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PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND PRACTITIONER ENGAGEMENT ON DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN MALAWI

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 25% fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Management (in the field of Public and Development Management)

Abstract

Over the last forty to fifty years the industry that supports international development cooperation, has become more complex in its pursuit of multifaceted development objectives. Studies suggest that history, politics and a power differential between aid recipients and the foreign aid workforce undermine the development policy process locally. This study explores local engagement on development policy in Malawi, between public officials/aid recipients and donor-agency practitioners/foreign aid workforce; and the role of the 2008 Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness in this engagement. The two significant findings are that, while there are some adverse effects of history, politics and power in engagement on development policy, there is also evidence of replicable outcomes that can bolster the policy process. Secondly, the democracy model in practice in Malawi is struggling to deliver development policy dividends. The study concludes that both the state and donor agencies working in Malawi should mutually leverage global commitments, domestically, and use them to negotiate an increase in development aid committed to improving the development processes, for greater national ownership. The study specifically recommends the adoption of deliberative democratic development processes. This nuanced approach may improve Malawi's ability to yield development policy dividends.

Declaration

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Masters of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university.



_____

Thokozile Thabu Lwanda Chisala

Date: 21 October 2015

Dedication

I dedicate this research report to my dearly beloved late mother, Esther Barbara Catherine Lwanda, from whom I continue to draw my aspirations, courage, and ability to persevere.

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I would like to acknowledge my partner and friend Zaheer Ahmed Kharodia for his tireless support and encouragement, which has sustained me throughout the pursuit of this Masters degree. I was favoured with a strong support network, which includes a long list of friends and family, who put up with my endless thoughts and ramblings, in relation to this research paper. This network includes; Sarai Chisala, Zione Ntaba, and Chipo Kanjo, to mention but a few.

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Table of Contents

Abstract ii

Declaration iii

Dedication iv

Acknowledgements v

List of Abbreviations viii

List of Tables x

List of Figures x

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1. Background to the Study 1

1.2. The Problem Statement 3

1.3. The Purpose Statement 4

1.4. The Research Questions 4

2. THE LITERATURE REVIEW 5

2.1. Literature pertaining to the Main Research Question 6

2.1.1. Globalisation, the Nation-State and Aid 6

2.1.2. Ownership, Partnerships and Deliberative Democracy 12

2.2. Literature pertaining to Research Sub-Questions 1 and 2 22

2.3. Conclusion to the Literature Review 29

3. Research Methodology and Data Collection 33

3.1. Research Strategy 33

3.2. Research Design 34

3.3. Research Method& Procedure 34

3.4. Sampling 35

3.5. Data 37

3.6. Data Analysis 38

3.7. Data Analysis Techniques 38

3.8. The Limitations of the Research 40

3.9. Ethical Considerations 42

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS 44

5.1. A Presentation of the Themes Emerging from the Study 44

5.1.1. Themes Emergingunder Question 1 (the Main Research Question) 44

5.2.1. Themes Emerging under Question 2 (the 1st Sub-Research Question) 55

5.2.2. Themes Emerging under Question 3 (the 2nd Sub-Research Question) 59

5. UNDERSTANDING THE FINDINGS 64
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 70
References 78
Appendices 86

List of Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
EU	European Union
EU-ACP	European Union -African, Caribbean and Pacific
CABS	Common Approach to Budgetary Support
CPA	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
DFID	Department for International Development
FISP	Farm Input Subsidy Programme (Malawi)
Govt	Government
GPC	Global Partnership Commitments
HLF	High Level Forum
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (Malawi)
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MoF	Ministry of Finance (Malawi)
NSP	Non-State Service Providers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet (Malawi)
PD	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

List of Tables

Table 1: Thematic Analysis Framework..... 39
Table 2: A Schematic Presentation of the Findings..... 63

List of Figures

Figure 1: Hypothesised influence of the model of democracy on civic engagement. Reprinted from "Making Civil Society Work: Models of Democracy and Their Impact on Civic Engagement", by I. Stadelmann-Steffen, and M. Freitag, 2011, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 40, 3, pp.534* .Copyright 2011 by the Authors. Reprinted with permission. 17
Figure 2: Defining strategic alliances across a continuum of integration. Reprinted from "Utilizing Collaboration Theory to Evaluate Strategic Alliances", by R. Gajda, 2004, Nonprofit American Journal of Evaluation, 25, 1, pp.69 23
Figure 3: The World Bank Country Policy Institutional Assessment 2013 score for Malawi. Reprinted from The World Bank Data Topics, n. d., Retrieved January 10, 2015, from http://datatopics.worldbank.org/cpia/country/malawi. Copyright 2015 by The World Bank Group. Reprinted with permission..... 27

1. INTRODUCTION

Several commentators have argued that changes in the dynamics between post-colonial states and colonial masters have been influenced by the reconfiguration of the global world order and the acceleration of digitally aided globalisation. These changes have purportedly served to perpetuate the subordination of post-colonial states by their colonial masters. It is also argued that this has affected the post-colonial states prospects for development, through domestic policy. This among other concerns, has added to the calls for a new form of global governance to manage the affairs of what has come to be viewed as our 'shrinking world' (Falk, 2006; Held & McGrew, 2003).

This study will examine the engagement that occurs on development policy, between Public Officials and Practitioners within Malawian based donor agencies. This national level engagement takes place within a milieu of ideological, theoretical and practice based debates (both explicitly and implicitly), on a diverse range of internal and external issues, which have a bearing on the formulation of Development Policy for Malawi. The study will examine relevant historical and political issues that influence the Malawian development policy space, to understand their implications for engagement. In this study the term engagement refers to the processes of communication, interaction, and negotiation geared towards social transformation (Finlayson, 2005).

1.1.Background to the Study

The 'Washington Consensus' policy prescriptions (1980's and 1990's), which advocated for 'poverty reduction through good governance', was characterised by significant donor influence in the development policies of developing countries. This 'Washington consensus' perpetuated the notion of a North-South relationship, in which the North is viewed as enabling the South to fulfil its objectives of poverty reduction, amongst other objectives, by this means justifying northern prescription of policy (Johnson & Wilson, 2006; Hatton & Schroeder, 2011). The Consensus's policy implementation was made up of a combination of 'knowledge' transfer and development financing, which was interwoven with conditionality' (Ruckert, 2006).

For sub-Saharan Africa more specifically, parallels can be drawn between the North – South relationship that drove the Washington Consensus, and the Eurafrican partnerships between Europe and Africa. Eurafrica is a term that has been used to encapsulate the relationship between European colonial powers and their African colonies. It has been in use from the early 1900's, and appears to have gained currency in the literature on the early post-colonial era (1960's), with less reference in the last decade. This relationship was largely based on the concepts of complementarity and interdependence, while granting the colonies fluctuating amounts of preferential treatment (Martin, 1982; NORRAG, 1998).

From 1964, the fundamentals of the Eurafrican relationship experienced a series of modifications, through the evolution of various international conventions between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states, namely; Yaoundé I and II, followed by Lomé I, II, III and IV, and more recently the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) (Mackie, 2008; Martin, 1982). The context of the Eurafrican relations, within the broader North – South context, is used to advance the argument that there is a power differential in the North – South relationship.

It is this asymmetry that undermines the prospects for establishing a relationship or rather partnership which genuinely espouses the principles of mutuality and equality (Hatton & Schroeder, 2011; Hurt, 2012). Nevertheless, a new global politics of development appears during the late 1990's, bringing with it a new rhetoric, advocating for national ownership of development policy and partnerships for development (Hickey, 2012; Ruckert, 2006). It would appear however, that this shift has occurred without significantly acting to address the power differential, which seems to be inherent in North – South Relations, or to deal with the implications for national level engagement on development policy (ODI, DIE&ECDPM, 2013).

Malawi is a significant recipient of foreign aid, to the extent that foreign aid accounts for approximately 40 percent of the national budget (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009; Wroe, 2012). At the aggregate level, foreign aid to Malawi has been in support of democratic development and socioeconomic development (Resnick, 2012).The limited studies that exist, exploring the relationship between foreign aid for democracy and socioeconomic development, uncover a multilayered conflict between the funding to the two objectives. This conflict bears a consequence on the

amount of power that donors are able to wield in the pursuit of, otherwise nobly stated, development objectives at the country level (Resnick, 2012a). In so doing, the country level relationship between aid, democratisation and power, has the potential to perpetuate the power differential identified at the global levels, in the paragraphs above.

As an ex-British Colony, and signatory to all the EU-ACP conventions, from Lomé I onwards, Malawi is situated within the Eurafrican and North-South context described above. This research seeks to understand how this global and regional context of power asymmetry manifests within the microcosm of Malawian country level engagement, between the public officials and locally based donor agency practitioners, specifically with regards to development policy.

1.2.The Problem Statement

Global and national development problems, solutions and opportunities, have become interconnected in the world today. This has motivated the need to collaborate and cooperate in the pursuit of means and ways of addressing the complex development challenges. The most prolific approach to collaboration/cooperation has been through various forms of partnerships for development. One of the supporting arguments is that partnerships increase the likelihood of success in development interventions (Edwards, 2004; Morse and McNamara, 2006).

In the global arena, initiatives like the South-South Cooperation, North–South Cooperation, and more recently the Triangular Cooperation, have established various partnership principles, to facilitate these multifaceted partnership processes (Johnson and Wilson, 2006; Rampa and Bilal, 2011; Tortora, 2011). However, these partnerships also consist of many complexities, amongst which are issues of inequality, power imbalances, and trust. Malawi is a country that remains largely dependent on development aid, and development cooperation, for it to increase its chances of conceiving as well as implementing successful development interventions. This context of dependence has the potential of fostering unequal partnerships. Partnerships which, as a result, are skewed in favour of cooperating partner interest; and these interests may not always be aligned with national interests.

For Malawi to yield optimal benefits from development partnerships there is a need to understand the subtleties that exist, in both the emergence and evolution of these relationships. The pace of transformation in the development cooperation space necessitates the production of up-to-date and relevant knowledge, on the nature of the interactions between development partners. This knowledge should be fed back into partner decision-making processes, towards the realisation of development effectiveness.

1.3.The Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to understand the emergence and effects, of engagement between public officials and locally based practitioners, on development policy in Malawi. An exploration of the nature of these engagements will assist in identifying the key issues that potentially distract from the conceptualisation and implementation of successful development policy in Malawi.

1.4.The Research Questions

1. In what ways does engagement emerge, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, on political and technical issues relating to development policy?
    1. What role do the evolving global partnership commitments play, in the engagement between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, on development policy in Malawi?
    2. What are the effects of engagement on development policy in Malawi, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners?

2. THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review has been conducted as a narrative review, and involved a wide search and critical reading of literature pertaining to the research questions (Bryman, 2012).

The main research question delves into the history of the sovereign state, as it relates to the world order, to understand the conceptual basis on which the Malawian state was formed. It also explores the effects that globalisation, has and may have, in situating a post-colonial state, like Malawi, in an ever evolving world order. The review engages with the progressive debates surrounding global consensus on the critical principles that should underlie aid effectiveness as they relate to both donor countries and foreign aid recipient countries, like Malawi.

After setting the historical context within which engagement emerges on development policy, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, the review examines some democracy theories. Looking at some of the strengths, limitations and the implications for at least two schools of thought on democracy theory. Demonstrating, through the literature, how at least one of these schools of thought, is able to enhance the ways in which engagement emerges in development policy, within a democratic setting.

Specific reference is made to the debates surrounding German Philosopher Jürgen Habermas's theory of Deliberative Democracy. Included is a series of reinforcing arguments, demonstrating how it is that deliberative democracy supports and promotes the legitimacy of overall democratic decision-making, which is inclusive of decisions on development policy. Furthermore, demonstration is made of how deliberative democracy facilitates the design of institutions that are responsive to the fundamental tenets of a democracy. In this study

> *"…an institution is, in part, a set of regularised patterns of human behaviour that persist over time and perform some significant social function or activity… These regularised patterns of behaviour, which we often call rules or structures, can affect decision-making and the content of public policy. Rules, structural arrangements, and other institutional features are usually not neutral in their effects; rather, they tend to favour some interests in society over others and some policy results over others."*(Anderson, 2011, p. 25)

Due to the study's overarching preoccupation with engagement on development policy, between national and international development actors, and since development policy plays a significant role in the aid effectiveness agenda, the literature review for the main and two sub-questions concentrates on the globally recognised aid effectiveness principles of Ownership, Partnership and Alignment, each in varying degrees of detail. These principles represent three out of the five principles contained in the 2008 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD 2005 & 2008). In addition to the above mentioned, the review also explores some of the conflicts that exist between the conceptualisation and implementation of these select aid effectiveness principles at the in-country, operational, level.

2.1.Literature pertaining to the Main Research Question

The main question seeks to understand the ways in which engagement emerges between public officials and locally based practitioners within donor agencies, on political and technical issues relating to development policy.

2.1.1. Globalisation, the Nation-State and Aid

The origins of the modern day state can be traced back to the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, and its associated notion of sovereignty. This ushered in the notions of the sovereign state (beginning with the sovereign European states before sovereignty was extended to non-European countries in later years), the nation-state, and absolute power over the territory of the sovereign state; just to mention a few of its fundamental features. (Anghie, 2006; Falk, 2006; Lupel, 2005; Walby, 2003).This facilitated the formation of a

> *"… 'society of states'* (that) *laid down the formal rules which all sovereign and autonomous states would, in principle, have to adopt if they were to become full and equal members of the international order of states."*(Held, *et. al.*, 2003, p. 9).

The usefulness of the Westphalian ideals have attracted a great deal of interest and debate in recent years, as they relate to the realities of post-colonial states like Malawi; this amidst the contemporary concerns of globalisation and agitation for a new world order. In particular, Anghie (2006) has argued that the post-colonial applicability of this Westphalian-inspired-sovereignty, simply serves to further an

imperialist mission of dominance and control. He also argues that colonial relations, in the form of neo-colonialism, continue irrespective of the formal end of colonisation. In addition to this to this, Anghie (2006) suggests that international law has facilitated the subordination of the post-colonial third world countries, rendering their sovereignty meaningless. This, he argues, has been accomplished by the use of international law, to ensure that the political sovereignty of the non-European states, and as such post-colonial states, lacks corresponding economic independence.

It must be recognised that the degree of economic independence and prosperity, varies across the post-colonial states, with most African states featuring at the stagnate end of the spectrum. This is evidenced by the longitudinal performance of the majority of African states in various composite indices including the Human Development Index. Stephan Haggard (1986) utilises Peter Evans's triple alliance model, which falls within the rubric of dependency theory, to argue that *"the balance of power within the "triple alliance" of state, local, and foreign firms"* (Haggard, 1986, p. 346) can assist in understanding the differences in the economic prosperity of post-colonial states. Lawson (2003) argues that the differences in outcomes, as a result of balancing the alliances within the triple alliance, are steeped in the histories of the social structures within the state, as well as the formation of these states.

Lawson (2003) posits that the arbitrary distribution of African territories formalised during the 1884 Berlin Conference, together with its successive *"…administration on the cheap* (devoid of)*… intensive policies of social and economic transformation"* (Lawson, 2003, p. 41), have contributed to the perpetuity of the weak African States. She (Lawson, 2003) argues that post Berlin Conference territories featured weak administration, which was compensated by a heavy juridical culture and reinforced by co-opted traditional authorities. Since the European colonial masters tended to deploy minimalist administrative infrastructure, the pre-colonial territories developed a dual authoritarian social and political structure. This pre-colonial structure featured traditional authorities who had been subdued to the European Colonialist dictates on one hand, while on the other hand the same traditional authorities were also clamouring to protect their own local authority. Leticia (Lawson, 2003) concludes that it is these circumstances amongst others, that have contributed to the emergence, and subsequent persistence of weak African states, which have emerged as

"…severely lacking in infrastructural power, and socially rootless" (Lawson, 2003, p. 42).

The OAU Charter's Article III (1963), affirms the principle of the sovereign equality of the OAU member states, in accordance with the political boundaries which were inherited from the Berlin Conference delineations. Amadife and Warhola (1993) argue that it is this unchallenged continuation of these geographically based delineations, as opposed to ethno-nationally based delineations, which have only served to buttress the inherently weak colonial state structures, contrary to the OAU's original intent. As such one can draw a logical conclusion from this line of argument: that the OAU did not provide an adequate challenge to the structural deficiencies inherent in the post-colonial states, rendering its sovereignty principle toothless.

An additional layer of complexity is introduced with the superimposition of globalisation on contexts that are already grappling with the notion of sovereignty, particularly in the less 'powerful' states (Held, *et. al.*, 2003) . While commentators on the subject of globalisation, like David Held (as cited in Falk, 2006), do not view the effects of globalisation as overtaking the role of the state, rather modifying the role of the state, by *"…changing the ways peoples and institutions behave at various levels of social interaction"* (David Held as cited in Falk, 2006, p. 732). Nevertheless, it is suffice to say that the transnational effects of globalisation on social organisation has had a constraining effect on the national politics of post-colonial states, due to their relative positioning in the broader world order (Held, *et. al.*, 2003). As such, Held (as cited in Lupel, 2005) does recognise the threat that globalisation poses to traditional forms of democratic processes in these de-colonialised states.

