

**LIMITATIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY
ON HOUSING WITH RESPECT TO POVERTY
ALLEVIATION IN BOTSWANA**

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Master of Science in Housing

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ON HOUSING WITH RESPECT TO POVERTY
ALLEVIATION IN BOTSWANA**

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree in Master of Science in Housing.

Johannesburg, 2007.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Science in Housing in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Gobusamang Bogorogile

_____ day of _____ 2007

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the limitations of the housing policy in Botswana when dealing with poverty alleviation. Botswana is faced with high levels of poverty that does not conform to the country's economic success since independence. Very few opportunities exist for the urban poor to earn a living and work themselves out of poverty. Efforts to address poverty in the past yielded mixed results and failed the urban poor more especially that the interventions were biased towards rural areas. Evidence has been provided that housing has a critical role to play in poverty alleviation. The Government of Botswana has put in place housing projects (one of which is used for this enquiry) through which poverty can be addressed alongside other human needs such as shelter. An enabling environment has to be created for the successful exploitation of housing for poverty alleviation. It is therefore imperative that the government ensures the existence of such an environment.

For my wife, Mrs. Moetsenyane Bogorogile
and our children,
Bianca and Michelle Bogorogile.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBS	Botswana Building Society
BHC	Botswana Housing Corporation
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development and Policy Analysis
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CEDA	Citizen Economic Development Agency
DoH	Department of Housing
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEMVAS	Government Employee Motor Vehicle Advance Scheme
GoB	Government of Botswana
HBEs	Home Based Enterprises
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Virus/ Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
MPCHPB	Morake Presidential Commission on the Housing Policy
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Policies
SHHA	Self Help Housing Agency
SYA-FMA	Saad Yahya & Associates and FMA Architects Pty. Ltd.
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UN	United Nations

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CHAPTER 1.0: OVERVIEW OF THE ENQUIRY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Coming up with responsive policies has been said to be an elusive task to many policy makers (Bar-On, 2001; Bratt, 2006). In agreement with the above sentiments, Erguden (2001: 1) observes that despite the progress that has been made by developing countries in housing policy formulation, “there is a widening gap between policy formulation and the implementation process...”. This disparity is attributed to various factors such as

“[l]ack of effective implementation strategies, poor promotion of security of tenure, inadequate supply of affordable land and infrastructure, inadequacy of housing finance systems, poor utilisation of local building materials and technologies, lack of support to small scale construction activities, inappropriate standards and legislation, inadequate participation of communities in shelter development process and support to self-help, lack of focused research and experimental projects, [and] poor utilisation of research findings” (Erguden, 2001: 1).

Besides the above-mentioned factors, it is argued that the disparity is a result of the views that housing policies are “generally aimed at promoting political agendas [of the government of the day] and the economic objectives of private businesses” and nothing else (Bratt, 2006: 399). This view is in contrast to the position that “the goal of social policies [housing policy included] should be to promote individual, family and community well-being” (*ibid.*) and the failures to do so affect the already vulnerable members of the society. Among those affected are the poor, female headed households and children (Bratt, 2006; Erguden, 2001). It is with this in mind that there are calls for housing policies that appreciate the “diversity, complexity and dynamism of housing issues and housing delivery processes and their interaction with forces and elements of politics, economic, social and cultural development” (Erguden, 2001: 9). This is with a view that solutions suggested are a reflection of the problems that have to be solved

hence his conviction that policies will be more responsive to the needs of the people (*ibid.*).

The National Policy on Housing in Botswana like in many other developing countries, as has been argued by Erguden (2001), has tended to divorce housing from the broader development course. The failure to consider housing within the broader development framework has in a way hampered the implementation of the policy's recommendations. Where the recommendations are implemented there are limitations in addressing the problem they are meant to deal with. The enquiry on this research report recognises the potential that housing has with regard to poverty alleviation. It is worth indicating that this enquiry is premised on the assumption that the current approach adopted by the Government of Botswana (GoB) in poverty alleviation through housing, has some limitations. This assumption is prompted by the observation that what has been realised from the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing projects so far falls way below expectations. With this in mind, this report sets out to identify why the National Policy on Housing in Botswana has failed to meet its poverty alleviation objectives through the project in Francistown.

1.2 BACKGROUND

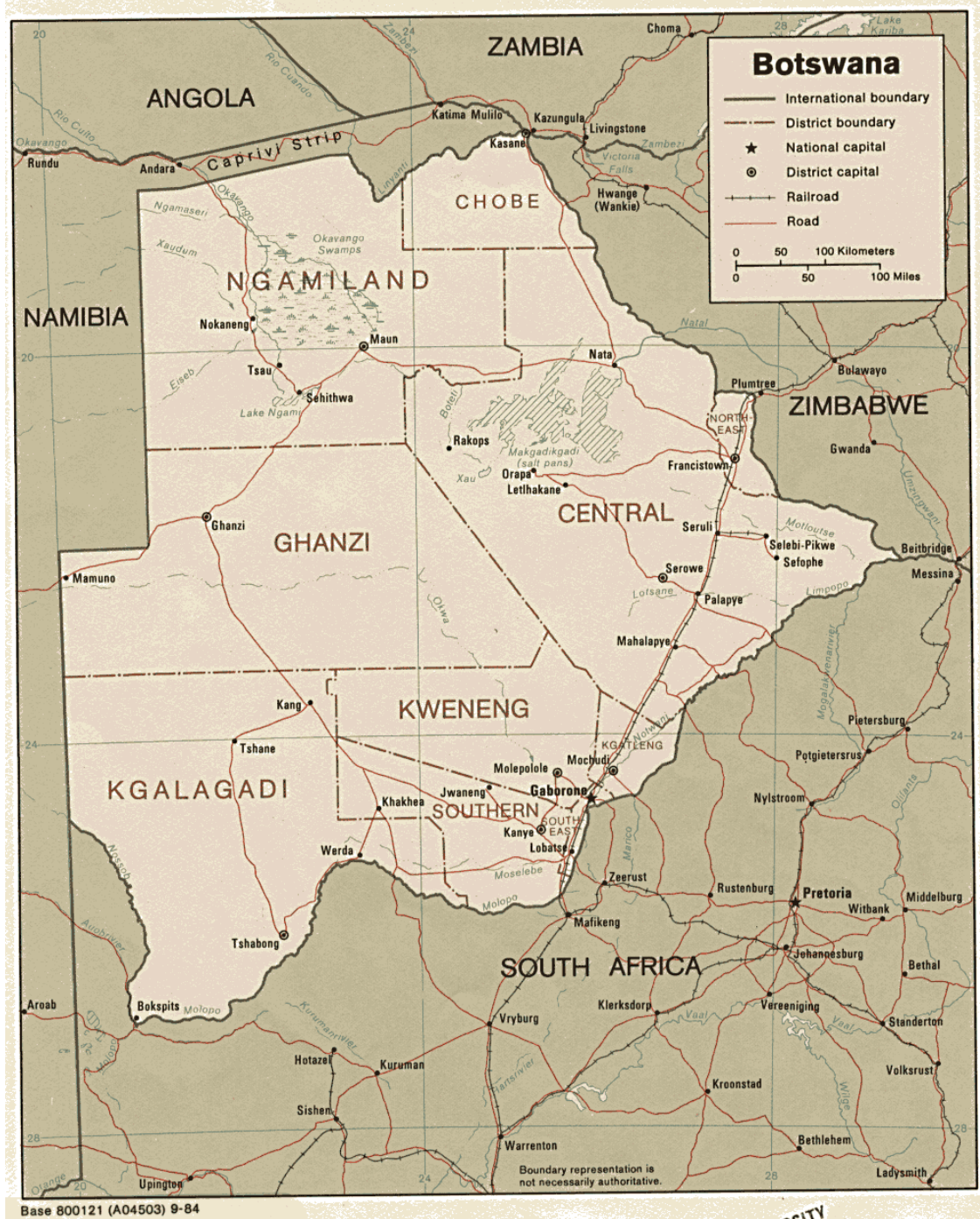
Gwebu (2003) states that unlike other sub-Saharan Africa countries, Botswana has experienced rapid urbanisation which brought about many results which were not planned for. This phenomenon is attributed to the "reclassification of rural settlements, designation of districts and sub-district centres and rural-urban migration" (*ibid.*: 140). It is pointed out that as at 2001, there was a population 910 500 living in urban areas in Botswana accounting for 54.2% of the country's total population. This was a drop from the 68% urban population recorded in 1998 (Wilson, Kanji, & Braathen, *eds.* 2001). It is further indicated that in a period of 18 years (from 1980 to 1998) Botswana experienced the highest urban population growth of 53% (from 15% in 1980 to 68% in 1998) whereas other Southern Africa countries experienced marginal growths of between 1% and 14% within the same period (*ibid.*). Botswana, a landlocked country lies at the centre of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region (See **Figure 1**). The urban

population growth in Botswana has been viewed as “...one of the most rapid processes of urbanization in history” (Wilson, Kanji & Braathen, *eds.* 2001: 6). Kennedy (*undated*: 1) citing UN Population Division (2002) points out as of 2001 “[i]n sub-Saharan Africa approximately 34% of the population ... [lived] in urban areas”. According to the statistics provided above, the average urban population of Sub-Saharan Africa is almost half Botswana’s urban population in terms of percentages.

Gwebu (2003) and GoB (2001) point out that Gaborone accounted for 186 000 of the urban population with Francistown managing 83 000 of the total urban population in 2001. Gwebu (2003) further observes that rapid urbanisation has placed a strain in housing provision. The observation made here is similar to the one made by Larsson (1989). She argues that Botswana experienced housing problems in urban areas within the first five years of gaining independence despite having an urban population of 58 000 in 1971. She points out that the influx of migrants to urban areas from rural areas, brought about by the need for labour to help with the construction of these new towns contributed to the problems experienced. Larsson (1989) further argues that the difficult living conditions in rural areas (due to factors such as drought spells) forced people to go to urban areas. The new and upcoming urban areas could not adequately provide for the rate at which people were streaming into them hence problems such as those that have been mentioned above with regard to housing provision (*ibid.*).

In response to the housing problems, as observed by both Gwebu (2003) and Larsson (1989), not only in urban areas, but in the whole country, the GoB came up with the National Housing Policy of 1982. The main focus of the policy was to address the strain put on the housing sector by among other factors urbanisation (SYA-FMA, 1997). With the passage of time (15 years in operation) the 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana was found to be inadequate in dealing with housing issues, hence its review which led to the current housing policy (*ibid.*). The new policy is geared towards facilitating “...the provision of decent and affordable housing for all within a safe and sanitary environment.” (GoB, 2000: iii). To achieve this, the policy intends to;

Figure 1: Location of Botswana in Southern Africa



Source: http://www.reliefweb.int/mapc/afr_sth/cnt/bot/botswana.html

- “change the emphasis of Government from home provision to facilitation in the various settlements in partnership with other stakeholders;

- channel more Government resources (and emphasis) to low and middle lower income housing in both urban and rural areas;
- promote housing as an instrument of economic empowerment and poverty alleviation; and
- foster a partnership with the Private Sector and all major employers in home development and facilitating home ownership” (GoB, 2000: iii-iv).

