

PPA Evaluation and Recommendations
for the Poverty Monitoring System in
Tanzania

Final report

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“PPA Evaluation and Recommendations for the Poverty Monitoring System in Tanzania”

By Social Development Direct

Foreword

The Research and Analysis Working Group (RAWG) of the Poverty Monitoring System for Tanzania commissioned this evaluation of the first national use of Participatory Poverty Assessment in Tanzania during 2002/2003.

This report contains an assessment of the achievements and challenges, as well as recommendations for future participatory assessments in the poverty monitoring process – now the MKUKUTA monitoring system. The intention of the RAWG is that the lessons drawn from this evaluation can be used to design an improved PPA component within the MKUKUTA monitoring system.

Social Development Direct Ltd, specifically Rachel Waterhouse and Maia Green, undertook the evaluation.

The Research and Analysis Working Group is making the report widely accessible by Internet access through the web page of the secretariat of the RAWG: www.repoa.or.tz and its links to the Research and Analysis Working Group's reports.

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Abbreviations	6
Introduction	7
Background: Tanzania's Poverty Monitoring System and the role of participatory methods	7
Methodology used for the PPA Evaluation	9
Process of the 2002/03 PPA	9
PPA findings and dissemination	13
PPA achievements and challenges	14
Lessons learned for participatory research	17
Comparative initiatives in participatory research and monitoring	22
Recommendations for the PMS Review	27
Way forward	31
Box One: Objectives of the PMS	8
Box Two: Examples of research tools and type of information Gathered	12
Box Three: Examples of research tools and type of information yielded that could be used to explore vulnerability in social and historical context	19
Diagram One: Poverty assessment, analysis and monitoring informs poverty reduction policies	23
Annex One: Sources	
Annex Two: Frameworks for policy related research	

Executive Summary

Background

Accompanying Tanzania's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), in 2001 the Government of Tanzania (GoT) designed a comprehensive Poverty Monitoring System (PMS). This included Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPA) as a key tool for qualitative research related to poverty reduction policy. Under the auspices of the Research and Analysis Working Group (RAWG), one of four 'technical working groups' under the PMS¹, Tanzania carried out its first national PPA in 2002/03. This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the PPA against its initial objectives, and considers the implications for the future integration of participatory methodologies within the PMS.

The methodology used involved documentary review and a 10 day field trip to Dar es Salaam to meet with key stakeholders in the PMS and in the PPA process. Based on information from these sources, the report outlines the PPA objectives, management and scope of the process, the concepts and methodology applied to field research, its input to building local capacity for participatory research; key findings of the PPA and the dissemination process.

PPA Achievements and Challenges

The key **positive outcomes** of the PPA were found to include:

- Increased awareness and understanding of vulnerability
- Increased capacity in Tanzania for participatory research through training a new cadre of development professionals in the use of PRA tools
- Indirect but significant influence on policy through informal as well as formal dissemination channels, reflected in recent policy reforms and in the new poverty reduction strategy

Major **constraints and limitations** were found to include:

- Limited analysis of vulnerability due to a static focus on set categories of vulnerable people and impoverishing factors instead of investigating the relationships and processes that help to explain social change
- Prioritisation of data collection with limited attention to enhancing the analytical capacity of field researchers or building capacity for participatory policy research
- Problematic formal dissemination and advocacy strategy.

Lessons learned

Analysis of the PPA methodology, analytical framework, fieldwork and dissemination process suggests important lessons may be learned for participatory research and monitoring exercises in future. Key lessons include:

- *Utilising the explanatory potential of PRA tools*

¹ The Technical Working Groups further include the Surveys and Censuses TWG, Routine Data Collection TWG and Dissemination, Sensitisation and Advocacy TWG.

The PPA aimed to provide a comprehensive description of livelihoods in diverse contexts in Tanzania. The methodology focused on describing categories of people ('vulnerable groups'), events and phenomena ('impoverishing shocks and stresses'). It therefore provided descriptive, rather than explanatory, knowledge about poverty in Tanzania and this has limited its potential to guide policy making.

- *PRA tools may not be adequate for PPAs*

PRA tools derived from rural livelihoods research aimed at promoting local action may not be adequate, alone, to capture factors of broader policy relevance or to facilitate analysis of the micro impact of macro policy on changing livelihoods.

- *Policy relevant research requires analysis of structures and relationship*

The TzPPA focused on obtaining the views of poor people and the reports attempt to present and not to interpret these views. To achieve a more sophisticated analysis of vulnerability and impoverishment, however, socio-economic and political analysis should be built into the research design.

- *Capacity building for contextualised research is needed*

The use of PRA tools to explore processes and relationships that contribute to social change is a highly skilled undertaking. Adequate time is required for capacity building with researchers and for field work at any particular site.

- *Standardised data recording tools would facilitate analysis of findings*

The PPA aimed to bring 'voices of the poor' to the policy table; yet the reporting methods did not differentiate between raw data and selection, synthesis or interpretation made by the field researchers in recording this information. This limitation left the PPA findings more or less 'up for grabs', for different stakeholders to interpret them in their own interests and, or argue over their significance.

- *Predetermined analytical frameworks limit explanatory potential*

The use of a predetermined analytical framework imposed rigid limits on the explanatory potential of PPA findings and hence of its relevance to policy makers. Poverty related research may be more effective if the research begins with policy analysis, defining the research questions and designing research methods in relation to those questions. Triangulation of findings, analysis and dissemination should be integral to the research process.

- *Stakeholders should clarify expectations*

A wide range of stakeholders were involved in designing the PPA field work. The objectives of this approach were to achieve buy-in from different stakeholders and build capacity of organisations in Tanzania for participatory research. The results suggest that these objectives were pursued at the cost of greater focus on analytical quality of the research design and implementation.

- *Separate spaces for research management and advocacy*

The PPA played an important role in opening up wider space for dialogue between different stakeholder groups including Government, donors, and non-state research and civil society organisations in Tanzania. However, some suggest that the institutional framework for this dialogue was one factor slowing dissemination of the PPA findings. This suggests that the PMS may be more effective in future if the technical management

of socio-economic research is institutionally separate from decision-making forums designed to achieve inclusion and consensus around the policy agenda and PRS implementation.

Comparative experience

The advantages of using a complementary mix of methodologies for policy related research, poverty monitoring and monitoring PRSP implementation are widely recognised. However, it is important to distinguish between poverty monitoring, monitoring PRS implementation and policy related research on poverty. Participatory tools can be employed at different levels of research and monitoring and to a variety of ends, including gathering qualitative information, consulting opinions, mobilising people around a policy agenda and promoting accountability.

To make recommendations on the 'routine integration' of participatory tools in the PMS it would be critical to clarify the role of the PMS and the intended outcomes of using participatory tools. Meanwhile, a brief review of selected participatory research and monitoring initiatives is presented, as an illustration of some of the methods available, according to PMS demands.

Recommendations for the PMS Review

Based on evaluation of the PPA and comparison with other participatory research and monitoring exercises within and beyond Tanzania, the authors make a number of recommendations for stakeholders involved in the poverty monitoring system, namely that they should:

- **Review PMS information needs:** a clearer definition of the types of information the PMS intends to generate, for what and for whom, will help to identify the best methodology(ies) for obtaining this information
- **Separate technical from advocacy and policy roles:** separating out the technical / managerial roles of information gathering, collation and dissemination from the political role of consensus-building around government policy and the advocacy role of increasing accountability would help to clarify how and when participatory approaches can best be used
- **Extend stakeholder consultation around programme implementation and service satisfaction:** for example, through service satisfaction survey models such as the Citizens Report Card that broadly engage stakeholders in evaluating service quality and suggesting how improvements could be made
- **Contribute to evidence-based policy-making:** through specifically tailored, policy-related studies that draw on qualitative research methodologies, including the use of participatory research tools
- **Use a complementary mixture of research methodologies:** to monitor policy implementation and outcomes, including participatory tools to monitor qualitative aspects of poverty and vulnerability
- **Enhance accountability:** through both internal and external mechanisms including independent monitoring of the implementation of Government policy, for instance through public expenditure tracking studies
- **Adapt the institutional framework:** through separating technical / managerial functions within the PMS from advocacy work that might be more effectively conducted from outside the PMS framework.

The Report concludes by suggesting a way forward for using participatory methodologies within the PMS.

Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CRC	Citizen's Report Card
ESRF	Economic and Social Research Foundation
GoT	Government of Tanzania
LGRP	Local Government Reform Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSGPR	National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction
PET	Public Expenditure Tracking
PMMP	Poverty Monitoring Master Plan
PMS	Poverty Monitoring System
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSSS	Policy and Service Satisfaction Survey
RAWG	Research and Analysis Working Group
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation (Research Institute)
TCDD	Tanzania Coalition for Debt and Development
TzPPA	Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WDRP	Women's Research and Documentation Project

PPA EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POVERTY MONITORING SYSTEM IN TANZANIA

Introduction

Following the production of Tanzania's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), in 2001 the Government of Tanzania (GoT) designed a comprehensive Poverty Monitoring System (PMS). The aims, structure and activities to be carried out through the PMS are outlined in the Poverty Monitoring Master Plan (PMMP) of 2001 and include the instrument of Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPA) as a key tool for qualitative research related to poverty reduction policy.