Much of the existing research suggests that the applicability of the notion of a nation-state has many limitations for the latter day post-colonial states (Barro, 2012; Deasi, 2008; Lupel, 2005; Mitzen, 2005). While Held, *et. al.* (2003) argue that the force that links nations to states is nationalism; on the other hand it has been argued that the history of nationalism in post-colonial states is laden with ideological dissonance (Desai, 2008). Desai's (2008) conclusions, drawn from a study of the historical progression of nationalism in post-colonial states, suggest that the evolving notions of nationalism have failed to yield and consolidate egalitarian gains for their

societies. Like Held, Desai (2008) also views the argument, that the 'age of globalisation' has precipitated the decline in nations, as facile. However, the social reconfiguration effects of globalisation, do suggest an increase in the breadth and range of polities with which the nation-state is required to engage, which attracts a distinct set of challenges for post-colonial states (Walby, 2003).

The definition of polity, which is used in this paper, is an entity with varied *"…forms of authority, power and means to enforce sanctions"* (Walby, 2003, p. 534). As such, it can be argued that the state in Malawi and the development community represent two distinct polities within the Malawi territory. This is not dismissive of the reality that the development community, more broadly and in Malawi, does not represent one homogenous block. Rather, that it is constituted of several different polities for example; regional polities or hegemonies i.e. the EU, multilaterals and other forms global governance, as well as providers and conduits of development aid for development activities.

While it has been recognised above that the polities vary in terms of authority, power and the capability to enforce sanction, then it stands to reason that some polities will be stronger or weaker than others, with consequences for global, regional and national policy formulation. This reasoning is supportive of Held *et. al.*'s (2003) argument that,

> *"The state has become a fragmented policy-making arena, permeated by transnational networks (governmental and non-governmental) as well as by domestic agencies and forces. Likewise, the extensive penetration of civil society by transnational forces has altered its form and dynamics."* (Held, *et. al.*, 2003, p. 11)

The rapid increase in interconnectedness which is characteristic of the globalisation age, suggests a decline in strategic policy choices that are available to governments. It also raises concerns about the potential ineffectiveness of domestic policy processes and instruments, when viewed in light of the competing interest of the various polities in the global, regional and national social orders (Held, *et. al.*, 2003). These potentially divisive effects of globalisation on the state provide a logical segue into the centrality of the regulation of conflict in the achievement of public order.

The public sphere, which is likened to the concept of civil society, is defined as identified socio-cultural institutions originating in the eighteenth century, *"…these institutions constituted a 'realm of reasoning private persons'…"* (Baynes, 2003, p. 482). These institutions were made possible through the enactment of a variety of constitutional rights and liberties. The distinguishing features of this public sphere are that it is distinctive from the market, the family and the state, and is formed around collective reasoning on common interests (Barro, 2010; Baynes, 2003; Finlayson, 2005; Lupel, 2005; Mitzen, 2005). The increased global interconnectedness also gives rise to a global public sphere, which is broader, more complex, and increasingly transnational in nature. This suggests greater overlap in territories, polities, and national, regional and global public spheres, with a bearing on the domestic public policy processes.

The historical landscape presented above provides a backdrop within which to situate the debates surrounding the aid effectiveness agenda. David Booth offers a succinct summary of the historical justification and evolutional challenges facing the provision of foreign aid, and the aid effectiveness agenda, as follows:

> *The aid effectiveness agenda has been linked historically with the view that the poorest countries, and those in Africa in particular, are primarily short of funds. The Paris commitments were accompanied in the mid-2000s by a political bidding-up of donor aid budgets in relation to donor ability to pay as measured by Gross National Income, with little attention to absorptive capacity or institutional impacts, and a growing tendency to downgrade agencies' own human resources and skills for in-country work.* (David Booth, 2011, p. 13)

Numerous theorists have argued that the conditions which may have necessitated foreign aid have either changed, for instance in some cases domestic revenue in poorer countries are not as dire as they were, when foreign aid was originally justified (Booth, 2011). Or alternatively, that the incentives underlying aid flows are more complex than would be implied by the simplistic logic proffered in global aid debates, which tout aid-flows as 'the transfer of funds from richer to poorer countries' to assist in poverty reduction. To illustrate this point, Alesina and Dollar (2000) found significant evidence to support the hypothesis that patterns of aid flows have been "…*dictated in large part by political and strategic considerations"* (Alesina, & Dollar,

2000, p.1). From an analysis of OECD data between the years 1970 to 1994, Alesina and Dollar also concluded that for the United States of America, Japan and France "*aid allocations may be very effective at promoting strategic interests, but the result is that bilateral aid has only a weak association with poverty, democracy, and good policy"* (Alesina, & Dollar, 2000, p.55).

Another conclusion drawn from Alesina and Dollar's (2000) study, which is of interest to the issue of global governance and was derived with demonstrable care for statistical bias, is the correlation between the proxy variable for 'donor strategic interests' titled UN-Friends, and aid patterns. The UN-Friends variable was generated using data gathered from UN voting patterns records. Alesina and Dollar provided the following interpretation following their data analysis,

> *"…donors favour their "friends" in disbursing aid, and an observable manifestation of "friendship" is the pattern of UN votes. This view would then imply that an exogenous change in UN votes would indicate a change in the pattern of geopolitical alliances that would bring about a change in aid pattern."*(Alesina, & Dollar, 2000, p. 46)

This discussion provides a strong foundation, to put forward the following argument: if aid is so controversial and potentially harmful to the realisation of development in poorer countries, then it must follow logically that it has outlived its usefulness. However, a counterargument to this logic has been provided by David Booth (2011), who sees a window of opportunity for an evolution in the aid effectiveness agenda, in a way that could potentially reclaim its diminishing usefulness, under the present conditions.

He recommends that development theorists and practitioners need to return to the original insights that inspired the earlier-stages of the aid effectiveness agenda, specifically the recognition of the central role that endogenous country ownership plays in the achievement of development success (Booth, 2011). Booth argues that this recognition…

> *"…commits us to seeking out and recognising the most likely drivers of development effort in poor countries.…the kind of insights into alternative avenues of political self-interest and the logics of decision-making they entail are essential if external and domestic actors are to target their governance*

campaigns well. In particular, they are critical to avoiding doing harm by promoting 'best practice' initiatives that have ideological appeal but do not correspond to the real challenges a country is facing."(Booth, 2011, p. 10)

When one follows the issues and arguments that arise from the history and evolution of aid and the nation-state it becomes apparent that there is a need to change certain aspects of the aid effectiveness agenda. The implication is that, revisions may not offer easier approaches and, or solutions.

2.1.2. Ownership, Partnerships and Deliberative Democracy

The historical and conceptual arguments on state sovereignty and aid effectiveness, outlined in the paragraphs above, segues into a discussion on the ideals and challenges, for the endogenous ownership of development policies, by the aforementioned sovereign/'donor recipient' states.

The principle of commitment to Ownership, as defined in the Paris Declaration, has been advanced as a mechanism for ensuring that there is *"…a constructive relationship between aid and political commitment to development goals at* (aid-recipient) *country level"* (Booth, 2011, p. 1). The 2008 Paris Declaration issued strong statements, based on evidence available at the time, emphasising Country Ownership as one of the three topmost challenges to be overcome if donor recipient countries were to achieve aid effectiveness.

Some of the literature suggests that the Paris Declaration's notion of ownership tends to come into conflict with institutional realities of the democratisation process within emerging democracies, and that this has consequences for the delivery of public goods (Booth, 2011a; Faust, 2010). Booth (2011a) captures the conflict succinctly when he argues that, *"Democratisation is an inevitably extended process and the contribution it eventually makes, in the best of cases, to the adequacy of provision of key public goods is iterative and experimental."* (Booth, 2011a, p. s19)

It must also be considered therefore, that since democratisation promotes pluralism, this will probably lead to growth in the plurality of interests within a society. However, not all of these interests will have the patience or interest, in trading-off the immediate gratification of service delivery demands, in favour of enabling the evolution and maturity of the iterative and experimental policy-making processes,

which is characteristic of an emerging democracy. As such, Faust (2010) argues that instead of the more simplistic understanding of democratisation, as a process that enables the eliminations of conflict in the policymaking process, an alternative is a more nuanced understanding of the policymaking process, with democratisation as the backdrop.

The Ownership principle agreed during the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, commits Partner Countries to *"Exercise leadership in developing and implementing their national development strategies through broad consultative processes"* (OECD, 2005 & 2008, p. 3). In so doing, what is understood as an all "*encompassing ownership of policy content"* (Faust, 2010, p. 525), is then presented as a precursor to aid effectiveness, as opposed to an outcome of development effectiveness. However, social scientist Jörg Faust (2010) argues that this is an overly ambitious expectation. His argument is premised on the observation that, at best *"Ownership in established democracies is mostly limited to procedural ownership – a consensus about core institutional features of democracy and individual rights."* (Faust, 2010, p. 530).

In other words, Faust (2010) is arguing that ownership is not based on a conditional, all-encompassing agreement on the minutiae of the policy content in established democracies; rather, it is based on procedural ownership. In this paper procedural ownership is understood as, *"…the common acceptance of basic principles and institutional features of democracy that guide policy processes."* (Faust, 2010, p 526).

Faust (2010) argues for a more progressive approach which views ownership as an outcome of development assistance. Such that ownership is not limited to mere consensus on the content of policy, which tends to be volatile within a democratic regime where political competition necessitates regular iterations to policy content. Alternatively, he advocates for a shift in the aid effectiveness agenda towards a broader preoccupation with the issue of political and administrative transparency.

He (Faust, 2010) argues that this shift would demonstrate a move towards a more congruent recognition of the conflict that exists between the Paris Declaration definition of country ownership, and democratisation. This is because, while*"…the advantage of democratic settings consists in inclusive competition, which generates*

complex, iterative and experimental policy processes…" (Faust, 2010, p. 51). In addition to this, is the observation that "…*policy ownership, in emerging democracies* (is where) *the political search for the encompassing interest will be even more experimental and volatile because of the distributional conflicts and co-ordination problems inherent in democratisation.* (Faust, 2010, p. 527).

This does not create an environment conducive for the Paris Declarations Alignment principle, which requires donors to "*Base their overall support – country strategies, policy dialogues and development co-operation programmes – on partners' national development strategies and periodic reviews of progress in implementing these strategies"* (OECD, 2005& 2008, p. 3). Consequently this turns the reconciliation of: the narrow interpretation of ownership; the democratisation process; and, the advancement of aid effectiveness, into a significantly challenging endeavour. This then undermines efforts to achieve aid effectiveness through the development policymaking processes, within emerging democracies.

It has been established that the principles underlying the achievement of aid effectiveness within these aid-recipient sovereign states have been the subject of debate over several decades, with shifting focus on particular issues, definitions and resolutions. This paper tracks two of the five principles in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness namely, ownership and partnerships. David Booth (2011) posits that the 2008 Declaration was based on lessons learnt over several decades, which at the time had culminated in the realisation that "…*development depends primarily on efforts at the country level, and that aid needs to focus on facilitating these efforts, not on trying to replace them* (Booth, 2011, p. 3).

In tracking the history of the two principles further, Mizanur Rahman (2011) posits that the origins of the conceptualisation of the ownership principle can be traced to the early 1990's; following lessons learnt from the "…*marginal impact of Bank-Fund development strategies"* (Rahman, 2011, p. 45). According to Rahman (2011), some of the influential voices that contributed to this conceptualisation include a former World Bank President, James Wolfensohn. *"Wolfensohn defined ownership as saying that the country must set the agenda through a fruitful public debate where stakeholders participated and the entire process of agenda setting was transparent"* (Rahman, 2011, p. 45).

Up to this point it has been established the conflict that exists in the two-track accomplishment of aid effectiveness on one hand, and democratisation on the other, with social benefits as the nexus (Booth, 2011, Faust, 2010). Therefore it can be argued that if democracy is to be the bedrock upon which countries can optimise their chances of achieving development objectives, while concurrently receiving aid and pursuing democratisation, it is imperative to look into the democracy theories, upon which these conflicting objectives can potentially contribute towards optimal developmental outcomes.

Deliberative Democracy

In an interview between Dr. Jean-Paul Gagnon and Dr. Benjamin Isakhan on Isakhan and Stephen Stockwell's book titled '*The Secret History of Democracy*', Isakhan speaks of two overarching schools of thought, regarding how democracy should be defined, along a continuum (Isakhan& Gagnon, 2010; Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). On the one hand Isakhan identifies a group of views that offer a "…*minimalist, almost scientific definition of democracy"* (Isakhan& Gagnon, 2010); to which he subscribes the work of theorists like Thomas Hobbes, Joseph Schumpeter and John Rawls; whom he posits advanced the tenets of democracy, while overlooking concerns with the power of the elite members of a society. On the other hand, Isakhan identifies another school of thought, which he categorises as Habermasian and whom, he argues, places the active involvement of the people in decision-making, at the centre of their definition of democracy (Isakhan& Gagnon, 2010). This school of thought includes theorists like Jürgen Habermas (who inspires the category title), and Ernesto Laclau. The common denominator in these schools of thought however, is three fundamental tenets of democracy namely: the people's willingness to participate; equality in people's access to information, freedoms and rights; and, some form of civil virtue which enables citizens to be part of the democracy (Isakhan & Gagnon, 2010).

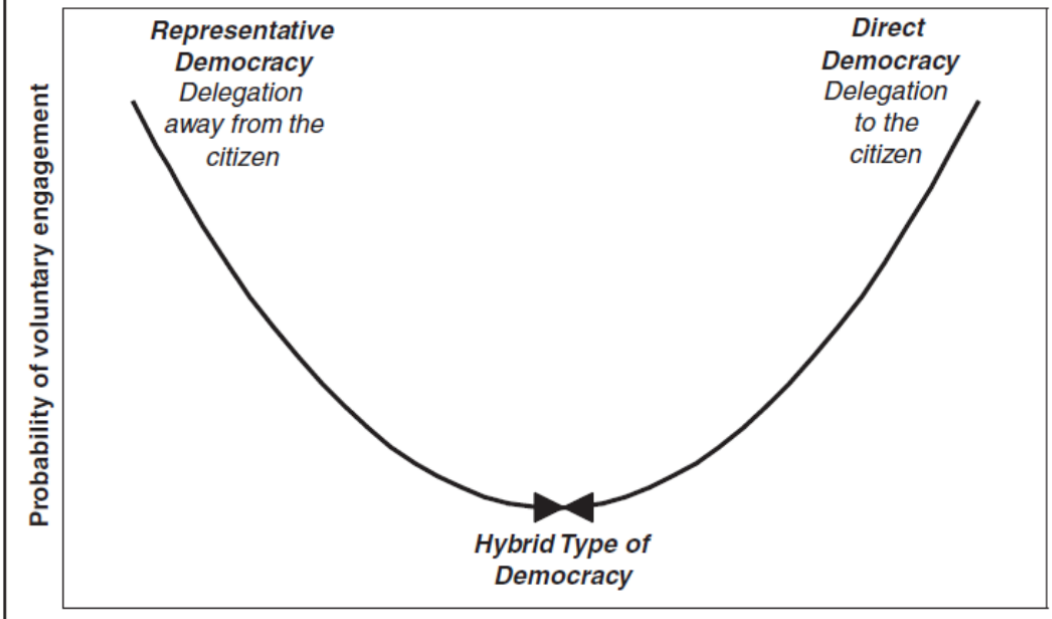
Another distinction that has been made, in relation to the different theoretical schools of thought on democracy, has been on the basis of the logic that underlies the delegation of power in democracy theories (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). This perspective is issued in the Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag's (2011) study, which is an enquiry into the impact of power delegation logic on the propensity to

engage as a volunteer in civic organisations, analysed at the individual level. In the study power delegation is related to democracy models as follows,

> "…*different models of democracy are characterized by different dominant logics of power delegation, either based on a delegation of powers away from the citizen (the liberal or representative-delegative logic) or to the citizen (the participatory-inclusive logic).* (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011, p. 528).

The Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag (2011) study, a quantitative study, is used here simply to illustrate some of the problems that have been identified in the conceptualisation of deliberative democracy theory. It is founded on a modelling approach to the two schools of thought on deliberative democracy, whereby, Isakhan's (Isakhan & Gagnon, 2010) Minimalist/Scientific approach corresponds with the Representative democracy model and the Habermasian approach corresponds with the Direct democracy model.

The study presented preliminary results in support of several propositions. That the adoption of more purist democratic models improves the propensity for individual voluntary civic engagement, for both the representative and direct models of democracy. While the study also suggests that, a mixture of the two models reduces the propensity for individual voluntary civic engagement, as illustrated in Figure 1 (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). However, the authors also stressed that from their investigations *"…a direct democracy in its pure form does not actually exist in reality"* (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011, pp 530), and that "…*most countries are dominated by the pure representative logic of democracy, with some allowing for limited elements of direct democratic participation (Scarrow, 2001)"* (as cited in Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011, p. 531). These two additional findings suggested a bias towards representative models of democracy in the real world. However, the study does not illuminate the reasons for this bias, especially given that both models produce uniform outcomes, when adopted in their purist forms.



Representative-delegative logic of democracy		Participatory-inclusive logic of democracy	
Clearly dominant	*Direct citizen participation strengthened*	*Representative elements strengthened*	*Clearly dominant*
CEP: overcoming individual powerlessness *CES*: self-development and self-expression ***= high probability of civic engagement***	*CEP*: no need to overcome individual powerlessness due to direct participation *CES*: direct political participation as alternative for self-expression ***= lower probability of civic engagement***	*CEP*: representative experts instead of direct citizen engagement *CES*: representative experts as alternative to citizen's responsibility ***= lower probability of civic engagement***	*CEP*: joining powers for direct participation *CES*: deliberation and communication lead to norms of reciprocity and further civic engagement ***= high probability of civic engagement***

Figure 1. Hypothesized influence of the model of democracy on civic engagement
Note: Schematic illustration. CEP = Motives and Traits of Civic Engagement in the Political Sphere; CES = Motives and Traits of Civic Engagement in the Societal Sphere

Figure 1:Hypothesised influence of the model of democracy on civic engagement. Reprinted from "Making Civil Society Work: Models of Democracy and Their Impact on Civic Engagement", by I. Stadelmann-Steffen, and M. Freitag, 2011, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 40, 3, p.534* .Copyright 2011 by the Authors. Reprinted with permission.