Of importance to this exercise is the third objective which deals with the promotion of housing as an avenue through which poverty alleviation and economic empowerment could be realised more especially for the vulnerable groups of the society. Despite having a separate policy on poverty reduction, the GoB found it appropriate that housing play a role in poverty alleviation. This desire to deal with poverty is entrenched in the country’s long-term vision (Presidential Task Force, 1997). The vision envisages Botswana to have an equitable income distribution with an economy “that creates sustainable jobs” (*ibid.*: 8). It also calls for poverty eradication “so that no part of the country will have people living with incomes below appropriate poverty datum line” (*ibid.*).

In its efforts to achieve the objective on poverty alleviation through housing, the GoB, through the Department of Housing (DoH), implemented the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme projects. The implementation of the above-mentioned projects is a response to a policy recommendation that “adequate steps should be taken to implement integrated urban poverty alleviation and shelter schemes...” (SYA-FMA, 1997: 77). This scheme is meant to cater for those not covered under the Self Help Housing Agency (SHHA) arrangement and was to be implemented in rural areas only. SHHA is a government’s programme that is meant to help low-income households within the income range of P4 400.00 to P36 400.00 per annum to realise housing (GoB, 2000). The maximum loan amount is P20 000 (*ibid.*). The income range per annum converts to R 4641.32 to P42236.01 and the maximum loan amount converts to R23 206.60 at an exchange rate of P1 = R1.16033 (<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi>).

When the White Paper on the National Housing Policy came out in 2000, it had adopted the recommendation but amended it to reflect that the scheme has to be implemented in both rural and urban areas. The White Paper states that “the urban and rural poor who are not covered by the SHHA scheme or the Destitute Policy should be provided with housing assistance under the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme” (GoB, 2000: 18). Implementation of this scheme in both settings was meant to address the poverty problems experienced in the country and to “give poverty policies [in Botswana] and programmes a national focus” (GoB and United Nations Development Programme-UNDP, 2000: 5). The scheme main thrust is on the integration of “skills acquisition, employment creation and income generation with shelter provision” (GoB, 1997b: 427).

The first stage of the project involves the identification of beneficiaries through the help of the Social and Community Development Division of the local Council where the project is being implemented. Once they have been identified they are trained in the production and marketing of “standard building materials such as stock bricks, blocks, pavement slabs and kerbstones for sale at competitive prices on the local market” (DoH, 2003:2). An allowance is offered to the beneficiaries dependent on the profit made from the sale of the project’s products. Averagely the beneficiaries earn around P368.00 (R 427.00) per month. Production of building materials run concurrently with the training of beneficiaries in basic construction skills. Skills acquired are meant to encourage the beneficiaries to build their own houses without having to employ some one to do it for them (*ibid.*).

The projects have to repay Government the initial capital invested so that a revolving fund can be created for replication purposes (GoB, 1997b). It is indicated that “all capital invested in the scheme will be recovered to constitute a revolving loan fund” (*ibid.*: 426) for replication purposes. Once the project has reached full production, with the needed resources in place, the Government pulls out and hands its management to the beneficiaries (DoH, 2002). This scheme has since been piloted in three urban areas of Francistown, Mahalapye and Ghanzi (*ibid.*). The ‘success’ of these projects has led the Government into replicating the project to Selibe Phikwe (Modikwa, 2006).

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the study is to find out why the National Housing Policy in Botswana has not achieved its intended objective of poverty alleviation through the 'Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Programme'. The outcome of the enquiry will inform a set of recommendations.

Specific objectives

- To understand the conceptual approach /position of Department of Housing on the 'Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme'.
- To analyse the conceptual position adopted by the Department of Housing in relation to the poverty alleviation approach adopted in the literature.
- To evaluate whether the objectives of the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Programme are being achieved, comparing objectives against outcomes.
- To identify challenges to the realisation of the programmes' objectives.
- To identify opportunities of adjustment for the programme to be more focused.

1.4 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT: LIMITATIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON HOUSING WITH RESPECT TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN BOTSWANA

The 'Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme' is touted as Government's multi pronged response to the hardships caused by poverty. The scheme has been running for almost seven years, on a pilot basis at the three mentioned sites (Francistown, Mahalapye and Ghanzi). Modikwa (2006) points out that there is another project that has been started in Selibe Phikwe. This replication resulted from an evaluation exercise carried out internally by the DoH in 2002. The main reason for having another project in Selibe Phikwe came from the observation made by the DoH that other projects were making profit (DoH, 2002). This unfortunate decision did not consider some of the most critical aspects of the scheme with regard to poverty alleviation. The following subsection highlights issues which have been neglected in making decisions to replicate the poverty alleviation scheme, as it is, to other areas.

1.4.1 Qualifying criteria for beneficiaries and conditions governing their participation

The criteria used to select beneficiaries are not clear. Infact there is nothing said about the qualifying criteria except that the beneficiaries should be households or individuals who are not able to access the SHHA loan facility. This is a programme that targets the poor who already have programmes meant for them. There is nothing said about whether one will qualify for it if he/she is enrolled in another programme targeting poverty.

1.4.2 Role of beneficiaries in the projects

According to the current arrangement of the poverty alleviation and housing scheme projects, beneficiaries are mere recipients of government assistance and the way the projects are to be run has been pre-determined by Government. This has left out the input from the beneficiaries and as such might be missing on very important issues that the poor would like to be addressed through the initiative.

1.4.3 The impact of the projects on the beneficiaries

In the reporting that has been done so far with regard to the impact of the project, there is little said about changes in the lives of the beneficiaries. The reports indicate that few structures have been built with some still under construction. The observation that “the objectives of employment creation and poverty alleviation will thus be achieved” (DoH, 2002: 2) when beneficiaries start earning a paltry P368.00 per month is unfortunate.

1.4.4 Financial sustainability of the project

The evaluation exercise on the project has been very limited. There is no mention of the fact that the projects might have realised profit (for the project) because the running cost of the project, safe for the beneficiaries’ allowances, cement, sand and concrete, are borne by the Government. These running costs involve vehicle fuel and maintenance, office expenses and salaries for the technical officers manning the projects. From this observation the project might not be sustainable once government pulls out.

1.4.5 Role players

Despite the mention of the beneficiaries ultimately taking over the running of the project, there seems to be nothing that suggests that it would happen. The Government is doing almost everything in the project with minimal involvement of other stakeholders such as the beneficiaries. Mention of role of other stakeholders such as the civil society is made but there seem to be nothing tangible coming out of it.

1.4.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Generally there has been no formal measurement framework prepared to gauge the progress of the scheme. It is not going to be easy to establish whether there is achievement of the desired objectives. Reliance on one officer to manage the project is a toll order.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

Why is the National Policy on Housing failing to achieve its intended objective of poverty alleviation through the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme?

The hypothesis for this study is that the limitations in the conceptual approach adopted by the DoH when formulating the scheme contribute to the failure by the National Policy on Housing to achieve its intended objective of poverty alleviation.

1.6 RESEARCH METHOD

1.6.1 Methodology

The methodology developed for this research report involved a literature review as well as utilisation of questionnaires, grey literature and observation which all helped me answer the research question and hypothesis. The research is on a Government project in the City of Francistown as its case study. I therefore requested permission from the DoH to use the project as the case study. I also requested for permission from the Francistown City Council to interview their Self Help Housing Agency staff. The request to the DoH was granted but I experienced problems at the Francistown City Council. Despite being given

the authority to go ahead with my interviews, it proved difficult to commit anyone to an interview until the head of the head of SHHA decided to step in. I was then able to interview only one senior SHHA official.

Existing literature was utilised for secondary data through the available library resources and the sourcing of grey literature from the GoB, which was not available in the libraries. To augment this, I administered questionnaires to the various interviewees. The following gives an account of the questionnaire administration. I need to point out that despite making mention of positions of the respondents no names are mentioned. This is mainly because they did not want their names mentioned for fear of victimisation or being associated with some remarks that might not go down well with their superiors.

- I interviewed 8 beneficiaries at the Francistown Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme. This was meant to find out from the beneficiaries how the project is impacting on their lives and also to find out if they have any suggestions on how it could be improved. I also visited five of the beneficiaries' dwellings to see the transformation that might have been made by their being involved in the project. I was fortunate to conduct these interviews when the project was going through a bad patch of material shortage. This made the interviewees have time with me.
- I failed to interview the three City Council staff members responsible for Self Help Housing Agency at the main office because none of them would like to commit for an interview. They cited time constraints and fear of victimisation as their main reasons. I however managed to talk to the senior officer responsible for the Council's housing department (SHHA). The said officer took me through what obtained when the integrated poverty alleviation and housing scheme was formulated. She was also helpful in providing what could be best in improving the project.
- I had expected to interview the Technical Officer, a staff member within the Department of Housing, responsible for the project. This was to find out how the project is run, the challenges experienced and how they deal with them. I failed to do so because of reasons beyond my control. A questionnaire was later emailed to him but no response has been received. I have made efforts to remind him but to no avail. It is

however worth indicating that some of the issues that he was to address were addressed by the national Government officials and the beneficiaries.

- Two questionnaires were given to senior staff members of the DoH. One of the officers was the Deputy Director and the other is the Principal Housing Officer under whose portfolio the poverty alleviation project falls. The questionnaires were to be self-administered by the said officers but only the Principal Housing Officer obliged. The Deputy Director partly did his questionnaire and I had to interview him to it.
- A questionnaire was also sent to a Non Governmental Organisation (Habitat for Humanity) but I did not receive any response from the institution despite numerous reminders.
- Questionnaires were sent to three academics and unfortunately I have not received any feedback from them. Reminders were sent to them but to no avail.
- I experienced problems, which were later resolved, when interviewing beneficiaries at the project. They had misgivings about me interviewing them because they thought the DoH was planning to phase out the project. It is important to indicate that my being aware of these limitations made me more prepared for the interviews in that I had to devise appropriate approaches to get useful insights from all my interviews. I had to brief each interviewee on the importance of undertaking this enquiry. They did understand as was evidenced in their openness to talk to me.

1.6.2 Limitations to the methodology

The main limitation to this enquiry has been the failure by some key respondents to provide feedback. The failure by the NGO, experts and the technical officer to respond has robbed the enquiry of valuable information. This has also influenced the outcome of the enquiry. This study is on a topic that has never been researched before, save for the evaluation exercise done in-house by the DoH (DoH, 2002).

The enquiry was conducted using only one case study and as such it is not good for generalisation. Despite this shortcoming, the enquiry provides vital information that can be used (Patton, 1987). In agreement with Patton (1987), Schwandt (1997: 26), with

reference to Stake (1995), argues that a case study is “not chosen for representativeness... [but]...because it can shed light on a particular pregiven issue, concept or problem”.

