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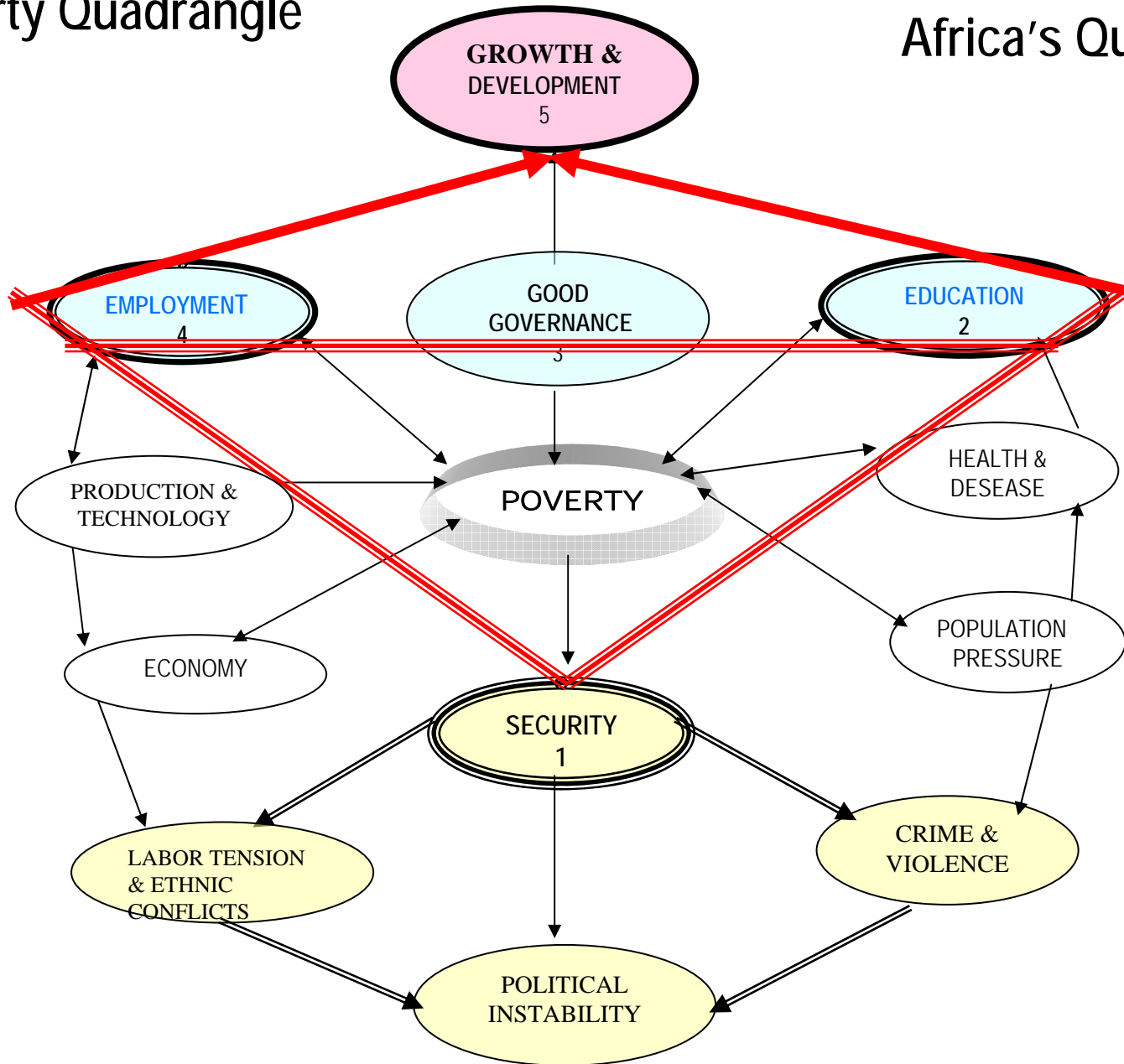
**PARLIAMENT'S ROLE IN POVERTY
REDUCTION: ENHANCING MACRO-
ECONOMIC POLICY APPROACHES**