Although the study does not make an explicit case in support of, or against, either of the two models, that is, in so far as they relate to civic engagement. The study does however suggest that hybrid democracies models may have a reverse relationship

with individual level voluntary civic engagement, such that the more hybrid the model the less individual level civic engagement and vice versa, "…*because the two modes of democracy follow very different mechanisms"* (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011, p. 543).

In effect the study serves to uphold the legitimacy of the democracy models in their pure form, which the study also indicates is not altogether practical in the real world. The study is not able to deal with the more substantive concerns in relation to the variability of the real world context of democracy. The model approach requires the study to hold all other factors constant, when analysing the relationship between these two democracy models and the propensity for voluntary civic engagement. As such, the Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag (2011) study has been used in this paper, to illuminate the limitations that modelling places on the conceptualisation of democracy theory.

In a paper presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Mark Warren (Warren, 2012) recognises that the modelling approach to understanding democracy theory has had its advantages in that, at its best, it enables clear normative and corollary claims which, permitted theoretical comparison and, can be related to identifiable political institutions and a range of contexts. However, Mark Warren (2012) also recognises that models approach to democracy theory has had the effect of retarding development in democratic theory more broadly, and deliberative democracy more specifically. He does not propagate a departure from the democratic models thinking, without offering a similarly track-able alternative in the form of a systems approach to democratic theory. Warren (2012) argues instead "*…in favour of a problem-focused, functionalist approach.* [Whereby] *we need to ask what political systems need to accomplish in order to count as "democracies."* (Warren, 2012, p. 17)

The exploration of the modelling and functionalist approaches to democratic theory, provide some insight into the intellectual debates surrounding the evolution of this theory. However, neither the modelling nor the functionalist approaches to democratic theory make a strong argument in support of, or against, the spectrum of schools of thought on democracy theory. In the context of this study, which endeavours to understand the ways in which engagement emerges between public officials and locally based development practitioners in donor agencies within the

context of Malawi, the following argument is advanced in favour of a deliberative approach to democracy because

> *"Most fundamentally, deliberative democracy affirms the need to justify decisions made by citizens and their representatives …In a democracy, leaders should therefore give reasons for their decisions, and respond to the reasons that citizens give in return ...Its first and most important characteristic, then, is its reason-giving requirement."* (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 3)

If, like Simone Chambers (2003), a proponent of deliberative democracy, one subscribes to the argument that the legitimacy of a political order can be measured by its ability to justify itself to all those governed by its laws (notwithstanding the multiplicity of interests emanating from all those governed); one can also argue that this justification includes being accountable for public policy. It is this process of justification, which Chambers sees as an extension of representative democracy as opposed to being separate from, that promotes deliberative democracy as an approach with the potentiality of resulting in "…*a more complex and richer interpretation"* (Chambers, 2003, p. 308) of the citizenry's consent, and beyond this the legitimacy of the outcomes of deliberation.

The 2010 Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) Malawi Country Report highlights the democratic challenges facing the country, which illuminates the value of deliberative democracy in the Malawi context. The report stated that "…*the persistent failure of the government to organize local council elections has contributed to a "democratic deficit."* (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009, p. 11). For the purposes of this study 'democratic deficiency' is understood as"…*a situation where democratic organizations, institutions, and governments are seen as falling short of fulfilling the principles of democracy in their practices or operation"* (Nabatchi, 2010, p. 378).

Some of the ideological features of the state, with a bearing on engagement on public policy, have been explored in part. There are some more structural features of the state that also warrant exploration so as to present a solid foundation for the exploration of the research topic. The inner workings of some of the institutions that facilitate engagement on development policy are explored to gain a better understanding of the structural features. One of the study's target populations is

public officials situated in public institutions. They are bound, in principal, by certain institutional rules which are supposed to guide their engagement with external development actors (this includes locally based donor agency practitioners) on development policy, among other objectives.

Blessings Chinsinga (2010) highlights how between 1964 and 1994 under one party rule, patronage politics (which were present but controlled) in Malawi did not take precedence over the policy process. Incongruously from 1994 under multiparty rule, Malawi experienced a collapse in the capacity for policy formulation and implementation. Patronage politics began to take precedence over policy, to the detriment of the professional civil service. Chinsinga (2010) also highlights how under multiparty rule the civil service nurtured during the one party rule, were set aside and rendered defunct placing a higher priority on patronage politics, at the expense of policy formulation and implementation. Whereas under the one party rule, they had been strategically engaged and dismissed, for the benefit of the ruling elite. The formerly professionalised bureaucracy began to transform into an institution that placed a premium on party loyalty over professionalism, paving the way for widespread corruption (Chinsinga, 2010). This historical account demonstrates a converse relationship between bureaucratic professionalism and a strong public policy process.

Chinsinga (2010) also explores the role of donors operating within this deteriorating policy processes, following the advent of multiparty politics in 1994. He argues that donors exploited the situation by their own adoption of this dysfunctional and short-sighted approach to public policy, in their local level engagement on development policy (Chinsinga, 2010). Chinsinga argues that, "*…consequently, competing views, interests and demands among donors have substantially compromised policy coherence, and subjected policy-making and implementation to often polarised ideological leanings and orientations"* (Chinsinga, 2010, p. 88). The significance of these structural features of Malawi's public policy space, as stated by James Anderson is because *"…decisions that are made without adequate consideration of their technical aspects or that conflict with strong professional advice may turn out to be faulty on both technical and political grounds"* (Anderson, 2011, p. 234).

Some of the key ideological and structural features, as well as limitations to engagement on development policy have been highlighted, and situated in the

Malawi context. The next logical step is to further explore the potential of deliberative democracy as a viable ideological underpinning for engagement on development policy. Following the debates that have been presented above regarding the conceptual and contextual aspects of deliberative democracy, this section proceeds with an exploration of the viability of institutional designs associated with deliberative democracy; and their consequent implications for development policy. Nabatchi (2010) argues that

> *"…on the whole, deliberative processes engage and transform individual preferences and values such that policy decisions represent more than the aggregation of individual interests. In doing so, deliberative democracy provides institutional designs that might allow public administration to better rediscover and reflect the publicness in public affairs".* (Nabatchi, 2010, p. 386)

Earlier in the paper the discussion revolved around the evolution in democracy theory advancing the debates surrounding deliberative democracy from the modelling to the systems approach to democratic theory, in a bid to arrive at a democratic theory which is more reflective of the real world complexities. Mansbridge, Bohman, Chambers, Christiano, Fung, Parkinson, Thompson, and Warren, (2012), proponents of the systematic approach to deliberative democracy, highlight some of the pathologies of the deliberative system that may act as barriers to the realisation of political institutions which mirror the ideals of a deliberative democratic system. One of these pathologies stems from the need for the deliberative system to be anchored on a number of strong and decoupled institutions, so as to mitigate against institutional dominance by one or a few of the deliberative democratic institutions over the others; in so doing undermining the processes and ideals of the deliberative system (Mansbridge, *et. al.*, 2012).

However, to conclude the point on the viability of deliberative institutional designs, it is important to be reminded that as an extension of as opposed to an alternative to representative democracy and its associated institutions. "*Deliberative democratic theory is a normative theory that suggests ways in which we can enhance democracy and criticize institutions that do not live up to the normative* [democracy] *standard."* (Chambers, 2003, p. 308).

Nabatchi (2010) wraps up the discussion on the potentially reinforcing relationship between ownership of public policy, expressed and realised through political commitment, and the legitimacy of the deliberative democracy ideals.

> *"…deliberative democracy processes also have instrumental benefits that may help public administration to effectively address the citizenship and democratic deficits within the modern environment of networked and collaborative governance structures. Moreover, deliberative democracy offers institutional designs that may help the field rediscover the role of the public in shaping societal affairs and, in doing so, abate the inherent tensions between bureaucratic and democratic ethos* (Nabatchi, 2010, p.392).

2.2.Literature pertaining to Research Sub-Questions 1 and 2

The first sub-question is exploring the role that the evolving global partnership commitments play in the engagement between public officials and practitioners, on development policy in Malawi. While the final sub-question explores the effects of engagement on development policy between public officials and practitioners in Malawi.

Several, global and regional development cooperation agreements exist which have been established to facilitate the formation of partnerships for development. the following definitions for the terms cooperation and collaboration are used in this study: collaboration is a broader and more ambiguous term used in reference to the forming of strategic alliances, in this study collaboration is defined as *"a powerful strategy to achieve a vision otherwise not possible to obtain as independent entities working alone"* (Gajda, 2004, p. 76). The slightly more tangible term cooperation is defined as, the *"joint pursuit of agreed-on goal(s) in a manner corresponding to a shared understanding about contributions and payoffs"* (Gulati, Wohlgezogen, & Zhelyazkov, 2012, p. 533). As such partnerships are also viewed as an alliance strategy for cooperation and collaborative.

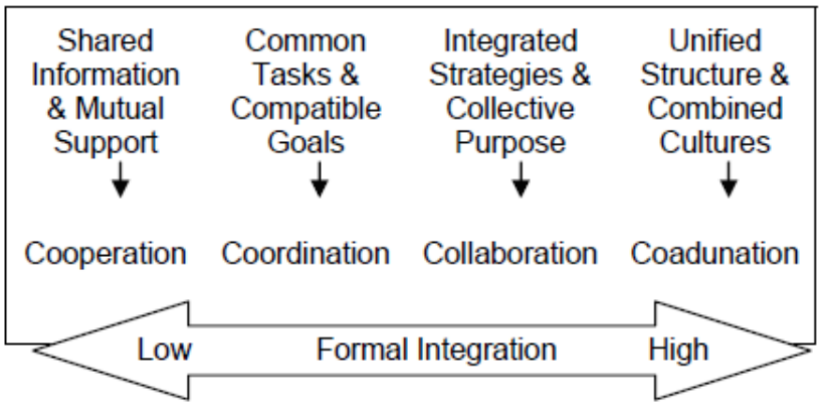


Figure 2: Defining strategic alliances across a continuum of integration. Reprinted from "Utilizing Collaboration Theory to Evaluate Strategic Alliances", by R. Gajda, 2004, Nonprofit American Journal of Evaluation, 25, 1, p.69

In the case of North-South Cooperation, its related initiatives began with the intention of building consensus towards the achievement of the **Aid Effectiveness** agenda, however contemporary discourse suggests that there is an emerging shift in agenda towards **Development Effectiveness** through economic growth (Hughes, & Hutchison, 2011; Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, 2012; McEwan, & Mawdsley, 2012). This has been attributed in part to the evolving context of development and foreign aid, the reshaping geopolitics and the world economy. More specifically, in the wake of the economic crisis which occurred between the 2005 Paris and 2008 Accra High Level Forums. This shift in the global, and as a result local, partnership agenda has its own set of implications, opportunities, challenges and risks for national level engagement on development policy, and ultimately the delivery of development outcomes for the poor and vulnerable populations in the less developed countries.

The 2005 Paris Declaration (PD) is most probably the more widely recognised High Level Forum (HLF) on Global Partnership (Hayden, 2008; Hughes, & Hutchison, 2011; Kaufmann, 2009). The PD, like the 2002 Rome Declaration before it, was aimed at reforming the aid effectiveness environment and outcomes. However, the distinguishing feature of the PD is that specific commitments were agreed, which were explicitly identified for both the donor and aid recipient countries (The High Level Fora, n.d.).Two more HLF's, have been held following the 2005 PD namely, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, and the more recent 2011 Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (The High Level Fora, n.d.).

Among the array of global partnerships commitments ranging from those with a global, continental and regional reach, the study concentrates on the 2008 Paris

Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which is framed around the management of foreign aid. This is because it endeavours to commit developing countries, who are recipients' of development aid, to "…*broaden country-level policy dialogue on development"* (OECD, 2008, p. 16). In so doing the Paris Declaration assumes that if developing countries broadened policy dialogue on development, this will lead to strengthened country ownership of the development agenda and related polices, as well as the realisation of development results, and a growing body of literature exists challenging this theory of change. One of the challenges to this theory is the assumption that democratic ownership is the key ingredient to development success, and the case is made based on numerous interrogations into the more recent case of China's undemocratic development successes (Faust, 2010; Mawdsley, *et. al.*2012).

Another hypothesis underlying the Paris Declaration, is the assumption that a commitment to, and emphasis on, the principles of Ownership; Alignment; Harmonisation; Managing for Results; and Mutual Accountability, will result in more effective partnerships. Faust (2010), challenges this logic with the argument that this set of principles are"…*not only ill-suited for contexts of state failure. They are also at least partly misleading with regard to political processes in democratic settings, thereby further limiting the applicability of the model outlined for donor-recipient relations* (Faust, 2010, p. 516).

The Paris Declaration does not interrogate the continued justification for aid, in the first instance, what Mawdsley, *et. al.* (2012) refer to as the 'post-aid world'. However, literature reveals that the objectives and outcomes of development and foreign aid for development, have received scathing reviews within the development literature.

> *"Development was – and continues to be for the most part – a top-down, ethnocentric, and technocratic approach, which treated people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of "progress". Development was conceived not as a cultural process (culture was a residual variable, to disappear with the advancement of modernization) but instead as a system of more or less universally applicable technical interventions intended to deliver some "badly needed goods to a "target" population. It comes as no surprise that development became a force*

so destructive to Third World cultures, ironically in the name of people's interests." (Escobar, p. 44, 1995)

In a study, assessing the degree of aid dependence, in aid recipient countries between the 1960's to the 2000's, as well as, their likelihood of exiting from a situation of aid dependence (Hailu, & Shiferaw, 2012), Malawi was assessed as being comparatively more aid dependent in the 2000's than it was in the 1960's. The country was also assessed as less likely to graduate from aid dependency, unless relevant policy actions, directed at graduating from aid, are taken. Out of the five Paris Declaration commitments to Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability, Malawi performed the lowest under the commitments to Alignment and Managing for Results (A Country Evaluation of the Paris Declaration for Malawi, 2012).

The Paris Declaration includes a subset commitment, within its overall commitments, to the *"Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations"* (OECD 2005 & 2008, p. 19). This subset of ten principles of engagement, which are specific to fragile states and situations, recognises that there are states and or situations within the wider developing country classification, which are definitively fragile and therefore require a modified approach to engagement on development. However, little guidance is provided on the definitive features of a fragile state, so that development practitioners are clear when to activate the principles for engagement when operating in a clearly distinguishable fragile state and or situation.

Bertoli & Ticci, (2012) give two broad categories of fragility definitions. One of the categories draws its roots from global concerns with national security, while the other draws its roots from foreign donor concerns with the international aid performance-based allocation (PBA) system. On one hand the definitions stemming from national security concerns, are based on the understanding that fragile states/situations are those states characterised by a context in which the state is unable to manage its own affairs, such that unrest begins to fester within the state's boundaries. Subsequently, these circumstances have the potential to cultivate an increased likelihood or risk that the unrest spills over into neighbouring countries, turning these states into bad neighbours (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012).

While the definitions stemming from PBA concerns view fragile states/situations as those where the state, is unable to produce certain outcomes such as, the effective use of development assistance, poverty reduction, and sustainable growth, as measured by the World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012). These outcomes are normatively identified as *"an ideal set of core policy objectives"* (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012, p. 213). In these contexts there is a misalignment between these core policy objectives, supported by the donor community, and the outcomes of the state. Further to this, through aid platforms like OECD-DAC, donors began to allocate aid based on performance against these policy objectives, which resulted in poorly performing fragile states progressively receiving less aid based on the understanding that aid is less effective in fragile states/situations (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012). It is the debates challenging this reduction in aid based on performance that inspired the emergence of a category of fragility definitions around the PBA system. In summary, Bertoli and Ticci (2012) classified the two categories of fragility definitions as procedural and outcome-based definitions, however they also emphasise that there is still considerable ambiguity surrounding 'a' definition and its utility in engagement on development aid.

