because there is a whole bag-
gage behind it that we are not following through. I am incredibly surprised when I hear about the importance of democratization and good governance in Palestine from the same countries that would not give a damn about the issue of democratization. These issues are raising serious problems.

Let me talk about PRSP: We were told that the reason we are going towards PRSP is, to a certain degree, an admission of the failure of structural adjustment policies. Why did they fail? One of the central arguments of the PRSP is that it failed because there was no ownership, that people are not participating in this process, that it is a policy that is so foreign that unless otherwise they know it and they participate in it, they will not even implement it. Very good. So, the two key principles are government ownership and public participation. So here we are, we discuss our policy and we say for Ethiopia, X policy is good – in fact, I am giving you a very good example in the Ethiopian PRSP process – the business community came in and said look, there is no way that without developing our productive sectors that we can alleviate poverty. And the key to developing the productive sectors is at least to have some time – because globalization is coming – whereby we can develop our industrial base, compete and, you know, to protect our industry, and so on; it came out openly and unanimously in the PRSP consultations. At that time there was a World Bank person there and I raised my hand and I said: “Now great, you are listening to what the public is saying; if we put this in the PRSP, would you accept it?” He said, well, you know, there are certain principles that we have to follow. What principles? What is the principle that we are following? Is participation and ownership an important principle or are the old macro-economic policies that we are supposed to follow, the free trade policies important?

These are the kinds of issues that I think are important for donors to realize and to say either ‘look, we know what development is all about, we know what the principles are that you have to follow, you simply follow them’, or you say ‘you know what development is all about, make sure that these development policies came from a serious consultation among your public, and then follow it and we will help you’. You have to take one or the other.
One of the things PRSP is creating is cynicism. If people do not believe that this is something that is going to be followed by donors, it is just another farce, it is just another conditionality, and you will not have ownership, you will not have implementation, in fact even more, you will have much more powerlessness among the public. I think you have to watch for that.

**Plenary 2:** The question is this and it goes to OECD/DAC: To what extent is DAC subscribing to or helping to implement the Monterrey consensus on improving development assistance management? Because that is key.

The second point is a comment: We are forgetting that private investment capital dwarfs aid, and that is not subsumed under the PRSP rubric. So what are we achieving, what are we recommending in that respect?

My last point is this: The alternative economic framework Mr. Shah is talking about is needed. In order for us to achieve that, we may need to go back to development economics, integrate political economy – as he mentioned himself –, look at equity and distribution issues, bring in the qualitative aspects of life and, lastly, try and integrate the institutional and cultural aspects. Cultural aspects, because no country ever developed since the war without maintaining its culture. In Africa, the cultural base has been destroyed, partly as a result of these things.

**Plenary 3:** Mine is a comment: During this conference I was talking to one person who is an official of a Ministry of Planning and we were discussing gender issues in economic policy and in the PRSP processes. And she said to me: “Well, you see, if the donors made it a condition to integrate gender into the PRSP, then we would, but we consult civil society because we must and then we get on with other things.” To me that was very revealing about ownership of PRSPs. Very, very revealing.

I have a feeling that it is known to African policy makers that women play a very important role in the economy, particularly in the agricultural sector. They are probably a little bit aware that economic policies have differential impacts on African men and women and that there is a need to integrate gender concerns to increase efficiency and growth. But I sense that be-
cause this negotiation of PRSPs is not truly African, because there is some hidden hand of donors driving the process, that the integration of gender equality issues – and linking them with poverty and growth – is not happening. In fact, when I look at what is happening here in the North, — I am sorry if I am not well informed — but when I look at care, particularly child care, I see that it is still a cost that is paid by women despite all the achievements of the welfare state. This is really something that has been assumed (taken as a given) and has been carried as a donor assumption into our own economic policy formulation, so that this whole area of what women do that is unpaid – cooking, cleaning, fuel wood collection, water collection – is also ignored in our macro-economic policy making to the cost of the whole of the society, simply because the donors are carrying an assumption from their own economy that caring for human beings is a simple leisure activity of women! I am beginning to feel that while we still need to raise the awareness of our own policy-makers, such assumptions are very important and they are being carried by a very powerful constituency – the donors.

