In Search of Inclusive Development:
Social Policy in Sub-Sahara Africa

'Jìmí O. Adésínà. PhD

Professor of Sociology
Rhodes University, Grahamstown-iRhini, South Africa.
E-mail: J.Adesina@ru.ac.za

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1. Introduction

This monograph provides an overview of the research project on *Social Policy in Late Industrializers: Sub-Saharan Africa and the Challenge of Social Policy*. Eight studies were commissioned focusing on four regional and linguistic clusters, and organised around two sets of thematic concerns. East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa formed the regional cluster, but this was supplemented by a study of selected francophone West and Central African countries. The thematic foci of the studies are education and labour market issues on the one hand, and health, water, and sanitation issues on the other. The concern of this monograph is not so much to summarize the findings from the studies; it is more concerned with tying together some of the themes that have emerged from the studies, ***and*** reconnecting these to the conceptual issues in social policy broadly, and in the connection between social policy and development concerns, specifically. The concerns are tied up in section four of this monograph with a reflection on six essential elements or *imperatives* in rethinking social policy in sub-Saharan Africa. The imperatives, as is our research project, are based on three normative concerns: inclusivity, development, and democracy—where 'public reasoning,' as Amartya Sen (2004) puts it, is foundational to the ordering of public and civic relationships.

For the purpose of our analysis, we define Social Policy as the collective public efforts at affecting and protecting the social well-being of the people within a given territory. Beyond immediate protection from social destitution, social policy might cover education and healthcare provision, habitat, food security, sanitation, guarantee some measure of labour market protection, and so on. The idea of a tolerable, minimum level of livelihood and decency is intuitive and socially constructed; and normative (ideological) rather than technical. These define the links between economic and social policies; the desirable system of social relations and governance; and the specific instruments for achieving the perceived minimal level of well-being. But unlike much of the framing of social policy issues in the global North, social policy in sub-Saharan Africa has not been defined by the guaranteeing of a minimum level of social wellbeing through social insurance, unemployment insurance, state guaranteed old-age pension, or pronatalist social provisioning. Rather it has been largely defined by publicly guaranteed or mediated access to healthcare and education; much of the old-age pension or provident fund scheme is tied to formal sector employment, contributory or fully funded retirement pension scheme for public sector employees. While we will reflect on pension schemes, the concern of the project and this monograph is largely with the issues of healthcare and education.

In Section 2 of this monograph, we provide the conceptual and methodological framework for the research programme. In Section 3, we reflect at length on the research findings and core arguments; these are tied together by the author's independent survey of secondary sources and reflection on the existing body of knowledge in the field of social policy. The fourth and the final section of the monograph involves a reflection on *rethinking social policy* in the sub-Saharan African context.

2. Sub-Saharan Africa in Retrospect: background to the project

There has perhaps been no other time in Africa's four decades of post-colonial statehood, than now, when the crisis of social development seems so pervasive. In the two decades between 1981 and 2001, 134 million people dropped below the poverty line, putting the total number of people living in poverty (US$2.15 a day poverty line) at 516 million or 77% of the population (Sachs Report 2005). While there was an 8% reduction in the number of people living in poverty worldwide, sub-Saharan Africa registered an increase; the proportion of the population living in absolute poverty (less than US$1.08 per day) in the reference period was the highest of any region in the world: 46% or 313 million, up from 45% a decade earlier or 227 million; an increase of 86 million people (Sachs Report 2005:16). Of the countries listed as having the least human development index, 80.5% are sub-Saharan African countries (UNDP 2002). Even if one were to quarrel with the estimation technique used in the report,[1] the idea of the region's association with poverty and characterisation as a development wasteland is dominant.

In specific social development outcomes, there is considerable unevenness. Between 1980 and 1994/97, Primary School enrolment fell from 80.7% to 78% (World Bank 2001c). Excluding Nigeria and South Africa, primary school enrolment declined from 72.7% in 1980, to 67% in 1994/97. Aggregate figure for secondary school enrolment rose from 15% in 1980 to 26.5% in 1994/97. Again, when one excludes Nigeria and South Africa, the improvement in secondary school enrolment over the period becomes marginal: 14% in 1980 and 16.8% in 1994/97. Probability of survival to the age of 65 years is lowest of all the regions of the world (UNDP 2002: 177). Per capita gross national income declined at an annual rate of 0.6% between 1988 and 2000. Added to this is the dominant perception of SSA as a region plagued by genocidal conflicts, civil wars, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This perception is shared by both the political leaders, analysts, and the media.

Yet, such characterisations of the region hide three important issues in any analysis of social policy and outcome in the development process. First is the problem of ***time-sensitivity***. The economic growth figures for the region have not always been this anaemic. Indeed given the perception two-and-half decades ago (that the 1970s was a period of stagnation and decline), the pre-1980 period has turned out to be, what Adedeji (2002) referred to as "the golden age." Average growth rate for sub-Saharan Africa was 4.3% over the period 1967 to 1980—which was comparable to Asia and Latin America over the same period (cf. Mkandawire 2001b). By contrast Gross National Product, for the region, declined at an annual rate of 10% between 1980 and 1990 (UNDP 1996). What is significant about the pre- and post-1980 disaggregation of performance data is the shift in the understanding of and nature of macroeconomic and social policy, the nature and the role of the State, and the primary source and nature of incentives. Regardless of the spin that is being put on the experience of Africa since the 1980s, the negative impact of macroeconomic and social policy instruments is evident.

Second, the aggregate regional statistics hide significant variations in the composition of the various economies, the macroeconomic performances, and social development policies and outcomes. For instance, agriculture accounts for only 3% of South Africa's gross domestic product, while in Zimbabwe it is around 20%. Uganda's economy is heavily dependent on robusta coffee production and agriculture accounts for over 42% of its GDP. Botswana, on the other hand, is dependent on diamond extraction, with agriculture accounting for less than 4% of its GDP in 2000 (World Bank 2002a). There is also the question of size. In 2000, South Africa and Nigeria account for 50% of the GDP (in current US$) of the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa—with South Africa accounting for 75% of

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[1] Vandermoortele (2000) has queried the validity of the $1/day 'international norm' for estimating core poverty. The studies of 10 low income countries, "found that the cost of a minimum basket of goods and services was equivalent to S1 per day per person, when expressed in purchasing power parity of 1985" (Vandermoortele 2000: 4). His concerns were that, first, this produces a static idea of poverty (a 1985 benchmark), when in fact the circumstances—which speaks to how one constructs the PPP basket. Second, the norm "violates the standard definition of income-poverty" where someone is considered poor if s/he fails to "reach a minimum level of economic well-being *set by society*" (p. 5, emphasis in original). Wealthier societies tend to have a higher level of society acceptable standard of living, which a measure taken in some of the poorest countries in the world might yield. The norm is not a measure of poverty but of "how many people are struggling to survive every day on less than $1 (*ibid*). While accepting the validity of Vandermoortele's critique of this norm, the implications of the second-leg of his argument, for 'poorer' countries is not necessarily valid. To illustrate, if there were to be a massive collapse in standard of living or wealth in a society such that everyone in the country became poorer, and this were to persist for two generations or more—such that people start getting "used to living at a severely diminished level of livelihood, poverty would not *ipso facto* reduce. There is a minimum level of human existence that must serve as a floor, regardless of how many people in society fall below that floor or the normative orientation to such level of livelihood.

that proportion. Ghana and Nigeria experience sharp fluctuations in international oil prices differently. Similarly, there are wide variations in social development outcomes. The population living in poverty, using national poverty lines, ranges from 25.5% in Zimbabwe to 86% in Zambia.

Third is the paradox of the lack of fit between macroeconomic indicators of performance and social development outcomes. Understanding social policy outcomes requires more intimate knowledge and understanding of the nature of social forces in a territory that impact on or shape social policymaking and the realisation of outcomes (cf. Kangas 1992: 27). Nigeria and South Africa have relatively strong civil society organisations—especially their labour movements—that make the terrain of social policies highly contested. But both countries, for different reasons, show remarkably divergent internal variations in social development outcomes and profiles—the one regional, the other racial.

The linkages between economic growth and social development outcomes, and the way in which we conceptualise the interaction have become increasingly central to the development debate in the last two decades (cf. Mkandawire 2001a). After several years of vilifying the State, the idea of a developmental state is back on the policy agenda. Clearly, the challenge of a developmental state, that is democratic—however defined in relation to economic growth and the nature of State/Market interaction—remains a compelling issue for sub-Saharan Africa. It is in this context that we have seen a rash of global declarations and commitments on a range of social policy outcomes: basic education, sanitation, health care, and so on. It is to this challenge of a democratic developmental state and implications for the social development/economic growth nexus that I turn.

2.3. Conceptual and Methodological Framework of the Network

The work of the Africa Group was shaped by a specific conceptual and methodological framework. We understand social policies to be specific and deliberate policies (enacted and pursued) that positively impact on social wellbeing and security. Critical areas of focus therefore will be education, health and sanitation, and social security. The latter we will define more widely to include social insurance, pension schemes, and policies directed at reducing socio-economic vulnerability. The critical conceptual bases of the research programme of the regional network are (a) the understanding that social policies do matter, and (b) the virtuous relationship between economic development consideration and improvements in social development outcomes. The study by Kangas and Palme (2000) shows that even in the OECD countries, social policies do matter. Extent of general reduction in poverty and the dampening of the poverty cycles are important outcomes of specific social policies in the various countries. Further, studies on the linkages between social policy outcomes and economic growth shows that at both microeconomic and macroeconomic levels, social development outcomes have virtuous effects on economic growth (Mkandawire 2001a); and that economic growth that is oriented towards social equity and redistribution ensures the sustainability of growth. Where macroeconomic policies fail to pay attention to social policies, they not only undermine the microeconomic basis of growth, they are likely to weaken the social and political basis of sustainable economic growth.[2]

It was also clear at the design phase that our studies would need to be sensitive to the gaps that may exist between macroeconomic policies, social policies and social policy outcomes. In other words, between the intended and unintended outcomes of social policies, and social forces that impact on this. The widespread collapse in industrial output, escalation in poverty prevalence, and the disintegration (at least severe shrinkage) in administrative capacity might not have been the ***intended*** consequences of adjustment policies but the collapse resulted nonetheless—this aspect between policy intention and outcome is most dramatic in the area of social service provisioning; in health and in edu-

[2] While there is increasing concession from the side of Walrasian neoclassical economists and policymakers on the possible virtuous interplay of equity and efficiency (Mkandawire 2001a), there has been no fundamental shift—concessions are made only to the extent that equity considerations and policies are limited in their coverage (basic education, for instance), and targeted social safety net in the design of social security policies, and strong antipathy to redistribution as a core principle of macroeconomic policy. Cf. Bhagwati (1988) and design of policies rooted in PRSP approach. Wolfensohn's 1999 internal memo on the 'Comprehensive Development Framework' (CDF) is driven by the same logic (cf. Adesina 2002/2006).

cation. Yet, the variation in social development outcomes, among the adjusting countries point to the importance of human agency in mitigating the worst impacts of a debilitating policy environment and a country's ability to manoeuvre (cf. Hutchful 2002). Even among non-adjusting countries, social development outcomes have proven to be quite varied.

This leads us to a third dimension of the conceptual framework for our research programme, namely paying attention to the nuanced exploration of the social and political contexts of social policies and their outcomes as a fundamental aspect of the research programme. This requires attention to the nature of 'elite' politics and those of allied social forces; the configuration and orientation of social forces within the "civil society" that shape (initiate, contest, enact) social policies. There is, however, no *a priori* assumption of virtuous 'civil society' forces confronting vicious state forces.