1.7 CONCLUSION

The research report points out that there are limitations in development policies in their endeavour to deal with problems that they have been formulated to address. The National Housing Policy in Botswana has not escaped that in any way despite its efforts to provide tailor-made programmes. The research report is structured in such a way that readers are taken through the various key themes of the project, starting off with defining poverty, poverty alleviation and the responses that have been made to poverty at various levels. This is followed by the discussion of the general importance of housing, and how it contributes to poverty alleviation. This enquiry borrows heavily from the conceptual framework of enablement as a guide towards the responses to poverty. The conceptual framework is discussed alongside the role of housing in poverty alleviation. It is of importance that we understand what poverty is, so as to come up with appropriate policies and strategies that are aimed at fighting against it to bring the desired results. This discussion enables me to point out how the National Policy on Housing in Botswana responds to poverty alleviation.

CHAPTER 2.0: POVERTY DEFINED

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Rapid urbanization the world over has led to the world's urban population growing from 14% in 1900 to 47.5% in 2001. This phenomenon has been accompanied by growth in urban poverty over the years (Mehta, 2000). Expectations are that there will be continued growth in urbanization, with the bulk of it occurring in developing countries. This growth is mainly attributed to the "natural population increase and the structural transformation of formerly rural areas on the periphery of urban areas" and continued urban rural migration (*ibid.*). United Nations Human Settlement Programme-UN-Habitat (2001) further observes that there has been an increase in the number of people who survive on less than the internationally accepted poverty line of US\$1 per day. It is also argued that there is a likely further growth in 2015 if the way development is carried out is left to continue as it presently does (*ibid.*).

Faced with this grim situation, it is appropriate that relevant policies be put in place. In 2000 the United Nations (UN) member states adopted the Millennium Development Declaration and embraced the eight goals commonly referred to as the 'Millennium Development Goals'. This was a further reaffirmation by governments around the world to fight any ills that threatened human settlements and a continuation of what was agreed at Habitat II (United Nations Centre for Human Settlement-UNCHS, 1998). Amongst the eight Millennium Development Goals is the goal on the eradication of "extreme poverty and hunger" by 2020 (GoB and UN, 2004: 9). With this in mind it is worth indicating that poverty might be history looking at the position that "[t]he reduction of poverty in all its forms [the world over] is now the prime objective of development policy" (UN-Habitat, 2003: 31). This development position is welcome because poverty remains one of the serious problems that the world, more especially developing world, is faced with currently alongside HIV/AIDS. Concerted and fortified interventions against poverty from all stakeholders are required.

2.2 FORMS OF POVERTY

Despite having different views on the definition of poverty, there is a general agreement that there is need to go beyond income based definition to cover other factors that are overlooked by income-based definitions. Those that are against the income-based definition of poverty argue that there is generalisation. They therefore point out that “poverty must be defined with reference to the living standards in particular countries, at a particular time” (Lal and Myint, 1996:30) because the living conditions across countries differ. UNCHS (1996a: 108) holds a similar position and argues that income-based definition of poverty is misleading in that it “simplif[ies] and standardis[es] what is highly complex and varied”. UNCHS (2001) is also for a well encompassing definition and argues that “[p]overty should not be seen narrowly in terms of income relation to costs of living” (*ibid*: 14).

Taking into consideration some of the limitations put forward, UNCHS (1996a: 108) broadly defines poverty as “lack of physical necessities, assets and income”. Lack of these things negatively impacts on the households and/ or individuals capability to meet their daily basic needs such as shelter and food (*ibid.*). Availability of such things as “[good] health, [high] life expectancy, literacy or access to public goods or common property resources” is vital in dealing with poverty (*ibid*: 108). Taking it up, Golbert and Kessler (1996: 500) argue that poverty could generally be said to be “a situation which prevents the individual or the family from satisfying one or more basic needs and from fully participating in social life”.

Also against the income-based definitions and with reference to UNCHS (2001), UN-Habitat (2003: 30) argues that the definitions “substantially underestimate...poverty because they do not make allowance for extra costs of ...living” with some of these ‘costs’ not being expressible in monetary terms. To show its discontent with income-based definition of poverty, UN-Habitat (2003: 29) argues that “[m]onetary measures of poverty have been used in many countries... [and] they do not capture the multidimensional nature of poverty”. With this in mind, UN-Habitat (2003) argues that there is need to define poverty holistically rather than paying attention to one particular

aspect of poverty which might make policy formulators fail to come up with appropriate interventions. The following are the major forms of poverty that came out from the literature and are relevant to the enquiry.

2.2.1 Income poverty

UNDP (2000) observes that there are two forms of poverty; income and human poverty, and the latter is discussed in the next section. It is pointed out that income poverty is made up of two forms: extreme poverty [absolute] which is “lack of income necessary to satisfy basic food needs” (*ibid.*) and measured in the calories needed per day (the international used definition which has been viewed as lacking). The other form of income poverty is the overall (relative) poverty which means “lack of income necessary to satisfy essential non-food needs such as for clothing, energy and shelter” (*ibid.*).

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific-UNESCAP (2000) takes care of the concerns raised by UNCHS (1996a) and defines poverty in a similar way as UNDP (2000) though with some minimal differences. UNESCAP (2000) agrees that there is absolute and relative poverty. The former is defined as “the cost of the minimum necessities needed to sustain human life” (*ibid*) which is pegged at less than US\$1 a day. UNESCAP (2000) goes on to point out that relative poverty refers to “the minimum economic, social, political and cultural goods needed to maintain an acceptable way of life in a particular society” (*ibid.*). This definition takes into account the social exclusion aspect that has been brought up by UNCHS (1996a) but left out by UNDP (2000). Amis (1995) argues that income poverty is rife in urban areas due to commodification and this has led the urban poor into debt in an effort to escape income poverty.

2.2.2 Human poverty

UNDP (2000) observes that human poverty refers to “lack of basic human capabilities” (*ibid.*) and this is manifested in various factors such as “illiteracy, malnutrition, abbreviated life span, poor maternal health, and illness from preventable diseases” (*ibid.*). UNCHS (1996a) points out that there is need to take into account ‘social exclusion’ in

defining poverty because there are instances where people have been excluded from “labour markets and from civil and political rights” (*ibid.*: 116). Broadening the definition of poverty take excluded into consideration.

Destremau (2001: 136) argues that human poverty should be viewed as a condition within which there are limited “capabilities that...allow individuals and groups to lead a satisfactory life, exert their freedom of choice and be protected in their human rights”. With this in mind and with reference to UNDP (1997: 4) she points out that the basic needs should “include opportunities to make the most essential choices for human development; longevity, health, creativity, the ability to have decent conditions of life, freedom, dignity, self-respect and respect of others” (Destremau, 2001: 135). The above-mentioned authors indicate that failure to provide for these contributes to the poor living conditions that most of the world’s poor people find themselves exposed to.

2.2.3 Housing poverty

UNCHS (1996a) points out that another form of poverty (housing poverty) is normally subsumed under the general definition and due to that has not received the attention it deserved. It is pointed out that housing poverty refers to a situation where “individuals and households...lack safe, secure and healthy shelter with basic infrastructure such as piped water and adequate provision for sanitation, drainage and the removal of household wastes” (*ibid.*: 109). In addition to this Pugh (2000) points out that “[h]ousing poverty depends on the distribution of prior income-that is income from subsistence, from wages or informal sector entrepreneurship, and from capacities to save and engage in self-help” (*ibid.*: 213). UNCHS (1996a) points out that housing poverty is linked to income poverty because “it is their [the poor’s] lack of income and assets that makes them unable to afford better quality housing and basic services” (*ibid.*: 114).

From the above discussion on poverty I can reach one conclusion that in their efforts to define what poverty is, the authors tend to discuss manifestations of poverty (Satterthwaite, 2001 as cited in UN-Habitat, 2003; Satterthwaite, 2003). These manifestations are dealt with in the next section. Drawing from the above observation,

poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that is conceptualised around the aspects of income, human capital, social capital and financial capital (UNCHS, 1996a; Moser, 1998). These aspects should form the basis on which policy makers can devise suitable mechanisms and strategies to address poverty. The multi-dimensional nature of poverty entails that it doesn't need to be dealt with in piece-meal approaches lest there is continued poverty growth.

2.3 MANIFESTATIONS OF POVERTY

With reference to the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995, Munkner (1996) points out that

“[p]overty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill-health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterised by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural life...” (*ibid*: 7).

UN-Habitat (2003) is in agreement with the above and argues that what could be viewed as manifestations of poverty varies across different settings. This is in agreement with Munkner (1996) who is convinced that what might be viewed as signs of poverty in rural areas might not necessarily apply to an urban set-up. Also in agreement with sentiments put forward above is UN-Habitat (2001). UN-Habitat (2001: 13) observes that “[t]he main features of poverty today include falling incomes, rising costs of living, especially within urban areas, and inadequate access to basic services such as water and sanitation”. In addition to those factors highlighted, other authors such as Korayem (1996) and Novak (1996) point out to other aspects that are highlighted below as indicative of poverty manifestation.

2.3.1 Inadequate income

UN-Habitat (2001) observes that there has been a worrying trend with regard to income levels in developing countries. It is indicated that population growth in developing countries is not accompanied by growth in the needed resources (*ibid.*). Africa has been singled out as the most affected of all the continents. It is observed that as in 2001, “Africa [was] the region with the largest share of people living below US\$1 a day” (UN-Habitat, 2001: 14). With reference to such a scenario, UN-Habitat (2003) argues that the failure to have adequate income impacts negatively on the potential of people to provide basic household needs. It is argued that this failure often leads to “inadequate consumption of necessities including food and, often safe and sufficient water; often problems of indebtedness, with debt repayments significantly reducing income available for necessities” (*ibid.*: 30).

Novak (1996: 55) observes that “[p]overty as a side-effect of economic development is viewed as resulting in unemployment”. The failure by households to be gainfully employed impacts negatively in them having disposable income to provide for their households needs. This has also contributed towards and exacerbated the income disparities in that the poor, due to prejudice and stereotype they normally find themselves doing menial short-term jobs earning paltry allowances (UNCHS, 2001). Hardoy, Cairncross, and Sattethwaite (1990) cited in Moser (1998) point out that “environmental hazards...have a ...serious impact upon the urban poor’s human capital, health and well-being” (Moser, 1998: 4). This has severe repercussion on the capability of the poor household to provide for its needs more especially when it affects the breadwinners of the households. This is also made worse by the unstable and risky asset base such as the labour force that is involved in some menial and insecure jobs mainly in the informal sector (*ibid.*).