MALAWI

World Bank – Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
CPIA 2013

Quick Facts

CPIA Score	Change from previous year	Highest performing cluster	Lowest performing cluster
3.1 (Below SSA IDA Avg.)	▼ 0.1	3.5 (Policies for Social Inclusion and Equity)	2.7 (Structural Policies)

Population (millions)	15.9
GDP (current US$ billions)	4.3
GDP per capita (current US$)	268.1
Poverty below US$1.25 a day (% of population, 2010, est.)	64.4
	(2011)

Country and Policy Institutional Assessment 2013

Indicator	Malawi	SSA IDA Average
Economic Management	**3.0**	**3.4**
Monetary and Exchange Rate Policy	3.0	3.5
Fiscal Policy	3.0	3.3
Debt Policy	3.0	3.3
Structural Policies	**2.7**	**3.2**
Trade	3.0	3.7
Financial Sector	2.5	2.9
Business Regulatory Environment	2.5	3.1
Policies for Social Inclusion and Equity	**3.5**	**3.2**
Gender Equality	3.5	3.2
Equity of Public Resource Use	3.5	3.3
Building Human Resources	3.5	3.5
Social Protection and Labor	3.5	2.9
Policies and Institutions for Environment Sustainability	3.5	3.1
Public Sector Management and Institutions	**3.1**	**2.9**
Property Rights and Rule-Based Governance	3.5	2.7
Quality of Budgetary and Financial Management	2.5	3.0
Efficiency of Revenue Mobilization	4.0	3.4
Quality of Public Administration	3.0	2.8
Transparency, Accountability and Corruption in Public Sector	2.5	2.7
Overall CPIA Score	**3.1**	**3.2**

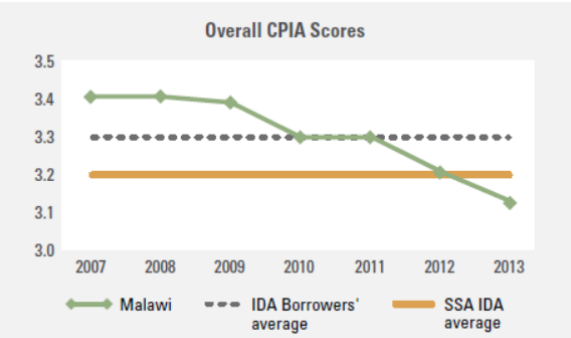
Definitions:

- CPIA: Country Policy and Institutional Assessment.
- IDA: International Development Association, the arm of the World Bank that provides credits to the poorest countries.
- SSA: Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Poverty is based on the PovcalNet poverty data as of May 2014. These data are being revised and will be available shortly.
- The cut-off date for data is June 2014 .

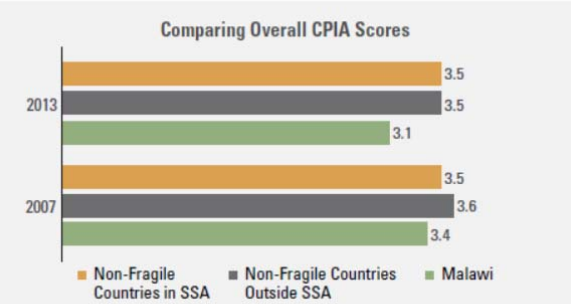
Average scores for comparisons refer to country groupings as follows:

- **IDA Borrowing Countries**: 81 countries eligible for IDA credits and with CPIA scores in 2013.
- **SSA IDA Countries**: 39 SSA IDA Countries which had CPIA scores in 2013.
- **Fragile Countries in SSA**: 16 countries with CPIA scores included in the World Bank's Harmonized Fragile List for Fiscal Year 2015.
- **Non-Fragile Countries in SSA**: 23 IDA-eligible countries (excluding fragile countries).
- **Fragile Countries Outside SSA**: 12 countries with CPIA scores included in the World Bank's Harmonized Fragile List for Fiscal Year 2015.
- **Non-Fragile Countries Outside SSA**: 30 IDA-eligible countries outside Sub Saharan Africa (excluding fragile countries).

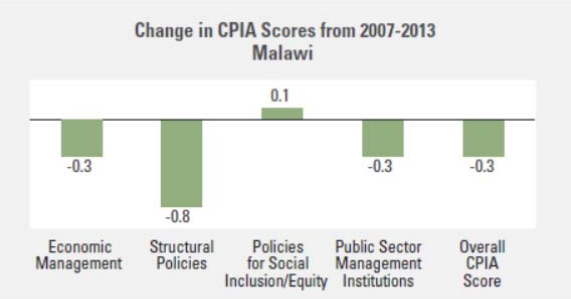
Trend



Comparison



Progress



NOTES: The CPIA consists of 16 criteria grouped in four equally weighted clusters: Economic Management, Structural Policies, Policies for Social Inclusion and Equity, and Public Sector Management and Institutions. For each of the 16 criteria, countries are rated on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high). The scores depend on the level of performance in a given year assessed against the criteria, rather than on changes in performance compared to the previous year. The ratings depend on actual policies and performance, rather than on promises or intentions. The ratings reflect a variety of indicators, observations, and judgments originated in the World Bank or elsewhere. For details see: www.worldbank.org/africa/CPIA

Figure 3: The World Bank Country Policy Institutional Assessment 2013 score for Malawi. Reprinted from The World Bank Data Topics, n. d., Retrieved January 10, 2015, from http://datatopics.worldbank.org/cpia/country/malawi. Copyright 2015by The World Bank Group. Reprinted with permission.

Faria and Magalhães Ferreira highlight that that the term fragility generates uneasiness in sub-Saharan Africa, within which Malawi is situated, and the region from which most of the countries classified as fragile originate. This adds further complexity to the utility of this term as part of a set of guiding principles like the Paris Declaration (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012).

> *"The uneasy feeling associated with being labelled as fragile is also clearly connected with the great amount of discretion that any underlying definition involves and with partner countries' fear of the stereotypes and stigmatisation which can jeopardise their international image, investment climate and economic and development perspectives"* (Faria and Magalhães Ferreira as cited in Bertoli and Ticci, 2012, p.218)

Another critical point worth noting is the analytical gaps which are created by the ambiguity that exists in the definition of fragility. For instance the 2010 OECD Global Report monitoring the use of the ten fragile states engagement principles draws on a sample of six countries that have all experienced some form or the other of protracted internal conflict. This sampling bias, by and large, reflects the procedural definition of fragility and not the outcome-based definition of fragility. A brief analysis of the Malawi case suggests that it falls in the category of outcome-based fragility, as such it is difficult to use the findings of the 2010 report to either assess the state of these principles or to apply the conclusions and recommendations arrived at in the report.

One of the other criticisms that have been levelled against the Paris Declaration, and other global partnership initiatives is, the degree to which it effectively takes into account the issues of the politics, power and trust that exist, between the donors and aid recipient's (Hayden, 2008; Hughes, & Hutchison, 2011; Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, 2012; McEwan, & Mawdsley, 2012). These are arguably difficult concepts to deal with, especially in the complex and evolving contexts, within which development cooperation occurs. The principles of engagement in fragile states or situations go some ways towards addressing the issues related to setting conditions for trust in engagement on development, specifically in fragile environments. However this section is so obscure and not as well publicised as the PD more generally that it's practical application is unclear. A related criticism, which has been directed at the

Paris Declaration specifically, is its inability to adequately comprehend and take into account the *"…political nature of development and foreign aid"* (Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, p. 1, 2012).

Existing literature, on the fundaments underlying the global partnership commitment on aid, and its effects on country-level development policy, suggest the need for a developing country like Malawi, to gain a deeper understanding of effects of these commitments, debates and the resulting practices, within the Malawian context.

2.3.Conclusion to the Literature Review

Several conclusions have been drawn, from this exploration of the literature relating to engagement on development policy within the developing country-level, as well as the global commitments that have a bearing on this country level dialogue.

This literature review begins with an exploration of the origins of the modern day state, which is based on the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. However, the literature uncovers a body of thought, challenging Westphalia's sustained reference and the usefulness of its model in view of contemporary concerns. Foremost, reference has been made to the contemporary concerns of globalisation, the multi-polarisation of the international community, as well as the evolution of the 'aid architecture' – defined as "…*the totality of donors, instruments and strategic or political frameworks covering the specification and implementation of aid to developing countries* (ECDPM, 2008, p. 2).

Some of the challenges to the Westphalian model of the state include the argued effects of international law on the subordination of post-colonial states, rendering their sovereignty defunct. Other arguments include the unrelenting effects of colonialism, resulting in weak and economically dependent post-colonial states, like Malawi. The literature also provides arguments for a derivative of the Westphalian ideals, the nation-state. Arguments include a critique of the ideological dissonance between the notion of the nation-state and its realisation in the context of post-colonial states.

Related to this is the effect that a state's ability to conform to the ideals of a nation state has, on its ability to engage effectively with the international community. Such that states with weak to nonexistent national identities, struggle to generate accord within their territorial boundaries. These states find it even tougher to aggregate that

accord on a regional, and continental level, as well as to be able to engage and interface with the rest of the global community. Another challenge to the Westphalian model relates to the point that was established earlier, in relation to the intrinsically weak African states formed during the 1884 Berlin conference. The formation of these weak states was not a solid basis for the ideals of a Westphalian model.

It can be argued that development policy is one of the mechanisms for generating nation-level accord. However, this literature review suggests that the fundamentals, underlying the formation of states like Malawi, contain inherent constraints to the formulation of effective development policy. This is further compounded by the interconnected context within which these development policies are generated, which transcends national territorial boundaries. This further suggests that these nation-level constraints must be carefully understood, by development practitioners, so that they can ensure that they are deliberately accounted for and/or mitigated against, when trying to contribute to strengthening of the development policy formulation processes.

The problem statement also highlights the contemporary predicament of development problems becoming more interconnected, and therefore requiring interconnected solutions from a multiplicity of actors. A prominent framework for development problem-solving in the global, regional and national arena is that of partnerships. The literature establishes that the fundamentals which led to the creation of states did not lead to the emergence of *equivalent states*. So, if the partners within partnerships for development are states, then the literature suggests that these partnerships are not formed between equivalent partners. This further suggests the potential for the existence of asymmetrical partnerships in the pursuit of addressing interconnected development problems. The logic in this conclusion is supported by the numerous criticisms, levelled against the partnership principles contained in global aid effectiveness partnership exemplified in this paper using the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

The literature also uncovers in-depth arguments demanding a re-justification of the provision of foreign aid by richer countries to poorer countries, based upon reflections on the changes to the original context which necessitated the provision of aid. Other arguments for the re-justification of aid stem from the need to make aid more meaningful while meeting the objective of ‘doing-no-harm’ setting the stage for

genuine, and not just rhetorical, aid-effectiveness. These debates around the justifications and objectives of aid have a common strand that runs through them: the pursuit of a deeper understanding of the basis and impacts of foreign aid on the development outcomes in developing countries like Malawi. This paper looks at an aspect of this quest for development effectiveness, through the lens of engagement on development policy at the country level, while situating this country level engagement in a wider context of historical, multidimensional governance, and power contestation considerations. The literature suggests that both the bases and objectives of aid may contain inherent constraints, which have the potential of obscuring the formulation processes and outcomes of development policies, in developing country contexts.

In the interest of exploring the role of global partnership commitments in engagement between the two identified actors, aid providers and aid recipients, (who in principle are also represented as equivalent partners in partnership frameworks), on development policy, the study delves into the global partnership commitment on aid effectiveness – the Paris Declaration. the discussion explores the role of ownership in development policy, as envisaged by the Paris Declaration, as well as, the declaration's inadequate consideration of the effects of democratisation processes upon the consolidation of the policy-making processes. The significance of this finding in the literature, as it relates to the problem statement suggests a need for the following considerations: engagement between development practitioners on development policy needs to be cognisant of the role, options and alternatives surrounding democratisation processes, as they relate to the formulation of development policy in a developing country context like Malawi. Particularly since the literature indicates that development policy, formulated in isolation of the democratic realities of a country, can potentially render the policy ineffective.

Other criticisms levelled at the Paris Declaration include its narrow recognition of politics, power and trust in the formulation and subsequent implementation of development policy, in most the developing country contexts. These criticisms relate directly to the main question of this study that explores the ways in which engagement on development policy emerge between development practitioners situated in the Malawi government and those situated in donor agencies. The literature indicates that the imbalance in stature of the states, from which the country

level practitioners and local officials originate, may have a bearing on the nature and quality of their engagement. Since this engagement is a means to formulating development policy, then this further suggests that the asymmetric engagement may also influence the resultant development policy. Based on the understanding that this asymmetrical engagement has the potential to translate into asymmetrical influence, in the formulation of development policy.

This review does not simply adopt a problematised approach; it also adopts a solution-driven approach to the literature. The review explores the features of deliberative democracy and the various debates surrounding the evolution of the theory. Discussions on the evolution of the theory include the progression in the theory from a modelling approach to the theory to a systems approach. The review also explores the potential that deliberative democracy has to help mitigate some of the conundrums facing the development and legitimacy of development policy in the aid-recipient, developing-country context.

3. Research Methodology and Data Collection

3.1.Research Strategy

The research strategy (Bryman, 2012), applied by this research is the qualitative research strategy. This decision is based on the understanding that the study intends to understand the engagement that exists between the public officials and development practitioners, on development policy in Malawi.

The literature review that has been undertaken for this study provides a series of observations, on the nature of engagement that occurs within the development and foreign aid context (Escobar, p. 44, 1995, Hailu, & Shiferaw, 2012; Hayden, 2008; Hughes, & Hutchison, 2011; Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, 2012; McEwan, & Mawdsley, 2012). This line of enquiry lends itself to inductive theory (Bryman, 2012); in that it is expected that the consequence of this enquiry, which will begin with observations of the nature of engagement between public officials and development practitioners on development policy and aid effectiveness; should result in the construction of some form of theory. However, it is important to note from the onset, that the study will not be in a position to generalise the expected theory, derived from this enquiry, due mainly to the size and scope of our study.

The body of knowledge, upon which this study is premised, is that of Interpretivism (Bryman, 2012), because the study endeavours to understand how the public officials and development practitioners, interpret their engagement on development policy in Malawi. This study is conducted from a position of understanding, as opposed to quantifying or measuring the concept of stakeholder engagement. Finally, the ontological orientation upon which this study will be conducted is that of constructivism (Bryman, 2012). This is because the study intends on exploring engagement as a social interaction, as well as the impressions that public officials and practitioners have in relation to this interaction. This exploration is based upon the underlying assumption that the public officials and development practitioners, also recognised as social actors, give meaning to the social interaction that occurs within the development space, and that they may also influence the way that interaction occurs.

3.2.Research Design

The research design employed for this study is a Case Study, more specifically an Exemplifying case study (Bryman, p. 70). The main justification for this classification is the parameters of the study, as the research intends on exploring the engagement of public officials and practitioners, within a specific constituency. The constituency in this case, are the sections of the public service that engages public officials and development practitioners, specifically the line ministries the Government, international donor agencies and civil society organisations.

The unit of analysis in this research is the social interaction, established as **engagement**, between the public officials and development practitioners.

3.3.Research Method& Procedure

This study adopts a two phase method, as follows;

a. Literature and Document Review

This phase was iterative and continued throughout the research process. It included the conduct of a desk research and the compilation of a literature review. This phase of the study provided the bulk of the literature that informed the development of formal interview materials, and the identification of key participants to be recruited in the study.

b. Interviews

The interview phase used semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2012) conducted with public officials and practitioners within donor-agencies and civil society organisations.

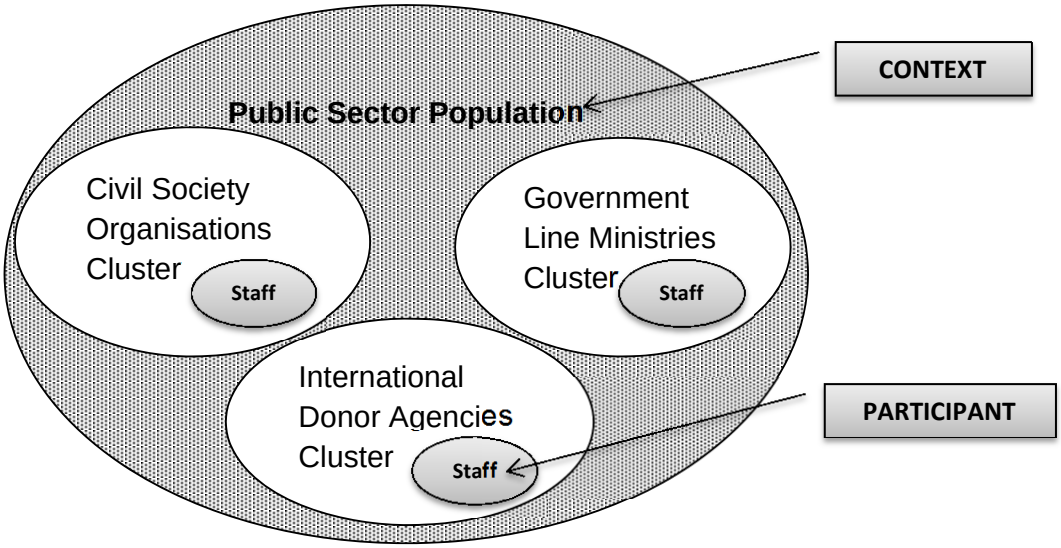
1. The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis with participants in Malawi;
2. The researcher was the sole investigator conducting and transcribing the interviews;
3. Listening is the key faculty drawn on during the conduct of the interviews;
4. Data was collected in the form of handwritten notes and audio recordings where consent was duly obtained, and;
5. The data was collected and stored with strict privacy and confidentiality.

3.4.Sampling

This section describes the way that data was collected within the target population of this research. It outlines the details of the sampling frame and sampling method for this study.

Population

The population of this research is the Public Sector in Malawi because this is one of the primary places in the public sphere, where engagement on development policy occurs, as illustrated below.



Sampling frame and Sampling Method

The type of sampling used in this study is Generic Purposive Sampling (Bryman, 2012). There are two sampling units implied by the research question, which are a) organisations within the public sector and b) staff within these public sector organisations. There are two sampling frames (Bryman, 2012) that are required by the research question which are a) the sampling of the context or context sample population i.e. public sector organisations and b) the sampling of the participants or participant sample population i.e. staff. The purposive sampling technique that was used is Typical Case Sampling, as a result the context and participants represent typified dimensions of this research inquiry on engagement on development policy, among specified development actors.