A fourth dimension is the issue of ***time sensitivity*** and spatial disaggregation in making sense of social policy "transitions" and outcomes. Given the recurrence of Afro-pessimism in any discussion of sub-Saharan Africa, we need to pay attention to temporal disaggregation and discontinuities in social policies and social policy environments across the region. It is, broadly, possible to identify at least three distinct phases: (a) late colonialism, (b) post-colonial contexts until 1980 or early 1980s, and (c) post-1980; and the variations within each phase. The implications for Southern African countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa is that their post-colonial period coincides with the post-1980 phase for most of sub-Saharan Africa. An important dimension of the phases is also the macro-political logic that drove social policy and equity concerns. In spite of what has been said about the preponderance of autocratic states in the pre-1980s post-colonial phase, and the labelling of States and State agents, there is little doubt about the widespread concerns with nation-building among state agents—especially at the top echelons of the polities. An appreciation of this concern is important for making sense of very autocratic contexts such as Banda's Malawi or Kenyatta's Kenya. The extent to which the recent spate of violent social upheavals in countries like Cote d'Ivoire derives from the falling away of nation-building concerns should be an important consideration for researchers looking at specific country situations. Julius Nyerere might be vilified for the 'failure' of Ujamaa, but it is as a nation-builder that he would probably be remembered by history (Mkandawire 1999, Mazrui 2002, Mamdani 2002).[3] Equity considerations were therefore not only vertical, in class terms, but horizontal, in ethno-religious terms. Considerable intra-country disaggregation will be required in countries like Nigeria that have highly disaggregated national political systems with highly differentiated social policies.

From a methodological perspective, the agenda that was set for the research programme was not so much to generate new primary data but to creatively interact with and make sense of secondary data, while being conscious of the limitation and strength of each data source. Here, the understanding of social and political contexts of the data sources is important. Beyond this—and a methodological-conceptual issue—is the need to go beyond description. Researchers in the network were challenged to locate their specific sectoral works within the wider policymaking contexts as well as give explanatory and *theoretical focus to their works.*

Within this framework one study was concerned with overall conceptual issues and macroeconomic policy directions, focusing on the dominant or ruling ideas on development that shaped each phase of sub-Saharan Africa's post-colonial history, and how these ruling ideas shaped economic and social policies. A second set of studies focused on health, water and sanitation dimensions of social policy, while a third examined education and labour market policies. Using comparative techniques, these studies examined clusters of countries in East Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa.

3 Mahmood Mamdani. 2002. *Keynote Address.* 2002 Annual Congress of the South African Sociological Association, Regents Hotel, East London, South Africa.

3. Social Policy in Sub-Saharan African Context

In this section we discuss the major findings of the studies undertaken within the framework of this project in sub-Saharan Africa. While the studies are comparative, the basis of comparison has been sub-regional—i.e., inter-country comparison within each of the three sub-regions—here we draw lessons across countries and between sub-regions, and sometimes draw illustrations from countries that were not the focus of the individual studies. Further, while the individual studies are thematic in focus, we seek here to draw lessons between within each thematic area as well as across the themes, including the implications of the insights that Abdul-Ganiyu Garba's study (2003) of ruling ideas and the politics of policy enforcement affords us. A major gap in the individual studies concerns social security and/or social insurance. Apart from the traditional employment-based contributory old-age pension schemes for those in the private "formal sector" or non-contributory scheme for those in the public service, new health insurance schemes are being rolled out across several sub-Saharan African countries since the various studies in this collection were commissioned. The later part of this section provides a review of some of these schemes. The insight from Garba's schematic discussion of ruling ideas and their implications for economic and social policy is important for our analysis of these new pension and health insurance schemes.

3.1. Ruling Ideas, Policy Advice, and the Politics of Sovereign Rentier Capitalism

Garba identified three ruling ideas that have shaped economic and social policy thinking and practice in post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa. The first he identified as the nationalist discourse and paradigm of social policy; the second strand is broadly associated with the works of Maynard Keynes; the third strand is associated with Neoclassical Economics: economic thinking and policies that privilege market-transactional mechanisms for allocating resources. Within the broad stream of development economics, the Nationalist Paradigm can be regarded as being out of the mainstream.

Unlike the other two broad discursive approaches, the Nationalist approach was driven by three core values: an "explicit commitment to high moral standards," a "people centred" approach to development, and a pan-African orientation. The pan-African orientation was both ethically driven and pragmatic or instrumental—ethically driven in the moral commitment to ending colonial occupation of the continent. The moral commitment informed the allocation of scarce resources to the liberation project, even if "at the expense" of national or local economic and social investment. It was pragmatic because of the concern for overcoming the debilitating impact of the fragmentary nature of state territories in the post-colonial context. The small states and small markets, and the fragmentary infrastructure and resource endowment, combined to inform the regional approach to development. The moral commitment also informed the effort to ensure "Better Life for All," even if rhetorically so, which underscored the anti-colonial and post-colonial social pact. Garba identified Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere with this development policy strand, which differed from the mainstream modernisation thinking in that it was more Afrocentric and less about following the growth path of the North-Western European and North American countries. The 1980 *Lagos Plan of Action* was the first real continental effort in the direction that Nkrumah (1961, 1965) envisaged—i.e., an immediate concern with crafting a continental development agenda. The political ferment of the immediate anti-colonial and post-independence venture resonated quite greatly with a generation of African intellectuals with a radical pan-African focus, "in which" as Ki-Zerbo (2005: 84) puts it "we opted for immediate independence, the United States of Africa and a socialism that had to be premised on local realities, interests and values." It produced some early attempts at creating regional economic communities, such as in East Africa, and attempts at dissolving the colonial boundaries such as the Ghana-Guinea union in 1958, and the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union shortly after. In the wider geo-politics of the immediate post-independence context, however, this was a minority: the *Casablanca Bloc* of the integrationist pan-African states and political leaders were confronted by a more introverted and conservative *Monrovia Bloc*. The latter was defined by the Cold War politics of the West. The African unity that emerged in the form of the Organisation of African Unity was one constructed around a minimalist project of ending colonial rule and interaction within existing colonial boundaries. The feasibility of the pan-Africanist 'nationalist' developmental project is one that Garba questioned especially in light of the local and global constraints, as least as seen from the "game theoretical framework" within which Garba organised his discussion. As he puts it, "the failure meant that each [sub-Saharan African country] coexisted within a global political-economic system unilaterally even when the system was dominated by two antagonistic power blocs."

There are, however, two distinct and dominant concerns that cut across the ideological divide—although by no means generic: these are the concerns with economic growth and national unity. The "eradication of the 'unholy trinity of ignorance, poverty, and disease' was a central component of the nationalist agenda" (Mkandawire 2005a: 13), and economic growth was seen as a means for doing so. The reality of having inherited very weak or non-existent human resource prerequisites for embarking on the campaign meant that there was a second imperative for the synergy between social sector expenditure and economic growth. For example, for a country whose economy depended mainly on mining, Zambia at independence did not have a single indigenous mining engineer. Chachage (2004) made a similar point about Tanzania. At independence Congo-Kinshasa, a country larger than Western Europe, had only thirty university graduates.[4] Social spending on education, for instance, was clearly not only about the moral imperative of overcoming the legacy of colonialism but a *sine qua non* for the human resources needs of a modern economy. While there might have been differences in the degree of commitment to this broad project, ideological orientation (from those committed to liberal capitalism, radical socialism, to those with a social democratic commitment), and the policy mix that was considered appropriate, the links between social expenditure and economic development was largely seen as more immediate. The link between the social and the economic was neither as a residual for catching citizens when they experience market failure in command over entitlements nor a proactive protection against the loss of living standard to which citizens had grown accustomed. The concern with national unity and 'nation-building' was partly in reaction to what was considered the divisive ethnic policies of the colonial regime. The murder of Patrice Lumumba, on 17 January 1961—in the context of the Moise Tshombe-led secession of the Katanga Province—and the role played by a range of international[5] and domestic forces, profoundly marked the psyche of a generation of African nationalists. While Mkandawire (2005a: 12) has pointed to its implications for the "perception of ethnicity and regional claims that 'Tshombes' and 'Katanga' were seen behind every movement challenging the authority of the central government," it produced a contrary result in many countries. From Senegal to Kenya, social expenditure played an active role in the efforts to create national unity and social cohesion. The nation-building agenda was defined by efforts at developing a new generation of citizens committed to the 'nation-state'[6] rather than the ethnic or the regional. In national or sub-national contexts where there was strong commitment to active social policy of this nature, the social development outcomes were quite significant and beyond what the conventional mapping of social indicators against economic indicators might suggest.

If the nationalist projects of nation-building and growth provide the agenda or ends, the means were shaped by a changing pattern of ruling advice. In the period between the 1950s and the 1990s, identified four distinct, and often contradictory, regimes of policy advice. The diagnoses undergirding them ranged from market failure to government failure, policy failure, and more recently, institution failure. The policy advice ranged from promoting state as the primary agent of change to the vilifica-

4 BBC, *The Story of Africa*. http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/14chapter7.shtml. (Accessed 23 December 2005).

5 Patrice Lumumba's murder was authorised by Dwight Eisenhower, the US President, and with direct involvement of Belgian political and intelligence elite (cf. ibid).

6 Categories such as the 'nation' and 'nation-state,' even 'nationalism' or 'nationalist,' are of dubious value in making sense of post-colonial Africa or Africa of late-colonialism. Strictly speaking, the 'nationalist movements' were anti-colonial rather than 'nationalist' in what inspired them; they were hardly concerned with the political or territorial redemption of people with shared linguistic and cultural heritage or consanguinity. The aspiration for unity was not about 'national unity'—i.e., based on consanguinity—as much as overcoming ethnic and religious divisiveness on the basis of which colonialism had flourished, and which was a principal weapon of colonial-demagoguery. The new commitment is more to the post-colonial 'country-territory' (country-state, perhaps) than to the nation-state. The unity sought was one forged out of the crucible of shared victimhood arising from the racist-colonial enterprise. It is in this sense that pan-Africanism represents the ideal of such aspiration.

tion of the state; from getting the price right to getting institutions right. What is, however, common and constant across the policy regimes is the nature of the lead agents: visiting mission, foreign advisers, and state agents of the global North! Within the game theoretical framework in which he analysed the relationship, Garba highlighted the politics of 'sovereign rentier capitalism"

> *The history of sovereign rentier capitalism of the last half a century leads us to conclude that* ***orthodox development thought and development advice*** *wittingly or unwittingly served sovereign rentier capitalist that primarily sought their services in* ***creating*** *and* ***sustaining*** *the demand for sovereign rentier capital. Influential development theories such as the vicious cycle of poverty model deepen fatalism by its conclusion that poor nations are trapped in a vicious cycle and cannot get out without outside help. The gap models then help to create the demand for sovereign rentier capital by encouraging a habit of dependence as the model offer sovereign borrowing as a panacea to closing savings-investment and foreign exchange gaps* (2003, p. 22).