2.3.2 Inadequate and unstable asset base

UNCHS (1996a: 195) points out that “[f]or a considerable proportion of the world’s population, their house in their most valuable asset and, for many, it is also their most significant item of expenditure”. It is argued that people use housing for many activities

that help sustain their lives (*ibid.*). A similar observation is also made by Moser (1998: 4) who argues that amongst the “[p]roductive asset-for the poor urban households the most important is often housing”. She points out that despite the asset vulnerability discourse having been mainly concerned with rural areas this has since been applied to urban areas to better understand urban poverty. She points out that urban poverty is based on “[t]he three generalized characteristics of urban life often identified as...commoditization, environmental hazard, and social fragmentation” (*ibid.*: 4). Characterisation of life this way is said to have impacted negatively on the ability of the poor to move out of poverty (*ibid.*).

With this in mind, Moser (1998) argues that assets can be classified into types and/ or groups that the poor are in control of in urban areas. These are labour, human capital, productive assets, household relations and social capital which have been found to be lacking for poor households and communities (Moser, 1998; UN-Habitat, 2003). Moser (1998) argues that despite the poor having control of the above-mentioned assets, the assets are not usually adequate to cater for the needs of the households. This is further compounded by the fact that more often the poor lack the capacity to manage the available resources (*ibid.*). Echoing similar sentiments, Rogerson (2001: 341) argues that “the greater the erosion of their [the poor’s] asset base the greater their insecurity and associated poverty”. This is in agreement with what Moser (1998) has pointed out that there is need to build up the asset base of the poor to help them move out of poverty. Amis (1995: 154) is also of the view that asset for the poor that are “both tangible (resources and stores) and intangible (claims and access)... [can] determine a household’s possible survival strategy and ability to cope”.

2.3.3 Inadequate shelter

UNCHS (1996a) observes that inadequate shelter introduces another form of poverty in ‘housing poverty’. It is indicated that this form of poverty entails “individuals and households who lack safe, secure and healthy shelter with basic infrastructure such as piped water and adequate provision for sanitation, drainage and the removal of household waste” (*ibid.*: 109). This has been attributed to many factors. UNCHS (1996a: 109) argues

that inadequate and “poor housing conditions in many urban areas in the South are due...to inadequacies in the capacity of city and municipal governments to expand infrastructure and service provision constraints”. To compound matters Moser (1998) and Amis (1995) argue that in as much as the poor would like to have publicly-provided services and infrastructure, that improve their living conditions, they may not be able to afford the charges. Korayem (1996) argues that inadequate shelter has far reaching repercussions for the poor mainly due to the poor housing and sanitary conditions.

Moser (1998) argues that there is need for the poor to have productive assets for them to be cushioned against the impacts of poverty. She singles out housing as of critical importance. It is however worth noting that she laments that where there is access to housing by the poor it is normally inadequate to cater for their needs. She further argues that there are restrictions on how to use it more especially where the poor are renting from those who have surplus rooms (Moser, 1998). Rogerson (2001: 347) in reference to Moser (1996) points out that “[t]he international experience confirms that housing is a critical asset for the urban poor”. In agreement with this is UN-Habitat (2003: 29) which argues that “lack of productive assets [such as a house] that might be used to generate income or avoid paying major costs” impact negatively on the ambitions of the poor to move out of poverty.

2.3.4 Exclusion

UNCHS (1996a: 116) points out that exclusion “includes not only people’s exclusion from basic needs because of a lack of income or assets but also their exclusion from civil and political rights” and this makes the poor vulnerable to life shocks. Defined as “short-term incidents that push a previously self-sufficient household over the edge” (Amis, 1995: 149) life shocks make it difficult for the poor to provide for their needs, more especially in situations where they are discriminated against (*ibid.*; UNCHS, 1996a). Miller (1996: 575) adds to say that “[t]he socially vulnerable become the economically vulnerable” in that “they suffer discrimination in the labour market” and this impacts negatively on their capability to provide for their needs. Exclusion is therefore viewed as contributing to the continued reproduction of poverty (*ibid.*). Moser (1998: 4) also argues

that exclusion plays a role in urban areas where “[c]ommunity and inter-household mechanisms of trust and collaboration can be weakened by the greater social and economic heterogeneity” characteristic of urban areas’ population. She points out that the criteria used in shaping up the urban form tend to exclude the poor from benefiting optimally from being in urban areas more especially in situations where their livelihood strategies are not supported (*ibid.*).

Contributing to this debate, Destremau (2001: 135) observes that exclusion “rests mainly upon the consideration of needs that should be fulfilled for an individual to be integrated in the society in which he or she lives and to perform the basic activities that have become standards”. She argues that failure to provide for these has resulted in fragmented and polarised societies more especially in urban areas (*ibid.*). UN-Habitat (2003: 29) observes that “women...children, unemployed youths and disabled people have all been identified as the most vulnerable amongst the poor”. This is attributed to the prejudice meted on them by the societies within which they live. This attitude has seen some groups, more especially the women-headed households, being denied access to land ownership “through either legal or cultural means” (*ibid.*). In addition, UN-Habitat (2003: 29) points out that “[w]omen-headed households tend to have fewer income-earning opportunities than male-headed households and are generally poorer”.

2.4 POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Poverty alleviation programmes must be seen to be addressing the various poverty manifestations that have been indicated above. There should be a clear understanding that what might have been found to be working in a given area will not necessarily work in another area (Destremau, 2001). Policies formulated should also be supportive of the poverty alleviation and make it an integral part of the whole policy formulation process (Rogerson, 2001). Golbert and Kessler (1996) point out that the World Bank played an influential role in the introduction of ‘safety nets’ as the only way through which poverty could be alleviated. They however argue that this approach is limited in that despite safety nets’ contribution to poverty alleviation, they “are in no way efficient tools to

eradicate poverty” (*ibid*: 508). They contend that safety nets tend to make the poor dependent on handouts and this does not help them move out of poverty.

In his contribution, Korayem (1996: 203) argues that poverty can be reduced through “the economic approach, the human capital approach, and the welfare approach”. His position has however been denounced as furthering the reproduction of poverty through such interventions as Structural Adjustment (Amis, 1995; Wratten, 1995; UNCHS, 2001; UN-Habitat, 2003). Moser (1998) points out that the ‘asset vulnerability framework’ is of great importance in dealing with poverty. She argues that the framework can be used to identify and classify assets that are vital in fighting poverty. The focus of the asset vulnerability framework is on what the poor have and could do for themselves before external assistance could be sought (*ibid.*). With this in mind she points out that the following are central in dealing with poverty;

- “Labor--commonly identified as the most important asset of poor people.
- Human capital-health status, which determines people’s capacity to work, and skills and education, which determine the return to their labor.
- Productive assets-for poor urban households the most important is often housing.
- Household relations-a mechanism for pooling income and sharing consumption.
- Social capital-reciprocity within communities and between households based on trust deriving from social ties” (Moser, 1998: 4).

Moser (1998) argues that the assessment of the assets that the poor have, makes an easier entry point for poverty alleviation intervention. Her argument is that interventions will be tailor-made to the utilisation of the potential of poor communities in helping them out of poverty. It is however worth indicating that this is not normally the case. UNDP (2000) argues that “most programmes [poverty reduction] still assume that external agents deliver the benefits and that the poor are passive beneficiaries...[l]ittle wonder that the poor often complain that they never see the benefits - while delivery agents complain that

poverty persists despite their good intentions and scientific methods” (*ibid.*). The above impasse shows that there is failure to ensure that all stakeholders, most importantly the intended beneficiaries, are taken on board when poverty reduction programmes are formulated. In reference to International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD] (1992), Mafeje (2001: 21) argues that “nowhere in the Third World have the ‘poverty alleviation’ programmes...realized their objectives, namely, poverty amelioration and redistributive justice”. He points out that the failure by poverty alleviation programmes to realise their objectives contributed to the formulation of measures aimed at poverty reduction which is well captured in the Habitat Agenda, Principle 28 (UNCHS, 1996b).

Contributing to this argument, Rogerson (2001: 342) argues that it is important “to build up the asset base of the poor and to expand better their capabilities to manage their existing package or portfolio of assets”. He is convinced that it is only through such undertakings that their potential to work themselves out of poverty could be realised. The general argument here is that creating an environment within which the poor can maintain their asset base to provide for their basic needs, and improvement in poverty levels will be realised in a supportive environment. Hjorth (2003: 382) argues that “effective poverty alleviation would not come easily-it requires significant change in current structures, attitudes, and values” failing which programmes implemented will not yield the expected results. He further argues that it is possible to have successful poverty alleviation interventions that yield the expected results provided interventions are “holistic, people-centred, and focused on action and learning” (*ibid.*: 390). Huchzermeyer (2004: 43) however warns that poverty alleviation could fail to achieve the intended objectives more especially where “economic indicators of poverty dominate”. With this in mind she argues that it is vital that poverty alleviation targets vulnerability and resilience of the poor.

In the following subsections, I highlight the important roles that can be played by various stakeholders in poverty alleviation. This is in line with the concept of enablement where it is argued that the state has to facilitate the involvement of interested parties in poverty alleviation (Moser, 1997; Destremau, 2001; Mafeje, 2001; Hjorth, 2003). The

stakeholders covered include the state, the intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders such as Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and the Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

2.4.1 Role of the state in poverty alleviation

Moser (1997) argues that governments have the responsibility to act in the best interest of their people and it is through the social policy that governments can address issues that affect their people. With this in mind she argues that appropriate and responsive anti-poverty policies and strategies will have to be produced (*ibid.*). Destremau (2001) points out that there has been an evolution of the state's role in poverty alleviation. She observes that of late the state plays a supportive role to various role players in poverty alleviation and this is achieved through formulation of responsive policies. She argues that "in the present time the state is supposed to withdraw partially, and leave space for the play of the market forces and the intervention of NGOs and the international agencies" (*ibid.*: 136). In agreement, Mafeje (2001: 23) argues that "[u]niversally, the modern state is held responsible for the well-being and welfare of its citizens". He however bemoans the fact that most states, more especially in developing continents like Africa have failed their citizens with regard to poverty alleviation (*ibid.*). Hjorth (2003) emphasises on the need for the state to create a conducive environment within which poverty alleviation programmes can be formulated and implemented to realise their objectives.

2.4.2 Role of the poor in poverty alleviation

Munkner (1996: 5) argues that "external aid, transfer of financial resources, transfer of knowledge from the industrialised countries to the poor and dispatch of experts alone are no solution for alleviating poverty". With this in mind he calls for the "active involvement of the population concerned in improving their own lot, relying on their own potentials and on the resources available to them" (*ibid.*: 5). Chambers (1995: 201) holds a similar position and argues that "[p]eople centred development starts not with analysis by the powerful and dominant outsiders... but with enabling local people especially the poor, to conduct theirs". UNESCAP (2000) argues that promotion of income, power and access for the poor should be central to poverty alleviation programmes. It is argued that

failure to pay attention to these factors “make[s] the working, living and social environments of the poor extremely insecure and severely limit the options available to them to improve their lives” (*ibid.*). Moser (1998) concurs and argues that there is need to exploit the potential of the poor in their quest to move out of poverty. External aid (from Government, NGOs or foreign aid) can only be brought in when the poor are failing to cater for themselves. Their consent have to be sought before a decision can be made (*ibid*; Napier, 2002).