Three clusters of organisations were purposively selected within the context sample population, namely: i) Civil Society Organisations, ii) Executive Branch/Government Line Ministries, and iii) International Donor Agencies, based on their relevance to the research question. While the sampling of staff from the participant sample population, who *"…exemplifying the population under consideration" (Bryman, p. 417, 2012)*, was based on the relevance, of those participants in the organisations, to the research question.

Therefore to determine the appropriate context, established as organizations within the public sector clusters, and the appropriate participants, established as staff in the select public sector organizations, the relevance at both levels is assessed based on the following criteria: the relevance of the organisations in the organisation clusters and the relevance of the participants in these organisations; and the knowledge, expertise and experience that the organisations and participants have of working on development policy in Malawi. The application of the above criteria to arrive at the sampling of participants, is detailed below.

- Public officials are sampled within the two Line Ministries that are central to engagement between public officials and practitioners on development policy, which were identified through work experience, network and interaction in the field. having worked for three development aid organisations in Malawi, namely the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UK Department of International Development (DFID), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), for over nine years, in the areas of Governance and Democracy. The two identified ministries are the Ministry of Finance (MoF), and the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD).
- The development practitioners were sampled from within both the Civil Society Organisations and the International Donor Agencies, which were also identified based on personal work experience in the field.

The total sample size is 15 research subjects distributed as follows;

- Three public officials from the Ministries of Finance and Development Cooperation respectively, making a total of six participants;
- Six development practitioners from the International Aid Agencies, and;

- Three development practitioners from the Civil Society Organisations.

The minimum acceptable response rate is 70%, comprising the following mix of participants;

- Two public official from the Ministries of Finance and Development Cooperation respectively, making a total of four participants;
- Four development practitioners from the International Aid Agencies, and;
- Two development practitioners from the Civil Society Organisations.

3.5.Data

This study used primary data, which was collected specifically for this research, through the conduct of eleven semi-structured interviews, with the research participants detailed in the sampling section. A total of 5 locally based donor practitioners, 4 public officials and 2 civil society organisation officials were interviewed.

The semi-structured interviews were informed by an interview guide (provided in Annex 1), containing a combination of probing, specifying, direct and indirect questions, which were punctuated by follow-up questions at opportune moments in the interview process (Bryman, 2012).

This facilitated the collection of data with an open mind, enabling the formation of a deeper understanding of the effects of local engagement on development policy, through the use of this inductive approach to data collection (Bryman, 2012). All eleven interviews were recorded on tape, and the interviewer also took notes, while the interviews were in progress. The criteria adopted for assessing the quality of the data collection process is the evidence of ethical considerations, which include documentation like the signed consent forms discussed in the ethical considerations section below (Bryman, 2012).

The data has been organised thematically, where a theme is understood as – a category identified in the data, relating to the research questions and formulated from a thorough review of the interview data (Bryman, 2012).The identified themes, are organised as they relate to the questions, and further broken down into subthemes, to flesh out the details under each theme. A combination of direct quotes and carefully paraphrased sentences (to sustain the voice of the interviewee), have

been placed in the cells, where the relevant sub-theme column and interviewee row converge. The point at which the column and row converges, will be referred to as a field, for purposes of this study.

Since, the research targeted three categories of respondent's, the data analysis table will clearly label each interviewee by category to incorporate the nuances in the perspectives from the three sectors, namely: government, donors and civil society.

3.6.Data Analysis

This section sequentially details the data analysis techniques that have been employed in this study.

3.7.Data Analysis Techniques

The first step in the data analysis process was to check the collected primary data, sourced via semi-structured interviews, for any flaws or inaccuracies. This process included contacting the participants to seek further clarification, and remedy the problems identified in the data.

The next step was to partially transcribe the interview transcripts, for those interviews where the electronic capture of data was most relevant to the research topic. This selective approach was taken in recognition of the time and financial constraints of conducting a complete transcription of all the eleven interviews. as such, selective transcription was adopted to mitigate these resource constraints. Each line of the sections have been read and reread, to draw out the themes emerging from the transcription data. The interviewees were coded to conceal their identity, and the population of the frameworks was based on the codes.

To add to the transcription data, a review of the interview notes was conducted, as a cross reference, and to capture some of the themes that were identified during the conduct of the interview. Once all the themes were drawn out, these were categorised into broader themes, reducing the data even further.

The subsequent step was to populate the relevant fields of the thematic analysis framework (Bryman, 2012) in Figure 2 below, with the reduced interview data. This is then followed by a review of each thematic framework, to identify patterns in the data. The search for patterns is for those appearing, within and across, the themes.

The identified patterns are the important ingredients in the formulation of the data analysis narrative, and form the basis for the research findings and conclusions.

Table 1: Thematic Analysis Framework

THEME TITLE

	Sub-Theme 1	**Sub-Theme 2**	**Etc.**
Interviewee 1			
Interviewee 2			
Interviewee 3			

Finally, this representation of the data is used to analyse the participants' understanding of the research issues and questions. To instil further confidence in the research findings, a triangulation strategy was employed through the use of multiple data sources, theoretical perspectives and observers in the form of interviewees (Bryman, 2012). The multiple data sources were derived from the literature review exercise, which preceded and continued to be iterated, during the interview phase of the research. The literature review provides the critical background to the study, and forms the base upon which to build the interpretation of the study findings.

The interviewees consist of a range of experts with academic backgrounds in, political science, economics, social science, and law. These multiple lenses support the triangulation of the data, through the different theoretical perspectives. Finally, the interviewees, who are also serving as our observers, have been picked from three triangulated sectors; government, donors and civil society. The nature of these sectors is forged around the provision of checks and balances, and the study draws upon the inherent characteristics of these sector perspectives, to aid in the triangulation of the data. In accordance with the ethical requirements of this study, the researcher endeavoured to remain conscious of the potential biases that may exist, as a result of the power differentials identified during the literature review, and the potential influence that it may have on triangulation by observers/interviewees.

The triangulation of data has assisted in refining the process of identifying patterns in the data, in addition to building confidence in the findings.

3.8.The Limitations of the Research

The three main limitations of this research are: time, in relation to the scope of the study; the potential for the researcher's bias to influence the analysis and the findings of the study; and, the ability for the results of this research to be generalised.

In relation to the time limitation, the depth of understanding of the study will be managed closely within the timeframe of the research. The researcher brings a wealth of experience and personal reflections on the research issues under study, which also has the potential to introduce bias in the interpretation of the findings. The researcher's experience is from working within donor agencies and does not include work in the Government of Malawi or within civil society organisations in Malawi, potentially representing only one-dimension of this multi-dimensional study. To mitigate this, this research has included triangulated perspectives from three sectors government, donor agencies and civil society organisations.

Additionally, to manage any potential conflicts of interest arising from the researcher's professional orientation, the researcher included several measures to ensure a consistent adherence to the research standards of integrity, quality and transparency (ESRC's Framework for Research Ethics, as cited by Bryman, 2012, p144) as follows;

- The research questions and interview guide questions were formulated and iteratively reviewed and revised based on extensive literature review generated from a broad range of perspectives; to ensure the soundness and relevance of the questions, as well as to mitigate the potential bias of the researcher's donor agency perspective.
- The respondents were selected from three sectors to generate triangulated data, adding to the rigour of the data collected. The respondents were also selected purposefully based on their knowledge, academic qualifications and their years of experience engaging in the development policy process in Malawi, from the triangulated sectors. Informed consent (Bryman, 2012) was used to solicit participation by ensuring that they had sufficient information

about the study and formal reassurance through the signing of a consent sheet that their contributions would be confidential.

- All of the interviews were conducted using the interview guide which was structured to probe the respondents understanding of the concepts and processes under study. The consistent use of the interview guide ensured consistency in the conduct of the interviews as well as the collection of data from each respondent. To ensure the integrity and transparency of the data collected, and to enable their peer reviewed if required, each of the eleven interviews were recorded using a recording device and saved using a pseudonym to conceal the identity of the respondents and preserve their confidentiality.
- To ensure consistent data analysis, all of interview data was systematically organised into the Thematic Analysis Framework.
- When interpreting the data the research reflected on what this meant for the research questions. In addition to this the research also reflected on what this meant for the researcher, from a donor agency perspective. This approach was taken to consistently reflect on the distinction between the two objective and subjective perspectives, respectively and systematically. The researcher also ensured that crucial direct quotes, which captured the essence of the respondent's voice, were included in the write-up of the interpretations to minimise bias.

Throughout the conduct of this research, the researcher maintained a consistent and rigorous process of continual reflection alongside the application of the above identified research standards. The researcher was consistently cognisant of the potential bias that could occur based on the researcher's professional background and perspective; however these biases were constantly acknowledged and challenged, as the research study unfolded to ensure a high level of scholarly rigour.

Finally, by the very nature of case study research, this research does not claim to produce any generalisations, as such cannot be generalised. Although it is worthy to note that, the rigour in the detailing of the research design and method for this study, is aimed at providing the foundations for a criteria of evaluating this social research study.

3.9.Ethical Considerations

Prior to the commencement of the interview phase of the this research study, clearance was sought from the National Commission for Science and Technology in Malawi, who are mandated to evaluate research proposals of social research conducted in Malawi. The researcher was advised that since this study is in fulfilment of academic requirements, it would not require formal clearance; however that clearance will be required in the event that the research is published.

Of particular concern in this study is that many of the research respondents are from institutions or hold public positions that are highly visible. Clear and established safeguards are employed to protect the rights of all research subjects. The research subjects were requested to complete a consent form, which provides the details of their participation, issues of confidentiality, risks, discomforts and the benefits related to the study. There is the significant issue of anonymity: it will be better if all respondents are named within the study.

However, in the event that any respondent specifically requests that their identity be anonymous their wishes will be respected accordingly. The concern of power relations between the researcher and the interviewees is mitigated by the interviewer maintaining a constant and deliberate consciousness of the likelihood of power being a factor in the interview, and by the interviewer also adopting reflexivity, by way of methodological self-consciousness (Bryman, 2012). The researcher works for a donor agency that provides the largest portion of Malawi's foreign aid, when the agencies funding is combined with other sister agencies funding; like the Centre for Disease Control – CDC, Millennium Challenge Account – MCA, and other agencies that together form the United States mission in Malawi. This has the potential of skewing the power balance between the researcher and the respondents, especially the respondents from government and civil society organisations, who might view the researcher as a potential funder.

The first approach to mitigating this potential conflict of interest was to acknowledge and address this concern in the initial discussion with potential respondents. By exercising integrity and transparency, the researcher very clearly and deliberately disclosed the non-financial nature of the study respondent's participation, to each respondent in advance. The researcher clarified, with each respondent that their

participation was purely for academic reasons, and as such completely disassociated from the researcher's job. The researcher had the good fortunate of securing eleven of the twelve planned interviewees, all of whom are senior ranking officials within all three of the targeted sectors. The level of authority of the respondent's contributed towards the mitigation of a perceived power imbalance, as all respondent's viewed the researcher either as a peer or a subordinate.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

5.1.A Presentation of the Themes Emerging from the Study

In exploring the research questions for the study, five main themes emerge. Three of these themes fall under the main questions, while the remaining two themes fall under each of the two sub-questions. The five themes are **Consultation**, **Capacity**, **Accountability**, **Ownership** and the **Basis for Development Success or Development Discordance**.

These themes have implications for the study's unit of analysis which is **engagement** on development policy, specifically between public officials situated in the Government of Malawi and practitioners situated in donor agencies in Malawi. The data illustrates that there are numerous interests, issues and constraints (of both a technical and political nature) at play, that exert influence on the nature of engagement between the target actors, as they engage on development policy. The data also indicates that these numerous influences on the development policy-making processes appear to have an impact on the outcome of the process. These findings are consistent with the literature review which indicates that a state like Malawi, which was formed on a set of historically and politically entrenched constraints, is likely to experience asymmetrical engagement on national development policy, between a range of domestic and international stakeholders.

5.1.1. Themes Emerging under Question 1 (the Main Research Question)

The main research question aims to understand the ways in which engagement emerges, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, on political and technical issues relating to development policy. Under this question, the three most prominent themes emerging from the data are **Consultation**, **Capacity** and **Accountability**.

THEME 1: CONSULTATION

The findings provide evidence that consultation is identified as one of the most prominent ways that engagement emerges on development policy in Malawi. This concept can be used to understand the actual ways in which engagement emerges.

Four distinct sub themes emerge providing further clarity to the question of emergence of engagement; these are **Selectivity/Exclusion**, **Institutional Arrangements**, **Government Neutrality**, and **Prioritisation**.

a. SELECTIVITY/EXCLUSION

This sub-theme of consultation is exemplified by interviewee CSO Official B, who commented that there is *"…selective consultation* [on development policy] *looking at the interests that will be affected, especially those in power"* (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014). This comment captures the notion of a consultative process that considers select political interests, representing a select constituency – which based on Malawi's electoral system and it's multiplicity of pluralistic public interest is most likely representing the minority – on a subject that should otherwise consider a broader base of interests. This suggests that consultations may not be as inclusive as possible. Interviewee Govt Official A comments further that the *"winner takes all approach to development planning,* [which means that]*… opposition voices are excluded from the development planning process, as well as [that there are]… very few avenues for dialogue on development outside of government"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014).

One of the few avenues for engagement on development policy in Malawi is the CABS's (Common Approach to Budget Support) grouping, which is an exclusive platform dominated by senior level officials from the government and donor agencies. Representatives from civil society are invited but rarely attend and if they do attend, indications are that there is limited opportunity for them to influence decision-making on development policy through this platform. Interviewee CSO Official B (personal communication, February 22, 2014) indicates that consultation takes place after government and donors have already made a decision. Interviewee Donor A's comments support interviewee CSO B comments, by pointing out that

> "*There are limitations to who is involved* [in engagement on development policy]*, and it does not go far beyond public officials and donors, most of the consultations are organised under the Sector Working Groups, as such there are mixed levels of success depending on the sector. The Democratic Governance sector is particularly difficult because…it is an odd mixture of*

issues [and] *it is hard to conceive of a democratic sector, in…* [a]*sector wide approach, so I am not sure that it* [the Democratic Governance Sector] *was an entirely positive outcome…"* (Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014)

Finally, Donor D commented that *"Over the three administrations I have been in development work* [I] *have seen that the shape and form of public engagement…have differed according to who is in state house, and also by ministry…When consultation has been conditional …it has been put to use"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014). This comment suggests that consultation, for the purposes of informing development policy, is not domestically institutionalised. This also suggests that consultation is not motivated by a commitment to optimising development outcomes, rather that consultation is conducted as a prerequisite to aid, consequently neglecting the substantive value of consultation to development policy.

b. **INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The sub-theme on institutional arrangements for consultations suggests that there are deficiencies in the consultative institutional arrangements for development policy in Malawi.

Interviewee CSO Official A explains that there is a problem with the actual selection of representatives who serve as proxies to citizens in consultations on development policy. Traditional Authorities tend to be selected as the default representative of citizens' interest with weak representation from civil society organisations that have questionable ties to their identified constituencies. Given this scenario the interviewee feels that *"the capacity of the moderator is critical in ensuring representation…so that the chief can understand and represent the issues* [adequately and ensure]*…effectiveness of the representatives for the diverse groups* [in consultations on development policy]*."* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014)

Interviewee CSO Official B recommended that there is need for flexibility in the rules that govern platforms for dialogue, *"to accommodate the interface between the modern society and the traditional society"* (CSO Official B, personal communication,

February 22, 2014). This finding corresponded with the finding that suggested that development policy consultation is dominated by traditional authorities. CSO Official B also indicated that consultative institutions have adopted a rational institutional model which has not been customised to suit the needs of Malawian society". The rationale of the institution must fit into the traditional structure …the dominance of traditional culture is a hindrance to rational institutions" (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014). In this interviewee's perspective, the issue that needs to be addressed is the necessity to understand *"…how democratic politics* [can] *match the traditional rationale?"* (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014). This interviewee also identified the source of these institutional inadequacies as the deficiencies in the Malawian constitution, which they view as having had the singular objective of removing Malawi's dictator of thirty years. As a consequence they propose that the writing up of the constitution missed the opportunity to reflect the values of the traditional sphere (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014).

The executive arm of government and international development agencies were identified as the more dominant institutions influencing development policy in Malawi. Interviewee Govt. Official A sees the Common Approach to Budget Support (CABS) as the only platform for debate on development issues and it only convenes substantially twice a year. They stated that *"It* [CABS's] *is structured such that it focuses mainly on economic and financial management, and because of time limitations and the absence of other forums it gets overloaded with issues which are not paid adequate attention."* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014)

Most of the interviewees indicated that particular actors within the executive wield disproportionate influence in the formulation of development policy. Interviewee Donor D stated that*"…depending on whom the institutional players are, the rules tend to be different"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014). For instance the Ministry of Finance will take precedence over the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The interviewee also indicated that the institutional arrangements for consultation are not clearly articulated, *"…and this is the reason why we get variations between sectors …by administrations…* [and] *by issue".*

(Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014). Donor D also expressed that they see the policy process in Malawi as being misplaced, in that civil servants are responsible for making policies over politicians. This interviewee questions the legitimacy of the development policy process, because they believe that civil servants have captured the development policy making process and are driving the policy process, such that *"…party manifesto's do not seem to be the basis"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014) for the formulation of policy.

Interviewee Govt. Official B highlights another issue that is affected by this power differential in the policy making process, which is the overlaps between the development policies and the change of government. In Govt. Official B's view this overlap *"poses a problem because changes* [in administration] *also affect the use of the resource envelop, our* [civil servants'] *job is to advise and their* [politicians'] *job is to make decisions, and those decisions will have to be within the framework."* (Govt. Official B, personal communication, February 25, 2014). This interviewee also questioned the ability of these revolving politicians to remain within the developmental framework.

