

Integrating Land Issues and Land Policy with Poverty Reduction and Rural Development in Southern Africa

by

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Abstract

This paper is a synthesis of land issues and land policy constraints in Southern Africa prepared for the World Bank Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa and the Middle East held in Kampala, Uganda, 29 April to 2 May 2002. It synthesizes key points made in commissioned papers, plenary comments, and facilitated discussions from a special Southern Africa Working Group attended by conference delegates. Topics include an overview of land issues and special problems and constraints affecting the southern African region including land administration, community ownership, financial capital and investment, HIV/AIDS, land markets, land conflict, and land redistribution. It also compares the performance of selected countries in linking land policy with poverty reduction and concludes with steps for better incorporating land issues in country level Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers being endorsed by certain donors.

Paper prepared for the World Bank Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa and the Middle East held in Kampala, Uganda, 29 April to 2 May 2002.

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Purpose and Objectives

The Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa, 29 April to 2 May 2002, sought to achieve a number of objectives: 1) review analytical work and practical experience on land issues; 2) discuss ways in which broadly agreed upon principles of land policy are translated into policy and programmatic interventions; and 3) assess the integration of land in national strategies for poverty reduction and economic growth. The first two and half days of the conference were devoted to 10 panels on tenure security, legal framework, customary to modern transition, pastoralism, conflict, land markets, land reform, peri-urban growth, taxation, gender, and land administration systems. Following these panels, parallel sessions on regional case studies for West Africa, Southern Africa and East Africa were held to clarify linkages between land issues, poverty, and national strategies for development and poverty reduction.

Four background papers were prepared for Session II on Southern Africa – a regional overview of the Southern Africa region (Mbaya), and selected country papers prepared for Lesotho (Selebalo), Mozambique (Quadros) and Namibia (Katali). This paper endeavors to synthesize or consolidate key information on land issues and constraints expressed in these papers, and in addition integrates this synthesis with comments and discussions in previous panels, and with the summary discussions of the working group on Southern Africa (Session II).

¹ Paper prepared for the World Bank Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa and the Middle East held in Kampala, Uganda, 29 April to 2 May 2002. The helpful comments of Clarissa Fourie, Mike Lyne, and Rogier Van den Brink are gratefully acknowledged.

Land Issues

The overview paper by Sue Mbaya helps to catalogue key land issues and observes how appreciable differences exist in perspectives on how land is viewed, managed and used between the “settled” colonial states (Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe) and “nonsettled states” (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia) of Southern Africa. Settled states share a history of colonial occupation that has resulted in racially skewed land distribution systems, dual tenure systems, and severe degradation of communal areas. Land issues in the non-settled states tend to be more strongly associated with landlessness, environmental degradation, loss of land to peri-urban settlement, high population growth, unsustainable land use, and weak systems of land administration. Angola and Mozambique are not covered in Mbaya’s country stratification. Both however share similar histories of Portuguese occupation, political instability after independence, and a decade or more of war that has uprooted and dislocated rural populations, destroyed assets, and created trauma on a widespread scale. Land grabbing and the enclosure of customary lands are on the rise in most countries within the region by powerful indigenous elites and corporations that are acquiring land and property at the expense of the poor (Mbaya).

Many of these issues – colonial occupation, appropriation of resources and control of the economy – are observed elsewhere in Africa,² but southern Africa is unique in the intensity and scale of colonial interventions, the persistence of these effects, and the late transition to African independence. While dualistic land tenure systems prevail Africa-wide, there are also differences in the way colonial policy treated customary tenure systems. British colonial law served primarily to acquire land for public purposes and to administer leases to investors and settlers, while customary law applied to indigenous people in “reserves.”³ In the French colonies, the general land policy emphasized assimilation based on the doctrine of “one law for all”, giving all Africans and Europeans the right to obtain concessions and private property if they complied with the Civil Code. The Portuguese colonies (Angola and Mozambique) also emphasized assimilation, but integrated them into the land administration machinery using chiefs and “regulos” to mobilize labor and collect taxes (Graefen).

² Despite different legal systems applied by Britain (Southern Africa) and France (West Africa), land tenure policies of both were similar in law and effect. Both powers adhered to the doctrine that all occupied land was held in communal tenure, ownership of customary lands was vested in chiefs as trustees, individuals were granted only usufructory rights, and all vacant land was expropriated for colonial use. Dualistic land tenure systems were manifest within both regions, but in addition conflicts emerged between countries with large white settler communities (Angola, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe) and those with relatively small settler communities (e.g. Rwanda, Malawi, Lesotho, Nigeria). (see Graefen).

³ In east and southern Africa, but not in West Africa. See for example the paper by Honorable Professor Kasim Kasanga who talks about the importance of stools and chiefs on customary lands (not reserves) in Ghana.

Box A: Salient Land Issues, Southern Africa Countries

- Highly unequal land distribution both in terms of area and land quality, and a system of dual land rights resulting from massive alienation of land to white settler communities
- Severe land shortage and problems of landlessness in communal areas and certain land scarce countries (Malawi)
- Dual economies characterized by historically segmented access to resources and markets between “white and black”, rich and poor, socially advantaged and disadvantaged
- Severely eroded land in communal areas caused by overcrowding, pass laws, inadequate infrastructure, erratic rainfall, and inaccessibility of formerly disadvantaged population to input and output markets
- Weak and uncertain rights of tenants operating under permits on resettlement schemes, certain households and individuals (particularly women) on customary lands, and beneficiaries of land reform schemes operating under various forms of equity sharing
- Inadequate protection of farmworker rights against eviction and substandard farmworker housing on commercial farms. Inadequate protection of rights of citizens and communities against certain traditional authorities
- Land resettlement by large populations displaced by war and colonial occupation
- Loss of high quality arable land to urban and peri-urban settlements

Regardless of these differences in colonial land administration, the prevalence of dualism between national land tenure legislation and customary land tenure practice in West Africa (French Republic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) is equally relevant for the customary sectors of Southern Africa, as are the approaches discussed by Delville to move away from legal dualism (see also Julian Quan).⁴ However, as noted by Cousins, slow progress in addressing tenure reform in communal areas is strongly related to unresolved (and the highly contested) issue of the role of traditional authorities in local governance systems in South Africa, including administration of land tenure.