Under the auspices of the Research and Analysis Working Group (RAWG), one of four 'technical working groups' constituted under the PMS, Tanzania carried out its first national PPA in 2002/03. A Draft Report was finalised in 2003. The Main Report and a Popular Version of the main report were published in 2005. The RAWG planned that an evaluation of the PPA should be carried out at its conclusion, to draw lessons for the future use of participatory tools within the PMS and other Government monitoring systems.

In early 2005 the GoT adopted its new PRSP, the 'National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction (NSGRP)'. This foresees a revision of the Poverty Monitoring System based on lessons learned under the first PRSP. An evaluation of the PPA is therefore timely and intends to feed into the wider PMS Review.

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the PPA against its initial objectives, and considers the implications for the future integration of participatory methodologies within the PMS. Firstly, the report describes the context and methodology used for the PPA evaluation. It then outlines the background to the 2002 PPA, its objectives, methodology used and the PPA process. Based on an analysis of documentary evidence and interviews with stakeholders, it then highlights key positive outcomes of the PPA as well as the constraints and limitations. Lessons are drawn from the 2002/03 PPA to inform future participatory research or monitoring exercises. Drawing on the PPA experience as well as relevant literature and comparison with other participatory research and monitoring initiatives, a number of recommendations are made for Tanzania's PMS. These are intended to feed in to the forth-coming PMS Review.

Background: Tanzania's Poverty Monitoring System and the role of participatory methods

According to the 'Poverty Monitoring Master Plan' which guides its implementation, the role of the Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) in Tanzania is to 'ensure the availability of timely and reliable evidence on poverty', which will 'enable policy makers to assess progress under the Poverty Reduction Strategy' (GoT 2001:1). It further states that

"The poverty monitoring system... will provide the data and information required for M&E of the PRS" (p2).

The main purpose of the PMS, then, is to monitor the implementation, outcomes and impact of the PRS, to enable evidence-based policy and decision making.

In light of the recent revision of the PRS and production of Tanzania's second PRSP, the 'National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP)', as well as lessons

learned from implementing and monitoring the first PRS, the Government and its partners will shortly undertake a review of the PMS. The NSGPR maintains the principles that the PMS should provide both quantitative and qualitative information and that where appropriate it should use 'participatory methods' for data gathering and research. The NSGPR states that, among other things, the PMS shall

“Strive to collect and analyse more qualitative information and increase participatory monitoring through PPAs, poverty maps and social atlas and other methodologies. It will also possess a more guided research and analysis programme to evaluate change in or progress towards the desired outcomes of the NSGRP” (GoT, 2005: 62).

In this way, the NSGRP – and, by extension the PMS set up to monitor the poverty reduction strategy – assume that participatory methodologies are a good thing in and of themselves and should therefore be incorporated in the PMS.

Whilst acknowledging the value of participatory methods, we take the approach here that the use of participatory methods should be guided by the overall aims and objectives of the PMS. Moreover, the concept of 'participation' needs to be unpacked.

According to the general literature around PPAs², the use of 'participatory methods' is related to concepts of:

democracy (citizens presenting their views to Government and government policy and practice responding to those views);

efficiency (on the grounds that policies and policy implementation are more effective if they reflect the priority concerns of and engage the interest and commitment of citizens) and

accountability (whereby participating in monitoring of policy implementation enables citizens to hold the state and other service providers to account).

Box One: Objectives of the PMS as described by the NSGRP

“The specific objectives of the PMS are:

- (i) To ensure timely availability of data.
- (ii) To ensure proper storage, easy access and use by different stakeholders.
- (iii) To analyse data and disseminate the findings to stakeholders.
- (iv) To promote evidence-based decision making at all levels through monitoring and an increased attention to evaluation.
- (v) To ensure that targets of global initiatives (e.g. MDGs) to which Tanzania is committed to are integrated into the system and localised”.

Broadly, the use of 'participatory methods' for research and monitoring can imply a range of objectives and desired outcomes including:

- Consultation
- Gathering qualitative information
- Political consensus building
- Mobilisation / advocacy around a specific agenda
- Increasing accountability.

² See for example, Norton et al 2001; McGee & Brock 2001; Narayan et al 2000; www.esrftz.org/ppa;

In Tanzania and elsewhere, however, there has been a tendency to use the term 'participatory methods' in a vague and open ended way that does not specify which outcomes or which combination of outcomes are desired. Seeking to clarify what different stakeholders expected from the PPA has been a starting point for this evaluation.

Methodology used for the PPA Evaluation

The main objectives of this evaluation were two-fold:

- To assess the process and outcomes of the PPA and comparative participatory research or monitoring initiatives in Tanzania
- To draw out lessons learnt and recommendations to inform and strengthen the national poverty monitoring system.

To meet these objectives, the Evaluation Team looked at the different levels of data generation, dissemination and use and at the relationships between them. We looked at the objectives, approach and methodology, the design process, tools used, quality of data gathered and quality of data analysis achieved through the PPA, as well as channels used to disseminate the information. We examined consistency or otherwise in understanding of the information generated between information gatherers and users and to what extent there had been dialogue between them at different steps of the process.

At a policy-making level, we looked at the role of the PMS and at the contribution of the PPA in providing policy relevant information on poverty. We also looked at the contribution of selected other participatory research and monitoring initiatives in Tanzania and Zanzibar. Based on analysis and assessment of these initiatives, we drew out lessons learnt and recommendations for strengthening the PMS.

The first phase of the evaluation involved contextual analysis, a comparative literature review and review and analysis of relevant documentation around the PPA process including terms of reference for different aspects of the work, workshop reports, documentation from the field research including activity reports and site reports, the PPA Main Report and other literature accessed through the ESRF and Government of Tanzania websites.

The second phase consisted of a 10 day field trip to Dar es Salaam where meetings and interviews were held with key stakeholders in the PPA process as well as in other participatory research or monitoring initiatives (see Annex One for a list of sources). Visits to PPA field sites were beyond the scope of this evaluation.

Process of the 2002/03 PPA

PPA objectives

The 2002 PPA was the first to be implemented nationally in Tanzania. In 1992, the World Bank commissioned a poverty assessment exercise which contributed to its 'Voices of the Poor' publication. However, this was widely seen as a donor-led exercise and not country owned. In 1998, a regional level poverty assessment exercise was carried out by the UK Institute of Development Studies as part of a UNDP initiative in Shinyanga. Both these initiatives were primarily concerned with capturing village

dwellers' perspectives on poverty and exploring their concerns. They were not specifically integrated into the Government's national level policy making process.

The 2002 PPA was more ambitious. Falling in to the category of what Norton et al (2001) term 'second generation PPAs', its objectives went beyond those of providing a product ("textual representation of realities of the poor") designed to inform policy, to those of policy influence through "creating new relationships within the policy process". As such, the Government of Tanzania has helped pioneer an approach to PPAs which seeks to be a broadly inclusive and participatory process at all levels.

The Tanzania PPA of 2002/03 sought to draw lessons from the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Programme (UPPAP), which also aimed to move beyond the limited 'first generation' PPA exercises by linking the research more closely both to the Government's current policy agenda and its poverty monitoring system. Management of the UPPAP was based within the Ugandan Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and was implemented by Oxfam as the lead technical agency. By contrast, the Tanzania PPA (TzPPA) was implemented within the framework of the PMS by a consortium of civil society partners in collaboration with skilled researchers and district level government staff.

Seen as the first in a series, the 2002/03 focused on exploring **vulnerability**, as a key issue highlighted in the first national PRS. It set out not only to explore vulnerability, but to influence and improve policy responses to it. This was to be achieved though what the PPA designers termed *participatory policy research*, which would bring different stakeholder groups in to the design and implementation of field work as well as the dissemination and use of the research findings.

Originally conceived of as an institutionalised part of the newly established Poverty Monitoring System, under the PMMP issue-focused PPAs were to be carried out approximately every two years. The long term institutionalisation of PPAs within the PMS would require the development of national capacity to conduct this type of exercise; therefore capacity building was central to the PPA design.

In sum, the stated objectives of the 2002 PPA were

- to collect and analyse quality data on vulnerability in a timely manner
- to build the capacity of the implementing partners
- to make the findings available to key stakeholders in a way which facilitates the use of findings for planning and influencing policy dialogue.

Management and scope

The PPA was executed by the President's Office, Planning and Privatisation and implemented by a consortium³ of so-called "implementing partners" drawn from non-

³ The President's Office, Planning and Privatisation (PO-PP); The Ministry of Finance (MoF); The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS); Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC); Concern for Development Initiatives in Africa (forDIA); [Maarifa ni Ufunguo](#); The Pastoralists and Indigenous NGOs Forum (PINGOs Forum); [The Institute of Development Studies](#) (IDS), University of Dar es Salaam; Women's Research and Documentation Project (WRDP); [ActionAid](#), Tanzania; [The African Medical Research Foundation](#) (AMREF); [CARE International](#), Tanzania; [Concern Worldwide](#), Tanzania; [Save the Children](#), UK

profit, academic and research institutions, national and international NGOs. These included the RAWG of the Poverty Monitoring System, comprising representatives from a range of donor organisations and key ministries, and the Director of Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) – an independent research institution which acts as secretariat to the RAWG. In keeping with its responsibilities as laid out in the PMMP, the role of the Research and Analysis Working Group was oversight and quality control.

The PPA design and field work process was implemented as a two year project managed by another independent research institute, the ESRF, with a management structure comprising a Co-coordinator, an assistant co-ordinator, a Technical Adviser, an Assistant Technical Adviser and two senior fieldworkers. The technical adviser and his assistant had higher degrees in the social sciences. The other senior researchers were experienced field staff familiar with participatory field methods.