Interviewee Donor C focused in on the lack of synergy between the key platforms for consultation. One of these synergies being the ability for institutions like CABS to inform upstream decision making on development policy in institutions like parliament. Donor C highlighted that development

> *"…policies do not go to parliament for legitimisation, therefore there are no mitigating factors* [against emphasis of narrow special interests]*, within the public services. If our policies were passed through parliament before the bureaucratic systems starts implementing programs…* [then they would have been mitigation against undue civil servant biases]*. Parliament would be the best* [institution] *to look at the interests and come up with the best way forward.* (Donor C, personal communication, February 17, 2014)

In mitigating the consultation shortcomings Donor A highlights that *"some donors have incorporated an additional layers of stakeholder consultations between the Malawi development policy MGDS and the formulation of their country strategies."* (Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014)

c. GOVERNMENT NEUTRALITY

Interviewees indicated that successive governments since the advent of multiparty democratic politics in Malawi have struggled to facilitate consultations in which the results of the consultations are not rigged in favour of the interests of the ruling party, who also tend to be in the minority. Interviewee CSO Official A stated that *"the over politicisation of the development process has turned the state into a tool for marginalisation, where the incumbent does not lose to the detriment of critical reflection on actual development needs"* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014). Govt. Official A also added that the

> *"Civil service is supposed to be professional and objectivity…but in the contexts of Malawi it is very difficult to incorporate diverse interests. Politically sensitive projects or highly visible interventions limit the civil servants role, a good example is the Fertilizer Input Subsidy Program (FISP) were recommendations for policy amendments are not welcome, due to its importance for the electorate."*(Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014)

Interviewee Donor A provided an example of political influence compromising development outcomes, by stating that*"…something that has really come out with the cash-gate* [the 2013 financial scandal] *is the politicisation of appointments, so then if someone is beholden to the president for having that position, they are not going to want to take a contrary position to what the president wants"* (Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014).

Interviewee Donor C elucidates further by providing the recommendation that *"there is need for a paradigm shift in the way policies are brought into the public…because the bureaucratic system is not 'neutral competent'* [what is needed] *is to make institutions strong…* [to] *insulate the processes and procedures from political interference"* (Donor C, personal communication, February 17, 2014)

d. PRIORITISATION

Some of the interviewees indicated that consultations on development policy do not consider the prioritisation of the pluralistic public interests in accordance with the

reality of limited resources. They indicate that prioritisation is not governed by clearly articulated principles that reflect the democratic context within which these consultations on development policy occur. Interviewee CSO Official A highlighted that*"…the country dances to the tune of those who provide the nickel and the pound"* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014) in reference to governments prioritisation of donor demands in a bid to secure development aid. CSO Official A also indicated that government shows an "…allegiance to the donor partners and not the people, they [government] become insensitive to the needs of the people" (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014). The interviewee provided an illustration of how donor needs are promoted over locally generated priorities by highlighting that basic *"…existential concerns* [food, shelter etc.] *which are based on an anthropology understanding of Malawian society, must be met first, before issues of human rights and diversity can be addressed"* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014). This point captures several respondents' observations that donors have tended to rank the human rights agenda as a higher priority than the need to meet basic existential needs. As such, development policy is seen as over emphasising human rights to satisfy donor interests.

Interviewee Govt. Official A indicated that government spending is an illustration of the challenge of prioritisation, stating that *"so much money is spent on maintaining the [bureaucratic] system leaving very little to delivery"*(Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014). The interviewee also recommended that *"the ministry's of Finance and Economic Planning and Development, need to band together to ask the tough budgeting questions that will enable the bureaucracy to better service the people's development needs, [because] ….the handouts culture is a major problem"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014). Finally Donor A expressed concern that in development policy consultations *"service sector issues are prioritised over Governance and Democracy"* (Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014).

THEME2: CAPACITY

Some of the interviewees indicated that **Capacity** to engage on development policy is a challenge to the way that engagement emerges on development policy, between

public officials and donor agency practitioners. Two sub-themes to capacity emerge under this theme namely, **Analytical and Reflective Capacity** and the capacity for **Managing Tradeoffs**. The interviewees indicated that engagement on development policy at the national level, while also drawing on global instruments, is hampered by the limited capacity of both the public officials and donor agency practitioners.

a. ANALYTICAL AND REFLECTIVE CAPACITY

Interviewee CSO Official A stated that *"an anthropological understanding of the way our [Malawian] society is structured is the missing link and critical consideration for policy formulation"* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014). Whereas CSO Official B shared an observation from prior involvement in international trade negotiations representing Malawi, that *"…on the international platform technical experts from the African Union do not possess the range of expertise, like the European Union, as such relations are based on unevenness capacities in their levels of preparedness and capability to engage and negotiate"* (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014).

Govt. Official B raised the concern that locally *"the donors are more dominant but lack institutional memory"* (Govt. Official B, personal communication, February 25, 2014), as a result of their routine staff rotation policies. The interviewee indicated that donor agency staff do not stay in country long enough to adequately engage with the development issues, so as to effectively contribute to development policy processes. Whereas Donor A stated, that *"across all the sectors …everyone is understaffed…* [and in some instances] *it is that their roles are not clear"* (Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014).

Donor C provided a concrete example where analysis failed to influence the decision on a flagship education policy because of political interference.

> *"We have seen politicians championing policy without considering the knowledge base that public officials possess,* [for example] *free primary education were the bureaucratic system was never consulted and this policy was championed by politicians because it was put in their manifesto after the 1990 Jomtien Declaration …and implemented wholesale. If it had gone through the bureaucratic system they would have* [conducted] *policy analysis*

[and drawn lessons from the implementation of earlier policies]*."* (Donor C, personal communication, February 17, 2014)

b. MANAGING TRADEOFFS

The findings indicate that there is lack of capacity to manage developmental tradeoffs when engaging on development policy. Interviewee Govt. Official B explained how civil servants should help governments to make decisions on tradeoffs noting however that this has not necessarily been the practice.

> *"The civil servants role in managing tradeoffs includes highlighting the* [electoral] *implications of deviations from development policy. This includes advice on how changes can affect the economy, and how in turn this also affects the voting decisions of the electorate.* (Govt. Official B, personal communication, February 25, 2014)

Interviewee Donor D identified a gap in the various levels of local and international perceptions of the development problem. The interviewee said that at the local level

> *"sometimes [technocrats] have different views on what the issues are, and the villagers have a different expectation, they have a narrower perspective. You [the technocrat] are looking at data from Chitipa to Nsanje* [across Malawi] *while they are only looking at data up to the next village. They know their neighbours problems and their own, so they look at it in terms of solving current problems …the experienced issues."* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014)

While the interviewee also observed that at the sub-national, national and international levels the *"…domestication and contextualisation of international instruments and global partnership commitments, which set developmental yardsticks, has been a challenge that has not yet been adequately addressed."* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014)

THEME 3: ACCOUNTABILITY

Some of the interviews identified accountability as both an enabler and impediment to engagement on development policy. Four sub-themes can be identified under this

theme namely; **Political Accountability**, **Bureaucratic Accountability**, **Democratic Deficit** and **Mutual Accountability.**

a. POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

One of the interviewees shared their perspective on governmental efforts to enhance political accountability through the government structure. The interviewee shared that

> *"People need to be empowered to demand from their decision makers …The Office of the President and Cabinet is assisting the 'client' by developing public service charters, removing the bureaucratic layers and* [addressing] *corruption by setting expectations, empowering communities …*[and] *ensuring that government is efficient and accountable"*(Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014).

While another interviewee illustrated some of the challenges for political accountability, that have a bearing on engagement on development policy. Donor D illustrated this point by saying that,

> *"It is very difficult to hold political leaders to account because of Malawi's multiple planning frameworks, which are difficult to reconcile. As such, this has negatively affected the realisation of political accountability, making it difficult to…hold a unit* [of government to account] *and to isolate it, and be able to map* [its area of responsibility] *and* [identify] *the interventions meant for a particular village* [for instance]*"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

b. Bureaucratic Accountability

Several of the interviewees indicated that the erosion of bureaucratic accountability is an impediment to the emergence of engagement on development policy.

CSO Official A said that a reduction in meritocratic appointments in favour of loyalists, has resulted in misplaced human resources which is unable to "…serve as an independent civil service" (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014).Govt. Official A went further by providing the following prognosis,

> *"The appointment of senior offices in government is a problem. During the first government there was a divorce between politics and mainstream public service, but since we became a democracy there has been more of a connection between the civil servants and the ruling government, and this has taken away from the independence of the civil service."* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014)

To further illustrate the point, Donor D provided the following statement: *"The civil service needs to make clear at which point policies change, for example civil service work place policies that facilitate their interface with the public, change at a whim, when they are requested to account to the public for certain actions"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

c. Democratic Deficit

Some of the interviewees mentioned that the shortfalls in Malawi's democratic realities serve as an impediment to engagement on development policy. This position was best articulated by CSO Official B who said that;

> *"I don't agree with the idea [that], in Malawi people should be doing* [what is right] *because donors said we should do* [what is right]*, but they should be doing* [what is right] *because something has gone wrong. On 'cashgate', as a public we were not supposed to react because donors are withdrawing funds… but because something wrong has happened, the public anger and reactions …should be based on the values which we have embedded in the constitution."*(CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014)

To further illustrate the shortfalls in the countries democratic processes Govt. Official D pointed out that, *"…the* ['cashgate' forensic] *report was sent to the IMF* [International Monetary Fund] *before it was sent to the citizens, and … most of the money is from government… so it's the citizens* [money]*."*(Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014). The interviewee also added that *"The donors are calling the shots* [demanding] *that they want the report to come from the consultants and not from government"* (Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014), suggesting that donors may have undue influence on the processes of democratic accountability, over and above the citizens of the country.

To add to this Donor D also illustrated how the government appears to have a stronger sense of accountability to the donor community, than it has to the citizens of Malawi. For example with *"state party reporting on human rights …you have got governments who are failing to reproduce human rights reports in their own countries, willing to submit reports somewhere in New York. They are accountable to New York,* [but] *they are not accountable at the local level."* (Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014).

d. Mutual Accountability

Govt. Official A questioned whether development policy priorities are arrived at mutually and indicated that,

> *"bilaterals' [donor agencies] are limited by foreign policy dictates, which may not always correspond with the development needs; multilaterals' are limited by their development interest, for example the World Bank and Open Government. The our way or the highway approach introduces challenges for development policy"*

Donor D on the other hand highlighted how the international principle of mutual accountability is very dependent on the comprehension and will of the political leadership. They said that mutual accountability *"depends on the political leadership …the Bingu administration tried to take the Paris Declaration by its word, but now that he is out of the picture you do not hear any mention of it, so it means there is a connection between political leadership and which international instruments are being brought into the domestic arena."*(Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

5.2.1. Themes Emerging under Question 2 (the 1st Sub-Research Question)

The second question, which is the first sub-question of the main research question, aims to understand the role that evolving global partnership commitments play in engagement on development policy in Malawi, between public officials and locally based practitioners in donor agencies.

THEME 4: OWNERSHIP

The findings indicated that several of the interviews were questioning whether global partnership commitments do indeed have a legitimate role in domestic engagement on development policy, particularly the principle of national ownership. The four sub-themes emerging under this theme are **Competing Agendas'**, **Leadership Deficit**, **Conditionality** and **Effective Partnership Precursors**.

a. COMPETING AGENDAS

Some of the interviewees identified a potential conflict between the ownership and democracy agendas, which crowds out adherence to global commitments in domestic engagement on development policy. Govt. Official A made this point by stating that *"there is a limit to which ownership can be* [achieved] *in a democratic state. Whose ideas do you take? Unfortunately some of the ideas… have undermined ownership, so you may think it is the consensus on the development course but it is just narrow interests"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014). The interviewee also emphasised that an important ingredient for the local ownership principle to be realised, in the context of a fledgling democracy, is visionary leadership.

While Donor C identified a conflict between government interests and donor interests, which question the legitimacy of a local ownership principle in the development policy process. The interviewee said that,

> *"there are two forces* [in the formulation of development policy]*, Government wanting to include all the stakeholders in the policy formulation process whether it is cosmetic or grounded in research that was done by policy analysts, or not. On the other side are reforms, which are being driven by the development partners, where government just seems to be following what development partners want …without involving all the stakeholders including civil society"* (Donor C, personal communication, February 17, 2014).

b. LEADERSHIP DEFICIT

Some of the interviewees indicated that shortfalls in leadership impact the role that global partnership commitments play in domestic engagement on development policy. Donor D raised the following issues towards this point, questioning whether

the development policy process is led by the political leadership or rather that it is led by the bureaucratic leadership:

> *"Who should have been the one issuing the policy,* [should it not have been] *the party manifestos which are supposed to inform the political policies of a particular administration? But they* [development policies] *don't seem to be the basis of that. There is a clash there…* [should we not start with] *the political position and then civil servants find their place in that policy, or [should we] start with the civil servants coming up with the policy and then giving them to politicians to* [simply] *endorse"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

Whereas, Govt Official A said that *"leadership with a 'can do' attitude is lacking as, well as the ability to make decisive decisions and take bold steps"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014) and this has consequences for the leaderships ability to effectively draw on global partnership commitments when necessary.

c. CONDITIONALITY

Several interviewees indicated that conditionality can serve as a challenge to the domestic realisation of global partnership commitments, in specific reference to the development policy process. For instance CSO Official B said that *"as a poor country people have mortgaged their interests to the donors…, donor conditions go into institutional decision making.* [For example they can request that]*…we want so and so to be removed in order for you to be funded, instead of placing conditions on broader institutional strengthening"* (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014).

In an attempt to highlight the underlying challenges with conditionality, Govt. Official D offered the following analysis.

> *"Conditions detract from delivery, and we need to move towards mutual trust on both sides, because trust is in the way of mutual understanding. I'm not saying that it is only on the side of donors, even on the side of government there are so many layers* [of] *bureaucracy. If we can beat this and lessen the*

conditions … [have] *one common understanding* [and] *trust, then that will be a beautiful day… At the moment cashgate has overshadowed the entire relationship between donors and government, potentially overlooking a large number of reform-minded individuals, who want to make a difference."*(Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014).

Donor D provided a tangible example, where conditionality led to the reprioritisation of national development priorities in response to donor demands, which did not necessarily reflect the domestic application of global partnership commitments.

"During the PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) process, HIV/AIDS was ranked 17th by Malawians in the issues paper, but since IMF and World Bank had already decided that part of the money would be spent on HIV/AIDS… it was brought as a condition and raised to number three. …For villagers it was not a problem worth [prioritising]*, while for international actors that was the* [priority]. [It might have been] *a question of* [representing the issue differently] *as health problems and not necessarily HIV/AIDS … but as a result HIV/AIDS was one of the 12* [priorities] *that received funding."* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

d. EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP PRECURSORS

Two precursors to effective partnerships were emphasised by some of the interviewees. One of the precursors is an appropriate democratic process for identifying development priorities, and the other is a functional bureaucracy.

Donor D alluded to the need to strengthen Malawi's representative democratic processes when the interviewee said that, there is…

"…a disjoint between what the politicians consider to be the agenda for Malawi, and what Malawians themselves consider to be the agenda for Malawi. That discourse unfortunately doesn't always get encouraged by politicians; because it is a challenge to their monopoly over [determining] *what should be the priority …They forget that in a democracy you have the majority rule* [that] *doesn't hate the minority.* [Malawi needs]*…an effective*

parliament… [so that] these other [minority] interests can be taken onboard."(Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014)

Whereas, Govt. Official A emphasised that Malawi needs a functional bureaucracy, to facilitate effective partnerships and ownership, to*"…be able to articulate policies and negotiate, so* [that] *there is a connection between global partnerships, civil service and the donors,* [to facilitate] *coherence, not forgetting what the people are,* [and] *their value."*(Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014).

While most of the interviewees identified a link between a functional bureaucracy and effective partnerships, Donor A highlighted some ways that public officials could leverage donor support to enable effective partnerships.

"…so long as the government of Malawi is open to having foreign experts come in and help them identify the problems and strengthen the problem [areas]*, and then get the proper training for Malawian officials…* [as well as] *see if the civil service could be downsized, and salaries could be brought up to a living level. That has really been highlighted as one of the systemic problems feeding the tendency for corruption …* [then the bureaucracy could break the] *vicious cycle and turn it into a virtuous cycle."*(Donor A, personal communication, February 5, 2014)

5.2.2. Themes Emerging under Question 3 (the 2nd Sub-Research Question)

The third and final question, which is the second sub-question of the main research question, aims to understand the effects of engagement between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, on development policy in Malawi.

THEME 5: BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS OR DEVELOPMENT DISCORDANCE

Several of the interviewees identified numerous ways in which engagement on development policy in Malawi can either contribute to laying the foundation for development success, or frustrate efforts towards the attainment of development success. Elements contributing to development success or discordance were identified within both the public officials and locally based donor-agency

practitioners. These elements were either self-identified by members from within a particular target cluster population i.e. the public officials, or by members from another target cluster population i.e. the donor practitioners identifying success and discordance elements in public officials and vice versa. There are two sub themes under this theme **Intervention Logic** and **Leveraging Partnerships.**

a. INTERVENTION LOGIC

Several of the interviewees said that some of the challenges to engagement on development policy, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners, can be traced in the underlying intervention logic.