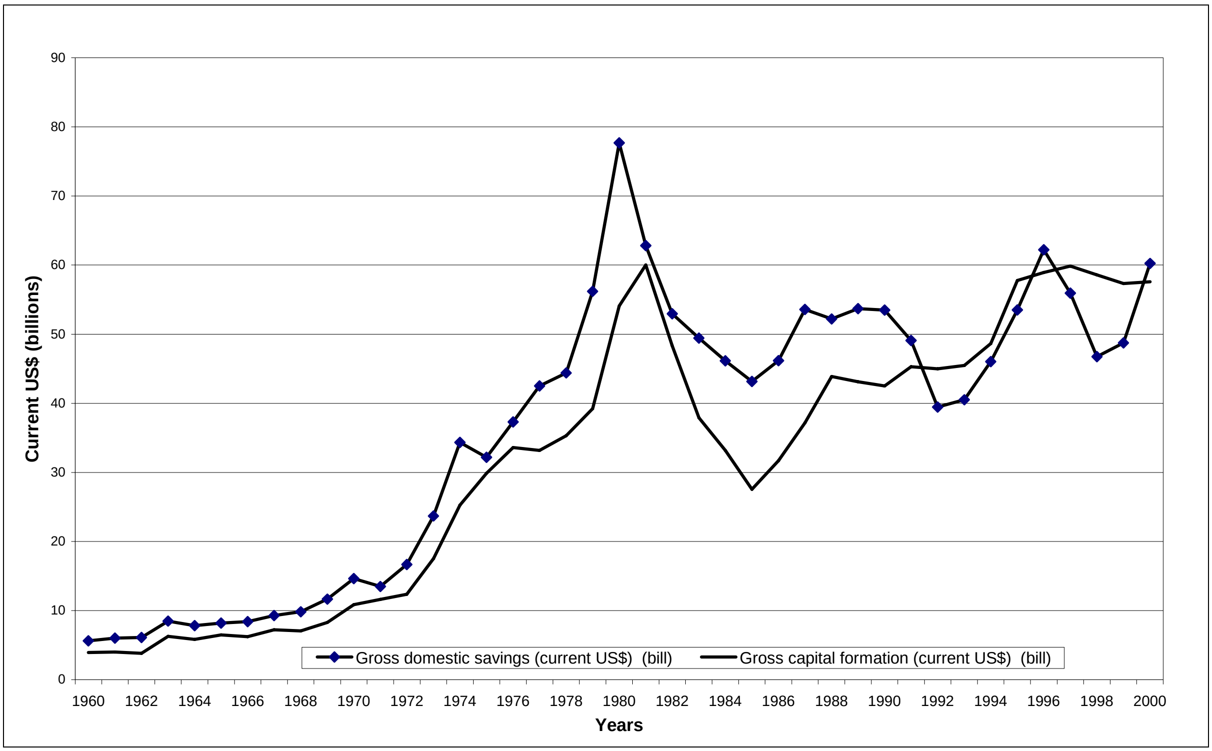
We might add that the 'capital' that sovereign rentier capitalist institutions offered was not only financial (aid or investment) but intellectual—policy advice. The "most ingenious strategic move of (the sovereign rentier capitalist) is its successful marketing of itself as a donor" (Garba 2003, fn.26). The overall objective is "control over policy making" (Garba 2003: 24; Toye 1991). From Nigeria, through Zimbabwe in the early 1980s, and South Africa in the 1990s, the consistency with which the 'donor-sovereign rentier' establishment have sought to maintain control over policymaking is remarkable (cf. Yesufu 1969; Mhone and Bond 2001; Bond 1998, 2000; Gumede 2005). The degree of policy intrusiveness has been defined by ideological affinity of the local state-agents and the external policy merchants, and fiscal vulnerability that results from a combination of domestic policies and external shocks. Ghana and Zambia were early examples of the crisis (external shock and the resulting fiscal vulnerability) that would become endemic after the 1980s. In Ghana's case external shock occasioned by the collapse of commodity price of cocoa created the fiscal vulnerability (Hutchful 2002: 9-10) and the ideological coup that overthrew the government in February 1966. The big-push strategy of the Nkrumah government had been financed by favourable international commodity price of cocoa. The ideological affinity between the new military regime and the fiscal vulnerability made Ghana the first country in the region whose policymaking process was under the direct control of the International Monetary Fund (IMF); and the consequences of the stabilization and the liberalization project was severe indeed. The deflationary bias it put at the heart of public finance policy persisted for a long time. In Zambia's case vulnerability was without ideological affinity, but the severe trade and budgetary crises that followed the sharp fall in the price of copper and simultaneous steep rise in the price of oil in the mid-1970s created similar result.

For much of the 1960s and 1970s, however, the IMF played little part in shaping fiscal and broad economic policies in most African countries. The dominant policy advice was from the World Bank, private, multilateral, and national policy advisers. In the period after the 1980s, the degree of policy autonomy by the local authorities and policy advisers—autonomous of the Washington Consensus establishment—diminished. In the pre-1980 period the more Keynesian of these policy regimes resonated with the more expansive nationalist objective in the underlining argument of the virtuous relationship between equity and efficiency, especially in the context in which much of the socialist orientation was inspired or influenced by Fabianism, and a widespread commitment to social expenditure. Even so, profound changes have occurred in the policy space available to most governments in sub-Saharan African. The multipolar world of the 1960s and the 1970s offered a greater diversity of 'learning sources' in comparison to the highly diminished policy space of the late 20th century.

The transitional phase had involved demands by the 'donors' and Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) for the replacement of personnel responsible for economic policies, and the use of "brute economic force… to push through certain idea. The unresponsiveness of African bureaucracies and their apparent unwillingness to learn has been used to justify the conditionalities that have accompanied policy making. It has also led to the hijacking of key policy-making agencies by international financial institutions" (Mkandawire 2004: 5). The personnel change was part of a much wider agenda of reshaping not only Africa's economies but her polities and civil societies (Adesina 2004); an agenda that involved active efforts at developing, financing, and promoting a new cadre of economists, the deployment of local experts that belong to the market-centric 'epistemic community. Capacity building became a mechanism for proselytizing and cloning (Mkandawire 2004, Adesina 2004). Elson and Cagatay (2000: 1354-1357) argued that the policy framework itself was shaped by three biases, with fundamental implications for social policy and social development outcomes: "deflationary bias," "male-breadwinner bias," and "commodification bias." We will return to this in the next section of this monograph.

The period from 1960 to 1980 witnessed a significant improvement in a range of social development indicators (cf. Table 1). Figure 1 would suggest that, for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, much of the domestic investment from 1960 to 1980 was financed largely by domestic resources. The contrast with the next twenty years (1980 to 2000) could not be sharper: the coefficient of regression for the 1960 to 1980 period (R^2) is 0.978, in contrast to 0.253 for 1980 to 2000.[7] Removing Nigeria from the dataset used for the analysis did not alter the trend or the shape of the graph (cf. Annexe 1); at least not for the period between 1960 and 1980. The post-1980 period showed two patterns. One is significant volatility in GDS and GCF; the other is that gross capital formation outstripped gross domestic savings. The post-1980 period, we should be reminded, has been the season of 'stabilization,' adjustment, and donor monopoly of the policy landscape; the period of neoliberal ascendancy.

Figure 1: Gross Domestic Savings and Gross Capital Formation in Sub-Saharan Africa



[7] Gross Capital Formation is the dependent variable, and Gross Domestic Savings the predictor. (Data source: World Bank's *2002 World Development Indicators* CD.

Table 1: Selected Social Development Indicators of some Sub-Saharan African countries

	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		**Child Death Rate (aged 1–4)**		**Adult Literacy (%)**		**Primary School Enrol-ment (% age group)**		**Basic Needs Index**	
	1960	**1982**	**1960**	**1982**	**1960**	**1985**	**1960**	**1981**	**1960**	**1982**
Botswana	40	60	23	13	33	72	42	102	48	80
Cameroon	37	53	28	16	19	56	65	107	48	73
Chad	35	44	60	37	6	25	17	35	25	42
Congo	37	60	23	10	16	63	78	156	52	78
Côte d’Ivoire	37	47	40	23	5	43	46	76	37	61
Gabon	36	49	34	22	12	62	100	202	54	72
Ghana	40	55	27	15	30	53	38	69	45	66
Kenya	41	57	21	13	20	59	47	109	47	76
Lesotho	42	53	29	17	59	73	83	104	64	77
Madagascar	37	48	45	23	34	68	52	100	45	73
Malawi	37	44	58	29	22	41	30	62	33	55
Niger	37	45	45	27	1	14	5	23	25	39
Nigeria	39	50	50	20	15	42	36	98	35	68
Somalia	36	39	61	47	2	12	9	30	22	34
Sudan	39	47	40	23	13	20	25	42	34	49
Swaziland	38	54	33	27	29	68	58	110	48	74
Uganda	44	47	28	22	35	57	49	54	50	59
DRC (Zaire)	40	50	32	20	31	61	60	90	50	70
Zambia	40	51	38	20	47	76	42	96	48	76

Source*:* Ghai, D. (1987:24); cf. Adesina (2006)

As Mkandawire (2001b: 303) pointed out, “despite the many distortions of import substitution, until the second ‘oil’ crisis many African economies had performed relatively well.” The nationalist consensus was not exclusively that of politicians. Hutchful (2002) noted that the IMF-inspired “the shoddy treatment of the state enterprises by the” National Liberation Council (NLC) military junta and the sell-off of state (essentially national) assets sparked-off public protest; the stabilization programme found little favour with the domestic businesses.

3.2. Changing Dynamics of Education Provisioning

In the survey of changing education policy environment in the three East African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda), Chachage (2004: 3) noted the influence of the wider, dominant, perception of education as “a means to social and economic development at national level, a way to employment opportunities at personal level and, a means to forging national cohesion and reducing inequalities left by the colonial legacy.” Education was not only about the national strategy for raising literacy levels and providing the human resources needed for the economic growth objective, it was the individual’s means of securing better livelihood. Unemployment was not considered a major national problem in many of the countries in the immediate years of post-independence; the misalignment of skill endowment relative to the need of the economy was something to be fixed with educational training. Apart from the problem of financing, the labour market structure did not make unemployment insurance a major policy objective. Universal access to primary education was a distinct objective of various governments from Ghana, south western Nigeria, to Tanzania. In the early post-colonial years, this expansive approach to education provisioning coincided with rapid expansion in the economies. Even in Tanzania, whose narratives these days might suggest that the crisis started as soon as the *Ujamaa* programme was launched, manufacturing output grew at a healthy 7.5% per annum between 1965 and 1975. In this Botswana has had an inverted experience—with considerable resource constraint and poor resource base in the early years of its post-independence experience until the 1970s, when diamond provided the phenomenal rise in GDP and government revenue. In the case of south-western Nigeria, ethical commitment to universal access to primary education, and a publicly-funded education system was financed in an environment of tight fiscal resource management; on shoe-string budget (Awolowo 1960). Zimbabwe, with a similar post-independence commitment to expansion of access to education, faced an initial few years of massive fluctuations in the monetary and fiscal policy conditions (Kadhani 1986).[8]

The crisis that was to become emblematic of the early 1980s emerged differently in the countries. In Ghana it was a function of external shock, made worse by the deflationary and aggressive liberalisation that followed the NLC-regime’s tie-up with the IMF. In Uganda, it was fundamentally the crisis of erratic and murderous policies of the Idi Amin’s regime—with the expulsion of 70 000 Ugandans of Asian descent in 1972 and the abduction and murder of the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University as emblematic of a maniacal regime; the Ugandan-Asians were the mainstay of Uganda’s manufacturing and service sectors. In Tanzania’s case, the impact of the second oil shock of the late 1970s was compounded by the war against Idi Amin’s army which had in-

[8] Net factor payments and remittances abroad grew from $14 million in 1979 to $206 million in 1982—the removal of the exchange control was a legal requirement of the Lancaster House agreement; balance of payment crisis—the deficit grew from $74m in 1979 to $533 million in 1982; the World Bank policy advisers were not short of loan offers and arrangements for various segments of the country—94 000 such loans by 1987 (Mhone & Bond 2001, Bond 2000). Both the Finance Minister and the World Bank were confident that while indebtedness might rise in the early years of post-independence, it would rapidly fall as the economy picks up and the loans are paid off (Kadhani 1986, Mhone & Bond 2001). It did not; the fiscal crisis that this created became the basis for the strangle-hold that the BWIs would, by 1985, impose on the country. In other words, a combination of iniquitous “peace agreement” for the country’s independence; exogenous factors like drought; South African geopolitics and destabilization; sovereign rentier politics, and errors on the side of domestic policymakers undermined the economy. Like South Africa, Zimbabwe emerged from racist, settler colonial rule “out of sync” with the nationalist phase and a more policy-plural context into one in which the neoliberal geopolitics came to determine donor/BWIs relationship with countries around the world.

vaded north-west Tanzania. While the war freed Uganda and the world of Idi Amin, it was at a cost of US$50 million to the Tanzanian fiscus.

The impact of the policy response to the crisis on social policy differed significantly from one country to another. Early response in Ghana, in the 1960s, was aggressive in the impact on public spending on social services; a phenomenon most dramatic in the Nigerian case where public spending on education plummeted: from 6% of GDP in 1980 to 0.6% at the height of structural adjustment programme under the regime of Ibrahim Babangida. In Ghana and Zimbabwe, from the 1980s onwards, there were efforts to protect social spending, even as the government of Jerry Rawlings in Ghana sought to constantly negotiate the policy margins with the BWIs—and in several instances 'played the BWIs game" (cf. Hutchful 2004). In this regard Botswana's example shows real growth in the economy accompanied by real growth in social spending. An affirmation of education as a social right also involved quality funding at all levels of the education system. The paradox of South Africa is quite interesting here: faced with the enormous challenges of redressing the inequities of the Apartheid order and early speculative run on its currency in 1996, the government *opted* for tight monetary and fiscal regime, with negative implications for real spending on education: public spending as a percentage of the GDP declined from 6.3% in 1990 to 5.7% (UNDP 2004). Real per capita recurrent expenditure on education declined, annually, by 1.2% between 1997 and 2002—from R793 in 1997 to R719 in 2002; and per capita gross fixed investment (capital expenditure) declined from R73 in 1995 to R60 in 2002 (UNDP 2003: 24).[9] The South African case is all the more significant since the economy grew between 1990 (when the country was in the throes of ending the racist socio-political order) and 2001; so did the resources (tax-based revenue) needed by the post-Apartheid government to address the crises of equity and poverty.