Concepts and methodology

The methodology used to conduct the PPA is presented in a number of workshop reports and in a Main Report⁴ entitled ‘Vulnerability and Resilience to Poverty in Tanzania: Causes, Consequences and Policy Implications’ (RAWG 2004). These documents state that key features of the PPA methodology in Tanzania would be:

- Broad participation in the process
- ‘Positive inquiry’ through a focus on people’s successes and strengths
- Weaving research together with advocacy, through involving a broad range of stakeholders in all aspects of the PPA and on-going dissemination of the process and findings

(www.esrf.or.tz/ppa/Methodology.htm).

Given the undertaking to involve a wide range of stakeholders in design of the field work phase (i.e. the implementing partners) the fieldwork methodology went through different iterations. Its focus remained on the use of PRA tools to investigate ‘vulnerability’.

Vulnerability is defined in the PPA Main Report as the likelihood that a person, household or community “might be poorer tomorrow than they are today”. In this case, the approach to poverty does not seek to change the status quo (through challenge to existing policies, institutional norms or structures) but simply aims to prevent things getting worse for people who are deemed to be vulnerable.

As well as consulting ordinary citizens in Tanzania about their perceptions of vulnerability – of who is vulnerable and what are the principle shocks and stresses that make them so – the PPA sought to identify different categories of vulnerable people. The stated intention was to help policy makers define priority groups in designing strategies to overcome vulnerability.

Using PRA tools associated with the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, research was conducted in 30 field sites, selected to represent a wide range of different livelihood contexts in Tanzania. The stated aim was to gather information on the different factors pushing people towards poverty in these different contexts. The research aimed to identify more and less vulnerable social groups by comparing “the number and intensity of things pushing them towards poverty versus the number and effectiveness of their available responses” (RAWG 2004:14).

⁴ Available on the ESRF website: www.esrf.or.tz

Tools used for the field research included tools typically used for PRA with a view to local action planning, including community maps, transect walks, seasonal calendars, preference ranking and focus group discussions. Examples of research tools used and the type of information gathered are presented in Box Two below. Using these tools, researchers were required to categorize people into more or less vulnerable social groups. An 'indicative list' of categories is laid out in the PPA "Field Guide", including elderly people, people with disabilities, women, youth and children, amongst others (PPA Field Guide 2002).

Box Two: Examples of research tools and type of information gathered	
Sources: PPA Field Guide; Activity Reports (ESRF 2002, 2003)	
Tool	Type of information
Community meeting	Local perceptions of key shocks and stresses causing poverty in the community List of social groups
Focus group discussions with different social groups, e.g. children, people living with HIV/AIDS	Perception of key 'impoverishing forces' facing this social group Coping mechanisms
Mobility maps	To show which people move in and out of the locality, where to and why
Transect walks	Involves the research team walking through a section of the community /village along a predetermined route, to record information on the environment and on livelihoods; on what resources are available, who uses them and how
Preference ranking	Determines the preferences of individuals and groups within a set of items. Can be used to compare priorities of different groups

According to key persons interviewed, there was an explicit intention that field researchers would confine themselves to reporting what they heard, rather than analysing or interpreting the information collected. This was intended to prevent bias or misinterpretations. The PPA documentation suggests that analysis of the findings would be carried out through feedback sessions at local community and at District level, and at a national synthesis workshop.

During the field work, research teams were tasked to produce daily 'Activity Reports'. These consist of transcripts of interviews and discussions, recorded as reported speech, and also include some visual outputs such as diagrams of community maps and transect

walks showing the location of different resources in the village. The Activity Reports are archived in the ESRF library in Dar es Salaam.

After the field work, Research Team leaders drew on the activity reports to produce Site Reports for each of the 30 field work sites. All of these are available at the ESRF library and 10 have been reproduced on the ESRF website. These reports provide a summary of 'people's perceptions and experience of vulnerability', the social groups perceived to be poor and a description of the main factors perceived as contributing to poverty, as well as 'coping mechanisms'. Policy recommendations are listed at the end.

According to its authors, at the stage of writing the PPA Main Report they used the research findings to try and identify the main factors which contribute to negative growth or the impoverishment of people living in different livelihood contexts in Tanzania.

Tracking the factors which lead individuals and households to become poorer, the report identifies what it terms as 'impoverishing forces' as the main factors 'pushing people off the ladder of improvement into poverty'. These can include short term 'shocks' (e.g. natural disasters such as floods), or longer term 'stresses' (such as the gradual process of environmental degradation).

Capacity building

Building the capacity of Tanzanian nationals in the use of participatory methods was a core objective of the PPA, reflected in the engagement of a consortium of implementing partners including research institutions and NGOs. The inclusive design of each phase of the process was intended to complement training workshops, as partners were engaged in all stages of the design and implementation process. In addition to staff members seconded from civil society organisations as field researchers, a number of recent graduates were employed by the project as research interns, all of whom have since found employment in the development sector.

PPA findings and dissemination

Findings of the PPA

The PPA Site Reports present a summary of findings around local perceptions of vulnerability, vulnerable social groups and 'impoverishing forces'. These reports tend to make very general statements about who is vulnerable and why. The Site Report for Ndogowe Village, for instance, states that the elderly, disabled and women are most vulnerable, followed by men and youths; whilst the key factors causing poverty are said to be 'hunger, disease, physical danger and ignorance'. The Site Report for Loborsoit identifies women and children as the most vulnerable, as well as disabled people, widows and the Ndorobo tribe. Key factors leading to poverty are said to include livestock disease, lack of access to services, perceived Government bias against pastoralists, corruption and fluctuating market prices for livestock.

Both the PPA Main Report and its popular version (produced in English and Kiswahili) highlight the extent to which vulnerability is perceived by ordinary people to be a problem in Tanzania. It gives voice to popular concerns about the quality of services, issues of governance and the viability of the agricultural sector. According to the Main Report:

“The most significant impoverishing forces include drought; environmental degradation; worsening terms of trade; corruption; inappropriate taxation; lack of physical security; HIV/AIDS; malaria and ageing” (RAWG 2004: 140).

Certain social categories are identified as more vulnerable than others to the affects of impoverishment. The most vulnerable are those with the fewest assets and hence the least resilience to shocks. Women, the elderly, children and those with disabilities are identified in the report as comprising the most vulnerable groups and thus those who should be the focus of anti-poverty policies.

A number of policy priorities were highlighted in the PPA process and have subsequently been addressed in the NSGRP. Particularly, these include its increased concern with issues of equity, good governance (especially at local level) and social protection.

Dissemination of findings

From the outset, the PPA was explicitly intended to have policy relevance and inform policy processes in Tanzania. The rationale for involving a wide group of implementing partners was partly to enhance their capacity to contribute to the policy process, as well as to establish a pool of professionals competent in the use of participatory research methods for the future. Integration into the PMS via the RAWG was intended to ensure that the PPA addressed issues raised in the PRS and fed into the development of the NSGRP.

In practice, the PPA resulted in the production and eventual publication of a main report, a popularised version of the main report in both English and Kiswahili and several briefing papers on specific topics or sectors, for example Education and Agriculture.

Although initial PPA findings had been presented at Poverty Policy Week in 2003 the publication of the main report was considerably delayed. Popular versions were not widely available until June 2005 and not all the briefing papers appeared in their final versions.

The PPA report is currently available on the website of the Poverty Monitoring System of the Government of Tanzania and the site reports and details of PPA methodology and process are available on the ESRF website. A video intended for public broadcast that presents case studies using interviews with pre-selected representatives from four of the research-site communities was produced. The RAWG viewed its contents and expressed concern that the video had been produced at some time after the research had been completed. The RAWG suggested that there be an introductory sequence in the film to clarify how the video was produced, which would also clarify specifically the circumstances around the choice and presentation of the case study which had been filmed in Dar es Salaam. At a second showing of the video to the RAWG, it was apparent that these concerns had not been addressed. The RAWG therefore felt that the video could not be responsibly released officially.

PPA Achievements and Challenges

Based on an analysis of the documentation, interviews and informal discussions around the PPA, the Evaluation Team identified key positive outcomes from the PPA process as well as the limitations and challenges. These points are detailed below.

Positive outcomes of the PPA

Awareness and understanding of vulnerability

- Tanzania's 2002/03 PPA represents a pioneering approach to PPAs that went beyond an extractive exercise through which expert researchers gather data from ordinary people, to involve a participatory process at both field and implementation level and which actively brought a wider range of stakeholders into dialogue with the State around understandings of vulnerability and the GoT's poverty reduction strategy. This process has provided new information on the nature of vulnerability as poor people see it. It has stimulated on-going debate around Government policies and their impact on vulnerability in Tanzania.
- The PPA Implementing Consortium created broad ownership of the objectives and priorities of the PPA. This was achieved through a participatory process of research design and formulation including workshop events at which the PPA implementing partners debated the key issues.
- Debate throughout the PPA process helped to strengthen a consensus around the need for local consultation and participatory methods of working.
- Through its implementation, the TzPPA brought a range of different stakeholders together including government, researchers and CSOs, creating a new space for research and policy dialogue whose significance may potentially extend well beyond the PPA exercise.