Special Problems and Constraints

While many of the discussions on land issues and policy interventions in Southern Africa were rich and robust, surprisingly little attention was given to a number of important land related issues and related policy interventions in the southern Africa papers:

⁴ According to Delville, five local institutional innovations are undergoing experimentation in West Africa: 1) identifying and mapping (individual and community) land rights; 2) codifying rules and granting legal status; 3) allocating responsibility for making and managing rules to local structures; 4) making land transactions more secure; and 5) developing tenure observatories to monitor land tenure constraints and performance.

1. Land Administration – A Missing Link

Land administration according to Okoth-Ogendo has 5 components – juridical, regulatory, fiscal, cadastral and conflict resolution.⁵ Far too many papers at the conference talked about “big challenges” for land reform and all-encompassing interventions. Far too few critically analyzed weaknesses in land administration and causes of slow implementation in already existing programs. Okoth-Ogendo concludes that land administration systems in Africa have generally failed to perform the functions for which they were designed. Indeed, except for Botswana, where land administration was addressed three decades ago (Okoth-Ogendo, see also Martin Adams and Christian Graeffen), land administration has been incidental in land reforms across the continent.

A central problem for most of the “settled” states is that the juridical and regulatory components, while “first-rate” in standards and quality of implementation, were designed to serve white minority interests situated on relatively few farming units. South Africa has gone the furthest in trying to redress racially-biased legislation. However, implementation has been slow and little progress has been made with making regulatory and cadastral functions affordable for the population at large. The very attributes that supported large-scale, capital intensive farming in the “settled” states – precise delineation of boundaries and full ownership based on deed registration to protect land rights and secure mortgage capital – are difficult to replicate or extend to the poor because of limited supply of land delivery services and steep costs.

For the “non-settled” states, government inherited limited governance skills and public infrastructure at the time of independence, and in the case of Angola and Mozambique, the human and physical capital that did exist was decimated by war.

Okoth-Ogendo offers some practical guidelines for moving forward, and calls for the need to redesign all aspects of the land administration function with greater emphasis given to a simplified legal framework, more efficient land administration, user-friendly dispute processing, and better business practices. Yet, who is to take the lead for design and implementation? As several commentators from civil society

⁵ The juridical component of land administration seeks to ensure that property rights created under a tenure regime are clearly defined and boundaries are maintained. The regulatory component refers to the authority to design, prescribe, enforce and guarantee the integrity of performance standards in land resource management (e.g. zoning, land quality assurance, land market controls). The fiscal dimension refers to land valuation, taxation and the assessment of land resources for fiscal development and revenue collection. The cadastral element refers to the ability to retrieve information on who owns what interest in land, identification of parcels on maps, and monitoring

organizations pointed out, while land administration is at the heart of land policy, “in no country, has government or the state behaved responsibly in land matters.” A good part of the answer lies in the need to move toward a system of land administration that is citizen-led, community-based and democratic to help re-center land administration at a local level (Alden Wily)⁶

Furthermore, according to Clarissa Fourie, land policy development must take into account what is practical and doable in terms of the present “toolbox” of legal and regulatory tools; in too many cases, impractical land policy is the result of technical (legal) tools not being available to deliver the land policy approaches being developed.⁷ While a number of technical professionals outlined new approaches using modern technology (e.g. GIS, digital mapping devices) at the conference, Fourie concludes that these tools are not appropriate or sufficient for Africa’s requirements.

2. Community Ownership – The Way Forward?

The juridical and regulatory components of land administration systems in Southern Africa were built upon the foundations of full ownership and a single-farmer ethic, while land tenure in customary areas and many of the emerging farming units under land reforms in Southern Africa exhibit group forms of ownership. There is legislation that allows for partnerships and trusts in many countries with the region, but in most cases these have proven inadequate for registering community entitlements. In other cases new legal instruments have been designed (e.g. equity sharing schemes and common property associations in South Africa), but considerable planning and outreach efforts are required to determine membership, assess resources, evaluate land use potential, build skills, extend knowledge, design governance structures, build trust, and generally adapt and apply legal instruments to localized conditions and populations with meager resources.

Without decentralization of land services, and devolution of governance to localized levels, there is great risk of failure and empty promises. As noted by Liz Alden Wily, in no case within Southern Africa has

of land use changes. The conflict resolution component is complex and is derived from informal mediation fora, traditional courts, administrative tribunals, land boards and civil courts (Okoth-Ogendo).

⁶ Botswana has recognized customary occupancy for some time. Customary occupancy of land in Mozambique and South Africa have in recent years gained the full equivalency of private rights in state law as registrable entitlements, and are expected to do so in Malawi and less certainly in Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe (Alden Wily). However, Clarissa Fourie (personal communications) disagrees with Wily’s assessment of South Africa now registering customary rights. According to Fourie, customary rights cannot be registered – something that the Communal Land Rights Bill is seeking to redress.

⁷ For example, creating certain records for group rights where the group is not cohesive, being able to register a large variety of tenures covering all social tenure types, creating a *de jure* land registration system that matches the *de facto* social land tenure system, creating a coherent land information system for both surveyed parcels and sketch

the power to govern land tenure been devolved to democratically elected community level bodies.⁸ Why hasn't the ultimate leap been taken towards Community Land Boards, community-decisionmaking, and community land rights (Alden Wily)?

Part of the answer lies with old habits, entrenched interests, and state failures, but there are technical problems as well. While group registration and sectional title is now possible in a number of Southern Africa countries (Mozambique, South Africa), what according to Clarissa Fourie is the spatial unit of observation for juridical, regulatory and cadastral purposes? Is it the individual, the chief, a village council, or group of communities, and what are the rights of each and for what specific units of land? There are also risks that land rights are eroded by adherence to customary law, or for example in South Africa, Swaziland, Malawi, Lesotho and Mozambique, that land rights newly won by beneficiaries become subservient to the control of chiefs and traditional authorities (see Cousins a la South Africa).

Alden Wily presses instead for a system of more "loosely" defined boundaries based on what landholders themselves decide is workable and sustainable. Emphasis should be placed on recording land rights based on locally agreed upon boundaries, rather than rigorous survey of parcel measurement and mapping which are neither feasible nor sustainable in present day Africa. The emphasis in sum should be on a land administration system that is fast, cheap, efficient and reliable. While such system might constrain secure access to financial capital or high-cost, fixed-place investment (which for most rural areas in Africa are not yet important constraints), it should nevertheless provide sufficient underpinnings for the emergence of a land rental market to increase land use intensity.