We can discern three trends in the attempts to fill the resource gap which emerged at various times (for various countries) in the late 20th century: utter neglect, shifting the burden to the citizens, or efforts to protect social spending, typified by Nigeria, Tanzania, and Ghana, respectively. Nigeria's case involves the neglect of social spending, resulting in a decline in education spending from 6% of the GDP in 1980, when the economy was at the peak of its performance, to 0.65% in 1995. In real terms, this was a decline in public spending from US$3.719 billion in 1980 to US$181 million in 1995! (World Bank 2005). Ghana, with similar experience of adjustment, more than doubled its public spending on education (Udegbe 2004). Public spending on education increased from US132 million in 1980 to US$273 million in 1995 (World Bank 2005). At the other end Tanzania experienced a dramatic shifting of the burden of education financing (especially at the tertiary level) to citizens and the institutions. The aggressive "re-commodification" of access to education in Tanzania and Uganda has received complimentary attention, as examples of institutional dynamism (cf. Court 2001). Chachage's 'frog-eye' view of the experiences revealed not only the massive degradation in the teaching and research environment, but the extent to which the market-logic deployed at Dar-es-Salaam University and Makerere University undermined the rationale for education—a qualitative link that was central to the nationalist mission or the functioning of universities in the developed countries. In the effort to improve funding in the face of declining government subvention universities in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, have experienced a dramatic rise in student number, even with declining staff complement. The dramatic increases in student enrolment has been 'financed' by overcrowding, decline in quality of teaching and the neglect of research activities (especially in relation to the pre-crisis period). While "user-fee" was promoted on the grounds of equity of access and the need to shift resources away from tertiary to primary education, there is little evidence that such equity of access is being achieved when compared to the quality of education at all levels in the 1970s. On the other hand, there is ample evidence of sharp decline in budgetary funding for social services in many countries and that user-fees have been used to substitute for budgetary allocation. The fiscal objective of restraining public spending—often to service external debt—has been the primary objective rather than equity. In Makerere the percentage of privately-sponsored students, in the total student population, grew

9 The figure that the government often quotes—R31.1 billion in 1995 to R59.6 billion in 2002—refers to nominal spending: i.e. before accounting for the impact of inflation.

from 32% in 1993 to 86% in 2000 (Obong 2004: 111). Both Ghana and Zimbabwe have also seen significant rises in user-charges levied on citizens who seek social services.

Table 2: Gender and Illiteracy Rates (% of people age 15 and above) 1970-2000

Countries		**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1990**	**1995**	**2000**
Nigeria	Adult Total	79.9	74.1	67.1	59.3	51.4	43.7	36.1
	Adult Female	89.8	85.0	78.5	70.4	61.9	53.1	44.3
	Adult Male	69.4	62.7	55.2	47.6	40.4	33.8	27.6
Ghana	Adult Total	70.5	63.6	56.3	48.9	41.6	34.9	28.5
	Adult Female	83.4	77.0	69.5	61.5	53.0	45.0	37.1
	Adult Male	57.1	49.7	42.5	36.0	29.9	24.5	19.7
Kenya	Adult Total	59.3	51.7	43.8	36.2	29.2	23.0	17.6
	Adult Female	74.2	66.4	57.3	48.0	39.2	31.1	24.0
	Adult Male	44.2	36.9	30.0	24.2	19.0	14.7	11.1
Tanzania	Adult Total	64.3	57.8	50.9	43.8	37.0	30.8	24.9
	Adult Female	80.2	73.8	66.1	57.5	49.0	41.1	33.5
	Adult Male	47.3	40.8	34.9	29.4	24.4	20.0	16.1
Uganda	Adult Total	63.7	59.1	54.2	49.2	43.9	38.2	32.9
	Adult Female	78.3	73.6	68.4	62.7	56.6	49.8	43.2
	Adult Male	48.6	43.9	39.4	35.0	30.7	26.3	22.5
Botswana	Adult Total	53.9	48.1	42.5	36.7	31.9	27.4	22.8
	Adult Female	52.4	46.7	40.9	34.9	29.7	25.0	20.2
	Adult Male	55.9	49.8	44.4	38.7	34.2	30.0	25.5
South Africa	Adult Total	30.2	26.9	23.8	21.1	18.8	16.7	14.7
	Adult Female	32.0	28.5	25.2	22.3	19.7	17.5	15.4
	Adult Male	28.4	25.3	22.4	19.9	17.8	15.8	14.0
Zimbabwe	Adult Total	42.5	35.8	29.9	24.2	19.3	15.2	11.3
	Adult Female	51.0	43.8	37.5	30.9	25.0	20.1	15.3
	Adult Male	33.8	27.6	22.1	17.3	13.4	10.2	7.2

Source: *World Bank World Development Indicators 2002 (CD).*

We will address user-fee charges as a mechanism for social services financing in greater depth later. Anecdotal evidence suggest that the attempt at meeting the basic education targets under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is resulting in the same crisis of overcrowding, since increased in enrolment numbers is not matched by increase in number of classrooms and teachers. In Uganda, with the introduction of universal primary education,[10] in 1997, enrolment increased from 3.06 million in 1996 to 7.6 million in 2003, a remarkable feat, but the number of students per classroom was an astonishing 110 in 2000, declining slightly to 94 children per classroom in 2003 (Bategeka 2005)! What is instructive about the universal basic education—not even primary education—is that fifty years after the Action Group government rolled out what is universally acknowledged as a very successful universal primary education effort, and over forty years after several nationalist governments took the same road, African countries are embarking on a journey to their own past: without a full acknowledgment, within the same community framing the agenda, of the impact of 25 years of structural adjustment in reversing the post-colonial social development

[10] Four children per family could go to school without paying fees, which begs the question of what happens in the case of a family with more than four children for families in acute poverty. To blunt the gender impact, policymakers decreed that where the household has female children, at least 2 of the four children must be female—which still begs the question of families having to decide which child should go to school, and which one should stay on the farm or learn a trade. The contrast with nationalist phase universal access is stark, indeed. In 2003, enrolment of girls in primary school was 49% of total enrolment (cf. Bategeka 2005).

outcomes. But there is a second paradox—while universal primary education involved more focused and programmatic planning, and largely financed by domestic resources, the reinvention of past achievement is currently being driven by donor-financing, fiscal conservatism, and project-focused! Again, we will return to this in a moment.

An assessment of the education aspect of social policy objectives would return us to the twin issues of gender disparity and the role of agency in the pattern of achievement. While illiteracy rates have declined significantly across sub-Saharan Africa, Table 2 shows the diversity of gender differential in such achievement. Across the countries that were the focus of this study, female non-literacy rates are on average twice that of men—with the exception of Botswana, where female literacy rate is slightly higher than that for males, and South Africa where the difference is marginal. This is even more remarkable in the case of Zimbabwe, whose literacy achievement was significant; showing what public commitment to social objectives can produce, even in the face of adverse economic performance.

Nigeria's abysmal public commitment to education is made even worse by the quality of spending. At the time that spending declined to 0.6% of the GDP, much of this was for personnel cost. It would seem that without the agitation by education sector unions to ensure payment of salaries, although sporadic, social spending in this sector might have been worse.

Equally important, for making sense of social policymaking, is the role of agency: the lack of fit between basic economic indicators and education achievement (cf. **Error! Reference source not found.**). Botswana with five times Zimbabwe's per capita income, has a lower level of literacy; its literacy rate is similar to that of Tanzania whose per capita income is less than a tenth of Botswana's, South Africa's literacy rate is about the same as Kenya's although South Africa's economy and GDP are 8½ times and almost 6 times, respectively, that of Kenya. The comparative difference between Botswana and Zimbabwe is particularly evident in the public sector commitment, with Botswana spending 2.1% of its GDP on education, compared with 10.4% in Zimbabwe; Ghana with a slightly lower per capita income than Nigeria spends more than four times its share of GDP on education. As noted earlier, while public spending on education declined dramatically in Nigeria, it more than doubled in Ghana. Both countries were under structural adjustment. In Nigeria, the argument by state-functionaries and their BWIs handlers regarding the imperative of rebuilding the country's education infrastructure has focused private sector provisioning and 'cost-sharing' rather than significantly increased public spending on the sector. Similar crisis is evident in the health sector, which we will discuss shortly. The relationship between the level of inequality in the various countries and public spending on education speak to the dynamics of social pressure that can be brought to bear on public policymakers. Again this is an issue that we will address below, shortly.

Table 3: National Wealth, Public Spending and Social Policy Outcomes (2002)

	GDP (US$Bill)	GDP per capita (US$)	Adult Literacy	Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP	Infant Mortality Rate**	Public Expenditure on Health as % of GDP+	Human Poverty Index	Gini Index	Gender-related development Index
Kenya	12.3	393	84.3	6.2	78	2.2	37.5	44.5	0.486
Tanzania	9.4	267	77.1	3.2*	104	2.7	36.0	38.2	0.401
Uganda	5.8	236	68.9	2.5	82	2.1	36.4	43.0	0.487
Botswana	5.3	3,080	78.9	2.1	80	3.7	43.5	63.0	0.581
South Africa	104.2	2,299	86.0	5.7	52	3.5	31.7	59.3	0.661
Zimbabwe	8.3	639	90.0	10.4	76	4.4	52.0	56.8	0.482
Nigeria	43.5	328	66.8	0.9*	110	1.2	35.1	50.6	0.458
Ghana	6.2	304	73.8	4.1	57	2.3	26.0	30.0	0.564

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2004. +: UNDP Human Development Report 2005

Notes: *All data refer to 2002 except: * is 1990 data; **Infant Mortality figures are per 1,000 live birth.*

The paradox of the last twenty-years, which was supposed to correct the distortions in the economies of sub-Saharan African countries, is two-fold. First is the rise of unemployment among university graduates, within the context of a general rise in unemployment. Studies from Ghana to Tanzania and South Africa record this phenomenon. The impact of a deflationary macroeconomic policy approach and aggressive liberalisation on the one hand, and the "public sector" reform with massive cut-backs in employment levels, on the other hand, have led to a phenomenal rise in unemployment in several countries—with Botswana as the lone exception among the countries covered in our studies. Hendricks (2004) pointed to the South African case where the rate of unemployment among Black graduates is much higher than the average unemployment. The growth-path that South Africa pursued since 1996 has been particularly regressive in the area of employment; in March 2003, the official unemployment level was 31.2%, up from 19.6% in 1996. Much of this was the result of the monetary and fiscal policies that encouraged capital-intensive production system; while output rose between 1996 and 2002, employment stagnated or declined while the number of new entrants into the labour market grew (UNDP 2003). Second paradox is the phenomenal rise in the number of expatriate "technical assistance" personnel that have poured into sub-Saharan Africa. Chachage cited a 1990 report on Kenya, which showed that of the 324 technical assistance positions that were filled by expatriates local Kenyans could easily have filled 204 of such positions (Chachage 2004:10). A study in Tanzania showed that in 1988, the salary and emolument of the expatriate staff consumed US$200 million out of US$300 million in technical assistance support in 1988; the total personnel cost of the Tanzanian public sector employees (civil servants, teachers, health workers, etc.) for the year was US$100 million!

Apart from South Africa, none of the other seven countries covered in our study has any unemployment insurance or wage-protection scheme in place. The result of unemployment is therefore likely to trigger a significant entitlement failure in these countries, which partly explains the significant increase in the number of people living in poverty within the regions. South Africa's unemployment scheme dates back to the 1966 Unemployment Insurance Act. In 2001 a new Unemployment Insurance Act was enacted—a contributory scheme funded by payroll deduction, employers' contribution, and funds appropriated by the South African parliament. The scheme, which covers non-public servants, excludes anyone working for less than 24 hours a month for an employer, non-South African citizens who are working on contract or a worker whose income derives from commission.[11] On 1st April 2004, the Act was amended to cover domestic workers.