Capacity building

- Through the capacity building element the PPA process contributed to creating a new cadre of researchers in Tanzania with experience in using participatory research tools. This group of people has already entered the local market of development professionals.
- The research interns obtained considerable benefit from involvement in the PPA and their performance was commented on in positive terms by research staff and partners alike. The staff of implementing partner organisations also benefited from exposure to policy concerns and from the opportunity to link local and national agendas.

Policy influence

- Efforts and mechanisms to ensure broad involvement in the PPA process and dissemination of findings helped ensure that the findings fed in to current policy debates. These included the informal promotion of findings at the Poverty Policy Week event in 2003, the engagement of implementing partners and RAWG group members in associated policy processes, and conveying key messages to policy makers through the PMS. The RAWG played an important role as a forum for debate around PPA findings that were immediately related to and fed into broader debates around the NSGRP.
- PPA findings were successfully incorporated in the annual Poverty and Human Development Reports produced by the PMS. The 2003 Report features an extended discussion of core PPA findings, with a detailed section on vulnerability. The PHDR effectively combines routine survey data with the findings of qualitative research on

service delivery through the PSSS and PPA reports to present a snapshot of poverty in the country.

- The PPA research and key messages resonated with ongoing policy processes and the findings of concurrent policy oriented research, contributing to a subtle change in the policy climate among government personnel and development partners.
- Issues highlighted in the PPA including the quality of local governance, the proportion of district revenue retained by wards and burdensome multiple local taxes have recently featured as components of policy reforms and are reflected in the NSGPR. Tanzania is also embarking on the implementation of a national social protection strategy which aims to address vulnerability.
- Although it is not possible to attribute policy changes directly, the PPA appears to have successfully influenced policy change, including formulation of the new NSGPR.

Constraints and limitations

Awareness and understanding of vulnerability

- Understanding of vulnerability achieved through the PPA was limited by weak links between the research question and the research tools defined in the PPA methodology. The participatory approach to research design achieved broad initial ownership, but did not encourage adequate attention to quality and coherence of the methodology.
- The PPA set out to capture the dynamics of impoverishment and to differentiate between the relative vulnerability of different social groups in order to help policy makers prioritise their interventions. In practice, however, the research tools were used to gather descriptive rather than analytical information and focused on identifying static categories of people and things rather than exploring the relationships between them or the processes of exclusion and impoverishment. This limits its potential as an explanatory tool able to increase understanding of the causes of vulnerability or of likely policy impacts on vulnerability. It makes 'vulnerability' less useful as a concept for guiding policy and prioritisation, for example through targeting. The Site Report for Makongora Village, for instance, finds that "women, children above five years and men respectively were particularly vulnerable". Such generalisations were typical of the site reports. Activity reports for the same site state that the local community "had nothing to add or change" in relation to a list of categories of vulnerable groups suggested by the researcher.
- The emphasis in the PPA fieldwork on a static exercise of categorising people (into vulnerable groups), situations and events (into impoverishing forces) proved contrary to the stated intention of focusing on 'the positives', on people's 'success stories' in overcoming 'impoverishing forces' and improving their lives. Contrary to stated objectives, the series of reports therefore tends to focus heavily on people's problems rather than on successes and lessons learned from local experience.

Capacity building

- The PPA process prioritised data collection and building the capacity of implementing partners to collect data. Limited attention was paid to enhancing the analytical capacities of NGO staff, and other researchers, to think critically about the research process and to select and adapt the selection of research tools.
- There is little evidence that engagement in the PPA enhanced capacity for social and political analysis or for participatory *policy* research. These limitations were inherent in the PPA process which focused on data collection and reporting rather than analytical or facilitation skills.

Policy influence

- The formal dissemination and advocacy strategy turned out to be problematic. Local level feedback sessions in practice seem to have been peremptory and not guided by skilled facilitators who could have helped people to situate their grievances (often against local government staff) within a broader institutional framework. Site reports were not sent out to Districts or villages. These shortcomings are likely to have compromised the original sense of engagement in the process, particularly on behalf of local communities and CSOs.
- Approval of the PPA Main Report was delayed for almost 2 years. Causal links attributed in the report were disputed as not coming directly from the field – a problem linked to limitations of the research methodology noted above.
- Only 4 of the planned 8 policy briefing papers were produced, some only in draft form. The Policy Briefs that were produced were not widely disseminated, even within the Ministries responsible for the sector addressed by the briefing paper. The papers made available to the review team were overly long and less strategic or user-friendly than they were intended to be.
- The full and popular versions of the PPA Report were less effectively disseminated than they could have been. Implementing partners, who could have provided a conduit for dissemination, claim they did not receive copies until May 2005. The popular versions of the PPA Report in English and Kiswahili retained a high level of technical language and a style of presentation geared towards policy professionals. As far as we are aware the popular versions of the report have not been disseminated and there is no strategy for dissemination. These constraints will, undoubtedly, have limited the potential for policy influence.
- The lack of a clear line of institutional responsibility to ensure production of the intended PPA outputs after the ESRF project closed, at the end of 2003, seems to be partly responsible for these problems.

Lessons learned for participatory research

An analysis of the PPA methodology, analytical framework, fieldwork and dissemination process suggests that important lessons may be learned from PPA experience for participatory research and monitoring exercises in future. Key lessons identified are presented below.

Highly skilled expertise is needed to use PRA tools for policy analysis

Given its commitment to build the capacity of a local cadre of development workers able to use PRA methods, the TzPPA process focused on training in the use of PRA tools for data collection. This led to a mechanical use of PRA tools to gather descriptive information rather than using these to explore the processes and relationships that can help explain social change. To use PRA tools in this way is a highly skilled undertaking which would have required more guidance and training. This would have been hard to achieve within the timeframe for building basic research skills within the implementing partner organisations.

PRA tools alone may not be adequate for PPAs

The PPA adhered to what have become established as participatory methodologies in development research, derived from rural livelihoods research and aimed at obtaining consensual information about the local environment, physical and social, and livelihoods. The selection of research tools used in the Tanzania PPA are effective in obtaining information about farming and local services. They are less able to capture factors of broader policy relevance or to facilitate participatory analysis about the micro impacts of macro policy on changing livelihoods.

Policy relevant research requires analysis of structures and relationships

The PPA design adopts an understanding of vulnerability as the propensity of particular social categories to become poorer when faced by shocks and negative trends, an approach informed by the World Bank's Social Risk Management Framework, which informed design of the first PRS that generated the PPA research focus.

While it might indeed be the case that individuals in certain social categories are vulnerable to circumstance in a way that the better off are not, this framework does not account for the social and structural factors which both account for certain individuals belonging to specific social categories and account for their apparent vulnerabilities.

Moreover, in assuming that social categories can explain vulnerabilities the approach confuses the very different social trajectories of what are represented as different vulnerable groups. Perhaps the best example of this is that of children, represented as the most vulnerable group. While it is certainly the case that as individuals children are subject to the care and decisions of adults who provide for them, and are hence dependant on the quality of care received, the vulnerability of certain children does not derive from their group position as children relative to other social groups but from their position within a household, their relationships with adult carers and the capacities of those carers to support the child.

The problem in terms of explaining the apparent vulnerability of children is then to explain why or indeed whether all children are vulnerable or whether vulnerability is an attribute or risk associated with certain kinds of household situations. The vulnerability of all children irrespective of household conditions would suggest differential entry points for policy than findings which point to the vulnerability of children from certain households.

A similar critique can be made of the findings on older people as being vulnerable to poverty, without an adequate analysis of the social and structural relationships which may place some such people at risk. The PPA analysis of impoverishing forces does not adequately explain why individuals in such categories are at greater risk nor how their livelihoods would be improved if the impacts of such 'forces' were lessened.

Alternatively, the key questions for social and policy analysis would be what happens to make people poorer and which policies could help to ensure that people in different social groups become less vulnerable to poverty?

The answers to these questions lie in the wider political / economic context not captured in the PPA's geographically restricted analytical range, which in focusing on the local context assumes highly localised causes for the problems which local residents experience. This in turn contributes to an analysis which personalises the forces of impoverishment: for example, blaming corruption on local government staff and blaming failure of the agricultural sector on lack of government subsidies, without contextualising these factors – for example, in the global economy.

In order to capture these wider dimensions of vulnerability, research design and analysis will need to take structural factors, relationships and processes into account instead of focusing narrowly on individual agency and local level understandings of the immediate factors that increase poverty.

Capacity building for contextualised research is needed

Design of the TzPPA was based on a technical vision of PPAs as a means of obtaining data and the view that participatory research techniques in and of themselves would facilitate analysis by the participants as part of the research process. Yet, facilitating the process through which local informants analyse their immediate situation in a wider socio-economic and political context - about which they often lack information - is a highly skilled exercise.

In practice, because the research team maintained that informants' versions of events, i.e. the 'data', amounted to analysis, much of the 'analysis' presented in the first drafts of the PPA report and reiterated in the video is actually based on informant's statements rather than a contextualised social and political analysis. This explains why the kinds of causal mechanisms outlined in the report either appear as local and personal, (e.g. impoverishment is blamed on the perceived corrupt practices of local government officials), or alternatively, as the result of uncontrollable environmental events such as flooding.

To achieve a more sophisticated analysis of vulnerability and impoverishment - and thus with greater relevance for policy formulation and reform - socio-economic and political analysis would have to be built into the research design. Some examples of how PRA tools could be used to provide a more contextualised picture of vulnerability are presented in Box Three, below.