In agreement with this view, Petesch and Narayan (2002: 490) argue that the development process should “fully integrate processes that help the poor people both assert and defend their interests”. Hjorth (2003: 382) concurs and states that poverty is a “complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon that has to be attacked by holistic and coordinated methods”. He further argues that “holistic, participatory, approaches that build on sharing of knowledge and learning by doing” (*ibid*: 381) within an enabling environment are key to the success of poverty alleviation programmes. He argues that this would only be possible when the “actual policy solutions are well grounded in a deep understanding of the causes of poverty and how the causes have been, and can be, effectively addressed” (*ibid*: 382). The argument here is that whatever is done in the name of poverty alleviation, would fail to yield the expected results if the intended beneficiaries have been not empowered to be part of the whole process.

2.4.3 Role of other stakeholders in poverty alleviation

UNCHS (1996a) points out that there has been a shift in the way governments around the world are running their affairs. It is indicated that governments are now supportive of what other stakeholders such Non Governmental Organizations and Community Based Organizations are doing within the confines of the rules and regulations set up. Botswana Institute of Policy Development and Analysis [BIDPA] (1997: x) points out that there is need to build “partnerships between Government and communities and individuals”. This partnership is meant to get optimal results from poverty alleviation programmes and projects. To further enhance the output of these projects and programmes, BIDPA (1997: x) argues that “the majority of supervision [and monitoring of poverty alleviation projects

and programmes] need to be contracted-out to the private sector”. The argument is that it will be “possible to achieve productivity levels comparable with private contractors” (*ibid.*). It is however worth pointing out that Erguden (2001) is not keen for the involvement of the private sector in poverty alleviation as he is for the involvement of the civil society.

Destremau (2001) points out the involvement of other stakeholders in poverty alleviation should be within the confines of the parameters set up by the state. She argues that it is meant to provide for monitoring and regulation purposes (*ibid.* and UNESCP, 2000). In agreement with this observation is Erguden (2001: 3) who observes that “there is general agreement today on the enabling approach in the formulation of housing policy”. He argues that as opposed to the market, the civil society is vital as it provides capacity building for communities and also local ownership over development which in a way could enhance attainment of development objectives. Besides capacity building, the civil society plays an advocacy role for the marginalized so that ultimately their plight is addressed (*ibid.*). I wish to point out that it might be difficult to involve the private sector in poverty alleviation but for the civil society’s involvement, the state could draw up guidelines on how they operate. It is also well known that despite the civil society being dodged by some problems such as fragmented communities, their delivery is far much better than that of government alone (UNCHS, 1996a and Erguden, 2001).

UNCHS (1996a: 337) argues that

“third-sector institutions such as NGOs, voluntary agencies and community based organizations...are seen as more cost effective producers and providers of housing, housing finance, land development and many forms of housing-related infrastructure and services than government bureaucracies”.

Harpham & Allison (2000) argue that in most cases, the civil society provides the needed resources that local governments do not have. Of importance here are the technical skills which the civil society more especially the NGOs and CBOs will have and utilise for

capacity building within the community in which they are based (Harpham & Allison, 2000 and Erguden, 2001). Harpham & Allison (2000) point out that the success of civil society in development is reliant on the type of partnership formed and they argue that the partnership that would yield expected results is one that is comprised of “features of social life-networks, norms and trust-that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (*ibid.*: 131).

2.5 CONCLUSION

The discussion on this chapter has indicated that it is not easy to pin-point certain factors as being manifestations of poverty. The various forms of poverty discussed are just a few of the many that will be found in different countries and situations. It is therefore appropriate that in defining poverty efforts must be made to ensure that what is defined does also reflect the circumstances within which it is being defined. The use of a generic definition of poverty is misleading for those who try to come up with anti-poverty measures. The definition leads to the creation of ‘one size fits all’ solutions which would not necessarily address poverty problems in a given setting.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional and complex issue hence calls for the responses that match its diverse nature. Interventions that are meant to address poverty should reflect the diversity and complexity of poverty. Based on this the expectation will be that the interventions will achieve the desired objectives. To achieve the above, poverty alleviation needs the involvement of various stakeholders besides governments. The involvement of other stakeholders is however dependent on what the state does. It is the responsibility of the state to ensure that a conducive environment is created. It is important to note that those targeted by poverty alleviation programmes and projects have a critical role to play in these interventions. The idea here is to make sure that whatever intervention is mooted, it should be able to address the concerns of the targeted group.

The involvement of the poor will help in such aspects as understanding the complexity of their livelihoods which will go a long way in enhancing the interventions. It has been shown that the poor have certain ways through which they survive poverty and it is

appropriate that they be involved. It has also been indicated that poverty affects different members of the same household differently and this is one aspect that has to be considered in poverty alleviation. Besides the poor being involved because they know how to deal with poverty, the added benefit could be that what they might help come up with inexpensive interventions which adequately meet their needs. Being the victims of poverty, the poor are better placed to help the professionals from governments and aid agencies to better understand how to deal with poverty. This is to make them learn from the poor and be able to see poverty from the poor's perspective. Making professionals learn from the poor, and having collective efforts in devising interventions can help in coming up with responsive and relevant interventions.

CHAPTER 3.0: THE CONCEPT OF ENABLEMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In discussing poverty alleviation in the previous chapter I did not consider whether the poverty alleviation interventions in the literature do in any way enable and/ or empower the poor and any other stakeholders in poverty alleviation. With this in mind it is opportune for me to highlight in this chapter how enablement can be the basis for poverty alleviation interventions. The concept of enablement is of central importance to this enquiry. From the previous chapter on poverty, it is evident that the state plays a pivotal role in poverty alleviation.

3.2 ENABLEMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

From the literature reviewed, it is indicated that to have successful poverty alleviation, there is need for the state to create an environment within which all stakeholders, the poor included, could effectively contribute towards poverty alleviation. UNCHS (1996a) points out that there has been change of state's role from one of a controller to that one of enablement to achieve development goals. With this in mind (*ibid*: 295) observes that enablement "includ[es] more actively supporting the initiatives of the private sector and of the community based organisations" and other stakeholders such as individuals, households and NGOs.

It is further observed that the "[e]nabling approach is also associated with political reforms, especially democratisation [where]...[p]opular participation and decentralisation now receive more official support than they used to be" (UNCHS, 1996a: 338). In addition to this Pugh (1994) argues that despite the shortcomings that enablement can experience, it is a concept which has been used to yield expected results. Pugh (2000: 8) defines enablement as "the design and implementation of economic, financial, socio-political and legal frameworks for enhancing efficiency and social effectiveness" in the development process. He further argues that enablement makes it possible to provide a conducive environment within which all stakeholders such as "states, markets, the

voluntary sector and households could achieve improvements in urban, housing and environmental qualities” (*ibid*: 224). Even though Pugh (1994) argued about the central importance of markets to the concept, he does point out that there is more to be done beyond “harnessing the markets” (*ibid*: 369).

Pugh (1999: 407) adds on to point out that “[e]nablement developed into a broad theory that state roles were to be used to create the legal, institutional, and economic frameworks for economic productivity and social effectiveness”. This is an indication that despite putting markets first, enablement still considers the crucial role states have to play in delivery of developments to their people. He argues that instead of viewing enablement as a way to promote market driven policies and reduction in state roles, there is need to view the concept as

“the reconfiguration of state roles in policy-making, institutional reform, and for instrumental social and economic purposes in housing finance, in the bridging of individualism and collective choice in the environmental improvement of insanitary squatter settlements and in blending state and market roles in land policies” (Pugh, 1999: 416-417).

Pugh (2000) further points out that “[a]n ideal enablement set of principles would bring together technical know-how, a broad participatory approach among residents with wide social inclusion, capability in urban development authorities and set rules whereby each partner would know its responsibilities” (*ibid*.: 141) to achieve sustainable urban development. To illustrate his convictions, he argues that enablement was vital in making people participate in informal settlement upgrading and provided for clear lines of responsibilities of the affected parties. He points out that enablement has borne some fruits in areas such as India, Sri Lanka, China and Chile because the framework had ‘pro-poor’ elements (Pugh, 2000). This is in situations where there was participation by the intended beneficiaries as partners in the development process and not as mere recipients of aid (Pugh, 1994). As Pugh (1994 & 2000) has rightfully indicated, enablement goes beyond just the creation of economic development programmes to empowerment of the

target group to ensure sustainability. This will be enhanced provided governments reform policies, institutions and the regulatory frameworks (Angel, 2000 & Payne and Majale, 2004).

Pugh (1994) however warns that the application of enablement in the housing sector could pose “some real dilemmas owing to its dependence upon reform in complex institutional conditions” (*ibid*: 368). He therefore advises that rather than addressing issues in piece-meal fashion it requires that “a simultaneous solution to problems of poverty, unhealthy urban environments, unsatisfactory housing standards, imperatives for increasing living standards, the empowerment of poor people, and good governance” (Pugh, 1994: 369). To achieve the desired results Pugh (1994) points out that there should be effective and efficient enabling framework that provides for monitoring, feedback and the revision of programmes that are being implemented (*ibid*.). He argues that enablement has provided “efficiency and effectiveness among some of its institutions, including good government, innovative NGOs and CBOs, productive and useful households, as well as firms acting in markets” (*ibid*: 370).

In support of the above argument are Hjorth (2003) and UN-Habitat (2003). Hjorth (2003: 381) argues that “the way towards poverty eradication goes through holistic, participatory, approaches that build on sharing of knowledge and learning by doing...guided by an enabling framework”. UN-Habitat (2003: 131) argues that “the enabling approach was developed to coordinate community mobilisation and organization, and to make the argument for state withdrawal” in service delivery. It is further observed that for enablement to be effective the state should play some roles in such activities as provision of “support in the form of training, organizational assistance, financial help and managerial advice” (*ibid*: 131).

3.3 RESPONSES TO POVERTY AT GLOBAL SCALE

The misconception around the definition of poverty as being mainly income-focused and the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) have been criticised for the “rising levels of urban poverty” (UNCHS, 1996a: 7) in developing countries. Wratten

(1995:11) concurs and argues that “[e]conomic crisis and structural adjustment policies introduced in the Third World have had a disproportionate impact on the urban poor”. In support of this argument, Amis (1995: 146) observes that “[t]here is... clear evidence from Asia, Africa and Latin America that the urban poor have suffered disproportionately from [structural] adjustment process”. He however warns against the danger of “focussing too narrowly on structural adjustment” (*ibid.*) as there are other causes to poverty. The economic crisis and the failure to come up with a more representative definition of poverty has left countries grappling with what kind of measures should be put in place to address poverty and at the same time meet the requirements of SAPs (UNCHS, 1996a). This led the World Bank into coming up with proposals for projects that have to be undertaken in the drive towards poverty alleviation (Korayem, 1996). A set of elements that had to be considered in poverty alleviation included;

- “measures to increase the income-earning opportunities of the poor by increasing their access to employment and assets;
- measures to improve the effectiveness of public expenditures in health and education in order to increase the poor’s opportunities for human capital formulation;
- measures to achieve effective targeting of all secondary income transfers (consumer and producer subsidies, and direct welfare transfers);
- the creation of an Emergency Social Fund to foster the above efforts and to protect the low-income population from the negative impact of adjustment measures” (World Bank, 1990 as cited in Korayem, 1996: 203).