Under Section 13(3) of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 2001, "a contributor's entitlement to benefits… accrues at a rate of one day's benefit for every completed six days of employment as a contributor subject to a maximum accrual of 238 days benefit in the four year period immediately preceding the date of application for benefits." Benefits can be claimed for unemployment, maternity leave, or period of illness not covered by the employer. Dependants of a contributor may also claim from the fund upon the death of the contributor. At the end of 2004 the Unemployment Insurance Fund has built up a reserve of R8.4 billion, and "expected to exceed its actuarial valuation reserves by R500 million" by the end of the 2005/06 fiscal year.[12] Net contributions to the fund was R3.63 billion in 2003/4, against benefits claim of R3.28 billion; a significant turn around from 1999 when net contribution stood at R27 billion against benefit payout of R2.98 billion.[13]

3.3. Changing Dynamics of Healthcare Provisioning

The comparative studies on the changing dynamics of health and related services show similarities and distinct divergences when compared with the education sector. Here as in the case of the education sector, two patterns of social provisioning emerge: the pre- and post-1980s. As Table 1 shows

[11] Cf. Department of Labour (www.labour.gov.za); Republic of South Africa, *Unemployment Insurance Act 2001*.

[12] Labour Department Spokesperson, Page Boikanyo, 10 March 2005. (www.southafrica.info).

[13] Department of Labour. 2004. *Unemployment Insurance Fund Annual Report for the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004.* Pretoria: Department of Labour

child mortality (for children aged between 1 and 4 years) declined across sub-Saharan Africa, even for the more errant states like Mobutu Sese Seko's Zaire. Much of this was achieved through the socialisation of consumption, especially at the level of primary health care services; social spending on health was part of a wider objective of defeating the triad of "ignorance, poverty, and disease." In Tanzania, part of the reasoning behind the "villagization"—concentrating rural communities in distinct villages—was to benefit from the economy of scale that this brought in the provision of social services and efforts to raise production. The moral crisis of enforced concentration of the population, no matter its expected social and economic benefits, and the mistakes made in the process, are things that Mwalimu Nyerere himself readily accepted (cf. Mkandawire 1999). Similarly, as Bond (2005) noted, the first decade of post-independence in Zimbabwe witnessed significant improvements in health indicators: infant mortality declined from 86 per 1 000 live births to 49; immunization coverage rose from 25% to 80%, and life expectancy increased from 56 to 62 years.

As Atieno (2003) shows for East Africa, under-five mortality rate declined in Kenya from 98 for every 1 000 live births in 1970 to 81 in 1980; in Tanzania it declined from 125 to 98 over the same period. Within ten years of adjustment these improvements had been reversed; even with the case of Uganda, under-five mortality had risen from 118 per 1 000 live births to 187 in 1990, 132 in Tanzania, and 94 in Kenya. Maternal mortality more than doubled in Tanzania between 1985 and 1990; in Uganda it rose four-fold within the period, in spite of the fact that in 1985 Uganda was in the grip of the civil war waged by the Youveri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA). While maternal mortality fell back to lower levels in 1996, the number of women dying in child-birth was still higher than in 1985.

It was perhaps in the area of health care provisioning that the aggressive retrenchment of the state and cuts in social expenditure had its genocidal effects. The erroneous assumption of orthodox adjustment was three-fold: one was to assume that there was a market in health care service to take care of the impact that the fiscal retrenchment of the state would create; the second was to assume, as unproblematic, resource endowment for all the citizens for procuring their health care needs in the new market place; the third is to assume that public resources spent subsidizing the citizens were a waste. The consequence has been particularly grim across most of sub-Saharan Africa. People did not as much fall through the net of social provisioning; they died! The impact on increased women's burden in the care-economy within the homes has been pointed out by several researchers (cf. Elson and Catagay 2000). As Atieno's figures show, the impact of the retrenchment of state provisioning was particularly damaging for women both for their personal healthcare needs but also that of children because of women overwhelmingly bare the burden of nurturing and childcare. The weight of healthcare provisioning shifted from the national fiscus to the end-users. Okuonzi (2004) showed that gynaecological and obstetrics services suffered particularly under this policy regime.

The shift from "stabilization-and-liberalisation" forest hacking to attempt to grapple with the 'social dimensions of adjustment' (SDA) followed overwhelming evidence of the carnage that adjustment was wrecking on child and maternal health in the countries under adjustment, generally, but on Africa, specifically (cf. Cornia *et al* 1987). The initial response was to focus on using 'safety net' for what was considered short-term market failure to raise social welfare. The social service delivery to address vulnerability was premised on 'targeting' the 'deserving poor' rather than universal access. Retained within this period was the framework of the earlier phase in which privileged market-transactional social policy provisioning, 'cost-recovery,' and 'user-fee' charges became the basis for accessing publicly financed social services. Again, social policy was regarded largely as a residual aspect of public policy. The widespread evidence was that even within the SDA palliatives poverty continued to rise, and social development indicators continued to regress; generally adjustment policy was not working. This prompted a search for 'explanations' (cf. Garba, 2003) and 'alternative approaches' to liberalisation. The attempt at comprehensive development framework (Wolfensohn 1999) and using the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers as its delivery vehicle have not altered the fundamental economic ontological discourse, the focus of macroeconomic policy in restraining public spending and 'liberating' the market from *dirigisme*, or the 'no-free-lunch' logic that requires end-users to finance their social service consumption.

Studies continue to show that the claims about empowerment and consultation with civil society are perfunctory at best. Both the BWIs and the donor countries persist in pushing the same macroeconomic policy instruments that failed to address the structural impediments in most African economies which created the vulnerability to external shocks in the first instance. Not only has there been a failure to sustain the pre-1980s regional growth rates, the capacity for sustainable recovery has been undermined even in successful adjusting economies (Adesina 2004, 2005). In many ways we are back to the same current account and balance of payment imbalances that were emblematic of the 1970s—when import bills of feeding the consumerist appetite of the middle class and urban areas escalated, even as export receipts stagnated or declined. While growth may be good for the poor and social policy broadly, there is evidence that the BWIs' policies have not been particularly good for growth, much less development (Weisbrot *et. al.* 2000).

In countries already faced with rapidly declining household income levels and rising tide of poverty, the imposition of user-fees or 'cost-sharing' had the effect of mediating citizenship with capacity to engage in the market. Bond (2005) discussed at length the counter-productive impact of the "user-charges" policy in the provision of water and sanitation services in South Africa; where people in poor neighbourhoods are forced to source water from deadly sources. The case of KwaZulu Natal Province in 2002—where the cost of responding to the cholera outbreak far outstripped the outlay that would have been needed to provide the households with clean water—is an important reminder of the dubious cost-benefit-analysis that underscores much of the aggressive neoliberal thinking. The shift in state policy, to universal provisioning of 6 000 litres per month/per household might be less than what the anti-poverty coalition (within and outside the ANC) bargained for, but it is key reminder of how tentative, and often tenuous, is the neoliberal effort at "dissolving the public realm" (Clarke 2004).

As Okuonzi (2004: 1629) notes:

> *Despite the theoretical benefits of such fees (equality, resource mobilisation, quality of care, and efficient use of services), the reality was starkly different. The envisaged fund generation through user-fees was clearly negligible, always less than 5% of total health expenditure. There were no demonstrable benefits of these fees on the quality or efficiency of social services.* (Okuonzi 2004: 1629)

While fiscal constraints are often cited for the charging of user-fees, and these constraints treated as exogenous (Mkandawire 2005), it is useful to remember that the fiscal contraction of the state was itself the consequence of the macroeconomic policies pursued within the wider adjustment programme. Massive reduction in tariff-based revenue, reduction in taxes and tax rates were two such cases that undermined the fiscal base of the state. In several cases, as Okuonzi (2004) noted in respect of healthcare services, the state was discouraged from investment in healthcare services; the same applies in the area of education. Stephen Lewis (2005) recollection of his experience in this area during his recent 2005 Massey Lectures *Race Against Time* is worth quoting at length:

> *I remember being in Malawi in 2002 at a roundtable discussion with the vice-president and a number of civil servants from the Ministry of Finance. They were complaining bitterly about the limits imposed by the International Monetary Fund on Malawi's public sector pay levels and hiring intentions. It was surreal: here you had a country with huge human capacity problems that wanted desperately to retain its professionals in health and education, and increase their numbers, but the IMF wouldn't allow them to do so. We're talking about a sovereign government, fighting the worst plague in history, with but a handful of professionals: according to the minister of health, Malawi has one-third of the nurses it needs (4,000 instead of the 12,000) and perhaps 10 per cent of the doctors (300 rather than 3,000) for a population of 12 million. And they weren't being allowed—I repeat, this sovereign government wasn't being allowed—to hire more staff and pay better salaries, because it would breach the macroeconomic straitjacket…*

What makes me nearly apoplectic—and I very much want to say this -- is that the Bank and the Fund were fully told about their mistakes even as the mistakes were being made. They were so smug, so all knowing, so incredibly arrogant, so wrong. They simply didn't respond to arguments which begged them to review the human consequences of their policies.

The fact that poverty became increasingly entrenched, or that economies were not responding to the dogma as the dogma predicted, made no difference. It was a form of capitalist Stalinism. The credo was everything; the people were a laboratory.

The purpose of this extensive citation is not that the account in Lewis's lecture is new to most African scholars and administrators or that Africans and others have not written extensively about this; the relevance is that Lewis cannot be accused of being ignorant of the detailed inner workings of the international donor environment or the havoc that two decades of what the "social vivisectomy" (Adesina 1994), called structural adjustment and the politics of sovereign rentier capitalism, have done to Africa and continues to do.

As the macro-level data shows (cf. **Error! Reference source not found.**) none of the countries covered in our research programme, had a share of public expenditure on health (as a percentage of GDP) that approached 5% in 2002. In Nigeria, with a huge population, spending on health was an abysmal 1.2% of the GDP (up from 0.8% the previous year).

Table 4: Per capita government expenditure on health at average exchange rate (US$)

	1998	**1999**	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**
Kenya	9	7	8	8	8
Tanzania	6	6	6	8	7
Uganda	4	5	4	5	5
Botswana	73	76	78	85	106
South Africa[14]	117	109	103	92	84
Zimbabwe	33	17	24	26	61
Nigeria	4	5	6	6	5
Ghana	9	9	6	6	7

Source: WHO World Health Report 2005

Botswana's spending on health is particularly instructive in deciphering the extremely low pattern of health spending and commitment in most of the other countries; Zimbabwe's ability to increase per capita spending on health—part of a wider commitment to social spending, married often with user-fee charges, reflects the off-and-on, flip-flop relationship that it has with the BWIs and the sovereign rentier country cartel. The crisis in the health sector is emblematic of the horrors of neoliberal fundamentalism and the politics of the resurgent new imperialism (Adesina *et al* 2006). The HIV/AIDS pandemic and the phenomenal way in which it has spread across much of sub-Saharan Africa is emblematic of the massive entitlement failure of how the retrenchment of health provisioning capacity undermined the capacity of many of the countries to cope with the pandemic. The response of policymakers (local and international) has been slow in most countries and the interventions of the international donor institutions seem to have become another mechanism for deepening the stranglehold on the policy-terrain of many African countries. The 45% increase in public health spending in Botswana is largely in its attempt to cope with the human tragedy that the disease is unleashing on much of East and Southern Africa. The 2005 report on HIV/AIDS prevalence and the decline regis-

[14] When converted to international purchasing power US dollar, South Africa's health sector spending shows a small increase. I have opted for prevailing exchange rate for two reasons: PPP estimation is a function of the composition of the basket of items; more importantly, the health sector is one sector that is heavily dependent on import for both recurrent and capital spending—once we discount for wages and salaries.

tered in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe would suggest that the quantum of spending is only one aspect of the response to the crisis; leadership and civil society response are two other aspects.

In instances where user-charges have been abolished, the impact has been phenomenal. Okuonzi (2004: 1629) noted the instance of Swaziland:

> *Under political pressure, and with nothing tangible to show from user-fees, the policy was abolished by the government in 2001. The surge of more than 100% in the use of public services soon after the abolition of the fees shows the extent to which poor people were excluded from social services by an inappropriate policy.*

As noted earlier, the introduction of universal primary education in 1997, in Uganda, led to a 73% rise in total enrolment in the first year, and 148% rise by 2003 (Bategeka 2005). The crisis of budgetary restraint and a programmatic approach—rather than ad-hoc responses to international goal setting, and the whimsical shift in moods of the sovereign rentier forces—is that increase in demand has not been met by commensurate resources or investment in personnel and infrastructure.