Mr. Beier: Ms. Halvorson-Quevedo, there was a concrete question to you and I think you should also react on the first comments and questions which we have heard regarding the principles of ownership and participation: Who is talking with whom, with which legitimacy? And what is the role of donors in this whole negotiation and discussion process? I think these are very important issues that have been raised in the working groups as well and I think there are some answers to this, which are not so black and white as we heard it maybe in the first statement.

Ms. H.-Quevedo: Well, that is a big agenda to respond to. I have a lot to say and will try to make it as concrete and brief as I can. First of all, on the response to your question regarding the follow-up to Monterrey on aid management: This is a huge area of work in the bilateral community and I will sketch out briefly for you what is happening in a few areas. First, in-country coordination: There is a lot that needs to be done in every single partner country to coordinate and to rationalize what the bilateral community is doing, involving various thing, for example missions: there should be
more joint missions, there should be collaborative studies, there should be sharing of information among all development partners – bilateral, multilateral, civil society, Government. We need to align our planning cycles with the countries' planning cycle, with what they are doing in PRSPs. A lot of what is happening and a lot of what can happen at the country level is really driven by personalities. If we have a good donor coordination group in a country, something gets done. If people listen and follow the lead of the UN agency, we should be coordinating the donor community in-country, then we do have positive results. As a result of participating in this conference, I learned there are countries where there is no progress on this front. So I will bring that information back to my management and we will make this clear in ways that we can, with headquarter staff of bilateral agencies. This is a very important area of work.

Secondly, there is a whole group in the DAC that is working on efforts to harmonize, rationalize and streamline donor procedures, donor processes, and donor frameworks for organizing and providing resources to developing countries. It is called the 'task force on donor practices'. It has a web-site at "oecd.org/dac/donorpractices". Please consult it, it is an exhausted description, but it is still a concise description of just what this group is up to. Quite briefly, what they are working on is: The accounting and the reporting requirements of the different bilateral donors; the preparation cycle for the projects, how to rationalize all the work that is involved in preparing projects and programmes in developing countries; procurement; all of these issues are being dealt with by experts in different small groups. They are producing 'good practice reference papers'; that work will come to a conclusion in December of this year. And then we are thinking about next steps. Then the brother hits the road, because the pressure will be on the bilateral community to actually take up some of the recommendations in this report for ways in which they can streamline and rationalize what they require partner governments and partner civil society to provide in terms of information and accountability.

So we have a lot of work in front of us to change the way that we ourselves conduct our activities. However, at the same time it is very important for all
partners to understand that our agencies face various kinds of accountability constraints, as Mr. Hinrichs noted. We have legislative requirements, we have administrative needs, we have regulatory standards that need to be upheld. And there are watchdog agencies in every single one of our agencies, in every single one of our countries, who are coming up after the fact to try and see what is happening. Development assistance is a fragile area for our Governments, so we need to be very careful that we can maintain the integrity and quality of accountability for the resources that we provide.

Now, I will say that there is a situation in the bilateral community of something I could call 'variable geometry'; there are a number of bilateral agencies who are very progressive and who are working with one another in small cells in specific countries to already begin to streamline and to rationalize the reporting and the accounting requirements that they have previously required their partners to provide. In some countries, Denmark and Norway are giving their money to the Netherlands to manage; that is a step forward. It is incremental steps, it is taking risks, it is being innovative, these are all big challenges in front of the development community and we are working as much as we can to have some progress in this regard.

I would also quickly like to mention that there is an important donor forum for the strategic partnership with Africa, which is working very closely on these issues of donor harmonization as well.