Despite not having clear cut solutions to dealing with poverty, UNCHS (1998) states that member states should come up with possible ways to address poverty borrowing from what has been proposed by the World Bank. This call is captured in Principle 28 of the Habitat Agenda which states that:

“[t]he eradication of poverty is essential for sustainable human settlements. The principle of poverty eradication is based on the framework adopted by the World

Summit for Social Development and on the relevant outcomes of other major UN conferences, including the objective of meeting the basic needs of all people, especially those living in poverty and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, particularly in the developing countries where poverty is acute, as well as the objective of enabling all women and men to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen and productive employment and work.” (UNCHS, 1996b: 7).

This call has also been taken up by the first goal of The Millennium Development Goals which calls for members states to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” (GoB and UN, 2004: 9). This is in line with what is proposed by UNCHS (1998). It is observed that eradication of poverty requires “sound macroeconomic policies aimed at creating employment opportunities, equal and universal access to economic opportunities...; education and training that will promote sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work” (*ibid*: 66). Achieving these desired results requires an enabling and supportive regulatory framework (UNCHS, 1998). UNDP (2001) also argues that there should be some monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to gauge progress made by member states. UN-Habitat (2003) argues that poverty reduction is central to almost all development policies and this is mainly because “it takes some time before benefits reach the poor in most broad interventions” (*ibid*: 31). With broad interventions in place, it is expected that delivery will be enhanced (*ibid*.). With this in mind, calls have been made to come up with deliberate targeted mechanisms through which poverty could be addressed, even though some similar approaches have been criticised (Golbert and Kessler, 1996).

Contributing to this debate, Watkins (2005) states that “[i]n our interconnected world a future built on the foundations of mass poverty in the midst of plenty is economically inefficient, politically unsustainable and morally indefensible” (*ibid*: 4). He also calls for deliberate action to ensure that all people benefit from the economic development of their countries. UNDP (2000) argues that this call will only bear fruits when the poor are empowered failing which “the benefits of poverty programmes are unlikely to reach them

- or, if they do, [the benefits will fail] to make a lasting difference”. This is a similar view held by Harrison (2003) who argues that globalisation has resulted in unwarranted results more especially for developing countries. He points out that changes brought up by globalisation have resulted in job losses and sky-rocketing unemployment rates which in turn have negatively impacted on the livelihoods of communities. This occurs against the background of efforts by states to provide measures that would cushion people against the anticipated negative impacts of globalisation (*ibid.*). UN-Habitat (2003: 31) points out that in the implementation of structural adjustment policies “the poor are more adversely affected than the higher-income people” and don’t have any alternative to fall onto. It is with this in mind that there is need for responsive policy interventions in poverty alleviation.

3.4 RESPONSES TO POVERTY BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA SINCE 1966

Since gaining independence from the British Government in 1966, Botswana has witnessed socio-economic changes and this has not been enjoyed by all (Kerr and Kwele, 2000). It is argued that despite Botswana having been internationally acclaimed as “one of the fastest-growing economies in the world... [the country] has also exhibited rising unemployment, persistent poverty and widening income inequality” (*ibid.*: 1314). A similar observation is also made by Bar-On (2001) who is of the opinion that it seems that government’s interventions in Botswana are meant to keep the poor where they are without any likelihood of moving out of poverty.

The definition of poverty in Botswana is still based on the income levels as it is defined with reference to the poverty datum line and this is characteristic of most developing countries which failed to evade the income based definition of poverty (see Section 2.2). BIDPA (1997: i) defines poverty as “the inability to meet basic needs...[which] include absolute requirements such as nutrition, shelter and clothing, and relative requirements such as the ability to participate in basic recreation and to meet essential social commitments”. The failure to meet the basic needs is attributed to “low income and/or low human capability” (*ibid.*). The above position is what has been pointed out by GoB

and UN (2004) as informing the Botswana Poverty Line. Botswana Poverty Line is based on factors that have been considered in the country because of the need to provide a realistic picture of what is happening in the country (*ibid.*). It is pointed out that in setting the poverty line, the following were considered; food, clothing, personal items, household goods, shelter and miscellaneous items. These are said to be critical in constituting the 'basic needs' of a household in Botswana (*ibid.*).

Based on the above criterion, it is observed that Botswana witnessed an improvement in poverty levels from 59% of the whole population living below poverty datum line in the 1986 financial year to 47% in the 1997 financial year (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001; GoB and UN, 2004). It is further observed that there are some "considerable income disparities and regional [urban and rural] differences in poverty" (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001: 221) with 50% of the country's poor people residing in rural areas in 1994. In the same period, 46% of the poor resided in urban villages and 27% in towns and cities (GoB and UN, 2004). It is also observed that female headed households experience poverty than male headed households. 50% of the poor households in 1993 were female headed as opposed to 46% of male-headed households in the same period (*ibid.*). Robinson (2003: 66) observes a similar trend and argues that "[p]overty in Botswana is characterised by gender disparities – about 50 per cent of female headed households live below the poverty line compared to 44 per cent of male headed households". It is however indicated that there has been some improvements from the household poverty levels recorded. In 1985 poor female headed households accounted for 60% of the female-headed households with poor male-headed households accounting for 58% of the male headed households (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001; GoB and UN, 2004).

GoB and UN (2004) acknowledge that Botswana is still faced with poverty whose existence is blamed on the 'narrow economic base' which is not diversified and is heavily reliant on minerals (*ibid.* and Robinson, 2003). It is argued that due to the limited "opportunities for gainful employment; a poor endowment of agro resources; a small and sparsely distributed population-1.7 million in 2001... [and] a small and fragmented

internal market” (GoB and UN, 2004: 21), the country is faced with an uphill battle in its poverty reduction drive. Issues such as HIV/AIDS have been highlighted as some of the factors that complicate the drive towards poverty alleviation (*ibid.*). HIV/AIDS “takes people out of work, destroys accumulated wealth and creates new groups of vulnerable people” (GoB and UN, 2004: 21). Another factor that pushes people into poverty is the inaccessibility of land, water and finance that could help households produce food either for consumption or for both consumption and sale (GoB and UN, 2004).

In response to the poverty levels experienced in the country, the GoB formulated and implemented some social welfare policies and programmes since gaining independence (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001). Focus was mainly on rural areas as most of the poor were said to be in rural areas (*ibid.*, Robinson, 2003 and GoB and UN, 2004). It is worth indicating that the involvement of other stakeholders is on a small scale as government has assumed the whole responsibility of dealing with poverty. Below are some of the major interventions that the GoB came up with (GoB and UN, 2004).

3.4.1 The 1980 Destitute Policy

First to be implemented was the *1980 Destitute Policy*, which resulted from the expansion of social assistance from the central government to local government. This was because of the need to provide direction to the execution of social assistance (Bar-On, 2001) as the local authorities were better placed to implement the programme. This policy is meant “to provide income support to people defined as destitute according to criteria set by the GoB” (GoB and UN, 2004: 26) and has been revised in 2000. This policy also catered for “the provision of shelter to the needy” (GoB, 2000: 18). Bar-On (2001) observes that the policy refers to people eligible to benefit as those who don’t have assets (land, livestock and cash) and those that are not working because of age and disability.

Bar-On (2001) also states that “unsupported minors and persons rendered helpless due to a natural disaster or a temporary hardship” (*ibid.*: 257) can benefit from the policy. With regard to shelter, it can be provided to a needy household but its ownership remains with

the government so that it can be passed to another needy household in the event of social mobility or death of the beneficiary. Destitute shelter is wholly provided by government as “[i]t is the responsibility of the District/Urban Councils to provide shelter to the destitute families” (GoB, 2000: 18). It is also stressed that “it will be mandatory for councils to budget for the programme [provision of shelter for destitutes] and implement it” (*ibid.*). The policy is still in operation.

3.4.2 The 1982 Financial Assistance Policy

This policy followed the 1980 Destitute Policy and was meant to help in the creation of employment through provision of financial aid to qualifying and willing citizens of Botswana to set up some investment such as sewing, leather works and carpentry. This has since been stopped in 2002 as it was found to be no longer serving its intended mandate and was now being abused (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001; GoB and UN, 2004).

3.4.3 The 1984 Industrial Development Policy

This followed the 1982 Financial Assistance Policy and was revised in 1998 with a view “to diversify the economy, foster the growth of the private sector, assist small scale rural entrepreneurs, support growth and employment creation in towns and villages, and achieve higher levels of productivity” (GoB and UN, 2004: 26). This policy is still in operation but has since been modified to reflect and be responsive to the times during which it is being implemented (*ibid.*). There have been concerns that the role served by this policy has been usurped by the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA).

3.4.4 Labour-Based Public Works Programmes

In the mid 1980s the Government implemented the *Labour-Based Public Works Programmes* (commonly referred to as the Drought Relief Programme) which is meant to provide for those households that were affected by the drought spell that swept across the country during that period in addition to implementation of some government projects through labour intensive programmes (Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001; GoB and UN,

2004). This is a rural based programme that has since been implemented with some few stoppages when government considered that there was no drought. The programme is supposed to be beneficial to all it is targeting but this has not been the case. It has also been argued that this programme has tended to make the poor people dependent on Government. It is being implemented and depends on whether the President of Botswana declares drought or not. GoB (2006: 11) argues that the contribution of the programme is laudable in that “much needed employment has been created through the Labour Intensive Public Works Programme, with about 60 000 people engaged under the programme at one time or another during 2005”.

3.4.5 2002 Revised National Policy for Rural Development

In 2002, the Government revised the 1973 National Rural Development Policy, due to its inadequacy, to come up with and implement the 2002 *Revised National Policy for Rural Development* (GoB and UN, 2004 and GoB, 2002). The 1973 National Rural Development Policy was meant to promote “rural industrialization and agricultural development as well as provision of infrastructure and services” (GoB, 2002: 2-3). The new revised policy is more encompassing and is meant “to reduce rural poverty, promote sustainable livelihoods, stimulate rural development and income generation, diversify the rural economy, reduce dependency on Government, maintain and improve rural capital, increase agricultural productivity and promote participation in development” (*ibid.*: 26).