As the horrendous impact of the efforts to retrench the public realm in social provisioning has become clear, and the user-charges have turned out to be more ideological than a financially sound mechanism, new efforts are being made to find new mechanisms for funding national healthcare needs. In February 2005 the Nigerian government launched the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). According to the announcement on the official website of Nigeria's Office of Public Communications15, the scheme has six components:

> *Contributors can access healthcare needs from approved public and private health service providers. Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs) which are limited liability companies will be licensed by the NHIS to facilitate the provision of healthcare benefits to contributors under the Formal Sector Social Health Insurance Programme to interface between eligible contributors, including voluntary contributors and the healthcare providers.*

Formal sector employees will have 5% of their basic salary deducted as contribution while the employers would contribute 10%. Benefits will cover the member, his/her spouse and up to four children. Other components of the scheme are the Urban Self-employed Social Health Insurance Programme for the self-employed—which has to be occupation-based and involve more than 500 members. A monthly contribution by each member of between N120 and N150 (about US$1 or US$1.25 per annum), would cover treatment for "the most common ailments like malaria, typhoid fever, diarrhoea etc." The Rural Community Social Health Insurance Programme has the same framework; the only exception is the occupational category. The programmes for under-five children and those with permanent disability similarly require contribution for entitlement to benefits.

The scheme in Ghana follows the same broad principle as the Nigerian case.[16] However, the scheme in Ghana makes it compulsory for all the citizens to join the scheme, and the scheme is to be funded by a combination of a "2.5% Health Insurance Levy on selected goods and services" and member contributions. Annual contribution is scaled up from zero-contribution for those defined as "core poor," 72 000 *cedis* (about US$8) for the "very poor" and the 'poor;' rising to 480 000 *cedis* (US$52.7) for the "very rich." There is also the stigma for those defined as 'core poor' who try to access healthcare services, but had made no contributions to the scheme. Even at its best the scheme would face defaulting by the 'very poor' and 'poor' in meeting their contributions. There is no evidence of an appreciation of the need to commit funds from the fiscus to the scheme, which would prevent those defined as poor from falling through the cracks. As with similar cases, where quasi-market logic is inserted into social provisioning, the denial of healthcare service for those who default on

15 Cf. www.nigeriafirst.org. (Accessed 25 November 2005).

16 *National Health Insurance Scheme*, Government of Ghana: www.ghana.gov.gh (Accessed 25 November 2005).

their contributions will happen at the level of service providers. In the meantime, state-functionaries and those backing the scheme would use the scheme to justify less public spending on healthcare—the same crisis that beset user-fees.

For formal sector workers, 2.5% of their social security contribution will be paid into the scheme as their contribution. There will be a waiting period of six months, between the commencement of contribution and accessing health-care services (similar in coverage to the Nigerian scheme). The benefits would, however, not include the supply of AIDS drugs, treatment of chronic renal failure, or heart and brain surgery, and 'cosmetic' services such as hearing aids, dentures, or beauty surgery. At district levels, the collection of contributions is to be managed by Health Insurance Communities with Health Insurance Committees. Those seeking exemptions will have to get them through the committees. This raises the question of who defines one person as very poor, another as core poor, and the other as very rich. The scheme is another example of the abuse of the concept of 'community' within the neoliberal policy discourse—pecuniary advantages replace relations of mutual support and obligation. 'Community-based' interventions and resource management are primarily to mobilize the people in policing and enforcing compliance to a system of social relations which ontologically renders individuals as atomised economic agents. In the World Bank's more comprehensive manual (Aiyar 2001) 'community empowerment' and 'community driven development' are so tied to local collection of user charges, fees, and taxes that the very idea of 'community' as a network of mutual support, protection, and obligations disappears. Foregrounding the idea of community 'empowerment' is the 'taken-for-granted' idea of limiting public financing through the fiscus. The perception that public welfare provisioning will crowd-out community-based or informal social support system is often used to justify not extending public support to the vulnerable. As the study by Heemskerk, Norton, and Dehn (2004) shows this claim is largely without basis. In anything, "public welfare systems and informal insurance systems are mutually supportive… Receipt of public transfers not only enhances the capacity to self-insure, but a more central position in social exchange networks also facilitates access to public welfare" (2004: 951). The impact is particularly positive for women (Heemskerk *et al.* 2004: 952). As they concluded, "informal reciprocity networks are social glue of poor communities and help their members cope with a great number and variety of shocks… where they do work, these systems generate feelings of pride and empowerment" (2001: 953). What is instructive about the schemes in Ghana and Nigeria is that there is no defined contribution from the fiscus to fund the scheme. Indeed, in the case of Ghana, the government is using "funds from HIPC"[17] to facilitate setting up the scheme (Ghana 2005).

3.4. Social Policy Regime and Access: the Inequality and Poverty nexus

The current pursuit of the claimed objectives of reducing poverty and inequality, through a raft of targeted mechanisms, is paradoxical in the light of the existing body of knowledge, about the relationship between institutional frameworks or models of social policy on the one hand, and poverty and inequality on the other hand. Korpi and Palme's (1998) analysis of the data from 11 OECD countries shows that "the lowest income inequality is found in the three encompassing countries—Finland, Norway, and Sweden" (1998: 674).[18] By contrast "the highest income inequality figures occur in the

[17] HIPC refers to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative which provides debt relief or cancellation in exchange for deep liberalisation and 'reform' of the economy and public services. The funds released under this initiative is what the Ghanaian government is using to set up *the structures* of the health insurance scheme—the community and district structures—but not for funding the scheme itself.

[18] The "Encompassing" Model of Social Insurance Institution is one of the five 'ideal-typical' models of social welfare regimes that Korpi and Palme (1998) identified. This comes closest to the idea of "universal entitlement." Entitlement is based on 'citizenship *and* labour force participation;' the principle guiding benefit level is flat-rate and earnings-related,' and non employer/employee cooperation is required in administering the programme. (p. 666). At the other extreme is "Targeted" model, for which entitlement is based on "proven need" and benefit level is kept to the minimum. In between are three other models: the "Voluntary state-subsidized" model that relies on membership and contributions, with flat rate or earning related benefits; the "Corporatist" model in which entitlement derives from "occupational category *and* labour force participation," and benefits are earnings-related; and the "Basic Security" model, for which entitlements are based on citizenship *or* contributions, and benefit paid out on flat-rate principle. It is only the 'corporatist' model that involves the participation of employers and employees in the administration of the scheme. Korpi and Palme classifica-

basic security and targeted model, especially in the United States, Switzerland, Australia and United Kingdom" (Korpi and Palme 1998: 674). Poverty rate for 1985 in the United States was 17.8% among those between the ages of 25 and 59 years, against 1.6% for Finland and 2.6% for Sweden. The Gini Coefficient of inequality was 0.18 in Sweden, for those 65 years or older compared with 0.35 in the United States. Indeed, targeted model of social policy was found, on the whole, to be much smaller for countries pursuing targeted policies than those pursuing 'encompassing' policies. The paradox of targeted models, as Korpi and Palme (1998: 672) noted, is that in "discriminating in favour of the poor… it creates a zero-sum conflict of interest between the poor and the better-off workers and the middle classes who must pay for the benefits of the poor without receiving any benefits." The 'paradox of redistribution' is that:

> *by providing high-income earners with earnings-related benefits, encompassing social insurance institutions can reduce inequality and poverty more efficiently than can flat-rate or targeted benefits… the more we target benefits at the poor only and the more concerned we are with creating equality via equal public transfers to all, the less likely we are to reduce poverty and inequality.* (Korpi and Palme 1998: 681-2).

The social cohesion effect of 'encompassing' models—and something close to the nation-building incentive for 'encompassing' access during the early nationalist phase—was also found to be more robust:

> *The targeted model… tends to drive a wedge between the short-term material interest of the poor and those of the rest of the population, which must rely on private insurance. It gives the better off categories no rational basis for including the poor, and* ***leaves the poor to trust in the altruism of the more fortunate.*** (Korpi and Palme 1998: 672, emphasis mine).

In the face of mounting poverty induced by the neoliberal policies of the sovereign rentier regime, the response has been to address poverty by 'targeting' the "deserving poor"; a mantra that serves to obscure the primary concern which maintains harsh spending restrictions on the fiscus. The claim that preference for 'targeting' was motivated by equity and efficiency consideration rests on a dubious logic: the assumption was that through a more efficient and focused use of resources it was possible to do more with less fund (Mkandawire 2005). This was not just the BWIs but the 'donor' countries generally, on whose aid flow and approval many of the adjusting countries have come to depend—as the fiscal basis of the state had been progressively undermined. Mkandawire (2005: 21-22) drew attention to the paradox of the contradictory logic deployed by the World Bank against universalism in social policy and in favour of it in economic policies:

> *…the preference for targeting [in social policy] by the Bretton Woods institutions is rather paradoxical, especially in light of their aversion to targeting in many economic activities, such as selective industrial policies or credit rationing in the financial sector… The World Bank's dislike for such selectivity and targeting was partly based on the arguments that they would not be market conforming… The more serious arguments deployed against targeting revolved around possibilities of information distortion, incentive distortions, moral hazard and administrative costs, invasive loss, and corruption. It was asserted that governments did not have the knowledge to pick winners or to monitor the performance of selected institutions. In situations of asymmetric information, beneficiaries of such policies would conceal the information necessary for correct interventions.*

Yet the same governments that are bedevilled with weak administrative capacity were supposed to implement targeted social policy. The information asymmetry and incentive distortions that were used to justify universalism in economic policy did not feature in the discussion regarding social policy.

tions (regimes of social policy, one would say) is for me, far more useful than Esping-Andersen's (1990) three regimes of welfare.

That anyone would consider targeting an appropriate policy option given a context in which 77% of the population lives below US$2.15 a day beggars reason—especially where the macro policies of the policy vendors are largely responsible for the massive entitlement failure in the first instance.

Extensive studies on targeted social policies have demonstrated that even in the most administratively robust state with extensive surveillance systems, targeting suffers from extensive problems of Type I error (under-coverage, where those deserving are left out) and Type II error (leakages to those outside the targeted group). In the case of South Africa, Type I error for Child Support Grant was 90.7% nationally; and it was in those provinces with the highest levels of poverty that under-coverage was most acute: 93% in KwaZulu Natal Province, 91.9% in the Eastern Cape Province, and 91.7% in Limpopo Province (Samson *et al* 2005: 8). The onerous procedure for accessing the grant (documentation, forms to fill, and mean-test) in mostly rural provinces, and for people who are less able to navigate the bureaucracy is without doubt the primary source of the low take-up rate. Extending the reach of CSG was inspired by a complex array of social forces within and outside the state—and involved active campaign to go out and register people in the rural communities and poor urban and peri-urban neighbourhoods—leading to a significant decline in Type I error (Samson *et al* 2005); even so 42.5% of those eligible in 2004 did not receive the grant. Similarly Type I error for disability grant was 83.9% in 2000, down to 55.4% in 2004. By contrast, in the case of old age pension scheme, which has a more ‘encompassing’ approach[19] Type I error was 17.7% in 2000 and 10.2% in 2004. Further, Samson *et al* (2005) estimated that old-age pension alone accounts for 47% closure of the poverty gap in South Africa.

There is overwhelming evidence that user-fees mediated access to social service and mean-testing as vehicles for targeting involve considerable administrative costs (Jones *et al* 1983, Korpi and Palme 1998, Vandemoortele 2000, Pratt 2001, Mkandawire 2005). But the onerous procedure for eligibility or access is often designed precisely to exclude (Pratt 2001). In an effort to discourage the ‘non-poor’ from benefiting, the mechanisms adopted in most targeted programmes tend to stigmatize and adopt mechanisms that are ‘disempowering and even humiliating’ (Mkandawire 2005*)*. As Amartya Sen (1995: 13) noted:

> *Any system of subsidy that requires people to be identified as poor ant that is seen as a special benefaction for those who cannot fend for themselves would tend to have some effects on their self-respect as well on the respect accorded them by others.*[20]

Yet, in the design of the mechanism for social service provisioning stigma-avoidance was a crucial concern (Titmuss 1968, Jones *et al* 1983). The humiliation that comes with queuing and being identified as welfare-recipients or to secure exemption from user-charges has often meant that take-up rate is often low. Even for countries with the capacity, the “process of mean-testing or identifying the ‘deserving poor’ is often invasive and stigmatizing.” The attempt within the World Bank projects to shift the mediation of targeting mechanism to community-level does not avoid the crisis of stigma and humiliation. As Mkandawire (2005: 26) noted, neither community-based targeting nor geographical targeting (meant to improve on earlier forms of targeting) diminishes the inherent problem of targeted social policy or how “abuse and humiliation [become] common features of citizens’ interaction with the state” (Mkandawire 2005: 26). The vulnerability of recipients identified on the basis of such mean-test exposes people to the powers of what Sen called “minor potentates”: the petty authoritarianism of minor bureaucrats, community power brokers, and local chieftains. Again, the perversion of power relations is not only about the vulnerability of the poor generally but it is often profoundly gendered. The power brokers and chieftains are more likely than not to be men and the victims women: the widow in the community; women who are more likely than not to be less literate.