What is the optimal system? A division remains between the surveying community and social scientists about both approach and mechanisms. More than one speaker or commentator derided precision surveying and GIS tools as too costly and infeasible. Yet, a number of surveyors also raised the future costs from land conflicts and lack of mortgagability that will stem from "cheaper" and more-cost effective mechanisms being proposed in such countries as Lesotho and Mozambique. Ultimately, both positions are right; the key to bridging these two opposing views is the ability to upgrade tenure as demand so warrants. Such upgradability however seems distant in many land policies, and even in cases of

plans where both registered freehold and rights of occupancy must reside on the same system, and community based approaches that are difficult to scale up to a national level.

⁸ Draft national policies of Swaziland, Lesotho and Zimbabwe made similar arrangements, but have been suspended for various reasons. This is also the fate of the Land Rights Bill in South Africa which is being opposed by chiefs and traditional authorities (Alden-Wily).

Mozambique where an individual can de-link his/her tenure from the community's, ease of implementation and certainty of rights have not yet been proven.

3. Financial Capital and Investment

There remains another problem, in some ways specific to the “settled” states of southern Africa, but with longer term implications for all countries within the region. Can or will group ownership schemes provide “easy” entry and exit for members, adequate incentives for individual investment, secure incentives for capital accumulation, and increased access to long-term financial capital through use of land as collateral. A significant contingent dismissed these concerns; according to one commentator, “...title has not increased access to financial capital for smallholders anywhere on the continent because so many other preconditions must in addition be met.” Others noted that with advances in micro-finance and group forms of security, this issue is rendered unimportant.

While this may be true for much of rural Africa today, the situation in the “settled” states is much different. There, commercial farms are highly indebted and hold considerable capital value. Land value is maintained with substantial capital investment, and cash flow problems do constrain investment. In the redistribution of land from large-scale farms to beneficiaries, the ability to maintain the present stock of capital, let alone make new investment, will depend on linkages with financial sector institutions. Even if rural landholders through savings and micro-finance can secure financial capital for short term inputs in agriculture, such instruments will not be sufficient for housing and many long-term improvements.

How then are new land reform beneficiaries in trusts, common property associations, and individuals within communities able to borrow? Due to problems of moral hazard, free-riding and cooperative “failures” in group ownership models, individual ownership has become the mantra for land administration in economic development. If “community-led” development is to succeed, answers to a number of basic problems will need to be found – relatively easy entry and exit of the individual from the community and his or her liquidation of land and property shares, relatively easy access to mortgage capital for individual investment, and incentives made proportional to assets held by individuals within the community. Many if not most group ownership models still lack the ability to deliver these benefits.

4. HIV/AIDS

The paper by Drimie was one of the few that seriously examined the relationship between HIV/AIDS, land issues, and livelihood strategies despite very high infection rates in the Southern Africa region. According to Drimie, many customary tenure systems provide little tenure security to women on the death

of their husband as land falls back to the husband's lineage. HIV/AIDS not only affects the productivity of the infected, but also pulls labor of the household and extended family away from other productive and reproductive activities as others take care of the sick. Savings are consumed. Assets are sold to help pay for medical expenses. Farm-land utilization declines as inputs become unaffordable, household labor supply is reduced, and dissipating wealth makes hiring labor difficult. Sooner or later, households fall below the social and economic threshold of "survivability" leaving the survivors – mainly the young and elderly – with limited resources to quickly regain sustainable livelihood. According to Cheryl Walker, SubSaharan Africa is the only region in the world where infection rates for women are higher than for men. As women usually care for the sick and orphans, HIV/AIDS limits the amount of time women can devote to agriculture and to social networks. Walker's paper in addition raises the concern of HIV/AIDS creating social instability and conflict, and the breakdown of sexual mores that result from military destabilization, refugee crisis and war.

What then is the implication for land tenure? Land uses, according to Drimie, shift to less labor-intensive uses; in some cases land is left fallow or abandoned. Cattle are often sold to cover HIV/AIDS related expenses, depriving households of draft power that would otherwise be used to help increase labor productivity. As noted by Drimie, infected households in Lesotho and South Africa used sharecropping arrangements as a means to raise cash, share output, or to avoid land underutilization or abandonment that might result in repossession.⁹ Children of HIV/AIDS affected families suffer from poverty in the short run and risk losing their future inheritance if land is taken away by traditional authorities or the state due to abandonment or underutilization. Households need assurance that they will not be evicted as farmworkers because of illness, or if land is held, that their land ownership is secure. Informal land markets have allowed households to sell land in some situations.¹⁰ However, forced removals of widows from land and property grabbing are significant concerns.¹¹ Land codes in a number of countries (e.g. Lesotho and Mozambique) specify that land not used for a specified number of years in succession will revert to the allocating authority.¹²

Such restrictions on land use are generally only needed when there is no land market to impose an opportunity cost on idle or underutilized land. A land sales market is unlikely to invoke this opportunity

⁹ A similar shift in sharecropping arrangements was observed in KwaZulu Natal, but the weak position of HIV/AIDS households lessens their bargaining power when negotiating sharecropping terms.

¹⁰ Selling land to pay for basic needs or HIV/AIDS related expenses is usually the act of the desperate with few other options; while ensuring survival in the short-run, the affected lose their most important economic asset for sustaining livelihood in the future (Walker).

¹¹ Drimie reports that while women are protected under Lesotho's law, they were not always protected in reality.

cost due to concerns about distressed sales and loss of land for future inheritance and livelihood. However, strengthening the assurance of land rental contracts would help provide land abundant households suffering from HIV/AIDS with a higher income stream, while providing the landless or labor abundant households with a productive asset that would help improve livelihoods and food security.

5. Land Markets

Land markets play an important role in facilitating intergenerational transfers of wealth, enabling access to housing and livelihoods (farming or small-scale enterprise), providing a source of income or share of output for the sick or elderly, and in certain cases the means to securing long-term debt. However, unfettered land markets in cases of gender discrimination and market power often lead to land concentration or land grabbing, while the poor lacking income opportunities or a social safety net may resort to distress sales. Land sales and rentals may not always be easily discerned from other forms of land allocation – gifts, borrowings, and inheritances, of short- and long-term duration. For many social and even technical scientists at this conference, the use of land “allocations” is preferred because it better captures the social institutions and relational attributes that underlie African customary land tenure systems. But as implied by several speakers, land allocations too often tend to be the big “square peg” that is forced into the “round hole” of land markets by the “market” ethos that has come to dominate global land policy.