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- POVERTY IS A STATE OF MIND, EVEN ON A FULL STOMACH
- POVERTY OF PURPOSE IS WORSE THAN POVERTY OF PURSE
- THE BEST AMMUNITION TO FIGHT POVERTY IS A LOAD OF AMBITION FIRED WITH EFFORT TOWARD A DEFINITE GOAL
- FOR A MAN TO BE POOR IS NOT A DISGRACE BUT, ADMITTEDLY, IT CAN BE CONFOUNDEDLY INCONVENIENT

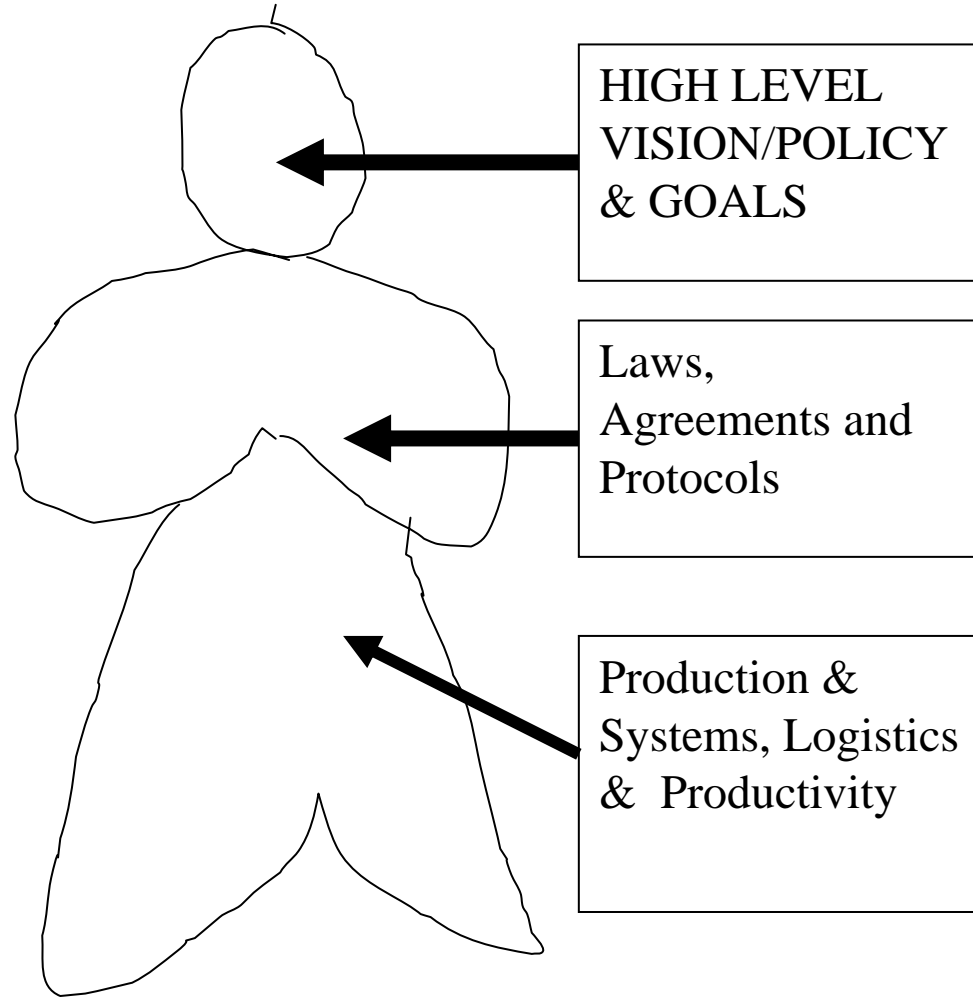
Africa Poverty Quadrangle

Africa's Quagmire



Role of Parliament: The New Perspective

The Constitution depicts the Image of Man



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POVERTY:

- **Poverty is the situation that prevails when a member of society is persistently unable, with reasonable effort, to find a job, or income generating venture that allows him/her adequate means to feed, clothe, house, educate and access basic health care and communications for him/herself, or to provide such basics for his/her young family within a reasonably safe and stable socio-economic environment.**

PRO-POOR M/E POLICY

- The idea supporting pro-poor macroeconomic policy is not new. What's new is the momentum it has gathered over the past 30 years, and moreso, the array of theories, models and metrics that have emerged in the last decade and a half.