Standardised data recording tools would facilitate the analysis of findings

During the PPA field work, 'findings' were recorded in daily activity reports largely as reported speech, rather than being synthesised and presented in a form that would enable comparison between different groups and across research sites. This could have been achieved, for example, by making more use of tables and matrices to present the findings, for example comparing priority concerns and interests of different social groups. In practice, the use of reported speech and lack of comparative material in the activity reports meant that selection and interpretation was inevitable in compiling the Site Reports; yet these are written in such a way that does not distinguish between 'recorded voices' and the authors' interpretations of the findings.

Box Three: Examples of research tools and type of information yielded that could be used to explore vulnerability in social and historical context

Tool	Type of information
Community meeting	Description of social and political organisation in the locality Description of main local livelihood options and local perceptions of how and why these have changed over time Expectations for the future
Focus group discussions with different social groups, defined by e.g. sex/age/civil status/wealth /livelihood	Groups' definition of well-being Strategies to improve well-being Main factors that help/ could help these strategies to work Main obstacles & how these could be overcome
Mobility maps	Information on which people leave the locality, where they travel to and why can be used to show relative access of different groups to services, markets, employment, etc
Historical map of community resources and services	Can illustrate trends in access of different social groups to local resources and services, e.g. including pasture land, arable land, water resources; as well as access to services eg education, health
Preference ranking	Can be used to determine priorities of different social groups for factors / interventions they feel would most help them to improve their well-being

Predetermined analytical frameworks limit explanatory potential

The framework of analysis laid out in the PPA methodology structured the research process and determined the research focus in the villages. Research teams were provided with a list of suggested social groups and asked to identify the most vulnerable groups using a limited set of tools drawn from the PRA toolkit. Analysis in the field was discouraged, on the grounds that research participants should be allowed to present their own views and the idea that this would incorporate their own analysis of their problems.

The predetermined analytical framework of 'vulnerable groups' and of 'shocks and stresses' which add up to 'impoverishing forces' imposes rigid limits on the explanatory potential of the PPA and hence of its relevance to policy makers. This weakness contributed to the problems faced by members of the RAWG in approving the final

version of the Main Report and to the unease experienced by Government representatives and other members of the RAWG over the analysis presented in the Main Report (whose authors were now criticised for interpreting the data).

This experience suggests that (instead of trying to fit data into a predefined analytical framework), poverty related research will be more effective in future if the research design begins with policy analysis, by defining the research questions in relation to pro-poor policy and then identifying the most appropriate research methods to answer those questions.

The research process should generate new questions

In practice, the PPA process did not discriminate between different degrees of vulnerability across different social groups, as was initially intended. If, however, the PPA is actually arguing that the majority of people in Tanzania are vulnerable to becoming poorer in the future rather than better off, this could be read as a critical commentary on the impacts of the PRS and the unequal distribution of growth. Issues of inequality, regional disparities and the uneven nature of Tanzania's economic development are significantly underplayed in the PPA framework and subsequent reports. Yet these issues could be used to generate new policy questions and policy related research.

Stakeholders should clarify expectations

The PPA's orientation towards process as an end in itself stems from the value based standpoint of those committed to participatory methods in development not so much as research methodologies for obtaining high quality research, but as components of the development effort itself. Such perspectives informed the promotion of PRA techniques during the 1980's as essentially transformative, not necessarily in terms of the kinds of interventions they justified but in terms of the research process itself. Participatory reflection and action on the part of both researchers and participants was claimed as the strength of the methodology, and informs its utilisation as a local planning and advocacy instrument.

Although the Tanzania PPA was intended as a technical exercise in obtaining information about a specific social issue identified in the PRS, the belief in the transformative potential of 'participatory methods' did inform the design of the implementation process, in particular the ways in which the implementing partners were included and the rationale for their inclusion. Partners commented that involvement in the PPA had changed them, and that it had 'opened the eyes' of the staff who had gone to the field. The increased awareness of partner staff as a consequence of PPA involvement was mentioned by the PPA technical adviser as evidence that the design of the implementation process had achieved some of its capacity oriented objectives.

This perspective of participatory methods as a development good was not shared across all stakeholder groups. In the event, there was an undeclared tension around understandings of who should participate in the research process and how. Thus, fieldworkers were to 'participate' in data collection but not in facilitating local level analysis of the causes of vulnerability; informants were to participate by describing their experience of vulnerability, but the tools used did not facilitate their participation in social or policy analysis. Indeed, this would have required a different set of field worker skills and a different timeframe than those that were actually available.

In practice, the PPA aimed to bring 'voices of the poor' to the policy table; but did not acknowledge the interpretative relationship between 'researcher' and 'researched'. The reporting methods did not differentiate between raw data and selection, synthesis or interpretation made by the field researchers in recording this information. This limitation left the PPA findings more or less 'up for grabs', for different stakeholders to interpret them in their own interests and, or argue over their significance.

A clear definition of management roles is needed

The delays in dissemination are partly explained by the fact that once the PPA project had ended and the contract with ESRF was fulfilled, there was no point of authority responsible for ensuring that the dissemination strategy was implemented. Delays in agreeing the final report and several rounds of rewriting had also contributed to the considerable time lag between completing the research and the dissemination of the final report.

Dissemination and the 'advocacy' component of the PPA programme were not planned effectively. Advocacy, in the sense of influencing policy, was written into the design of the PPA as an objective; but the mechanisms through which this was to occur remained vague (beyond the planned publication of targeted materials such as policy briefs). The PPA documentation seems to assume that the PPA findings will engage partners in advocacy efforts around the issues, as a result of their inclusion in the implementing consortium and subsequent sharing of the PPA findings. The design is confused about the implications of 'advocacy' on the one hand and evidence to inform policy processes on the other. This ambiguity contributed to a lack of agreement between civil society stakeholders and members of the RAWG during the PPA process. While the PPA process was successful in achieving policy influence, through a mix of formal and informal means, the PPA as a product has yet to have significant influence.

These factors suggest that management arrangements and the allocation of responsibilities should be carefully reviewed ahead of future PPAs or other research and monitoring initiatives. This issue is taken up in the next section.

Comparative initiatives in participatory research and monitoring

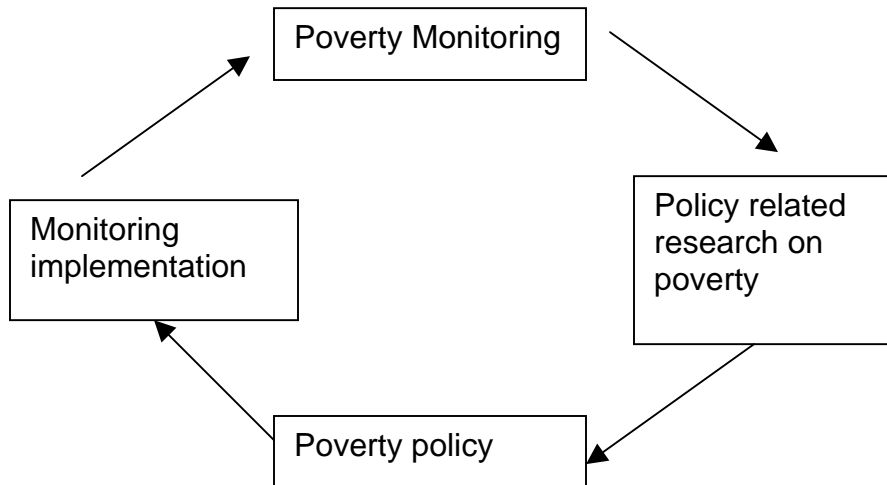
The TORs for this assignment state that the Consultants should review comparative experience in 'participatory monitoring or assessment initiatives' in Tanzania and elsewhere, and make recommendations for 'the routine integration of participatory methods and practices in the PMS'.

Recent literature suggests that development practitioners increasingly recognise the advantages of using a complementary mix of methodologies for policy related research, poverty monitoring and monitoring PRSP implementation. It is important here to distinguish, however, between:

- poverty monitoring – monitoring of indicators that relate to poverty status, whether this is defined in quantitative and, or qualitative terms;
- monitoring PRS implementation – monitoring of indicators relating to the inputs, outputs and impact of programme implementation; and
- policy related research on poverty, which seeks to investigate and analyse the relationships between poverty reduction policy and poverty related outcomes.

These different processes ideally inform each other, as illustrated in Diagram One below.

Diagram One: Poverty assessment, analysis and monitoring informs poverty reduction policies



As noted above, participatory tools for poverty monitoring and PRS monitoring can be employed at different levels to a variety of ends, including gathering qualitative information, consulting people’s opinions, mobilising people around a policy agenda and promoting accountability. They can also be used in qualitative case studies for policy related research.

Considering the above factors, in order to make recommendations on the ‘routine integration’ of participatory tools in the PMS it would first be critical to clarify the role of the PMS and the intended outcomes of using participatory tools. These issues may be addressed in the forth-coming PMS Review and falls beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, a brief review of selected participatory research and monitoring initiatives (in Tanzania and beyond) may serve to illustrate some of the methods available, according to PMS demands.

In relation to **poverty monitoring**, it has been argued that periodic participatory exercises can continue to enrich assessment of the qualitative aspects of poverty that go beyond mere quantitative concern with income and consumption. Indeed,

“There is increasing interest in establishing poverty monitoring systems which combine participatory exercises with traditional household surveys, allowing one set of findings to complement or supplement the other” (McGee & Norton 2000).