Land markets in southern Africa, according to Frank Place, are relatively insignificant compared with both west and east Africa. Land sales appear to be rare. Land rentals are also low, although greater in significance than land sales. Unlike west Africa where tenancies are allowed to evolve into permanent transfers, land transfers in Eastern and Southern Africa are strictly temporary (possibly to keep tenants from establishing long-term rights in the land). Women normally hold inferior rights in land. But in some areas of Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique, matrilineal and even matrilineal systems are still practiced where land is passed through female blood lines or directly to females as in Malawi.

What then explains the lack of land sales in Southern Africa. For much of Zambia, and parts of northern Malawi and Zimbabwe, land is still relatively abundant resulting in greater prevalence of other forms of land allocation. However, in more land scarce situations, other causes are likely to prevail – weak market demand due to gender discrimination, limited purchasing power, dual land tenure systems, and land market controls imposed by the state or traditional authorities. It is understandable that land sales might

¹² Drimie notes in Lesotho that some chiefs have ignored Lesotho’s legislation on land lying fallow in order to help protect HIV/AIDS households.

be discouraged by communities or traditional authorities to protect against land speculation or distressed sales. But these do not adequately explain the low incidence of land rentals and sharecropping. One might surmise from discussions above that tenure insecurity is an important causal factor, but state prohibitions against land rentals are also a cause.

6. Land Conflict

John Okidi in his opening remarks noted how parcels with land conflict exhibit lower land productivity. Yet, surprisingly few land policy frameworks in southern Africa adequately mention, let alone diagnose, how land conflicts are created and sustained. Departure from adequate land access, secure tenure and fair land distribution often create tensions, according to Daudelin, but how these tensions manifest depend on the intervening role of gender, class, and ethnicity. Unmet demands for land rarely result in violence, but when violence does arise it is usually the peasantry who is victimized and rendered powerless in the face of entrenched elites or the powerful new elites created by policy interventions. Conflict however needn't be open. As argued by Ruth Hall, much of the conflict in South Africa is based on covert resistance, "...not challenging the...status quo, but garnering micro victories for the poor and landless." How? Through encroachment and the creeping invasion of individual farms, people overtaking legal processes by occupying the land they claim under restitution, peri-urban squatting, and through theft from the white farm community. Whether conflict is violent or covert, it is nonetheless debilitating for the human spirit, and undermines the trust upon which all institutions are founded.

The state might address this conflict for example by speeding up land restitution and land redistribution. Or, it might penalize the offenders. But in addition, the state has contributed to conflict in South Africa by raising expectations for land reform that are not met, by failing to intervene adequately in situations of insecure tenure (allowing conflicts to simmer), and by privileging certain rights claims over another (e.g. when sorting out overlapping claims) (Hall). The state may also play more active roles in shaping or generating conflict – e.g. The Communal Land Rights Bill (2001) which proposes to transfer rights to traditional authorities at the expense of rural dwellers, or PROAGRI policies in Mozambique that encourage private investors and elites acquiring concessions and leases at the expense of the poor.^{13 14}

¹³ Jose Negrao and Chris Tanner explain how donor support for PROAGRI and DINAGECA in Mozambique is benefiting large commercial and agribusiness interests at the expense of the poor through various land mechanisms including titling. Ben Cousins makes reference to the "fat-cat" land reforms that benefit the well-to-do at the expense of the poor. Kisamba Mugerwa noted how processes for resolving conflicts are very burdensome, Africa wide.

¹⁴ Clarissa Fourie explains that up to a few years ago investors were often allocated rural land that was already occupied because the land titling system allowed it to happen, and because there was not information/evidence about the rights of these occupants. Mozambique subsequently had to change its regulatory framework to curb this practice and to develop a land titling approach for investors that simultaneously protected the poor.

7. Land Redistribution

Land redistribution lies at the heart of land policy frameworks in the “settled” states of southern Africa. The redistributive land reforms implemented in Central America and Asia in the 1950s through the 1970s included strong measures to help “force” land redistribution from elites to beneficiaries. Instruments varied from country to country but included inter alia expropriations, land taxation, and limits on number and size of land holdings by vested elites. The 1980s witnessed a shift in energies away from land reform efforts on a global scale and the beginning of the shift away from redistributive land reform to market-assisted land reform (1990s) and currently to community-assisted land reform. The reasons for this policy shift are multiple and complex but at least three factors played a role: 1) the after effects of the Arab Oil embargo in the late 1970s and a shift in policy focus to structural adjustment programs to curb macroeconomic imbalances, 2) sagging support for land nationalizations in donor countries; and 3) according to Rogier van den Brink, redistributive reforms proved too bureaucratic, cumbersome, slow, and costly.

The 1990s have reinvigorated the land reform debate, in part driven by land reforms in South Africa after apartheid, in Zimbabwe after the 1998 joint Government-Donors Land Reform Conference, and more recently Namibia. The jury is still out on whether the transactions costs of market-assisted or community assisted land reform in southern Africa is any more cost-effective or speedier than redistributive land reform.¹⁵ What can be said is that land reforms in Namibia and South Africa have been very slow in implementation, due to a number of structural and policy problems – land market constraints that prohibit the sub-division of large-scale farms into smaller units, weak capacity or reluctance of people to navigate the administrative and political machinery of market transactions, market power of landed elites, cash flow problems associated with loan finance, expensive surveying and demarcation, inadequate funds for land acquisition and resettlement, and high land prices for good quality land.¹⁶ Unlike Brazil and Columbia, which achieved independence at the turn of the century, southern African governments reached their independence in the latter part of the 20th century, and until independence most blacks were

¹⁵ Lumumba argues that redistributive land reform is inevitable to redress historical wrongs, reduce poverty and spur economic growth. But, one way around the controversy of redistributive land reform is agreeing that the policy framework should define a menu of options to be pursued. Rather than debating the pros and cons, and creating hard ideological stances, focus might instead be placed on creating a conducive atmosphere of experimentation where the performance of different approaches can be tested and compared in terms of cost/beneficiary, speed of transfer, impact on poverty reduction, and so forth. (See also Van den Brink).