3.4.6 Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA)

Also implemented in 2002 is the CEDA programme which is meant for the facilitation of entrepreneurship in the country’s citizens. The expectation from Government is that those who benefit will be able to create additional employment opportunities for those who could not be absorbed into Government and the ‘small’ private sector job market (GoB and UN, 2004).

3.4.7 The 2003 National Poverty Reduction Strategy

One other programme implemented in 2003 is the *National Poverty Reduction Strategy* which is meant to “link and harmonise anti poverty initiatives, provide opportunities fro

people to have sustainable livelihoods through expansion of employment opportunities and improved access to social investment and to monitor progress against poverty” (*ibid.*: 26). This strategy is implemented and enforced by the Ministry of Local Government (GoB and UN, 2004).

In implementing these policies, programmes and strategies, the GoB states that all efforts are made to avoid a situation where the beneficiaries become dependant on Government. It is also stated that whatever assistance the government provides should be seen as a “short-term assistance” (GoB, 2003: 64). It is argued that beneficiaries will acquire the necessary skills that will be vital for them to work their way out of poverty. If this statement from the GoB is indeed true, then this will be an improvement from what Bar-On (2001) had observed. In an effort to improve on its poverty alleviation interventions the GoB has engaged “a fulltime Poverty Alleviation Advisor, with effect from September 2005” (GoB, 2006: 11).

3.5 CONCLUSION

It has been indicated how the concept of enablement is of importance in poverty alleviation. The influence of the World Bank has also been shown in its efforts towards poverty alleviation. The impacts of the institution’s sponsored projects have been found to be limited. This is mainly attributed to the criterion that the bank outlined that was based on the economic indicators. The failures experienced vindicated the proponents of a broad definition of poverty. The failures also helped in showing that there is need for other stakeholders to be involved in poverty alleviation besides governments. The concept of enablement has received widespread dominance since its inception and has been implemented in poverty alleviation with some mixed results.

Sustainability of most of the implemented anti-poverty programmes has always been an issue and this is evident from the discontinuance of some of the programmes in Botswana. Pre-cautionary measures should be undertaken to ensure that whatever anti-poverty measures that are implemented do not in any way make the poor mere recipients of aid. Anti-poverty measures should empower the poor so that they can sustain their

lives even when the initiators and facilitators of the anti-poverty programmes have long left. It is generally agreed that the poor have the potential which can be tapped and utilised towards them working themselves out of poverty. This is achievable within a supportive environment.

In the next chapter I discuss the contribution that housing can make towards poverty alleviation. I am convinced that currently the potential that housing has in poverty alleviation is not exploited optimally in Botswana. I therefore view this as a serious omission which has to be rectified.

CHAPTER 4.0: HOUSING AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to highlight the importance of housing and its potential in poverty alleviation. The chapter will also highlight the appropriate environment within which housing can be exploited to sufficiently address poverty alleviation. It is worth indicating that housing can effectively serve its poverty alleviation role within a supportive environment guided by the housing policy. This will only be realised in a situation where there is a shift and change of opinion of what housing is i.e. it is good that policy makers desist from viewing housing as a product but as a process through which there are some spin-offs to be reaped (Turner, 1972). The shift should be given prominence in the housing policies that are formulated failing which there will never be realisation of the potential of housing in poverty alleviation. Tipple (2000) is convinced that once there is a change in the way housing is viewed, all the other tasks that housing plays could be realised. It is with this in mind that he argues that

“[a] house is more than just a dwelling. It is a source of identity and status and a demonstrator of both to the outside world. It may become identified with, and a place of assembly for, a wider family or lineage than occupies it from day to day...it may also be a location for business which provides the basic necessities of life or for one that augments a main income.” (Tipple, 2000: 40).

Ha (2004: 140) also writes that

“[h]ousing is not only a necessity of life but also affects all aspects of our existence. Housing provides privacy and security against intrusions, both physical and emotional. It is the principal locus of our personal and family lives.

The above quotations indicate the importance of housing in human life and there are many more authors who agree with the sentiments echoed by both Tipple (2000) and Ha (2004). They are in agreement that housing plays a critical role in the well-being of

individuals, families and community (UNCHS, 1996a, Bratt, 2006 and Erguden, 2001). Bratt (2006: 408) argues that it is not adequate for housing to only provide physical structures but has to go beyond that and “promote a household’s ability to achieve economic independence or to become ‘self-sufficient’”. UNCHS (1996a: 115) argues that the failure by either an individual or household to have adequate income to provide for “better quality housing and basic services” contributes significantly to the ever growing poverty levels that is characteristic of developing countries’ urban areas.

Nordberg (2000) observes that “[r]esearch has clearly demonstrated that in most regions housing has the potential of becoming an engine of economic growth because of its high yield on invested resources, a high multiplier effect, and a host of beneficial forward and backward linkages in the economy”. Concurring, SYA-FMA (1997: 3) argues that “[h]ousing plays an important role in the national economic and social development process particularly through its contribution to employment creation, import substitution, real capital formation and acquisition of skills”. In addition to these housing plays a significant role in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is also of critical importance in “ensuring social stability and improved health” (*ibid.*). Erguden (2001: 2) observes that housing has “central importance to everyone’s quality of life and health... [and] has much wider economic, social cultural and personal significance”.

Bratt (2006: 400) also argues that “housing is a critical element for families who are striving to achieve economic security and that it is essential in both promoting family well-being and providing a springboard from which other careers and income-enhancing initiatives can be launched”. Mumtaz and Wegelin (2001: 78) are also convinced that “housing has a vital role to play in the survival strategy of the poor”. In addition to this, Bratt, Stone and Hartman (2006: 1) concur that housing plays a central role in people’s lives in that it is the “basic building block for a range of related benefits-personal health and safety, employment opportunities, a decent education, security of tenure, [and] economic security”. With this in mind, various aspects are discussed, in the following section, to show the importance of housing.

The various authors cited above have indicated how important housing is to human life. Its importance is not only limited to the conventional value but goes beyond to serve diverse human needs. How housing impacts on human life depends on various aspects, some of which are the other uses other than the conventional one, e.g. provision of good quality life, provision of safety, human dignity, and many others. If left unchecked, housing can negatively contribute to human life more especially where dynamics of human livelihoods are left out when interventions are formulated. It is therefore important that the available institutions and structures can make housing a success so that many development problems could be resolved.

4.2 ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF HOUSING

As indicated above housing has a critical role to play in the overall economy. The following are some of the economic importances of housing that are of relevance to understanding the role of housing in poverty alleviation.

4.2.1 Employment and income generation

Abram (1964: 109) argues that “[h]ousing...plays a major role in stimulating employment”. This has been of importance to most developing countries as housing helped in absorbing the unemployed more especially those who came to urban areas seeking better life opportunities (*ibid.*). He however warns that not all housing programmes could be sources of employment. He argues that maximizing the use of “domestic [building] materials could be the principal means of employment” (*ibid.*: 110). Contributing to this, Erguden (2001) argues that housing is one sector of the development that can provide employment opportunities for most of the unskilled people. He observes that “[t]here is... a consensus on the role of housing construction in employment generation,... which is extremely important in the economies of the developing countries” (*ibid.*: 2).

It is also stated that besides the construction process creating job opportunities for many unskilled people, the finished product also provides the opportunity for owners to start home based enterprises (HBEs). The HBEs are also employment opportunities for other

people in the community (Erguden, 2001). The observation made is similar to the ones held by Abram (1964), Moser (1998) and Larsson (1989). They argue that houses can be areas where small HBEs are undertaken with minimal costs to the enterprise owner. Moser (1998: 4) argues that “housing is an important asset that generates income through, for instance, renting rooms and the use of its space for home-based production activities”. Tipple (2000: 51) argues that “[f]or many low-income households, the dwelling is also one of the few resources they have for generating income”. He states that these income-generating activities could range from renting of rooms to home-based enterprise. He is however wary of the fact that Government official hamper the progress of these undertakings through their oppressive development regulations (*ibid.*). On a different but related matter, SYA-FMA (1997) argues that the amount of revenue generated from building jobs for contractors is enormous. It is indicated that clients are normally willing to spend lots of money in the construction of their housing (*ibid.*). In agreement to the sentiments echoed above is Rust (2006). She argues that housing can be utilised to produce small-scale landlords and create small home-based enterprises.

4.2.2 Import substitution

Abram (1964) argues that the housing process could act as an import substitution in instances where there is encouragement of local building materials and technology’s use. He states that if there is deliberate action to do this, the local economy will be expanded in that it would be cheaper to use local building materials as compared to use of imported building materials. The same goes for foreign building technologies (*ibid.*). With relatively cheaper building materials and technology, Abram (1964: 110) argues that there will be “increase[ed] local purchasing power”. In agreement with this view is SYA-FMA (1997: 4) which argues that the “housing sector... contributes to the production of local building materials and hence facilitates import substitution”. It is further indicated that the failure to have deliberate policies in place promoting the use of local building materials and technology have seen developing countries spend more than they could afford in importing building materials and technologies (*ibid.*). With this in mind, SYA-FMA (1997) calls for promotion and support of small scale materials production companies that will utilize local technology in the production of building materials. It is

further argued that subjecting the local building materials to the stringent foreign building standards does not augur well for the local people (*ibid.*).

4.2.3 Promotion of savings

Abram (1964: 110) argues that “housing... play[s] an important part in developing savings and releasing unproductive capital into the economy”. He states that the importance attached to housing might lead people to save towards the construction and/or purchase of their own houses. This is similar to what Erguden (2001: 2) observes when he argues that “housing should not be looked at as a problem area requiring major social spending but as means for promoting and mobilizing savings”.

4.2.4 Promotion and growth of other sectors of the economy

Abram (1964: 110) observes that the multiplier effects of housing are immense in that it “fosters other industries, such as production of building materials” and this is not only for residential development but for any other construction work that would need building materials. He further observes that construction generates the need for complementary “services and utilities, shops, and communal facilities...transport, power” (*ibid.*: 110) and many other needed facilities. He argues that the provision of these further creates employment and income generating activities for various members of the communities as well as contributing to the country’s capital formation process (*ibid.*). Pugh (2000: 208) also observes that the “‘economic multipliers’ which generate income in housing-related industries.... [are] higher than other sectors” more especially in situations where there is less reliance on imports such as building materials and technology.

4.2.5 Contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

SYA-FMA (1997) argues that the contribution of housing to country’s economic development is unquestionable. With reference to Botswana, SYA-FMA (1997) observes that the increase in the change in construction brought about positive growth in the GDP. Echoing similar sentiments, Pugh (2000) indicates that housing investment in Singapore contributes immensely to the country’s GDP alongside housing delivery to citizens.

4.3 NON-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF HOUSING

Below are the non-economic attributes of housing which are very critical in determining whether an individual, a household or community stays out of poverty.