Some practitioners have argued that there is value in carrying out **periodic PPA exercises**. In Zambia, for instance, the national NGO and academic staff who carried out the PPA research updated the findings one year later in order to gauge the impact of a radical policy reform package (McGee & Norton 2000).

Broadly speaking, however, experience with second generation PPAs suggests that repeatedly exploring poor people's views of poverty and deprivation may generate diminishing returns. In general, there is increasing consensus that follow-up PPAs should "not (be)...bigger and more frequent, but more targeted, as well as fit for their specific purpose – exploratory, analytical, sceptical, reflexive and self-critical" (Appleton & Booth 2002). Similarly, McGee and Norton (2000) suggest that initial poverty assessments could be **up-dated periodically by small-scale PPA-type exercises; but with a specific, limited focus** – as on a particular sector (e.g. agriculture) or particular population group (e.g. orphans in AIDS-stricken countries).

PPA-type consultative exercises in exploring people's views about poverty are distinct from **monitoring PRS implementation**. In their report on 'Good Practice in the Development of PRSP Indicators and Monitoring Systems', Booth and Lucas (2002) distinguish different levels of PRS monitoring including: input monitoring, monitoring the implementation process and intermediate outputs; and measurement and assessment of poverty outcomes or impacts. To some extent, participatory methods can be integrated at each level.

With regard to **input monitoring, public expenditure tracking** studies have been undertaken in a number of countries such as Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda. These are intended to track whether or not and to what extent funds disbursed by central Government reach their destination and are used in the intended ways. They can be participatory in the sense of involving different (Government and non-government) stakeholders in the tracking exercise and have been used as a tool to enhance accountability.

In Tanzania, civil society organisations including the Tanzania Coalition for Debt and Development (TCDD) and the Women's Research and Documentation Project (WRDP) have engaged in public expenditure tracking (PET) for the Education and Health sectors, to monitor whether or not PRSP expenditure targets are being met. The Primary Education Improvement Project, for instance, involves tracking funding allocations from central to local government (District Council) and to facility level (schools). Working with 10 volunteers in each of 12 Districts, CSOs used a questionnaire with Heads of Schools to find out the amount requested, allocation and expenditure of funds at school level according to cost centre. It included other indicators, such as teacher:student ratio as an indicator of teaching quality. The methodology included focus group discussions with school staff and community members as well as feedback session to local communities in conjunction with the District Councils. The project cost \$28,000 for 12 Districts.

The PET exercise found that, whilst official Government policy was to allocate \$10 per pupil to each school, in practice schools in the districts surveyed were only receiving \$6 per pupil, with the main leakage being at district level. Wide dissemination of these findings led to renewed public commitment to meeting expenditure targets. (Interview with Chamba Max Kadege – TCDD & Fabia Shundi, WRDP).

PETs can promote increased public accountability and arguably this is most likely to happen when they are conducted by, or formally involve, non-government stakeholders. Whilst they may be participatory in the sense of involving a range of stakeholders, however, PETs are basically a quantitative exercise that show how resources are

allocated and used; but do not deeply explore qualitative aspects of service provision, nor involve analysis of the policy or implementation strategy.

With regard to **PRS implementation and outputs**, monitoring based on the model of **Service Delivery Surveys** can provide statistically valid information, not only on service coverage but also on the perceived quality and specific problems beneficiaries face in access to and benefit from the services. Various methodologies have been developed for this type of survey. These can be 'participatory' in the sense that they solicit the views and opinions of a range of stakeholders including service providers, key informants and intended service beneficiaries. They specifically examine people's views and perceptions on why and how services are used or not. Participatory methods in this context can expose barriers to service usage that were not previously recognised or understood by service providers. In some instances, such surveys have been used to increase accountability for service provision and the quality of services, through 'naming and shaming' poor service providers and through popular mobilisation around the findings.

One illustration is provided by the '**Citizens' Report Cards**' methodology. CRC initiatives draw on a methodology developed by the Public Affairs Centre (PAC) in Bangalore, India, with support from UNDP. Its aim is to elicit feedback through sample surveys on users' views and opinions relating to service quality, to identify key constraints that citizens face in accessing public services and to generate recommendations on sector policies, programme strategy and service delivery management to address these constraints. The CRC initiative in Bangalore has been used to create public awareness on the entitlements of service users as well as to advocate for policy and governance reforms.

This methodology is increasingly used internationally and has recently been piloted in Zanzibar and in Arusha⁵. The Zanzibar pilot focused on two public services (drinking water and primary education), covering 1015 households in two districts. It was implemented jointly by Government (the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the Office of the Chief Government Statistician) and civil society (the Association of NGOs in Zanzibar-ANGOZA). Questions included the socio-economic profile of respondents and their feedback on services including access, use, quality, costs and reliability as well as citizens' suggestions for service improvements or alternatives.

An assessment of the Zanzibar pilot (2004) suggests that the CRC methodology is effective when certain conditions are met, including: capacity at community level to speak out without fear of retribution; political will at central and local government/ service provider level to discuss issues with communities; willingness to use the information generated for performance management and planning; and the existence of 'independent credible institutions to guide the advocacy and follow up actions with communities and governments'.

⁵ In Arusha, TCDD used focus group discussions with local community leaders to formulate the interview questions for a survey covering 150 households. It was designed to elicit opinions on the most/least corrupt service providers. In this exercise, the police were seen as the most corrupt service and this result was reported to the Government. However, it is not clear that there were any tangible results from this survey. The exercise cost \$5,000. In 2005, TCDD plans to administer CRCs on water supply and hospital facilities in Dar Es Salaam.

In the context of Tanzania's PMS, the routine data collection process could be expanded to incorporate CRC exercises. In planning the management of such a process however, the PMS would have to consider the factors noted above as well as capacity building needs and incentives for collecting and utilising this type of information.

Service Delivery Surveys are participatory in the sense of soliciting the views and opinions of service providers and beneficiaries and, at best, the results can be used to stimulate public debate on improved service provision. They are generally limited, however, to assessing performance against predefined indicators and do not involve analysis (participatory or otherwise) of sector level policies.

In an attempt to move beyond this, **Policy and Service Satisfaction Surveys (PSSS)** have been used in Tanzania to gather views and opinions on access to services and quality of service delivery as well as 'policy outcomes'. The PSSS conducted by REPOA combined focus group discussions with a sample survey which asked for people's views on Government policy as well as service provision. Given that this methodology is consultative but does not involve facilitated analysis, however, it is questionable whether these views reflect longer term policy outcomes or are more accurately reactions to more immediate programme implementation outcomes. Again, 'participation' is confined to consultation, rather than shared analysis of and response to problems with policy implementation and its impact.

According to the World Bank, participatory models for **monitoring PRS impact** are still in the process of being developed. In the WB view, conceptually these combine prior policy analysis with local consultation and participatory research and analysis at community level (see World Bank PRSP Sourcebook).

In terms of assessing PRS performance at policy level, there are strong arguments for using participatory research tools for qualitative analysis to investigate causal links between policy and outcomes / impact. Booth and Lucas (2002), for instance, note the importance of linking qualitative case studies to other data collection instruments for policy analysis. There has been tentative experience with this approach in Tanzania.

According to Dr Suleman Mogaeka of the Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) Monitoring and Evaluation Department, the NORAD funded '**formative process research**' project was intended to guide local government reform through qualitative research into issues revealed by existing LGRP reports and data bases, i.e. derived from routine data collection at local authority level. However, Dr Mogaeka argues that the results have been disappointing so far in that the research agenda has not corresponded to priority concerns of the LGRP. Within the scope of this consultancy it was not possible to gather further information on this. However, it could be useful for the PMS to investigate the intentions and potential of the programme as well as lessons learned.

Alternatively, **specially commissioned qualitative studies** can be designed to explain trends identified through quantitative data analysis or to explain the reasons for poor performance or unintended outcomes of current policies and programmes. In Tanzania, the Ministry of Water reports positive experience of linking qualitative with survey based data, through a strong working relationship with the international NGO WaterAid. In collaboration with the Ministry, WaterAid has carried out qualitative research into particular issues around infrastructure and policy analysis that could not be explained

either through routine data analysis or through quantitative analysis of trends based on survey data (interview with Felix Ngamlagosi, Planning and Policy Division, Ministry of Water).

The relevance of these models and initiatives for the PMS will largely depend on the refined definition of PMS aims and intended outputs emerging from the PMS review. Nonetheless, some specific suggestions for the use of participatory tools are incorporated in the following section on Recommendations for the PMS.

Recommendations for the PMS Review

1. Review PMS information needs

To make recommendations on the use of participatory tools in the PMS a critical first step is to re-examine what type of information the PMS aims to provide, for what and to whom? These issues will be addressed in the forth-coming PMS Review. Nevertheless, some suggestions can be made about the potential for using PPAs and other participatory methods, depending on how the above questions are answered by the Review.

A key question for the PMS Review to consider is the distinction between poverty monitoring and monitoring PRS implementation. As Booth and Lucas point out, poverty monitoring focuses on the poverty data base and seeks to track long term changes in poverty status. Whilst these may be interpreted as outcomes or impact of poverty reduction strategies, this type of information has limited practical application for policy: because it arrives too late and with too many difficulties of attribution to reflect directly on current policy and because new policy is in any case not typically evidence-based (Booth & Lucas 2002:6).

On the other hand, monitoring of short and medium term process indicators for PRS implementation can be more powerful in ensuring that the State is held accountable for policy implementation and that policy is influenced by the findings.