Mr. Beier: I think not all of the comments and questions which have been raised are now completely answered. But at least one thing which I am hearing out of the comments of all donors regarding the very fundamental question "in how far do you take participation and ownership serious and in how far is this reflected in your behaviour", the one answer that was given by all the participants was: There is no way that we can say 'okay, there is political commitment and ownership, we can trust on this and go'; but what is said is: Of course we have to change a lot on the side of the donors, and we have to reduce donor domination in the negotiation process, but we have to have a negotiation process, and we have of course to strengthen
the voice of the civil society in this negotiation process – I think this is very important – and I think this is a joint opinion here which is maybe not totally convincing to what you had in mind, but I think it is not black and white; ownership as well as participation have to be produced in the process of negotiating, in the process of working together. This is one of the major messages I got out of a lot of the comments.

The gender issue was not yet answered, there was a very important hypotheses raised here. I would like to ask you, Mr. Ben-Senia, could you say something about this issue?

**Mr. Ben-Senia:** I do happen to be working in West African countries and some Central African countries. One of the first things that I learned, coming from the Northern part of Africa, is the difference in the strategic importance of women for the survival of the society in Sub-Saharan Africa as compared to our societies in Northern Africa or Europe. Any strategy, or any programme, or any reflection on sustainable development that does not put women at the centre stage for Africa is absolutely obsolete from the start. I am very happy, because in IFAD it is not a paradigm, it is not principle, it is a way of doing business. Women have a centre stage in most of IFAD’s projects, and we hope that it should be in the process, in the policy, it should be in defining institutions for development. That is not easy but it should be there.

**Mr. Beier:** Mr. Shah, you wanted to answer to the first statement we have heard, the more fundamental issues that were raised. I would also like you to answer the very last question which we got from the plenum regarding HIV / AIDS. How do you include the HIV / AIDS issue in the PRSP strategies? This is very much linked with the question: Are you just promoting PRSPs or is poverty alleviation done in a broader context? How are you assuring that very important poverty-related issues are really tackled? You said something about it before, that we have to diversify the approaches inside the strategies; but what are you doing to do this?

**Mr. Shah:** We have to avoid the tendency of placing emphasis only on PRSP as a single process, which will deliver a different social contract
between citizens and Government. I think there are some things for which PRSP will provide an enabling environment to take place. But there are other things which should happen independent of international financial institutions, which ultimately puts pressure on these institutions to behave differently. We have to recognize that making this process too much donor-centric on certain issues on which there is no consensus, is counterproductive, because I do not think you will achieve a consensus over night on those issues. But if you strongly feel about a particular issue, there should be scope to work on those issues independent of PRSP and over time influence the framework there.

What I am finding interesting is that – yesterday in our group we had a discussion – that there are countries that are developing now legal institutional frameworks for participation on an ongoing basis. We looked at Bolivia, we looked at Mauritania, we looked at the grassroots democracy decree in Vietnam – these go beyond processes for just the sake of producing a document. They are saying that for important policy-making processes we should have enabling legal frameworks, we should go beyond just production of PRSP. And I think the more we are able to work in terms of developing these enabling frameworks, it will be very important.