¹⁶ Cousins, in addition, raises problems of long delays in processing applications, small grant sizes to enable land acquisitions, a mismatch between the needs of beneficiaries and size of landholdings available, and difficulties in integrating land delivery projects (based on uncoordinated and unpredictable negotiations) with rural development processes (agricultural extension, water, schools and clinics to resettled communities).

forbidden from participating in land markets. Market assisted approaches are to some degree shackled as a result.

What then is the policy direction? However, egregious fast track resettlement in Zimbabwe has been in terms of human rights violations, and scale of state-supported violence, the action of the state to curb the market power of large scale land holders is not inconsistent with similar policy thrusts observed in the 1960s and 1970s in Latin America and Asia. On several occasions key policy makers at this conference from Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe proclaimed "...willing seller – willing buyer approaches may be obsolete for the needs of rapid land redistribution and poverty alleviation." Governments are already pursuing a variety of mechanisms to increase the ability of the state to redistribute land from large-scale sectors to the poor (see Table 1A and 1B).¹⁷ Both the World Bank and donors in addition need to seriously reconsider their policies against paying for land purchase and increase funds for resettlement costs.¹⁸ Whether future land policy emphasizes redistributive land reform or community-assisted land reform, the facilitation costs to recreate capacity in local communities and empower them to govern and assume control over their livelihoods will be gigantic. Yet, set against the political instability and future violence of slow-paced land reform, it is in the interest of all parties to work on ways to reduce land inequality.

Beyond land acquisition, in both communal and resettled areas, hefty costs will be incurred for demarcation of towns and villages and land use planning to improve access to electricity, schools, roads, water, sewage, and communications in ways that improve health, livelihoods, and social development. There will be yet higher costs for improvements in land delivery services to the poor by decentralizing the system of land administration that was created to serve minority interests. And further costs will be required to help communal and resettlement dwellers engage in markets and wise land use practices through skills development and empowerment of rights and local governance.

Land Policy and Poverty Reduction

On paper, countries within the region have been active in reviewing and promulgating new land reform and tenure reform policy (Box B). Not surprisingly for the "settled" countries, the policy framework tends

¹⁷ Namibia for example is consider closing "legal loopholes" that encourage large-scale farms to transfer assets into closed corporations that circumvent the land reform act. It is also considering various measures, for example the land tax, to help move underutilized land onto the market (Katali).

¹⁸ This already is underway. According to Rogier Van den Brink (personal communications), the World Bank has recently changed its policy and is now able to finance land purchases. The US government also made provision for financing land purchases under the 2000 Zimbabwe Democracy Act. The UK has financed land purchases in Zimbabwe since the 1980s.

to be more strongly focused on land reform to redistribute land from the formerly white large scale commercial farming sectors to smallholder sectors. Land redistribution further encompasses processes of land acquisition, resettlement and post settlement support including provision of clinics, roads, schools, market centers, water, electrification, sewage, and improved access to agricultural inputs, markets and technology. Overall, processes for land acquisition have been slow within the region, too slow for assurance of political stability.

Box B: Recent Land Reform Processes	
Country	Policy Formulation
Botswana	New Agricultural Policy, 1991
Lesotho	Draft National Land Policy, 2001
Malawi	National Land Policy, 2002
Mozambique	National Land Policy, 1995
Namibia	National Land Policy, 1998
South Africa	White Paper on South African Land Policy, 1997
Swaziland	Draft National Land Policy, 1999
Zambia	Draft National Land Policy, 1998
Zimbabwe	Draft National Land Policy, 1998/9
Sue Mbaya, 2002.	

Some headway has been made in rationalizing the dualistic system of property rights or for upgrading customary tenure, but overall tenure reform has received less attention than land redistribution. Despite the many innovations in land tenure reform in Mozambique's land law (see Table 1A), implementation has a long way to go. Both the Lesotho and Namibian land policy frameworks recognize the need for upgrading land rights, but the lion's share of resources seem drawn toward issues of land redistribution, land use planning, and land management. Even in South Africa that has gone the furthest in upgrading land tenure rights, implementation has been painfully slow in part due to capacity constraints, and conflict between government and traditional authorities over who – chiefs or the people – should be the rightful holders of the land.¹⁹ Of the countries where restitution claims are an issue (Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe), only South Africa has included a restitution component in its land reform, but as noted by Mbaya, restitution claims across the region are complex, contentious and a proverbial “can of worms” to untangle. Mbaya also notes that land policy and law within the region are becoming more gender

¹⁹ After eight years of democracy, according to Cousins, there is still no comprehensive legislation on land rights in South Africa's former bantustans despite a constitutional mandate, commitment to create tenure security, and pressing development problems caused by lack of clear land rights.

sensitive (see also Table 1A and 1B), but while some comfort can be drawn from more gender conscious governments, reforms on the ground are far from adequate.

South Africa has also gone the furthest in protecting farmworkers rights, but as argued by Roth (2001), land tenure reforms alone seldom provide the protection that is needed to avoid evictions due to grossly imperfect enforcement and inadequate government reach. What is required in addition is a policy thrust that builds trust between the commercial farm and farmworker communities, not divisions, and uses incentives that encourage employment, rather than penalties that result in eviction. But, the sad fact remains, that however successful the achievements in land tenure reform and restitution, majority populations within the region are relegated to land holdings that are too small and are diminishing due to environmental degradation and population pressure. With regard to both land tenure reform and restitution, one lesson is clear -- a more robust land redistribution component is needed to both strengthen the “teeth” of reforms and decrease demands on an overcrowded land base.

There are practical problems that impede governments’ ability to implement land reform and land tenure reform beyond inadequate legal frameworks, in particular lack of implementation and overly centralized bureaucracies.

Implementation. Certain land frameworks (Namibia) do a reasonably good job of clearly identifying land policy needs and interventions. Others like the land policy framework for Mozambique are very long on priorities as the needs are great. Many governments talk of agrarian reform, decentralization, land tenure reform, and investments in building systems of land administration. Yet, as noted by Martin Adams, “...in an attempt to do everything, governments often do little or nothing.” Many papers were simply too broad and lacking in focus. According to one commentator from Namibia, “...many discussions contained elements of “beautiful policies (Malawi) but no resources to aid in implementation. Governments know what must be done, but implementation is a nightmare.”