SUPPLY-DRIVEN & EXTERNALLY PUSHED

- Pro-poor policy in developing countries have been shown to be largely supply driven with high external capital and contribution.
- Does not encourage broadbase participation of citizens

PRO-POOR GROWTH: what does it mean?

- Pro-poor growth focuses on that part of society that lacks social capital and personal equity.
- Provides opportunity for the poor to participate meaningfully in the country's development.
- Obligates government, development partners as well as private sector to view social equity building and poverty eradication as complementary processes for durable solution.

POVERTY METRICS

Dimensions of poverty:

- ***explicit (chronic poor)***
- ***Implicit (casual, causal poor)***

Pro-poor macro policy: a need to revisit

- focuses attention and resource on addressing explicit poverty, i.e. poverty that is visible and chronic
- provides the “whats” in form of welfare and aid as first level solutions because they are quick, easy to deliver and simple to count
- see poverty reduction” as though it were a one dimension dilemma, with a common solution

Appendix 1: PARLIAMENT PRO-POOR MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

Main Parliamentary Instruments

Parliamentary Sectoral & Special Standing Committees

Public Hearings

Site Visits and Surveys

Department Reports & Submissions

Auditor-General Reports

Parliamentary Committees Investigations

Special Audit & Studies

1. **Special Standing Committee (Coordinating)**
2. **Sectoral Standing Committees**
 - Investment Promotion and Industrial Development and Trade
 - Agricultural Policy; State Lands; Fisheries; Animal Husbandry
 - Power and Energy; Highways, Road Transport and Railways;
 - Health; Social Security and Welfare;
 - Housing; Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Reconstruction
 - Education; Human Resource Development; Science & Technology
 - Employment & Labour Relations
 - Telecommunications; Media; Postal Services
 - Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Equity
 - Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

Characterization of Pro-poor Macro & Micro Economic Policy Impacts – cost & benefit

Welfare, Aid & Supplies

Linkages, facilities & Networks

Direct/indirect Income/Employment

Government Taxes, duties & Revenue

Training / Skills, land & equipment

Value added/Export/Import substitution

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PARLIAMENT'S PRO-POOR POLICY MONITORING

- pro-poor policy monitoring system would be taken to be *any process that is designed to gather, store, analyze and disseminate information on the impact of policy and the distribution of the living standard of the poor within a given society. (Taylor:2003).*
- *Parliamentarians are the people's elected/nominated representatives, and parliament as a collective body for political leadership are major players in poverty identification, policy approval, policy monitoring and evaluation*

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- Parliamentary approves/ratifies national budgets, and by extension, the policies and programmes
- Since Executive Branch of government seldom presents specific programmes in parliament in any great detail, parliament needs to specify to the EB what it needs to know before the SCs are engaged
- Parliamentarians provide a forum for building multiparty consensus on poverty reduction priorities.

CONCLUSIONS:

Parliamentarians' role in traditional African Democracies, is usually elevated too high, where citizens feel that they must service their politicians and not the other way round.

The role of the modern parliamentarian is to enhance political accountability, and to ensure that civil society is regularly consulted on matters of national and cross-sectoral importance.

- Through the holding of public hearings, standing committees' scrutiny and investigations, and constituent relations bureaus, parliaments help to sustain the participatory processes, public accountability, transparency, communication which are the hallmarks of a vibrant, maturing and effective democracy.