One thing I should tell you is that, as part of our country assistance strategies now, we are looking at creating an enabling environment for civic engagement as a very important area, basically for us to consider that if Governments are interested in working on creating both legal and institutional frameworks for participation in various decision-making processes as opposed to just working for a document or centred on one sector or something. We are very much interested in the resource investment, which will allow the kinds of debates we are talking about, debates on what kind of privatization we require, what kind of growth model we should follow in terms of linkage with multi-national corporations or domestic kind of trade sector. These are the issues, which in the narrow bureaucratic confines of how negotiations take place between Bank and Fund will get overlooked all the time. So I think we need some independent processes, which are not cared for in the other process.
HIV / AIDS is also a major issue now; there is a big debate going on in the Bank right now on how we develop the poverty-HIV / AIDS interface. Over a period of time we have increased our assistance to AIDS-related projects to almost three billion dollars, which is an exponential growth. In no other area have we expanded so fast, except education, where we are also now the biggest donor globally. But the linkages are not clear. Linkages have to be developed more holistically, and we have to look at the causes of poverty, and really have a very thematic focus on AIDS, and really come up with very specific solutions, which are more holistic. I was just reading a study on Malawi where they found that agriculture production has fallen by 20% as a result of AIDS, because the nature of the household composition has changed. There are a number of households with women with six children to look after, they are not able to invest labour into their lands in spite of having land. What people are saying is that you need new technologies, new forms of organization to work with this change in household composition. The situation is not that easy, that you can only do the prevention part of it all, but it is also the effect on agricultural production, and it needs a more holistic kind of planning framework. Right now, I think, three or four countries are focusing on that. The idea would be to work now in countries with high AIDS incidence and really develop much more holistic strategies. That can be done in a typical PRSP process. This also needs to be treated a little bit differently from PRSP, I think. If you try to overload PRSP by having everything under the sun, the doability of the PRSP, the implementability of PRSP is going to get affected. I would caution against crowding this agenda to such an extent that this is an unachievable thing and will create more frustration as a result, because nothing gets implemented.

**Mr. Beier:** It would be interesting to go into this discussion in more detail, but I am afraid that we will not have the time to do this now. What I have seen here with all of you is a high commitment to the issues that we discussed and a high responsiveness to what people were raising during the four-days discussion. What I have learned is that there are already many teams working on the critical issues, that there are strategic papers
written. This is all very nice, but now comes the very critical last question, thanks to the plenum: What, concretely, are you all going to do differently when you go from here? Tell us one thing that you are going to do differently once you are back in your donor organization, based on the discussions here, based on what you have learned, based on what you have seen in all these very rich experiences that have been exchanged here during the past four days. What makes the difference?

**Ms. H.-Quevedo:** One thing that I will do when I go back is propose that there is some kind of study or assessment or review taking place in one or two countries that I learned about at this conference, where there are some real changes in being committed by the bilateral community in terms of what they have committed to change for supporting poverty reduction, for working in partnership, and for promoting ownership. And as a result I hope we will get some information that, in turn, we can communicate to the political leaders of our agencies, so that there is a renewed awareness that we need to work with even greater effort, because we are not there yet. We have achieved a lot of progress in a number of countries – and that is the kind of information that we normally hear about in the DAC, that this is working in Uganda, that this is working in Kenya, that Ethiopia is having this way in terms of donor coordination. I have learned about a couple of countries here – well, that is in fact not the case. So I think this is a very valuable input for me and I will do my best to deliver on this for you.

**Mr. Beier:** Mr. Shah, how do you change the Bank?

**Mr. Shah:** I think it is a big challenge; I agree with what you are saying that the comprehensiveness of the scale – we have 72 countries engaged in this process – is offering us a big challenge. To me, it is about encouraging a high amount of resources into PR learning and capacity building, as I think what we are trying to say is that each PRSP should be accompanied by a strong investment. To me it is becoming more clear that unless we invest a significant percentage of resources in capacity building and PR learning between countries, it is not going to happen. This will not happen through direct technical assistance, through shipping consultants all over, I think it
has to happen through learning directly from experiences which happen with each other. If the Minister of Bolivia goes and talks to nine other Ministers, it will have an impact of a very different kind as opposed to the model we are following currently, which is very incremental. So I am committed to pushing for higher internal resources to be devoted to PR learning mechanisms between countries and capacity building mechanisms. I will also go back and take a lot of concerns people have raised to the management and probably lobby, not only on my behalf but on all your behalf as well.

**Mr. Beier**: Mr. Ben-Senia, what will be different tomorrow?

**Mr. Ben-Senia**: One of them is a personal one: When somebody is asking a question, you have to focus exactly to see what the question meant. I think I missed the boat with the question that was raised by our friend from Uganda. I could tell from her body language, that I was answering on the side. The second one is the lasting impression from this conference, that IFAD cannot afford to be not in the PRSP process. I think there is a lot of advocacy and work to be done within IFAD, and I think I can play a role in that.