CSO Official A indicated that engagement on development policy between public officials and donor agency practitioners can result in confusing development theories and practices. For example *"…in social protection, first* [the locally based donor practitioners] *advocated for social transfers, then shortly afterwards food relief* [then back again resulting in] *constant changes*… [that create] *antagonistic forces as opposed to cooperating forces"* (CSO Official A, personal communication, February 17, 2014). While CSO Official B reflected on the adoption and adaption aspects of engagement between public officials and donors, and said that *"the countries policy orientation is not compatible with the development process. It contains policy frameworks borrowed from the donors, not considering the local context to mitigate the borrowed development pathways"* (CSO Official B, personal communication, February 22, 2014).

Lastly Donor D reflected on some of the challenges in relation to development planning, programming and strategy, which have the potential to undermine the outcomes of engagement on development policy, and whose remedy is within the control of public officials, particularly civil servants. The interviewee said that in Malawi there are

> *"…various planning frameworks, OPC (Office of the President and Cabinet) has got its administrative districts, Agriculture has got its extension planning areas, NSO (National Statistics Office) has got statistical sampling areas, the same OPC has got*[electoral] *wards and constituencies, Health uses Traditional Authorities, Education uses different* [planning] *units altogether. You cannot automatically*

take a plan from health and superimpose it on education, and [be certain] *that you are dealing with one same issue for the same village. The civil services by now should have harmonised these* [planning frameworks]*, ensuring that policies can speak to each other, that is the role that civil servants has not been able to* [fulfil]*."* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

b. LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

Some of the interviewees identified instances where, while engaging on development policy, development partners have been able to leverage their partnerships domestically, towards either a positive development outcome or an outcome that potentially undermines the legitimacy of the development partnership.

Govt. Official A indicated that local level engagement assists in finding joint solutions to situations that would receive stricter measures internationally. For example *"…some of the measures taken following the 2013 'cashgate' scandal, which led to the withdrawal of direct budget support, included the redirection of aid within country as opposed to a complete deduction of aid to the country"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014). This is an example of a positive outcome from domestic engagement on development policy. The interviewee also highlighted a challenge within the public official cluster population, which can delay realising the value of engagement on development policy. The interviewee said that, *"there is a time lag in the effect of engagement on development policy,* [which is] *due to the impression that the adoption of ideas, for example* [the concern that accepting the need for]*civil society, will be understood as admission of failure on the part of government"* (Govt Official A, personal communication, February 7, 2014). As opposed to perceiving this as a potentially constructive contribution, from the donor practitioners cluster population, towards the enhancement of the country's development policy.

Govt. Official D highlighted an imbalance in the relationship between public officials and donor agency practitioners, emanating from the dynamics surrounding aid dependency. The interviewee said that,

> *"…one key challenge is that forty percent of the resources* [funding development policy] *are from the donors, so when it comes to negotiation you*

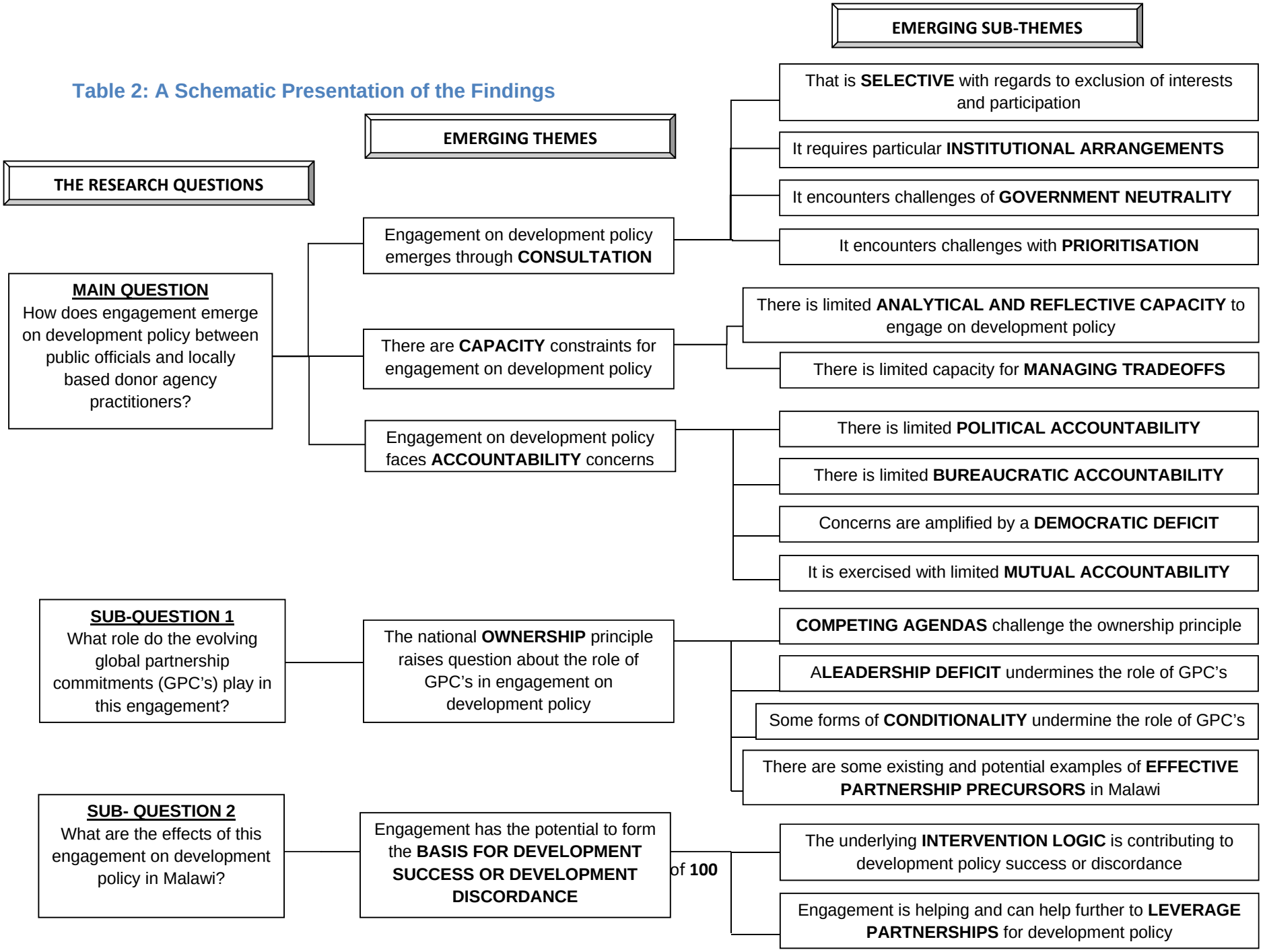
> *may negotiate to a certain extent, because the cooperating partners also have a bigger voice which is forty percent of the portfolio, and that makes it difficult for Malawi to champion its own development programs …we need to deal with this* [problem of aid dependency] *and reduce it as we go on"* (Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014),

In offering a solution to the challenge of aid dependence in the interim, Govt. Official D suggested that the public official cluster population needs to leverage development assistance through the Malawi Development Assistance Strategy, so that the *"ownership comes out permanently"* (Govt. Official D, personal communication, February 21, 2014).

Finally, Donor D highlighted some of the benefits to cooperation through engagement on development policy, between public officials and donor agency practitioners, by saying that donors have some form of

> *"…immunity from the local dynamics, and can speak on certain issues without bearing the consequences* [that local public officials face]*. Of course the medium matters, they can't say the same things on radio and in the media that they can say in a meeting. They also have the ability to advance their cause because they are financially empowered …they can put money on the table for that cause, which is not easy for the civil service to do …They have been able to call upon expertise that do not exist in Malawi to provide backroom support for analytical work, that supports policy formulation …However, context matters and the local realities need to take precedence. There is no use for them* [donors] *to push headquarters policies if they will not work* [in the local context]*"* (Donor D, personal communication, February 20, 2014)

Table 2: A Schematic Presentation of the Findings



5. UNDERSTANDING THE FINDINGS

The main research question seeks to understand the ways in which engagement emerges, on political and technical issues relating to development policy, between public officials and locally based donor-agency practitioners,

The Malawian constitution recognises democratic pluralism (Malawi Constitution, chapters, I, III, & IV). In principle this recognises the existence of pluralistic public interests, including those in relation to national development policy. While all of the interviewees identified consultation as the most prominent way that engagement emerges on development policy. They also indicated that there are challenges with this consultation, as it tends to happen among select groups, as such is not representative of a wider constituency of interests. The interviewees indicated that consultations on development policy are conducted selectively, particularly with regards to the inclusion of interests and participants. This suggests that **consultations on development policy in Malawi do not adequately provide for a plurality of interests.**

The literature review established that the Paris Declaration (PD) sets consultation on development policy, as a measure of optimal steps towards the achievement of aid effectiveness. The literature suggests that consultation on development policy has the potential to set a developing country on the pathway to development success. Furthermore, that the PD supports the logic that national development policy, which is derived through a broad consultative process, is a best practice and global governance standard for developing countries. According to the PD this signals that the developing country/aid recipient is demonstrating the principle of national ownership. If these yardsticks are to be used as a simple measure of Malawi's progress towards formulating development policy, that has an increased chance of aid and/or development effectiveness, then it can be deduced that the wide recognition of consultation on development policy is a positive signal of progress towards development success.

However, Faust (2010) offers an alternative perspective which dismantles this simple logic, by highlighting that the PD expects consultation to be on policy content which, he argues, is not a realistic expectation for a fledgling democracy where the policy

content is in constant flux. The earlier findings that consultations on development policy in Malawi are exclusionary: they encounter challenges with government's facilitative neutrality, tilted in favour of narrow interests; they enable undue influence in the setting of developmental priorities; shows that **policy content in Malawi is arrived at through a range of volatile influences**.

The findings also demonstrate a deficit in political and bureaucratic accountability between the citizenry and the state, as well as a deficit in mutual accountability between the state and the donor community on matters relating to development policy. The interviewees' responses indicate that the characteristics of consultation and identified accountability deficits stems from a struggle, in the political and administrative organs of the state, to transition from autocratic politics to multi-party democratic politics. This reading in the findings resonates with Blessings Chinsinga's (2010) observations that party loyalty in Malawi takes precedence over bureaucratic professionalism and neutral competence, despite the adoption of democratic politics. This suggests that there is **incongruence between the legislated democratic ideals underpinning politics in Malawi and the actual political practices, which may not be suitable for the delivery of development policy dividends to the wider Malawian citizenry.**

These challenges characterise Malawi's young democracy, and the situation is compounded by the country's status as progressively aid dependent (Hailu & Shiferaw, 2012). These findings also suggests that **consultations on development policy in Malawi do not adequately respond to volatile fluctuations in policy content, which are driven by the experience of transitioning to democracy, and is further compounded by the country's lack of economic independence**. This supports the arguments posited by Faust's (2010) and Booth (2011). Faust's (2010) arguments that it is difficult for development actors to reach sustained consensus on development policy content in a fledgling democracy, and this study's findings offers insights into the difficulties. While Booth's (2011) arguments that aid dependency introduces additional complexities to consensus on policy content in a fledgling democracy and again this study's findings offers insights into the complexities.

There are two significant findings that resonate with the concerns of inequality, power imbalance, and trust in development cooperation, raised in the problem

statement above. The findings indicate that both the domestic politics of winner-takes-all, and the microcosmic global politics of aid-based-power-differential, which exists between public officials and donor agency practitioners, are evident in the formulation of development policy in Malawi. It is also evident that these two elements have a disproportionate influence on development policy content, over and above other development actors' i.e. civil society, individual citizens etc. As such, **development policy formulation in Malawi is not based on an all-encompassing national agenda. There are indications of undue influence of select domestic political interests and foreign aid provider interests, in the engagement on development policy and as such the resultant policy**. These findings and the interpretation of these findings respond to the second and third research questions, which seek respectively, to understand whether there is indeed a role that global partnership agreements play in engagement on development policy, as well as what the effects of engagement are on development policy between our two focus populations.

Some of the interviewees indicated that donor development priorities, which are attached to funding conditionalities, are prioritised over domestically identified priorities irrespective of their relevance to national priorities. Examples include the escalating of HIV/AIDS in the PRSP process in the early 2000's. The findings indicate that un-scrutinised donor conditionalities undermine the consultation process. The findings support the claim that this tendency is connected to the country's level of aid dependence and lack of economic independence. This finding confirms the challenges highlighted in the study's problem statement, of unequally partnerships emanating from an aid inspired power differential, which is further supported by Chinsinga's (2010) observations that donors have not challenged the deterioration of the public policy process post-multiparty politics. The findings also demonstrate that **in Malawi's aid dependent context, locally based donors are significant development actors in the formulation of development policy, in a way that may not respect national priorities and in contradiction with the Paris Declaration principles**.

An analysis of the findings indicates that **the model of democracy present in Malawi, includes traces of both the representative and deliberative models of**

democracy, as such can be classified as a hybrid model of democracy (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). For instance there is evidence of delegation of power away from the citizens much like in a representative democracy identified by most of the respondents, as well as evidence of delegation of power to the citizens particularly when it is placed as a condition for foreign aid. There is also evidence of a redirection of accountability away from citizens towards external actors like donors. The predominantly representative or deliberative nature of Malawi's democracy is not explicitly stated in the Constitution. Nevertheless, as established above, the democratic practices evidenced in the findings are suggestive of a hybrid democracy that draws on the features of both of the overarching schools of thought on democracy as described by Isakhan & Gagnon, 2010. The literature review highlights a study of democracy models and civic engagement, which concludes that hybrid models have a reduced probability of individual level civic engagement (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). **The recurrent theme of selective/exclusionary engagement on development policy can be used as a proxy for individual level civic engagement, in which case it can be can argued that this finding supports the converse relationship between hybrid models and individual level civic engagement**.

Some of the respondents highlighted that donor agency-based practitioners lack enduring institutional memory to engage on development policy. This finding is most relevant to the second research question on the role of global partnership agreements in engagement on development policy. Most of the respondents, whether public officials, donor agency practitioners or civil society representatives, had a very basic understand of the Paris Declaration, (as the main global partnership commitment under study). Such that, despite several probes, the respondents were unable to engage on discussions relating to the contextually relevant sections of the PD, and they did not appear to be aware of or to understand the globally set measures for engagement in a context of fragility. All of the respondents engaged with the symptoms of, and outcome based definition of, fragility in the Malawi context. Most especially the donor - government fall-out as a consequence of the cash-gate financial scandal, which can be understood as a significant example of ineffective use of development assistance (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012). However, **the interviewees were not able to relate the symptoms of fragility to any of the**

global commitments and instruments for engaging, particularly in a fragile context. This suggests that, in practice, global partnership instruments are not being utilised or leveraged appropriately. This could be attributed in part, to the issues raised about institutional memory and capacities within locally based donor agencies, and the untapped value that their international perspective can bring, as well as the donor community's adherence to their commitment to provide contextually driven technical cooperation as agreed in the PD (OECD, 2005 & 2008). A distinctly separate but related challenge stems from the gaps in the PD. **Malawi is included in the World Bank (2015) list of fragile countries, but the PD does not provide relevant guidance on how to trigger engagement using the principles for engagement in a fragile state or situation**, which undermines the utility of the principles by locally based officials and practitioners.

Govt. Official A highlighted a clear example where engagement on development policy, in the midst of the cash-gate scandal, led to a positive development policy outcome. The outcome was the redirection of aid to civil society away from government systems, as opposed to a total deduction of aid to the country. This is important since Malawi has not yet established a clear strategy for graduating from a dependency on aid (Hailu, & Shiferaw, 2012). This example can be analysed using the second principle of engagement in a fragile environment, the 'do no harm' principle (OECD, 2010). In the respondent's opinion, **local level engagement was the reason for this favourable outcome for national development policy, because the locally based foreign aid workers were best place to understand the local needs and arrive at a solution that exercised leniency and that did not do any immediate harm.**

In conclusion, the findings show that local level engagement on development policy in Malawi, emerges in a context fraught with challenges to the following,

i) the democratic model and development policy processes in practice;
ii) the capacity constraints of both domestic and international stakeholders, represented by public officials and donor-agency practitioners in this study; as well as

iii) a disproportionate power imbalance, between citizens and government on one hand and government and foreign aid workers on the other, with overall ramification on democratic accountability.

These findings confirm the issues of concern identified in the study's problem statement.

The findings show that while the Paris Declaration does have some inherent design flaws, the useful aspects of the instrument are not being adequately utilised and leveraged within the Malawi country context, due to several challenges. These include lack of capacity of the public officials, donor agency practitioners and civil society representatives, to engage comprehensively with the content of relevant global partnership commitments and utilise and leverage these agreements in engagement on development policy locally. The other challenge is in the design of the Paris Declaration, the findings show how the obscure definition of fragility does not provide sufficient and pragmatic guidance on how or under what clear conditions, some of aspects of the agreements can be activated.

Finally, the findings show that engagement on development policy in Malawi has had polar effects on development policy. On one hand local engagement on development policy, has exhibited a power differential in favour of the donor agency interests in the development policy process, which can be associated with aid dependency. While on the other hand local engagement on development policy has exhibited a few development policy outcomes that are in conformity with the principles of engagement on development policy, and more appropriately in a context of fragility.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cooperation and collaboration are central features in the pursuit of solutions to global and national development problems, in today's complex and interconnected world. Over several decades, partnerships between nations have emerged as vehicles for development cooperation and collaboration, working through an array of cooperation platforms, commitments, agreements, mechanisms, instruments and tools.