Decentralization. More than one civil servant lamented the serious capacity constraints inhibiting government’s ability to deliver land services to the poor. As noted by one discussant, “an excellent policy not implemented cannot be excellent.” It is understandable how large countries like Mozambique and Namibia have been unable to adequately decentralize. But even South Africa, which has managed to create a first-rate legal framework, has suffered from inability to devolve authority and responsibility of functions to regional and local levels. Speakers from Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia observed how colonial authorities left governments with little or no operating infrastructure at the time of independence.

Table 1A: Land Policy Framework		
Mozambique	Lesotho	Namibia
<p>1995 Land Policy and 1997 Land Law; 1998 Regulations</p> <p>Land Policy Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customary rights protected by law • Identification and registration of customary land rights using co-titling or condominium titling • Definition and recognition of representatives of local communities in land administration • Recognition that women can be title holders • 50 year land use rights, renewable for same period; registration not obligatory for rightholders under customary occupation • Foreigners able to hold land • Compulsory consultation with communities in deciding upon new investment • Individuals may obtain individualized title by delinking from community jurisdiction • Titles in urban/peri-urban areas allowed to be bought and sold • Land use plan required for acquiring use rights; extinction of rights when plan is not implemented • Provisional authorization and later full title can serve as collateral • Identification and registration of community rights of way to ensure access to water and grazing • No transfer rights for agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Act of 1979 (still in force) • Removed powers of traditional authorities and vested rights in community-based institutions – land committees and village development councils • Allocation in rural areas is done by land committees chaired by local chiefs • Selected development areas established <p>Draft White Paper on National Land Policy, 2001. Proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive National Land Code will be developed to reconcile customary and statutory law • Grants of land in freehold may be made in selected areas for specific purposes • Commitment to removal of all forms of gender discrimination in land dealings • Restrictions should be relaxed to enable foreigners to acquire title subject to approval • Statutes will be amended to allow for compulsory acquisition of land for public purposes and payment of compensation • Certificates of rights to long-term occupiers on urban land to provide urban poor with secure tenure while avoiding costly title registration <p>Land Redistribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government will develop a range of options – taxation, enforcement of lease conditions, tightening payment of rent and use of powers to acquire land for public purposes to curb land hoarding and land speculation 	<p>National Land Policy and the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act 6 of 1995</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing-seller, willing buyer principle in land reform acquisitions • Any commercial farmer wishing to sell land must first offer it for sale to government. State has right of first refusal • Non-Namibians are forbidden rights of ownership unless authorized by government • Creation of a Land Reform Advisory Commission • Expropriation of excessive land • Establishment of a Land Acquisition and Development Fund • Taxation of all commercial agricultural land • Affirmative Action Loan Scheme administered by Agricultural Bank to help disadvantage people buy land and livestock <p>Communal Land Reform Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Land Boards to administer land allocation and land disputes in respective areas • Leasehold tenure to individuals for renewable periods of 99 years, upgradable to freehold <p>Land Redistribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Acquisition: Government prefers to buy the best farms, thus must be selective • Two target groups of beneficiaries – the poor and successful farmers in communal areas • Redistribution of people onto commercial farms helps create space in communal areas for smaller farmers to grow and for entry-level farming

Table 1B: Land Cadaster, Fiscal Planning, Land Conflicts and Constraints		
Mozambique (continued)	Lesotho (continued)	Namibia (continued)
<p>Cadaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property register and Cadastral register. Huge backlog of unprocessed cases • Prohibition against private surveyors ended in 1992. Few private surveyors presently • Cadastral services preoccupied with new registrations and inspections to monitor land use plans, master land use plans, and updating mapping <p>Fiscal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land taxation mentioned but not articulated <p>Land Conflicts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land conflicts resolved by both juridical tribunals (urban areas) and community tribunals, local public administration, customary authorities, churches and local cadaster services • Training program underway for all district judges and state attorneys <p>Constraints/Special Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector is proposing land titles be freely transferable, and that the land market be regulated. Civil society feels much can be done without privatizing land; state ownership confers stability • No means by which land value can be estimated. Only fixed improvements can be valued • Insufficient infrastructure, poor communications, a weak system of justice and limited public services • Implement policy and regulatory framework • Capacity building and institutional reform at all levels, central to community level 	<p>Cadaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources for urban land management to help curb unauthorized building development and uncontrolled growth • Integrate community-based land use plans with district development plans. Decentralize land use and physical planning to district level • Surveying, mapping and proper zoning of all land in Lesotho starting with urban areas and extending to rural areas based on LIS concepts <p>Fiscal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify the valuation process and update the valuation rolls to increase land revenues <p>Land Conflicts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the huge backlog of land cases. More resources made available to the land tribunal and Courts. Cases will be heard in districts • Fresh start in constructing system of land dispute resolution using local courts at sub-district level • Government will facilitate alternative resolution mechanisms involving arbitration mediation <p>Constraints/Special Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious environmental problems. Dwindling arable land from 13 to 10% of landmass • Land sector lacks advocacy at Ministerial level • Need to promote stakeholder participation at all levels. More open and transparent policymaking • High level policy advice needed including appraisal of policy options and legislative reforms 	<p>Cadaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning and subdivision of land for resettlement. Simple community-based systems of surveying and registration • Endeavor to de-racialize land by making ownership in any area proportional to population at large <p>Fiscal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land tax on commercial farmland to raise funding for land reform, discourage underutilization, and encourage sales of unproductive land • Tax rate reduced for emerging farmers. Fees will be paid by newly settled farmers and community dwellers <p>Constraints/Special Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing legal loopholes that encourage transfer of land to closed corporation that exempt commercial farmland from the Act • High costs of acquiring land and lengthy negotiating procedures • Difficulties in valuing “unimproved land” and improvements on the land in price negotiations • Communal lands overcrowded, lack roads, reliable water supplies, sanitation and communications • Uncontrolled urbanization and need for tenure security to invest in housing • Need to create capacity in land use management, particularly w.r.t implementing the land tax • Creation of 13 Regional Land Boards to allocate land, settle disputes, and implement policy
Source: Quadros	Source: Sebalalo	Source: Katali