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19 The “trigger mechanism” (Jones *et al* 1983) here are old age and (65 years for men and 60 years for women), and individual income below R1 226 a month for single persons, and R2 226 for married persons (Samson *et al* 2005).

20 Cited by Mkandawire (2005).

Many issues suggest the imperative of the shift to a more ‘encompassing’ social provisioning framework. In the context in which between 50% and 70% of people in many sub-Saharan African countries are living in extreme poverty (less than US$1/day) selectivity or a targeting variant does not make much administrative or financial sense. Second, in most of the mineral-based sub-Saharan African economies, the smog distinction between tax-payers and beneficiaries of social services makes very little sense—the overwhelming proportion of state revenue is from collectively-owned resources. The experience of countries like Nigeria is that as the neoliberals rolled back the state and championed the mantra of ‘there is no free lunch’—as if petroleum-based revenue is a particular individual’s property—the quantum of national financial resources available for discretionary (mis-)use increased; which in many ways fuelled corrupt-appropriation of national resources. A more encompassing entitlement to social services and protection will reduce the margin of resources available for such discretionary (mis-) allocation; it would also reinforce the capacity of the citizens to demand services from their governments. Third, locking those with voice into such provisioning, especially with funding from the fiscus, ensures protection for the budgetary allocation and the quality of service delivery as well. Across sub-Saharan Africa, what has developed over the last twenty-five years in the education and healthcare sector is a dual-system: an under-resourced and neglected public sector, and a private sector.

The paradox of this the dual system of social service delivery is that as the neglect and underfunding took hold, the people with the voice and resources in society relocate to the private sector for their healthcare and education need; the quality of service in the public sector declines further as does the commitment to invest in them—the senior public servants and politicians source their healthcare needs and education for their children in the private sector or outside their countries, and the further the public service institutions declined. The public sector for social services is weakened because of the decline in investment and commitment; it is then condemned for its inability to match the private sector in the quality of service delivery—a classical case of a ‘self-fulfilling’ prophecy! Anecdotal evidence in several countries show that those employed in the public sector—especially when tied to teaching hospital and medical school posts, moonlight in the private sector to augment their incomes. The effect is that the private sector may provide the service faster for steep charges but lack experienced medical experts or academics and is on the whole rarely able to undertake the investment needed for a decent medical establishment. The result is a downward spiral of quality of service—not anywhere near what the public institution offered in the 1970s, nor what their private sector counterparts would offer in other parts of the world. The Gini index of inequality (cf. **Error! Reference source not found.**), reveals the persistence of sharp disparity in command over resources and poverty in many of the countries we studied. In Annexure 2 I present a radar chart of literacy, life expectancy, poverty and inequality. While the collapse in life expectancy is a result of factoring the HIV/AIDS pandemic into the calculation, the others are direct results of how sub-Saharan African societies have been reshaped in the last thirty years. Indeed, poverty and inequality rose sharply in these countries over the last twenty-five years; South Africa and Zimbabwe are the exception due to the colonial racist order at the period.

3.5. Social Policy, Entitlement Failure and Social Cohesion

In many ways, the last 20 years have highlighted the crisis of citizenship and statehood in most African countries. The implications of the widespread deprivation and social development crisis, highlighted in section 2 above are evident in the rising number of state implosions and genocidal conflicts. I do not wish to suggest that the adjustment policies created these horrendous events—the pogrom in Nigeria in 1966 and the following civil war, and the earlier horrors in Rwanda in 1959 are two cases in point. However, I would suggest a link between the retrenchment of state capacity for social provisioning and the tide of crisis of statehood. The state/citizens relationship is a web of obligations and privileges; citizens’ stake in a polity is affected by the extent to which the state is seen to be responsive to the needs of the citizens. The retreat of state from social delivery (healthcare, education, human security, etc) undermined the relevance and the legitimacy of the state in the eyes of its citizens. In the absence of social policy-based engagement with the citizens, the coercive face of the state becomes the dominant (if not the only) area of interaction with citizens. The rising inequality during the period did little to enhance the legitimacy or social links between the dominant classes ('elites') and ordinary people. The first wave of adjustment, typified as the 'decade of greed', provided avenues for massive enrichment of individuals in a widening sea of human vulnerability and deprivation. From Sierra Leone to Rwanda, the fundamental questioning of the legitimacy of the state and the spilling over of difference into conflict, and conflict into genocide, occurred within this context of declining legitimacy of the state. While not the 'root cause' of these conflicts and while domestic policy and leadership issues are strong contenders, the retrenchment of the state at least served as the trigger mechanism.

4. Rethinking Social Policy, Beyond Adjustment: the challenge of inclusive development

I wish to conclude this monograph by highlighting six imperatives of rethinking social policy in sub-Saharan Africa, beyond adjustment. This is within the central normative framework for our research programme—that of a state-society nexus that is ***developmental, democratic*** and ***socially inclusive*** (UNRISD 2001) and raises several possibilities. A socially inclusive state-society linkage is more likely than not to privilege equity considerations and strive for universal entitlements in social policymaking and implementation. A democratic state-society nexus is likely to privilege popular engagement, transparency and accountability in policymaking and execution. However, we conceptualise social inclusion and democratic ethos as a dimension of the "developmental" rather than separate. These are important dimensions of what Amartya Sen refers to as the "ends of development" (Sen 1999). As he further notes: "Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states" (Sen 1999:3).

While we have said a lot about the value of the nationalist model of the symbiosis between economic and social policy, and the value of social policy as a mechanism for securing social cohesion and nation-building, it was developmentalism that became increasingly authoritarian. It is often argued that it is the excessive developmentalism of the state and obsession with nation-building that was the source of the rising tide of authoritarianism, single-party rule, and the shrinking democratic space. Hanging on the door of the state, as Joseph Ki-Zerbo (2005: 82) puts it, was the notice: "Silence, We are developing!" The democratic objective and a civic public realm are foundational for the reconstitution of the state-society nexus.

A second aspect is the developmental context itself, and there are three compelling issues: the regressive economic policy driven by a neoliberal ontology; the debt crisis—inspite of what *Gleneagles* was supposed to have delivered; and the global trade regime, both within the WTO framework and the increasing scale and number of bilateral "economic partnership agreements" that are foundationally damaging to Africa's development prospects. As Ohiorhenuan (2000: 22) notes: "Developing countries today face the additional burden of building capacities to project and protect national interests and to be more effective negotiators; to develop the capacity to comply creatively with agreed obligations and exercise their rights; and to put in place a whole panoply of new institutional arrangements in order to be competitive."

A third aspect, crucial for transcending the current crisis of state/society relations is to transcend the false dichotomy that neoliberal discourse created regarding the experience of many of sub-Saharan Africa's peoples. The state versus market discourse confused all that was not 'private sector' with the state, missing the significant role that collective community efforts in social provisioning played in the early post-colonial efforts of many countries, and some even under colonial rule, when communities pooled resources to fund education of young men and women, provide healthcare services, and so on. In several cases social provisioning in health and education involved the government and communities in a partnership (Cornia 1987: 170-172). Re-inventing this partnership, outside of the transactional logic of the neoliberal discourse, is important for ownership of institutions and programmes, but it must be one that fundamentally addresses gender content of community relations and interaction.

4.1. Rethinking Social Policy

I would like to suggest that a return to a broader vision of social policy is important for its long term efficacy, development, and inclusive social citizenship. Reconnecting social policy to the wider development objectives and the nation-building project is essential for sustainable social policy outcomes, as it is for sustainable economic development.

First, it is difficult to see one's way through the objective of poverty reduction, for instance, without improving the productive capacity of the economies. In 14 of the 16 sub-Saharan African countries, classified as having low human development and for whom data exists, more than two-thirds of the population live in poverty (UNDP 2002). While a lot more can be done even at lower levels of economic growth, as noted earlier, social policy objectives become sustainable when undergirded by sustained improvements in economic development; much in the same way that sustained economic development requires sustained social policy outcomes. The synergy between the two is enhanced with significantly reduced levels of inequality in society—to which both economic and social policy must contribute actively. There is a need to rethink social policy expenditure not as gratuitous favour done to citizens but as investments in development and nation-building or social cohesion.

The prevailing discourse (from NEPAD to the *Blair Commission Report*) mistakes 'trade discourse' for 'development discourse.' When President Youweri Museveni asserted that what Africans want is not aid but to 'trade our ways out of poverty', I agree with him intuitively; the question however is "With what? Coffee?" (Adesina 2002, Adesina *et al* 2006) Successful economic development involves not only quantitative growth in the economy but structural changes—and that requires a shift towards industrial output, however much we speak of the 'knowledge economy'. Maligned as 'industrial policy' in the neoliberal discourse, the examples of China, and India most recently, and the early industrialisers (who now discourage SSA countries from engaging in industrial policies) are evident enough of the centrality of dynamic industrialism for trading our ways out of poverty; these countries came to dominate the world trade not on the basis of primary commodities but manufactured output. Moving in that direction requires African countries to mount a challenge against the current global trade regimes—multilateral and bilateral. The shrinking of the trade and industrial policy space (Ohiorhenuan 2002, Chang 2005) is not a natural aspect of 'globalization' but conscious and deliberate steps taken by the powerful countries to advance their own interests and those of their transnational corporations. The proposition of the late-1970s of a regional development approach, where African countries seek to internalise the engine of their development remains valid.

Second, it is important to rethinking social policy in its social cohesion and nation-building dimensions. The last two decades have brought the imperative of nation-building back on the agenda. From Sierra Leone to Somalia; from Nigeria to Sudan, the crisis of social cohesion threatens the foundations of many African states. Enhancing citizens' stake in their polities is not only about the exercise of civic rights but social citizenship as well. The Afrobarometer studies conducted by IDASA (Cape Town) show that across Africa citizens make a direct link between their livelihood and democracy. The retrenchment of state capacity not only affects its capacity to deliver on social policy but the basic task of the physical security of its citizens.

Third, a move away from targeting and mean-testing in social policy is important not only because of the debilitation and humiliation associated with targeting but because we know that: (a) where social policy has been developmental, improved social well-being, and enhanced social cohesion, more encompassing, universal access have been important; it secures wider commitment to sustaining it—especially where it is financed from income tax. (b) A state/citizen nexus based on mutual exchange of obligations and privileges has a greater chance of securing social stability, which itself is valuable for sustained economic development. The urban bias and narrow coverage that was the focus of the criticism against universalism of the nationalist phase was, in fact, not atypical among the late industrialisers and the Nordic countries (Korpi and Palme 1998, Esping-Andersen 2001, Kuhnle and Hort 2004, Mkandawire 2005). Social protection grew outwards from the social groups that were considered to be central to the industrialisation project. But moving up such, social policy 'value chain' requires leadership and a state-bureaucracy capable of sustained policymaking.

This brings us to the fourth point: the imperative of reconstituting the state in its policymaking capacity, ability to run the state, administer society, and define the parameters of economic activities. There is an urgent need to overcome the creeping policy-atrophy of the last 20 years. As Peter Evans (1995: 3) noted: "Without the state, markets, the other master institution of modern society, cannot function." The "embedded autonomy" of a competent civil service has always been integral to successful developmental agenda (Evans 1995). The reconstitution of the state has to be part of a wider reconstitution of the public realm in which both the horizontal and vertical relationship is driven by a democratic ethos of a participatory rather than the perfunctory technocratic ideas of governance. Horizontal in the relationship within the civil society; vertical in the interactions between state and society. Simply framing the issue in terms of leadership alone will not do or capture the crisis of the militarisation of social consciousness or the casual disregard for civic order.