The future focus of the PMS – poverty monitoring or monitoring implementation of the NSGRP – will thus have implications for the most appropriate methodology to use. Whilst the PPA has yielded comprehensive information on the current views and concerns of the poor in Tanzania, similar PPA exercises are likely to be less useful for monitoring short and medium term indicators of change related to PRS implementation. For this purpose, it may be more appropriate to consider a mix of survey based methodologies with more focused qualitative studies to explore specific policy issues. In either case, some participatory tools may be used (see above and points 3,4 & 6 below).

2. Separate technical from advocacy and policy roles

If it is decided that the PMS in future should focus on its stated core objective of monitoring the PRS, it would be helpful to clarify and separate out the technical / managerial roles of information gathering, collation and dissemination, from the political roles of consensus-building around the poverty reduction strategy and increasing accountability for its implementation. This will help to clarify how and when participatory approaches might be used.

To monitor the NSGRP, the core business of the PMS will be to generate and disseminate information. In this context, the Research and Analysis Working Group might be reconstituted as a group of technical experts in the field of socio-economic research. This could help the Group fulfil its technical role of identifying and responding to needs for PRS related research, as well as helping to identify how findings from the research can feed back into the design and, or adaptation of surveys, censuses and other data collection instruments.

Within this framework, participatory research tools could be designed to:

- Extend the reach and quality of consultation around service satisfaction⁶
- Gather qualitative information with explanatory potential (able to produce hypotheses around likely cause and effect).

These options are discussed in more detail below.

3. *Extend stakeholder consultation*

Comparative literature suggests that there are gaps between what the PMS currently provides and could potentially offer. As Booth points out, the PMS in Tanzania – similar to other poverty monitoring systems linked to PRSPs – has tended to focus on indicators of outcomes and impact. However, these long term indicators are less appropriate for monitoring policy implementation within the usually 3 year PRSP cycle. A poverty monitoring system designed to provide high quality information in a timely way to inform policy would need to include short and mid term measurable indicators on process and outputs.

Instruments for gathering this type of information can usefully be made more 'participatory' in the sense of moving from the mere collection of quantitative data (e.g. how many service users?) to include consultation with ordinary citizens about their views and experiences (e.g. why did people use / not use this service? Were they satisfied with the quality and why /why not?).

Furthermore, recent experience with 'participatory' types of service satisfaction survey suggests that these methods can contribute to increasing the quality of services and accountability of service providers. Examples include the Policy and Service Satisfaction Survey conducted by REPOA (combining focus group discussions with a sample survey) and the pilot Citizens' Report Card initiatives in Zanzibar (implemented by a consortium of Government and NGO partners - see above).

4. *Contribute to evidence-based policy making*

According to the existing PMMP, the PMS should provide information to policy makers that helps them to assess the impact of the PRS and to adapt the poverty reduction strategy accordingly. Social scientists typically draw on participatory research tools for their capacity to elicit qualitative information that enhances analysis of likely cause and effect, through a better understanding of the socio-economic and institutional relationships and processes that contribute to shaping change.

In the context of evidence-based policy making, the PMS can call on participatory tools for:

⁶ REPOA has already undertaken 'Policy and Service Satisfaction Surveys'. These have served to gather people's views and opinions on policy outcomes and service delivery: however, this is distinct from policy analysis.

- Qualitative research to investigate specific topics and trends
- Monitoring qualitative aspects of change related to PRS implementation.

According to the PMMP, the Research and Analysis Technical Working Group is tasked to identify specific topics that need further research to inform policy making, partly through analysis of routine and survey data emerging through the system. Such analysis can point to issues and trends that require further explanation and where specific, qualitative research studies might be needed. Research can then be carried out through specifically focused studies which use participatory methods such as focus group interviews, and others, to help understand the local and social dimensions of national trends or dilemmas. Examples might include analysis of the response to removing fees for primary education, or the implications of imposing health care user fees. REPOA is already engaged in this type of initiative.

5. *Link research design to the policy question*

For research to have policy relevance, ideally the research design itself should be integrally linked to the policy question. In other words, rather than starting with a chosen methodology (e.g. PRA tools) to investigate an abstract issue (e.g. vulnerability), the research design process would start with policy analysis and the research methodology would be specifically designed to explore the research question. If qualitative data is to be useful for policy monitoring and formulation it has to be contextualised, including an analysis that locates the views and experiences of the poor within the local context of social, political and institutional relationships and processes.

Social scientists commissioned to undertake this type of research are likely to use participatory tools (amongst others) to gather qualitative information that can help to explain the links between people's perceptions and behaviour and the impacts of policy implementation. As Appleton and Booth explain, research of this nature usually employs case studies to explore hypotheses and generate new ones, but cannot be representative. The power of this type of research is in helping to explore causal links. The findings can be further tested through surveys.

A comparison of the PPA framework and an alternative framework for policy related research is provided in Annex Two.

6. *Use a mixture of monitoring methodologies to interrogate and complement each other*

Participatory tools, such as preference matrices, focus group discussions, mobility maps and so on can be used in monitoring the qualitative aspects of changing socio-economic conditions and relationships (see for example Box Three, above). To be used in monitoring, however, data is needed that is comparable over time.

There are growing examples of using 'mixed' research methodologies, such as combining qualitative research tools with the use of panel data (going back to gather comparable information with the same households or communities repeatedly over time)⁷. One instance of this is that information arising from studies using PRA methods can be used to inform survey questionnaires and surveys can then be used to test for generalisability. In Uganda, for instance, the welfare indicators in the National Household

⁷ For limitations on the extent to which these data types are comparable see the Appleton & Booth (n.d.)

Survey were revised on the basis of the PPA findings (Appleton & Booth 2001). Furthermore, fieldwork for the second PPA in Uganda was designed to investigate questions arising from panel data in the household survey; with the idea that findings from the PPA study sites would feed back again into household survey design (Booth & Lucas 2002).

Another approach to using participatory methods in monitoring is that of 'partnership' models. According to Booth & Lucas (2002), these can be used to give service users and service providers joint incentives for monitoring. In Bolivia, for instance, a Community Health Information System has been established which pools information collected by community health promoters with information supplied by health service providers, is presented in accessible graphical form and is used to promote joint decision-making and prioritising around health service provision.

7. *Integrate dissemination mechanisms in research design*

If participatory research and monitoring are to feed into policy making and review, experience with the PPA suggests that the mechanisms for sharing and dissemination of the findings should be integral to the research design and not left as something to be dealt with later.

8. *Enhancing accountability requires internal and external mechanisms*

Information on policy implementation, resource allocations and service delivery use can be used to promote accountability. Information-gathering of this kind can benefit from including qualitative information based on consultation with beneficiaries and other stakeholders, i.e. using methods that are participatory in the sense that stakeholders can air their views on the implementation of a pre-defined policy or service.

However, a distinction should be made between horizontal accountability – whereby different departments and institutions within the state administration hold each other to account – and vertical accountability, whereby the state is held to account by external actors. Routine data collection and surveys through the PMS can contribute to horizontal accountability.

Vertical accountability, however, requires that non-state stakeholders have access to public information and have the capacity to interrogate the methodology used as well as the findings. This is more likely to be achieved by independent activities such as parallel budget tracking exercises (e.g. as carried out by the Tanzania Coalition for Debt and Development – TCDD) and multi-stakeholder forums such as the Public Expenditure Review mechanism. In this case, the role of the PMS is to ensure that the information acquired through routine data collection and surveys is collated, analysed and disseminated in accessible form at local and national levels.

In the interests of promoting greater accountability of the state to its citizens, donors could establish a fund or earmark money through existing funds (e.g. the Tanzania Foundation for Civil Society) to be used for independent monitoring.

9. *Relocate advocacy outside the PMS framework*

Consensus-building around the PRS should be able to draw on information provided through the PMS. Similarly, forums for advocacy and for holding the Government to account - for implementing the PRS, achieving policy goals, and so on - should be able to draw on PMS data. However, to avoid the stalemate produced by tensions between

consensus-building between different stakeholders on the one hand, and opening space for dialogue and advocacy on the other, such forums might be better located outside the PMS framework.

In this case, the PMS would be responsible to provide information and analysis. Participation of different stakeholders in interpreting and using that information would be located outside the PMS technical /managerial framework in other, multi-stakeholder forums, to which the PMS could report.

10. Adapt the institutional framework

Given the need to ensure that dissemination is integrally linked to policy-relevant research design, the idea of having separate Research and Analysis and Dissemination working groups within the PMS might be reconsidered. Furthermore, the PPA experience has shown that trying to incorporate interest-based advocacy within the PMS framework can be counter-productive. In this case, it led to a long stalemate over publication of the PPA findings, thereby obstructing wider dissemination and debate of the findings. As the 'advocacy' role does not sit easily within the PMS, it is suggested that the Dissemination, Sensitisation and Advocacy working group might be re-conceptualised as an Education/Communication working group whose role would be to popularise information produced by the PMS and to make it more accessible to policy makers and to ordinary citizens.

Way Forward

This report has noted the distinction between different types and aims of 'participatory research'. Amongst others, it can be used as an exercise to build consensus around a (policy or programme) agenda or as a consultation exercise to gather different views and perspectives on an issue, as with the PPA. It can be used to facilitate participants' reflection and learning around issues that concern them. This is typical of PRA exercises used for local development planning. PPAs are less suited to facilitate local reflection and action planning, which requires specific (facilitation) skills as well as a longer time frame to gain trust, understand the local social dynamics and facilitate local understanding around structural issues.