Problems of weak government capacity were exacerbated by the scale of dualism in southern African economies that resulted in land administration systems designed for minority interests. Governments in the region appear to know all too well the enormous challenge involved in decentralizing land policy, but options appear all too weak against the scale of problems being addressed. Government and civil society organizations did find common ground around the issue of what the IMF/World Bank and donors can do to help with this problem. Donors simply need to help countries within the region do more with land administration, and according to Mbaya, "...when is the World Bank going to move beyond policy to implementation?" Indeed on many fronts, there is a sense that donors are long on policy advice and planning (PRSP), and short on the funds to help governments implement.²⁰

Incorporating Land Issues into the PRSP

Only four southern Africa countries have embarked on the process of drafting Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) to date: Lesotho and Zambia according to Mbaya have produced Interim-PRSPs; only Malawi and Mozambique had drafted full PRSPs by the end of 2001.²¹ Based on Mbaya's review of these documents a number of conclusions seem evident:

- **Land access.** Malawi's PRSP does a commendable job of linking land issues with land productivity concerns and poverty driven by inadequate land access, inability to use land effectively, poor quality land, and environmental degradation. Lesotho's I-PRSP mentions land shortage as a contributing factor to poverty, and poverty as a cause of land degradation. However, Lesotho's plan overall is weaker on the specifics of how land policy will be used to reverse poverty. Mozambique's PRSP argues that land holdings do not differentiate poor and non-poor peasants; rather, the constraint is capacity and the means to achieve adequate levels of productivity.
- **Tenure security.** Zambia's I-PRSP endeavors to develop efficient markets for leaseholds by improving the Ministry of Land's information system, speeding the issuance of land titles, and accelerating plot surveys on urban settlements. The I-PRSP also proposes to implement land resettlement for displaced workers, e.g. from mining operations, and improving and legalizing unplanned and peri-urban settlements. Mozambique's PRSP also relates tenure security to improving the efficiency of land adjudication and land registration, strengthening land administration institutions and organizing the national land register.
- **Fiscal.** Zambia's I-PRSP proposes improving revenue generation by putting in place an effective tax collection system (which presumably could be used to transfer land or income to the poor).

²⁰ For example, the Department of Land Affairs in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa hasn't been able to spend its annual budget for land reform in any year since 1996, first under the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) program, and later under the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) program (personal communications with Mike Lyne).

²¹ Due to urgencies surrounding debt release for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), the World Bank and IMF allows an Interim PRSP to be sufficient for release of HIPC funds. The I-PRSP, typically much shorter in length, provides a brief poverty assessment and policy framework (Mbaya).

- **Poverty targeting.** Malawi's PRSP targets poverty stressed groups – landless or land scarce households, labor constrained female-headed households, estate workers or tenants, *ganyu* laborers, the elderly and disabled.
- **Non-farm employment generation.** Landlessness while one cause of poverty across southern Africa does not mean that land policy to right-size land holdings is the first-best policy choice. Both the Malawi PRSP and Lesotho White paper (Table 1A and 1B) give attention to non-farm employment generation and the need to increase productivity per unit of land through better land utilization.
- **Sustainable land use intensification.** Malawi's PRSP includes a number of specific measures including broadening access to agricultural inputs, improved R&E, introduction of smallholder friendly technologies, soil conservation, improving access to domestic and international markets, irrigation, developing producer cooperatives and associations, and promoting family planning to reduce land use pressure.
- **Land Redistribution.** Strategies for reducing land shortage are linked in Malawi to land redistribution programs targeted to benefit 3,500 farming households. Lesotho's I-PRSP does not emphasize the Land Reform and NRM program, even though land reform is high on the agenda of the land policy framework.

For those attending the Southern Africa session II, many if not most felt the process of developing PRSPs should help to main stream poverty reduction in national policy dialogue and help coordinate World Bank and donor funding. As part of the macro-economic framework, the PRSP should serve as an aid to help prioritize programs and activities with the over-arching aim to reduce poverty. Being country driven with full stakeholder participation is also a strong advantage.

However, aside from possibly Malawi's plan, attempts to link land issues and land policy with poverty in the I-PRSP and PRSP to date have not been illustrious. Few of the plans adequately relate land tenure reform to poverty reduction, even though the land policy frameworks in Tables 1A and 1B show rich thought and policy experimentation with land tenure reform. Few of the plans provide poverty targets and specific indicators for who is to benefit, how and when. Land interventions too often seem geared to strengthening the system of leasehold and freehold tenure that at one extreme disregards the problem of the rural poor in the customary sector, and at the other extreme risks discriminating in favor of landed-elites who are better positioned to use these systems to upgrade tenure or acquire concessions. While leasehold and freehold tenure are not necessarily bad policy thrusts, it's not clear how the poor benefit. Further, as Mbaya points out, the PRSPs "...appear dominated by macroeconomic issues at the expense of social issues,...empowerment of the poor,...land rights of the poor and women,...HIV/AIDS, discriminatory inheritance laws that disadvantage widows and orphans,...or inequality.

Part of the problem may be that governments are still early on the learning curve, and PRSPs will mature with time to better articulate land issues in the way that the land policy frameworks in Table 1A and 1B have articulated them. It may also be the case, that the simpler I-PRSP is, well, “too simple”, for the needs of budget and priority setting being asked of them. But, there are more fundamental problems related to the process itself.

1. Very few participants in the working groups knew about Poverty Reduction Strategies or processes used to create the PRSP. Considerable time was spent in the Southern Africa session on defining basic principles, i.e. that the PRSPs have become the foundation for lending programs and for debt relief by the IMF and the World Bank, they must have a poverty reduction focus, are the responsibility of national governments, and must be inclusive of broad stakeholder interests. Further as noted by Mbaya, the PRSPs require that poverty reduction be the overarching goal, and that all donors coordinate their aid and lending programs with the PRSP. Given the highly imperfect information concerning the implementation of PRSPs by those in attendance, it is not unexpected that doubts about intent and motives would prevail.
2. World Bank and donor conditionalities will tend to make these programs deterministic and tied to policy agendas set by the Washington Consensus – market oriented reforms, trade and investment policy, minimal government intervention, etc. – that excessively discount social development and non-market allocations of land. As observed by both the West Africa (Guèye, Ouedraogo and Toulmin) and Southern Africa (Mbaya) case studies, there is great concern that the PRSPs are or will become Structural Adjustment Programs in disguise, loaded with conditionalities and “north-led” interference. If indeed the northern states were interested in genuine poverty reduction, debt would be cancelled, not simply reduced, and governments would be free to undertake poverty reduction programs without the onus of conditionalities that tie government’s hands. If indeed conditionalities are to be the norm, one speaker went so far as to suggest that land should be excluded from the PRSP process altogether.
3. There will be a tendency for countries to promise more than can be delivered, and there is far too little capacity to implement such programs. Are PRSPs another in a large field of unfunded mandates, national environmental action plans, structural adjustment loans, and sector investment strategies that either have not succeeded or created more work without budget and capacity constraints being

relaxed?²² And given that debt relief and donor financing will be tied to conditionalities, it is questionable whether participating governments will have “true” choice.