This study has endeavoured to explore the ways in which partnerships emerge through cooperation on development policy in Malawi. The research questions interrogate whether engagement on development policy actually emerges through strategic alliances resembling the notion of a 'partnerships', as stated by international platforms on development cooperation. The questions also explore whether, globally recognised commitments for fostering strategic alliances understood as partnerships, do indeed have a role in local level engagement on development policy. The Paris Declaration is used as a proxy for all global commitments endeavouring to foster partnerships in development cooperation, to answer the second set of questions. Finally, the research also examines whether historical, political and power differentials have an effect on the ways that engagement emerges on development policy at a local level.

There are three most noticeable development challenges emerging from the analysis of the findings i) Malawi's inability to graduate from a state of aid-dependence ii) the inability of the development policy process to deliver development dividends, as well as usher Malawi out of aid-dependence iiii) a failure in Malawi's transition to democratic politics, in that it has not enabled the establishment of a system of governance that is responsive to the objectives of graduating from aid-dependence and able to deliver optimised development results for the Malawian citizenry.

An examination of the ways that engagement emerges on development policy in Malawi uncovers that partnerships, as intended in the Paris Declaration, are difficult to establish within the local context because of a range of domestic and international factors. Partnerships are a means to an end, the end, is to identify and successfully implement solutions to shared development problems. Therefore, since the findings suggest that partnerships are also contributing as obstacles to the resolution of

development problems, then this discovery warrants close attention to realign the outcomes of partnerships with the goal of solving development problems.

The findings from this research have been used to answer the following fundamental question– are partnerships a necessary strategy for the achievement of desired development results through national development policy? Following the recent cashgate financial scandal, it was established that government and the donor community were able to arrive at a measured response, to this clear example of ineffective use of development resources, through domestic cooperation. This is particularly important since it was also established that Malawi is not ready to be rapidly withdrawn from foreign aid (Hailu, & Shiferaw, 2012), without risking a total collapse of this already fragile state (World Bank, 2015). Using this example, it is justifiable to say that partnerships are relevant to development cooperation, particularly on ephemeral development policy challenges, in the Malawi context.

However, it has also been established that some of Malawi's most prominent development challenges are not only ephemeral in nature, but also include enduring challenges like aid-dependency and poor longitudinal development results. If our definition of cooperation is based on a mutual understanding and agreement on the contributions and payoffs (Gulati, *et. al.*, 2012), then it is reasonable to expect that the payoffs should include ephemeral and enduring payoffs. It can be concluded therefore, that a shortcoming in Malawi's partnerships for development through engagement on development policy is that they are failing to achieve payoffs on enduring development challenges. This raises questions about the ability of local level engagement on development challenges to effectively address the more enduring development challenges.

The next logical questions is – why does it appear that partnerships are unable to yield both ephemeral as well as more enduring development results in Malawi? The findings draw the following conclusions. The challenges to resolving development problems through development policy, in the Malawi, stem from domestic, international and transnational influences. The transnational challenges are those that transcend the discernible realm of the domestic and or international. Domestically it has been established that consultation, as a primary mode of engagement on development policy, has several deficiencies. The foremost

deficiencies are exclusionary participation and structural inabilities to cope with fluctuations in policy content emanating from the volatilities associated with transitioning to democracy. It was also found that domestically public officials have a disproportionate influence on development policy, in a way that potentially undermines civic engagement. Internationally the study shows that foreign-aid-workers, whether at an individual or organisational level, also have a disproportionate influence on development policy, in a way that potentially undermines civic engagement. Trans-nationally, a conflict is found between the dictates of global partnership commitments and the overall oscillating domestic dynamics associated with transitioning to democracy while also attempting to attain economic independence.

The issues raised above may not be completely insurmountable, instead they present several opportunities to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. The definition of cooperation highlighted in the above sections highlights that cooperation is based on a mutual understanding of contributions and payoffs. The study also highlights that domestic, international and transnational factors are all contributing to meagre partnerships outcomes; however they are not contributing to the enduring development policy payoffs. The following measures can be taken to improve the prospects for enduring solutions to enduring development problems, through development policy.

Domestically it has been established that the current hybrid democracy model is not delivering opportunities for civic engagement which is sensitive to a plurality of interests. This suggests that some sections of the Malawian populace may be underrepresented in the development policy process or indeed the resultant policy. It has also been established that theoretically a more purist model of democracy increases the probability of civic engagement (Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). There are broadly two models of democracy on a spectrum; these have been established as the representative and deliberative models of democracy (Isakhan& Gagnon, 2010; Stadelmann-Steffen, & Freitag, 2011). It has also established that deliberative democracy is viewed as an extension of representative democracy (Chambers, 2003; Nabatchi, 2010).

In seeking the most appropriate democratic track to take in a context with a range of complexities and indications of underrepresentation, it is recommended that Malawi consider adopting a more deliberative model of democracy, to create an environment conducive to increased civic engagement and narrow the current democratic deficit. This is supported further by the argument that comparatively*"…the institutional designs of deliberative democracy are inclusive and sensitive to the value plurality inherent in complex policy issues, they can help rediscover the public's preferences and ameliorate the democratic deficit."* (Nabatchi, 2010, p. 387). This solution is within the manageable control of domestic development actors.

Internationally, it has been established that locally based donor agencies need to improve the effectiveness of the local technical cooperation that they provide in Malawi. It has been established that the person level institutional capacity of these agencies is a challenge to the development policy process. The most prominent factor contributing to this person level institutional memory is the organisational human resourcing strategy adopted by these agencies, which revolves the term of office of technical personnel within a short horizon. Consequently, turnover timeframe for revolving foreign aid personnel does not correspond with the long-view horizon of the enduring development problems identified above. A change in resourcing strategy may not be the most achievable recommendation, and would require further study to establish the feasibility of this kind of a recommendation. However, there is a case for donor agencies working in Malawi, to improve their local capacities for engaging on the long term and enduring development problems that exceed the short-term horizon of their term of office.

Bertin Martens (2005) provides two nuanced primary reasons why aid agencies exist. They exist to *"provide economies of scale and institutional arrangements that reduce* [foreign aid transaction] *costs, and mediate between donors and recipients to reduce uncertainties due to diverging preferences"* (Martens, 2005, p. 660). These overarching primary objectives offer insight into the tangential attention to the conditions for abiding local level engagement, with the ability to track and respond to fluctuations in the complex local context. Foreign aid agencies in Malawi need to ensure that they build the necessary person level and organisation level skills and capacities to anticipate, as well as manage the intricate processes associated with

development cooperation (Gulati, *et. al.*, 2012). This recommendation is potentially within the manageable control of donor agencies.

Possibly the most problematic sphere, to address the obstacles to effective partnerships in, is the transnational sphere. Faust (2010) proposes that development cooperation needs to *"…promote a mutual learning process that is flexible enough to adapt constantly to experimental and open-ended political processes"* (Faust, 2010, p. 531). There are two recommendations for the implementation of this overarching recommendation. The first applies to the global partnership commitments, upon which transnational partnership commitments that govern this obscure sphere, rely. Shortcomings have been identified in the design of the most prominent global commitment on partnerships, the Paris Declaration. The 2013 World Bank assessment categorised Malawi as a fragile state. It was established that the term fragile state has negative connotations for affected countries, as such is heavily contested, and that this is undermining the utility of the term (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012).However, it was also established that there are exceptional principles for engaging in fragile states within the PD, and that these principles require improvements to make the conditions and guidelines for their use clearer to all users.

The first recommendation relates to recasting and de-stigmatising the term fragile state on one hand and enhancing the guidelines for engagement in fragile states and situations. This recommendation is in the manageable control of both the individual donor agencies and a range of international platforms for development cooperation, specifically the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. It has been established that locally based donor agency personnel, at both the individual and organisational levels, have disproportionate influence in the development policy process. It has also been established that this is complicated by the tangential organisational emphasis on developing favourable conditions for local level engagement. However, although skills and capacities in donor agencies for engaging with the notion of fragility and its practical implications are low, there are still very good reasons to enhance their skills and capacities, because *"donors' definitions can induce development actors to miss the signs of fragility and vulnerability to crisis or even to promote reforms and policies that exacerbate fragility"* (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012, p. 221).This is significant in Malawi given its current position as fragile, overly donor

compliant and aid dependent, as such Malawi cannot afford the risk of reforms and policies that could exacerbate its fragility.

Internationally it is recommended that donor agencies also develop their local level skills and capacities for recasting fragility in cooperation on development policy. In practical terms, the donor agencies operating in Malawi should invest in senior level personnel, with both the diplomatic and technical skills to engage on development policy in a fragile situation, without eliciting the total rejection of otherwise valuable categorisations that have the potential to improve cooperation on development policy. A specific strategy that these senior level personnel can employ is to support a modified and better articulated relationship between the state and non-state service providers (NSP). It is important to declare that this study did not conduct a robust examination of the role of NSP; however the study did uncover two relevant findings. Firstly, it has been established that consultations on development policy tends to exclude civil society organisations (CSO), and secondly it has also been established that service sector issues are prioritised at the expense of governance and democracy issues.

The exclusion of CSOs which also includes NSPs, in development policy process, suggests that their role in development policy may not be adequately addressed. While the bias towards service sector issues implies that there may be more willingness to reform service delivery, than the more enduring concerns with reforms to the democratic governance practices and approach. As such a pragmatic recommendation, within the manageable control of local level donor agencies, is to provide technical support to the state, to assist them in making the *"strategic choices about how to deploy their limited capacity for engagement with NSPs most effectively, and without risk to pro-poor or pro-service outcomes"* (Batley & Mcloughlin, 2010, p. 149). This statement presupposes a lack of capacity in the Malawian government to make strategic choices on the use of NSPs. Malawi's 2013 CPIA on quality of public administration, which includes a measurement of service delivery and operational efficiency, received a score of 3.0 out of 6 were 6 is high. This measurement can be used as a proxy for capacity to engage with NSPs, further supporting the recommendation.

The second recommendation to improve partnerships in the transnational sphere is to address the more pervasive challenges with the definition of fragility. It has been established that definitions of fragility range from those associated with national security to those associated with performance based allocation concerns, illustrating the definitional ambiguities associated with a definition (Bertoli & Ticci, 2012). It has also been established that this means that divergent countries showing divergent symptoms of fragility can in practice, be clustered in the same group requiring the same cooperation strategies, which it has also been established can inadvertently exacerbate the state of fragility. This suggests that the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation also needs to invest in further research to sharpen the definition of fragility, possibly along a gradient demonstrating the different conflict and non-conflict related contexts of state fragility. To accompany this transnational recommendation, international donor agencies will need to ensure that their locally based agencies have the skills and capacity to track and implement these refinements to the definition of fragility. To complete the cycle domestically by institutionalise the practice of strategically utilising global partnership commitments locally, both the government and local civil society organisations will need to work on building their capacities to equally engage using a refined definition of fragility. International donor agency technical cooperation could provide support to government and civil society to build this capacity for effective engagement on issues related to fragility.

While an array of undesirable effects on development policy in local level engagement on development policy in Malawi have been identified, some desirable effects of engagement on development policy have also been identified, with regards to the more ephemeral development problems, and it would be desirable to replicate these outcomes more sustainably with the more enduring development problems.

The conclusions and recommendations detailed above demonstrate an overarching disconnect between the partnership principles, that are espoused in global development commitments, and the local level development practice, that inform engagement on development policy domestically. The responsibility of evening out this asymmetric situation lies with both the sovereign state and the collective local level donor agency workforce. The global commitments have invested extensive resources into establishing the overarching global ideals for engagement on

development policy, however as the study demonstrates there are genuine challenges in cascading these commitments and principles downwards to the local context.

For Malawi the specific commitments that need to be domesticated are those on National Ownership, which this study recommends should be through Deliberative Democratic Development processes; and Mutual Accountability, which will set the conditions for more symmetric power relationships between aid recipients and donor agency practitioners. Donor aid has increased for development outcomes, yet it is unclear whether there is a proportionate aid allocation to support the strengthening of development processes that underlies engagement on development policy.

The study shows that while there are political and historical challenges to engagement on development policy in Malawi, there are also some clear technical solutions to these challenges and gaps, which can be implemented given sufficient financial support for implementation. While it can be argued that Malawi should self-finance the implementation of these critical technical solutions as a display of National Ownership. However, the study also shows that the country may have to make substantial financial tradeoffs that it cannot necessarily afford at present. In which case, in the short to medium term, both the sovereign state and donor agencies working in Malawi should mutually leverage global commitments, domestically, and use them to negotiate for an increase in development aid committed to improve the country's development processes.

A number of recommendations have been proposed to improve the conditions for solving development challenges recognising that they range from short to long term, in a way that is more sustainable. In conclusion it is important to note that, the interconnected nature of the development problems which partnerships seek to solve, require equally interconnected and complex solutions to contribute towards addressing these problems. These interconnected and complex solutions are in the realm of influence of the domestic, international and transnational actors, and therefore require an interconnected effort.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1 –INTERVIEWGUIDE

***QUESTION 1*: In what ways does engagement emerge between public officials and locally based practitioners, on political and technical issues relating to development policy?**

- Is there a process for incorporating diverse interests into development policy in Malawi
    - Is this process well-articulated and available to all the relevant actors
- Are there mechanisms built into the process for mitigating against bias towards narrow special interests, both those originating from domestic and donor actors, and how well do they work?
- What role do public servants play in ensuring that diverse interests are incorporated into the development of (development) policy in Malawi?
    - What are their limitations?
    - What needs to change to remove these limitations to **facilitating** the incorporation of diverse interests in the development of policy?
- What role do donor agency practitioners play, in ensuring that diverse interests have indeed been incorporated into the development of (development) policy in Malawi?
    - What are their limitations?
    - What needs to change to remove these limitations to **providing support** to the incorporation of diverse interests in the development of policy?

***SUB-QUESTION 1*: What role do the evolving global partnership commitments play, in the engagement between public officials and locally based practitioners, on development policy in Malawi?**

i.e. Accra Accord 2005, Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness 2008, Busan 2011, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) etc.

- Which one, do you think, is most relevant to Development Policy in Malawi and why?

***SUB-QUESTION 2*: With the above observations in mind, what are the effects (if any) on development policy in Malawi, as a result of engagement between public officials and locally based practitioners?**

APPENDIX 2 – INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Who I am

Hello, I am **Thokozile Chisala**. I am a student with the University of Witwatersrand, in South Africa, studying for a Masters in Management in the Area of Public and Development Management (MM-PDM).

What am I doing

I am conducting a research on the *Effects of engagement between Public Officials and locally-based donor-agency Practitioners, on Development Policy in Malawi*, for academic purposes. In fulfilment of the research I will conduct a preliminary study with various experts, to find out more about practices related to the subject of study, as well as people's views of these practices, and how they affect Development Policy in Malawi.

Your Participation

I am asking you whether you will allow me to conduct one interview with you about your knowledge and opinions on the way in which public officials and locally based donor agency practitioners, engage on development policy in Malawi. If you agree, I will ask you to participate in one interview for approximately 1 hour. I will also ask you to give me permission to tape record the interview. I am requesting to tape record the interview, so that I can accurately record what is said.

Please understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop participating in the research at any time and tell me that you do not want to continue. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will not be prejudiced in any way.

Confidentiality

Any records that identify you will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that the research is done properly, including members in the ethics committee at the University of Witwatersrand. (All of these people are required to

keep your identity confidential). Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working in the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

The information you provide will not be published unless you give your specific permission in writing at the end of this consent form. All identifying information will be kept in a locked filling cabinet and or a password protected electronic device, and will not be available to others. I will refer to you by a code number or pseudonym (another name) in any publication.

Risk/discomforts

At the present time, I do not see any risks in your participation. The risks associated with participation in this study are no greater than those encountered in daily work and life.

Benefits

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this study. However, this study will be helpful contributing to the body of knowledge available on the effects of engagement on development policy in Malawi.

If you would like to receive feedback on this study, I will keep a record of your contact details, and send you the results of the study when it has been completed sometime in March 2014.

CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research on the *Effects of engagement between Public Officials and locally-based donor-agency Practitioners, on Development Policy in Malawi.* I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop participating at any point should I not want to continue, and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project, whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally in the immediate term.

I understand that my participation will remain confidential.

…… ……

Signature of Participant Date

I hereby agree to the tape-recording of my participation in the study

…… ……

Signature of Participant Date

APPENDIX 2 – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Public Official Interviewees

1. Chauncy Simwaka – Budget Director, Ministry of Finance (Former Director in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development)
2. Cliff Kenneth Chiunda – Principal Secretary, Office of the President and Cabinet (Former Director for Programs and Projects Implementation in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development)
3. Nations Msowoya – Government Spokesperson, Malawi Ministry of Finance
4. Ted Stimawina – Principal Secretary, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development

Donor Interviewees

5. Ashish Shah – Evaluation and Results Team Leader, Department for International Development (DFID) Malawi
6. Julius Munthali – Governance Adviser, European Union (EU) Malawi
7. Kristine Herrmann – Democracy and Governance Office Director, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Malawi
8. Lamulo Nsanja – Common Approach to Budget Support (CABS) Coordinator, Deutsche Gesellschaftfür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Malawi
9. Michael Nyirenda – Governance Adviser, Royal Norwegian Embassy in Malawi

Civil Society Organisations Interviewees

10. Chris Chisoni – Executive Director, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP)
11. Robert Phiri – Executive Director, Public Affairs Committee