The utility of participatory methodologies as a vehicle for monitoring similarly depends on what is being monitored and the kind of data required. Participatory methods can provide qualitative feedback on services and people's perceptions of their quality of life: they cannot provide measurements or baselines against which change can be assessed and progress evaluated.

Alternatively, participatory research tools can be used to obtain qualitative information at micro level, which is then analysed by skilled researchers to both take account of and help explain the institutional and policy context. In this sense, participatory tools can be used for policy research to improve understanding its the actual or likely impacts.

The extent to which such techniques are appropriate for the Tanzania PMS depends on the purpose of the PMS: whether it exists to monitor changes in poverty indicators and hence provide information of the progress of implementation of the PRS or whether the PMS is a more loosely focused institution which provides an institutional nexus for bringing together both monitoring work on poverty indicators and various other kinds of studies, including one off pieces of work on specific issues, addressing dimensions of

poverty more generally. Some of these issues will be addressed through the current review of the PMS.

With regard to the use of large-scale, PPA type exercises, based on the above we would suggest that a repeat PPA would not be cost-effective in terms of the likely added value at this point.

In order to further explore and demonstrate the potential of participatory research to contribute to pro-poor policy making, it might be more effective to plan for a new model of specifically focused policy research, which uses participatory tools to gather qualitative information. The RAWG could identify priority policy issues for research based on the PPA, on existing survey data or other information emerging through the PMS. An example might be a study to look at the impact of health user fees. The RAWG could commission a specialised team of social researchers who have the necessary skills to facilitate the research process flexibly without depending on toolkits which can predetermine both the kinds of data accessed and interpretive frameworks. Skills required for this kind of work are listening and interviewing skills, operational skills and basic sociological awareness of the core social and economic processes in Tanzania.

Any capacity building requirements should be fulfilled before the research begins. In other words, capacity building would be separate from the aims of the research project itself which aims at policy analysis.

A possible framework for this type of research is illustrated in Annex Two and presents a process through which policy analysis and research are more closely connected and interactive than happened with the PPA. In this model, research questions flow from the policy issues and are investigated in the field through critical and finely designed methods that are well honed to provide specific data. It is anticipated that this would minimise the dislocation between policy, analysis and data collection experienced with the PPA and would enhance the analysis of findings addressed to a specific policy context.

At the same time, participatory tools may be used at district and sub district levels for combined research and planning or monitoring exercises, where these techniques can enhance community awareness and ownership of an issue, and facilitate a collective strategy for action.

ANNEX ONE: SOURCES

Meetings

Research & Analysis Working Group Meeting 20/05/05

Joseph Semboja	REPOA
Lucas Katera	REPOA
Donald Mmari	REPOA
Hans Hoogeveer	World Bank
Valerie Leach	UNICEF
Jackson Biswara	JICA
Tamaha Yamaachi	JICA
Gerard Howe	DFID
Maia Green	Consultant, SDDirect
Rachel Waterhouse	Consultant, SDDirect

Meeting with Implementing Partners 23/05/05

Vivian Bashemererwa	Women's Research and Documentation Project Association (WRDP)
Martine Billanou	Save the Children (UK)
Godfrey Tweve	Concern Worldwide (Tanzania)
Ahmed Makbel	National Bureau of Statistics
Laurent Wambura	ActionAid International (Tanzania)
Maia Green	Consultant, SDDirect
Rachel Waterhouse	Consultant, SDDirect

Interviews

Mr Mwakupugi	Chair, Research and Analysis Working Group
Cheda Lupindi	Poverty Monitoring Officer, Poverty Eradication Division, Vice President's Office
Eammon Manyama	UNDP
Pascal Assay	Acting Director, Poverty Eradication Division, Vice President's Office
Dr Suleman Mogaeka	Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Local Government Reform Programme
Deo Mutalemwa	ESRF
Professor Amani	ESRF
Lucas Katera	REPOA
Rose Mwaipopo	University of Dar es Salaam
Charles Erhardt	(former) Technical Advisor to the PPA (ESRF)
I Kaduma	Ministry of Water, Planning and Policy Division
Felix Ngamlagosi	
?	Ministry of Education
Gerard Howe	Social Development Adviser, DFID
Valerie Leach	UNICEF
Brian Cooksey	REPOA

Chamba Kadge Fabia Shundi Marjorie Mblinyi	Tanzania Coalition for Debt and Development Women's Research and Documentation Project Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (ex- RAWG member)
Gertrude Mwinzi	Policy Forum
<u>Outside Tanzania</u> Arthur Van Diesen	Social Development Adviser, DFID Uganda (formerly DFID Tanzania)
Pim van der Male	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands (formerly UNDP Tanzania)
Carlos Oya	University of London (formerly Ministry of Planning and Finance, Mozambique)

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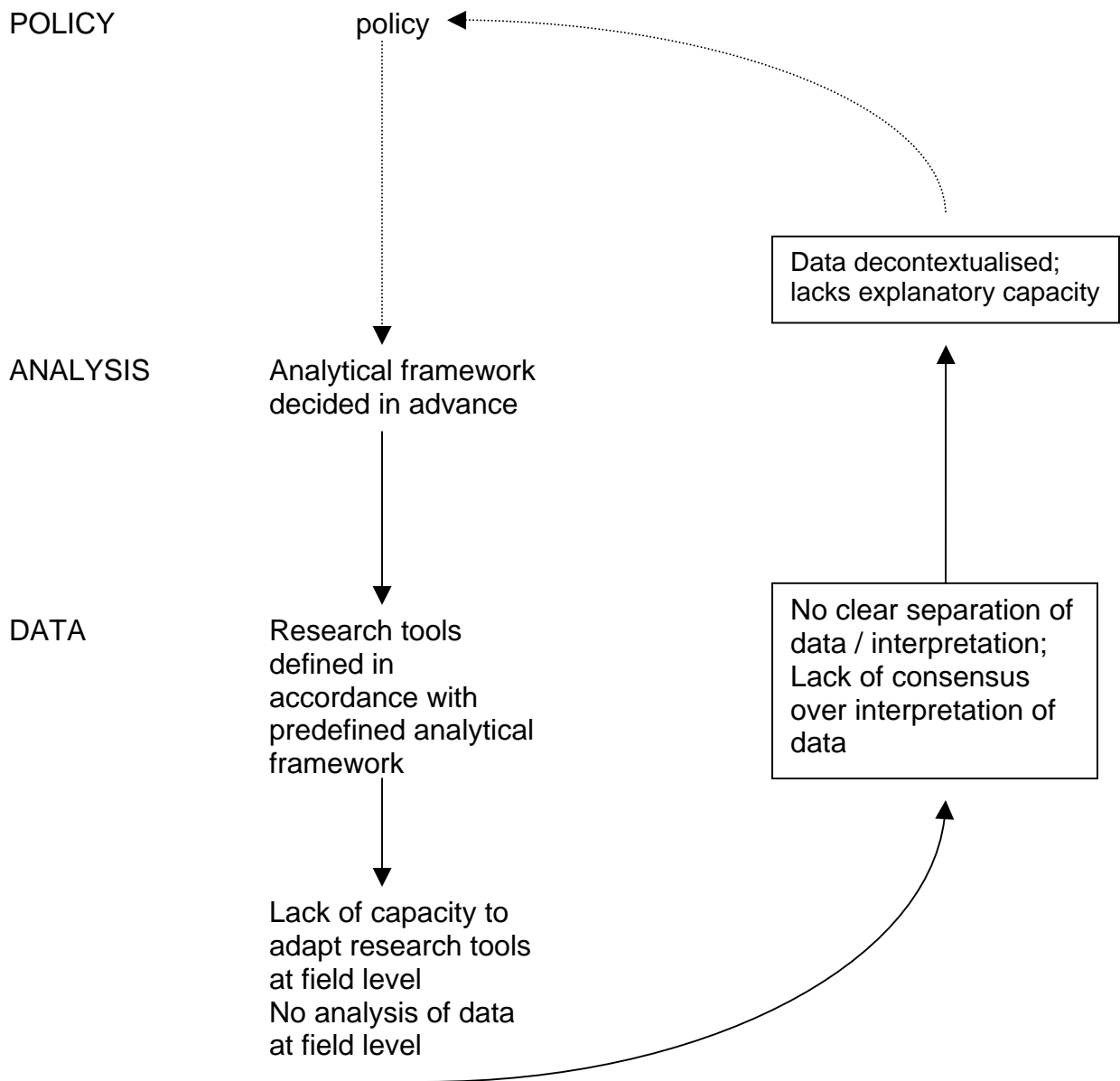
www.esrftz.org

www.tanzania-online

Annex Two: Frameworks for Policy-Related Research

The Tanzania PPA 2002/03 initially intended to provide 'policy relevant' research. In practice, however, there were gaps in the link between policy, the research questions and the data gathered. The limitations of this framework are presented in Diagram One below. Ideally, for research to have greater policy relevance, the research design itself should be integrally linked to the policy question. In other words, rather than starting with a chosen methodology (e.g. PRA tools) to investigate an abstract issue (e.g. vulnerability), the research design process would start with policy analysis and the research methodology would be specifically designed to explore the research question. An illustration of this framework is presented in Diagram Two below.

Diagram One: TzPPA Framework



Policy Formulation