4. Will the land sector be disadvantaged in the budget battles that will inevitably follow?²³ Clearly, with the PRSP used as an overarching planning process, ministries will be put in a position of having to compete for funds given a fixed budget constraint. Along with public investments and civil service expenditures will come the need to document accomplishments and produce indicators showing poverty reductions. While still too early to tell, it is possible that those ministries able to better document benefits to the poor will hold an advantage in the budget debate. What might these be – primary education, school feeding programs, vaccination programs, health care, development of physical and social infrastructure that directly benefit the poor? Arguably, investments in land administration cut across many of these sectors, but what weights will be given to land mapping, land titling, land valuation, etc. in the poverty debate.²⁴ Clearly land redistribution that redistributes land and income benefits from the wealthy to the poor is by definition poverty reducing and equity enhancing. However, what about the impact of investments aimed to upgrade tenure security of the poor; would there, for example, be productivity improvements to help justify poverty alleviation? At least one government official from Namibia didn’t think so even though he considers more secure land ownership a priority. At this preliminary stage of PRSP implementation, one might conclude that programs able to deliver concrete and measurable short-term benefits to the poor will be more successful than programs promising long-term benefits. It is also likely that promises will win out over the ability to implement.

5. Mbaya comments how governments do not see civil society organizations as serious partners in the PRSP, and some civil society partners have not seen their participation in the PRSP worthwhile.²⁵ Based on the Kampala conference, I would have to conclude that any easy marriage involving government and civil society in decisionmaking will be an uphill fight. It is not simply a matter of wider stakeholder representation in the PRSPs or even giving civil society a stronger voice. It is a matter of civil society stakeholders being given greater control over policy and decisionmaking, and here the problems run deep. Civil society organizations derided government for its failures at the

²² It is noteworthy, that the PRSP process is becoming less donor centric, with some donors (notably the French and Germans) still skeptical whether PRSPs will work.

²³ An example was provided in the case of Malawi, where land related functions were ranked well down the list of investment priorities.

²⁴ For example, Selebalo mentions in Lesotho how the land sector lacks direct advocacy at the Ministerial level and how the land reform process is relegated to lower levels of priority as a result.

conference, while a number of government officials downplayed what civil society organizations can offer. Civil society organizations all too often are placed in a role of having to nag at government for not having done more, while government is placed in a position of having to implement policy with too few good policy tools and resources at its disposal against great demands. Governments, while skilled at the business of policy making, are weak on outreach to their clients, in particular the poor. And while civil society organizations are well versed in understanding and representing the needs of their clientele, they are too often poorly skilled at the complexities of government. While an idealist with a poverty-first focus might conclude that the optimal path forward is for both groups to put their differences aside, join forces and learn to work together while exploiting their comparative strengths – government on policy making and civil society at outreach and implementation – the reality seems destined instead to remain mired in mistrust and self-interests. This does not bode well for the PRSP and for the poor.

Conclusions: Steps to Better Incorporate Land Issues in the PRSP

It is useful to return to a point made by Okoth-Ogendo that reflects the sentiments of a number of speakers at this conference – “...the land question is the single most important problem which Sub-Saharan Africa (and I would conclude Southern Africa) must resolve if it is to emerge from...economic and social crisis...” Easy solutions are not in abundance. The twin forces of population pressure and environmental degradation, in many situations, have all but made it impossible to fully redress what the white man has stolen. But as many speakers and commentators have noted, the land question is burning in the guts of many within the region.

I cannot say with any confidence that the PRSP is an appropriate mechanism for coordinating policy to address poverty. Nevertheless, if the PRSP is a fact of life that we must live with, there are a few practical guidelines that might help ease concern over its implementation.

First, there is a clear need to conceptualize and validate linkages between specific land interventions and poverty outcomes in ways that justify funds and fit with the budgetary process. It is not unexpected that a conference with so many land experts should conclude that land is a fundamental factor of production and source of livelihoods. But, in addition, policymakers and civil society groups will need to tell better stories how specific land interventions affect the poor, how, and with what impacts. There was far too much complacency at the conference over land's importance in the livelihood strategies of the rural poor.

²⁵ Even the Malawi PRSP, which seems the strongest to date, according to Mbaya, is reported to have failed in meeting the expected levels of civil society participation.

Without greater attention and focus to advocacy and land-poverty analysis and impact, there is real risk that land policy will descend in the ranks of budget priorities.

Second, there is need to correctly identify causes of poverty in rural and urban sectors (land may be central or peripheral to the poverty debate depending on the case). Poverty studies will increasingly be asked to move beyond who is poor and who is not, to focused questions on which policy options are most effective in addressing poverty and how.

Third, there is need for technical interventions (land institutions, land restitution, land redistribution, land demarcation, mapping, surveying and registration) that while serving the population at large help target or improve the lot of the poor. One shoe need not fit all. But at the end of the day, an instrument or agenda that is vague in terms what might or might not benefit the poor is at risk of seeing diminished funding.

Fourth, there is need for a new strategic partnership between government, multilateral organizations, donors and civil society organizations based on principles of trust, transparency, fewer un-funded mandates, unconditional debt relief, fewer conditionalities, and more give and take to expedite delivery to the poor.

Fifth, invest in capacity and skills development at all levels – government, civil society and society at large. It is hard to see how broad stakeholder participation in the PRSPs is feasible, or even realistic given current divisions. Trust needs to be established, and checks and balances are needed on the powers of both government and civil society organizations to ensure accountability and responsibility. The focus should be on decentralizing and devolving power, not necessarily to government or even to civil society organizations, but to communities and the poor who ultimately serve as our clients.

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