**Mr. Beier**: Mr. Hinrichs, what will be different in the German Ministry tomorrow?

**Mr. Hinrichs**: That does not depend so much on me, but perhaps I can give some hints. I am frightened by the complexity of the process. When we look at the boards over there and in the rooms, they could give enough work to a whole university. In reality, they are there to give work to developing countries, sometimes very small developing countries. How do we move forward to manage that contradiction? On all of the boards we can see that capacity building is needed, not only once, but it is on the four corners of the boards, and to put it differently: This means that the developing countries cannot do it by themselves. Whenever we say capacity building is needed, we say they cannot do it by themselves. So this is a frightening complexity.
At the same time, we must confess, I think, that in the planning cycle there is always an upstream phase where complexity is increased, and then decisions must be taken to reduce complexity. This is perhaps something we will have before us and in one, two or three years time the whole thing will perhaps change dramatically. I hope that will not be a change in substance but only a change in the manageability of the system. Let us remember that the IMF tries to reduce the number of conditionalities for the same reason. Normally, the IMF programmes had between 50 and 100 conditions, and now everybody is aware that this is nonsense, because nobody had the capacity, neither the developing countries nor the IMF, to manage it. Now the IMF tries to go down to just a handful of conditions. I do not know how this works and whether this is the solution for the future, but we realize in development co-operation, everywhere, that complexity is something which is intellectually necessary, but which has to be brought down to more simple solutions. What I will try to do is to find out with others where the areas are where you can reduce complexity, and where it is perhaps necessary.

Mr. Beier: Thank you.

Plenary 4: What is very necessary for the underdeveloped countries is that the developed countries open their markets for the products of the underdeveloped countries. If we cannot position our products – I am the Bolivian Ambassador – we will never be able to fight poverty. We cannot introduce anything against poverty, if we do not have the chance to export our services and products to have better incomes. Helping them in this way is the best thing we can do to develop the countries. And not copying the products; because here in Europe, they are beginning to copy our products and they do not need our products anymore. So, we need protection, we need respect, and we need help by having development improved in this regard.

Mr. Beier: I think it is a very good sign for this meeting that even if the moderator tries to close the session, there is still so much engagement and commitment to the issues. The discussion will not stop and I hope very
much that it does not and that we will see each other on different occasions in the next years and try to find out together what has changed and how we can improve the poverty reduction strategies.

Thank you very much for your participation, thanks very much to the panelists, thank you very much for the interesting questions, which made the job for me much easier, thank you very much for your commitment during the whole four days. I did not have the opportunity to participate during the whole time, but I was impressed yesterday evening when I saw the results and heard the stories about what has happened in the working groups, which is much more important than the results that are documented on the cards. What I have seen is that not only this session but also the other sessions have been very open, very committed discussions, and I hope very much that you can go on with this way of negotiating and talking about the critical issues that have been raised here.

Many thanks to everybody who has contributed to this conference, especially the people that you do not see: the technicians, everybody in this house, everybody in Eschborn, everybody in BMZ, everybody who has contributed to make this event a successful event – thank you very much, and I wish you all the best, a good trip home, and hopefully you have learned something that is important for you. Thank you very much.

Ms. H.-Quevedo: Mr. Beier, I do not know quite how to follow up on your closing remarks. But I personally, and I think probably a large number of people in this room would like to express gratitude to the German Government and to all the people from the German agencies, who worked so hard to make this event possible. And I think everybody could agree that this really was a fantastic opportunity to learn from one another. It enabled us to take this whole process of implementing PRSPs one very concrete step forward in terms of coordination. Thank you.
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Preface

Section 1: Introduction and Background

Section 2: Poverty Diagnostics

Section 3: Public Expenditure Management

Section 4: Macroeconomic Policy Formulation and Implementation

Section 5: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Section 6: Post Script

Annex 1: References

Annex 2: Agenda

Annex 3: Participants

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## A5  List of participants

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