Fifth, leadership matters; policy matters. Constructing social consensus around a developmental project is fundamental: it calls for visionary leadership that is locally grounded in the peculiarities of Africa's realities; it calls for putting at the heart of our collective social contract social justice, equity, and the vicarious indignity that we should experience when others in our societies contend with the indignity of poverty and destitution. Social mobilization around these values can only proceed on the basis of justice rather than charity, and it requires leadership in and outside the state.

The challenge to rethinking social policy is not only external but domestic. Over the last 25 years, the structural adjustment of Africa's economies has gone hand-in-hand with the structural adjustment of politics and civil society (Adesina 2004). Interest groups with instrumental, ideological, and material commitment to the neoliberal project are prevalent not only within the economy and the state, but within the civil society (not the least within the NGO-sector). It takes the construction of new social coalition to highlight the need for a fundamental rethinking of social policy, specifically, and development policy broadly.

Sixth, in rethinking social policymaking we need to come to terms with the profoundly gendered nature of labour market, the interactions between the formal and care economies, and the broad social relations. Elson and Cagatay (2000) point to the 'male breadwinner bias' at the heart of neoliberal macroeconomics; similar bias is inherent in many traditional social provisioning and social security programmes. The gendered dimensions of labour market participation and sustained employment record—and therefore retirement annuity or provident fund contributions—distinctly disadvantages women whose labour market participation is often interrupted by marriage, childrearing, or bear the burden of unpaid care economy. As public provisioning collapsed the burden of a gender ordered nature of this economy mounted; essentially increased burden for the women who are its essence (UNRISD 2005: 129). Rethinking social policy requires a strongly pro-natal approach, but it also requires social provisioning that treat women as persons in themselves rather than in their procreation and nurturing roles. Often, attempts at targeting women reinforce the gendered rendering of women as wives and mothers. The *Progresa/Oportuidades* programme in Mexico, which started in 1997 is a clear case in point: "it provides cash transfers and food handouts to approximately five million poor rural households, but on the condition that they send their children to school and visit local health centres on a regular basis" (UNRISD 2005: 138), which would have seemed a major social investment all round. However, the programme was focused on women: in addition to ensuring that the children attend school and visit the clinics, the women have "to perform community work such as cleaning schools and health centres, unlike those not in the scheme" (UNRISD 2005: 139). The scheme ended up reinforcing the traditional idea of the women as mothers and hindered autonomous labour market participation.

ANNEXURE

Figure 2: GCF and GDS Data without Nigeria

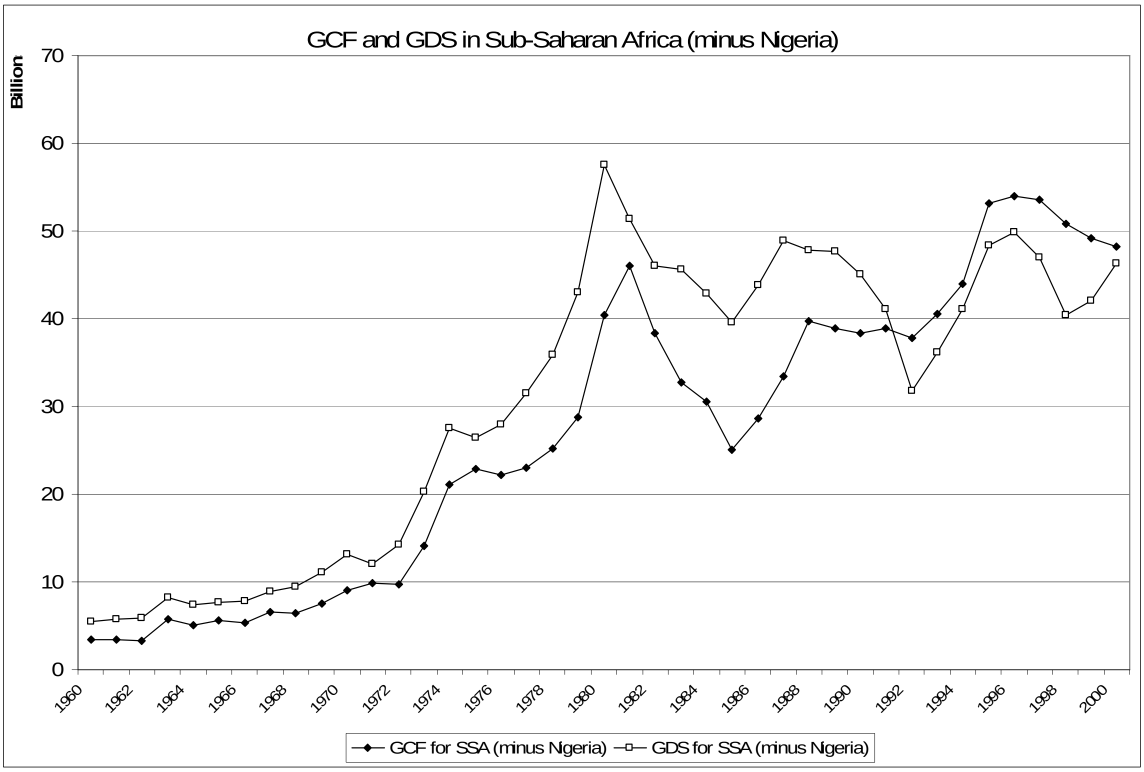
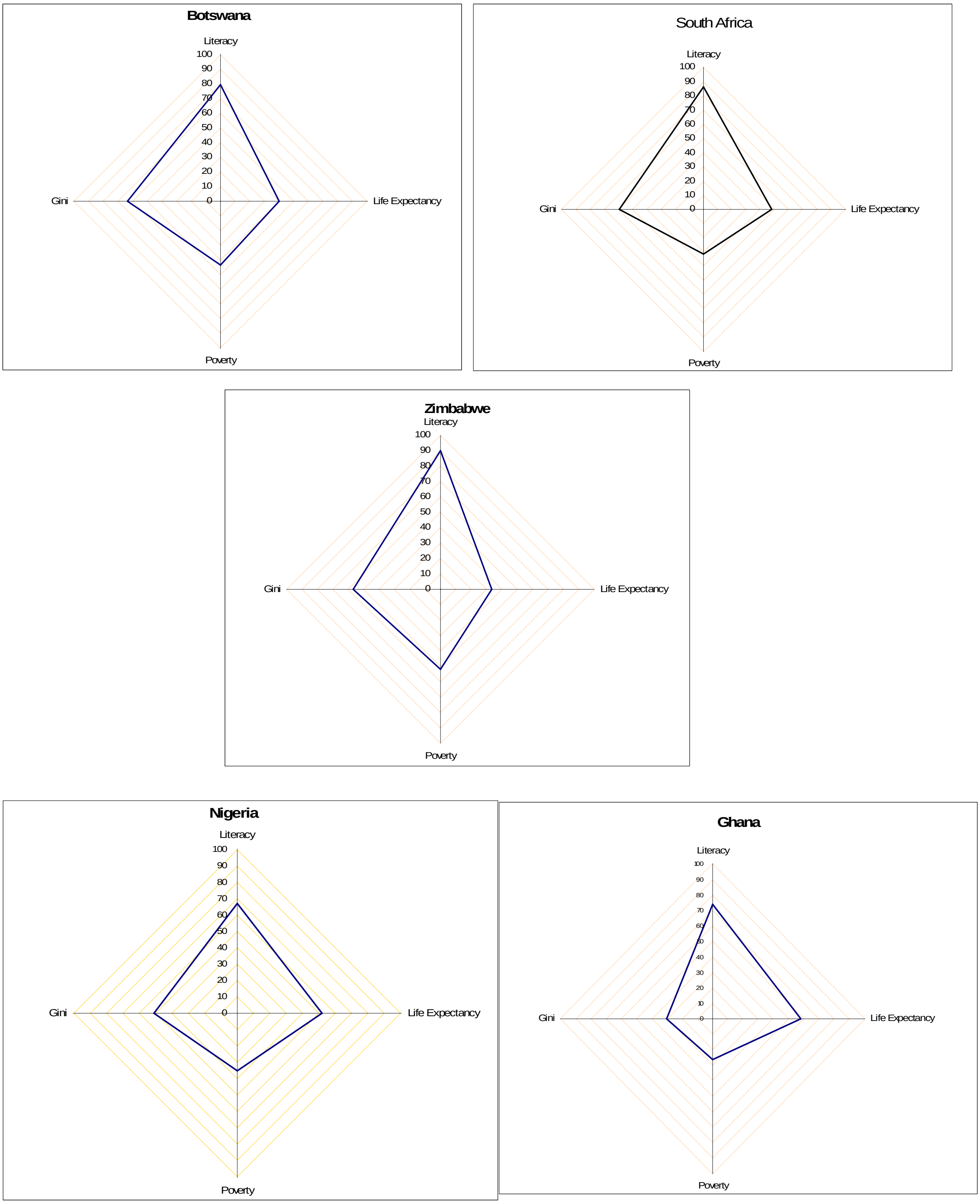
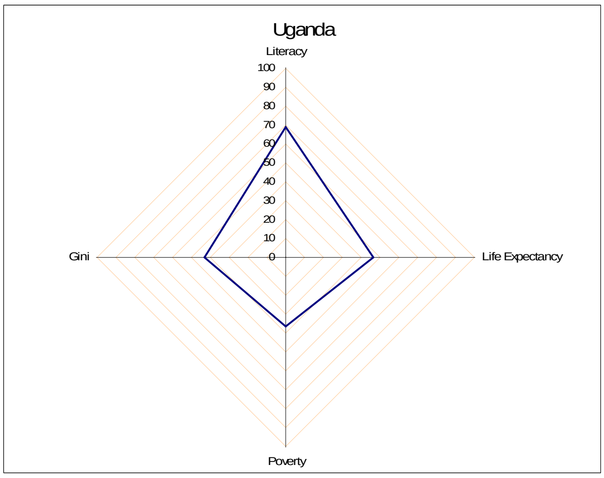
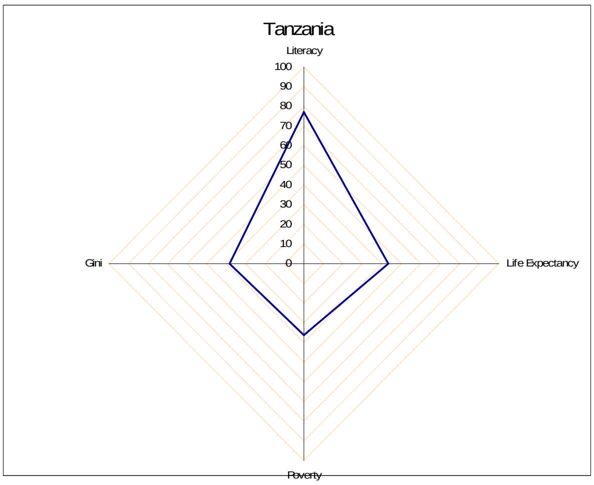
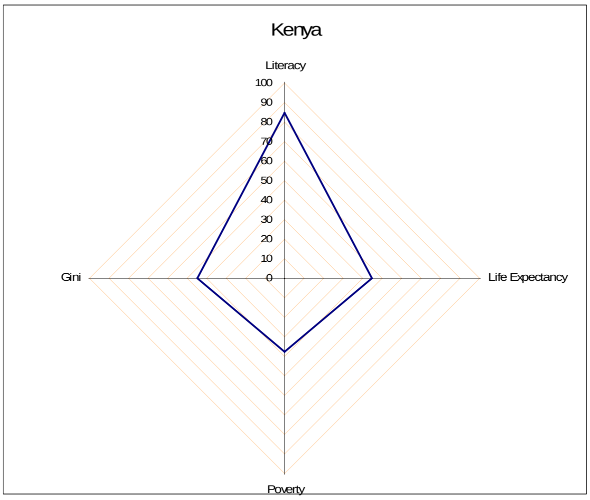


Figure 3: Social Development Radar Charts




Uganda
Literacy
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Gini
Life Expectancy
Poverty


Tanzania
Literacy
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Gini
Life Expectancy
Poverty


Kenya
Literacy
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Gini
Life Expectancy
Poverty

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