CONCLUSIONS

- **Bearing in mind the longer term objective of pro-poor policy:**
- new direction for education and poverty is needed to address the explicit poor
- this solution should emphasize and deliver technical, vocational and craft skills to support formal employment, and to the extent possible, initially, to facilitate small and self-employment ventures

Conclusions

- Pro-poor strategies need to be designed to facilitate small individual and group equity formation in the form of
- savings clubs, venture and angel capital,
- access to low interest credit (cooperatives, lines of credit, close corporation, etc)
- Linkages with other SIEs and SIEs with LSEs
- collateral and network building (associations, clubs, etc
- training & technical assistance initiatives in developing business skills (marketing, management, etc

CONCLUSIONS:

New set of resource mix is needed for African economies to resolve the **implicit poverty** i.e. (those persons that are casual or causal poor). Such persons or groups usual have some skills, training and experience but become casual victims in/to a non-growing economy, through redundancies, retrenchment and recession .

CONCLUSIONS:

- For parliament to effectively monitor and evaluate pro-poor policy implementation new terms of reference need to be negotiated between the executive branch and the legislature.
- redefine the functions of parliamentary standing and special committees

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Parliament to establish a Special Standing Committee for Pro-poor M/E policies monitoring
- E/B to establish a Pro-poor Advisory committee comprising reps for private sector and OMAs
- E/B to accelerate pro-poor growth with equity
- Parliament to monitor the sensibility and impact of governments pro-poor macroeconomic policy through proactive investigations and regular submission of sensitive OMA/departments

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Monitor the competitiveness of the economy and by how much factor costs have reduced/raised, especially in rural areas
- Monitor the pace and pattern of development in the rural sector inclusive of land, road, agricultural services e and small and informal enterprise (SIE) development initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Parliament through SSC (as coordinator) and other SCs to monitor the quality and impact of the support infrastructure provided or facilitated by government to encourage the productive sectors especially in intra-sectoral linkages and with small enterprises

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensuring the poor use/access to basic social services

- SSC & SCs to monitor the cost and ease of access of the poor to basic, technical and vocational education;
- SSC & SCs to monitor the cost, quality and ease of access of the poor to health services

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- SSC & SCs to monitor the cost, reliability and ease of access of the poor to water, electricity and information technology;
- SSC & SCs to monitor the quality and standard of the environment in which the poor live including housing and social facilities.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective 3: employment and income-generating activities for the poor

SSC & SC to monitor the degree of vulnerability of the poor to disease, farm lands, produce and other agriculture-related activities; and how they are their responding to these access/facilities when provided

RECOMMENDATIONS

Promoting good governance systems in OMAs

SSC/SCs to:

- Monitor the quality and performance of leadership and governance systems devoted to pro-poor growth programmes
- Monitor the role of parliamentarians and councillors and their capacity to exercise leadership, resolve conflicts and carry out their oversight functions;

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RECOMMENDATIONS

SSC & SCs to:

- Monitor the capacity of regional & local government and their critical needs
- Monitor arrangements and facilities to build linkages pro-poor linkages with agriculture, tourism and lands;
- Monitor Government policies, practices and institutions responsible for regulating and combating corruption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring Role of Parliament

- *Monitor the role of the State, its refocusing, commercialisation proceeds, exit and support strategies to ensure that pro-poor infrastructures benefit*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Monitor Government practices in Good Governance, performance management and public accountability*
- Monitor government gender equity policy implementation

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Monitor competitiveness of the economy, all factor and transaction costs*
- Monitor regional opportunities, programmes and disparities
- Monitoring the impact of Government-private sector dialogue
- Monitor OMA's performance, public service dialog with private sector

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Parliament should establish a special Standing Committee to coordinate its oversight responsibility of monitoring Government Pro-poor policy impact and implementation, and obligate the executive branch to provide clearly articulated pro-poor policy, and programmes along with defined level of resource appropriation

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Parliament to negotiate with E/B for adequate analytic support and/or capacity and core secretariat to continuously assess, analyse and interpret pro-poor data for Standing Committees of parliament
- Political constituency offices and office bearers should work closely with regional representatives and private sector leadership to review pro-poor data at least once a every quarter and to make recommendations to government for action or support

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RECOMMENDATION

- A Budget should be provided to SSCs to facilitate the regional poverty network meetings to share experiences and lessons across SADC states and eventually to AU and GOPAC AFRICA

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Thank You