4.3.1 Access to better living environment

UNCHS (1996: 195) observes that quality of housing should be discussed in terms of “size relative to the number of inhabitants, the quality of construction and the extent of provision for water supply, electricity, sanitation and drainage”. Whenever there are new housing developments there are other services that have to be provided to complement the residential development. Facilities and services such as schools, health, drainage, recreation, transport, electricity, water, and sanitation have to be provided (Ha, 2004). Provision of all these improve the living conditions and do also add onto the value of the houses that have been constructed. Some authors have indicated that this is also influenced by the location of the housing development and that “its [housing] location is important in terms of the access it provides its residents to city services” (UNCHS, 1996: 195).

UN-Habitat (2003) and Ha (2004) observe that the poor more often find themselves living in poorly located areas. This is attributed to their failure to afford the market prices that are charged for land that is suitably located (*ibid.*). By living in poorly located areas, the poor are denied adequate access to such services as education, health, employment, and security of tenure (*ibid.*). In agreement with this are Bratt, *etal* (2006: 2) who argue that “[w]here one lives-particularly if one is poor...plays a critical role in fixing a person’s place in society and in the local community”. They argue that decent housing brings to the owner and occupant human dignity. Rust (2006: 9) argues that housing offers the owners and their relatives “secure and legal access to the urban spaces the good services that are normally associated with urban areas”.

4.3.2 Secure tenure and access to credit

UNCHS (1996: 195) argues that housing tenure should be discussed with reference to “the proportion of households who, as legally recognized owners or renters, have

protection against sudden or arbitrary eviction”. Secure tenure provide housing owners with the opportunity to utilize their houses to improve their lives in that they could use their houses as collateral in the event that they need financial assistance from commercial financial institutions (UNCHS, 1996; UN-Habitat, 2003; De Soto, 2001). De Soto (2001) argues that there is failure to tap the potential of assets that the poor have, housing included. He is of the view that these assets can be turned into capital which can be used to improve the lives of the asset owners. He argues that assets “can be used to put in motion more production by securing the interests of other parties as ‘collateral’ for a mortgage,...or by assuring the supply of other forms of credit” (*ibid.*: 37). Secure tenure offers the plot and house owners the leverage to go on and invest in their residential development without fear of being evicted at some point in time (Ha, 2004). UNCHS (1996) and Ha (2004) argue that acquisition of secure tenure depends on the affordability and accessibility of housing development. It is indicated that housing continues to be unaffordable and inaccessible to many people due to the market forces at play hence the proliferation of informal settlements and slums (UN-Habitat, 2003; Ha, 2004).

4.4 ROLE OF HOUSING IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The discussion on the significance of housing above has revealed that housing has the potential to address poverty manifestations that have been discussed under section 2.3. This is therefore an indication that housing has a role to play in poverty alleviation even though it “is rarely used as an element of poverty alleviation strategies” (Nordberg, 2000). Erguden (2001: 2) makes a similar observation when he calls for changes in perceptions from the one that views “housing...as a problem area...[to the one that views housing] as a means for ...expanding employment, and economic activity particularly as a tool for poverty alleviation”. Abram (1964: 109) indicates that “houses...are often the small production centres for the tailor, dressmaker, or storekeeper”.

In agreement with the above sentiments, Larsson (1989: 1) argues that housing has the potential to offer “both short-term and long-term security...and self-employment activities”. She argues that people could have economic activities undertaken within the household, provided regulations allow, and that adds to the drive towards poverty

alleviation. Moser (1998) also argues that housing can be used for various income-generating activities. She observes that “[h]ousing is commonly identified as a basic need or item of household consumption [and]...an important productive asset... that cushions households against severe poverty” (*ibid*: 10).

Contributing to this debate, Rogerson (2001: 347) argues that “secure housing is a productive asset which can serve to cushion the poor against the crushing impacts of poverty”. He points out that there is need to have targeted housing programmes that will “assist households to become less vulnerable, offering them a greater number of choices and opportunities for development” (*ibid.*). Erguden (2001: 2) concurs and argues that housing should be seen “as a means for promoting and mobilising savings, expanding employment and economic activity particularly as a tool for poverty alleviation”. Cross (2006: 4) indicates that the South African government intends achieving its anti-poverty strategy objectives, through the “delivery of free public housing as the basic platform for household asset accumulation to take place”.

In reference to Hirsch (2005), Cross (2006: 4) argues that “providing poor families with subsidized house as an asset base, [is] intended to support further accumulation through household self-investment over time”. She however warns that housing delivery does not necessarily transform into poverty reduction as there are more other aspects that need to be considered to help an individual and/ or household to move out of poverty (*ibid.*; see Moser, 1998). Tomlinson (2006: 2) argues that in addition to housing being recognised as an important asset for individuals and households, “housing can contribute to the alleviation of poverty through the generation of income by owners renting out space for either residential or commercial usage”.

It is however worth pointing out that exploitation of housing as a poverty alleviation tool will be successful within the regulatory framework that accommodates the activities undertaken (Payne and Majale, 2004). Lankatilleke (1990) and Chen (1993) are also convinced that the existence of responsive development regulatory framework can go a long way in meeting people’s needs. Sivam, Evans, King, & Young, (2001: 110) also

argue that “inappropriate, excessively detailed and inflexible regulatory and legal framework” is prohibitive to development. With this in mind, Chen (1993) calls for the introduction of accommodative, responsive and flexible development controls.

4.5 LIMITATIONS OF HOUSING IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

It is worth pointing out that despite overwhelming evidence that housing can contribute towards poverty alleviation, there are certain aspects that hamper its contribution. Below are the aspects that need attention in an endeavour to exploit the potential of housing in poverty alleviation.

4.5.1 Accessibility to land and secure tenure

Rogerson (2001: 354) referring to Republic of South Africa (1997: 15) argues that land is “the most critical element of overcoming poverty”. Huchzermeyer (2003a: 212) is in agreement and argues that “land is an up-front component of low-income housing” but this is not normally the case as low-income households fail to access land (Kironde, 1995). It has also been argued that there have been some discriminatory practices on land allocation procedures and the low-income households becoming victims in the process (*ibid.* and Todes, 2003). Todes (2003) points out that environmental and economic concerns have more attention paid to them than housing. With regard to economic reasons she argues that “[l]and that might once have been seen as appropriate for low-cost housing is not considered for these purposes for fear of undermining economic activities, such as tourism” (*ibid.*: 116). This problem is well said by Kironde (1995: 87) when he argues that “[w]ith specific reference to land, it has been observed that for most African countries, the policies adopted by the post-independence governments [are] aimed at getting the socially powerful classes’ access to valuable land cheaply”. It is with this in mind that the poor fail to access properly located land.

4.5.2 Access to affordable housing finance

Failure by the poor to be gainfully employed and their involvement in the informal sector have been contributing factors to them not being able to access and even afford housing finance. Besides these there are other factors such as “...the process of providing serviced

land, streamlining the procedures to obtain building permits, setting realistic building and design standards, and making the construction industry more competitive”(Kim, 1997:1604). When these are attended to, affordability will be enhanced in that more often these factors contribute to the unaffordability of housing finance. Gardener (2003) argues that there is need for housing policies and finance mechanisms to provide for all forms of tenure-ship equally to accommodate different groups of households in the society. This will go a long way in providing for the poor that are left out by the existing financial establishments (*ibid.*). Bonyaboncha (1995: 20) calls for community savings and credit scheme that is a “self- managed activity in assisting community members through the development of a group process and agreement on simple rules and regulations...by the community themselves”. He is convinced that such arrangements will make the poor access finance according to their own affordable terms as opposed to the market-driven financial institutions. He indicates that this form of financial arrangement was started in Thailand because “the poor have lacked access to any form of credit from the state system” (*ibid.*).

4.5.3 Market practices

The implementation of market-driven policies has been viewed as detrimental to the many poor individuals and households. This practice has been instrumental in defining the current South African’s urban form. Huchzermeyer, (2003b) argues that the cost component of land in the subsidy scheme in South Africa played a pivotal role in encouraging the “developers to propose (and officials and politicians to approve of) vast and monotonous projects on the urban periphery, rather than...on well located vacant land” (*ibid*: 120). This has also been observed by Sihlongonyane & Karam (2003) who argue that “[t]he market dictates the parameters of housing location” (*ibid*: 173) and as such low income housing will continue to be located in the periphery of urban areas where land costs are said to be affordable to the poor. This does not consider other opportunity costs that are involved when the poor are pushed out due to the market practices. Ogu (1999: 243) argues that “[t]o enable urban households to have access to sustainable housing, balance should be found between land and housing market

efficiency and the likely inability of many urban dwellers to participate in such a market”.

4.5.4 Regulatory and legal framework

The regulatory and legal framework needs to be responsive to the affordability and needs of the local people (Lankatilleke, 1990; Chen, 1993). Sivam, Evans, King, & Young, (2001: 110) also argue that “inappropriate, excessively detailed and inflexible regulatory and legal framework” is prohibitive to development and the involvement of other stakeholders. It is from this position that Chen (1993), with reference to China, calls for the introduction of accommodative, responsive and flexible planning standards and regulations. He observes that conventional planning that places emphasis on the state as the central role player is not ideal. He argues that centrally pre-determined solutions in most circumstances fail to provide for the intended beneficiaries (*ibid.*). With specific reference to housing development he says that “there is no possibility for the occupants to adjust and transform the housing layout to suit their individual living demands at a later stage” (*ibid.*: 113). Ogu (1999: 244), though with reference to Nigeria, argues that “[u]nless building and planning regulations take into consideration the reality of the poor income base of the majority of urban residents, they could end up being counter productive”.

4.6 THE CONCEPT OF ENABLEMENT AND THE HOUSING SECTOR

Ha (2004: 151) argues that “enabling approaches are the most important and [are] necessary for low-income housing policy...[as a]...response to housing problems and the failure of conventional public sector responses”. He observes that this approach should yield expected results. In pursuit of an enabling environment in housing Ogu (1999) indicates that there are certain aspects that have to be considered. He argues that the following aspects are prerequisites:

4.6.1 Housing finance

With reference to UNCHS (1990), Ogu (1999: 233) calls for the “formulation and implementation of financial policies that could channel resources to investments in the

housing sector, including institutional capacity building in housing finance”. He argues that various financial mechanisms that are affordable to many will go a long way in even providing for the disadvantaged in their quest to realise housing and its inherent benefits.

4.6.2 Regulatory framework

A regulatory framework that works well is also important for enablement in housing (Ogu, 1999). With reference to (UNCHS, 1996a), he argues that there is need for the “management of the legal and regulatory framework by the government in such a way as to enable people, NGOs and private sector actors to be in a better position to produce housing and related services” (Ogu, 1999: 233).

4.6.3 Security of tenure

As has been mentioned under sections 2.2.3 and 4.3.2 of this document, secure tenure is pivotal in housing. Ogu (1999: 233), citing UNCHS (1994) advocates for the “granting of security of tenure to low income earners and removal of inhibitive legal and bureaucratic controls on housing development”.

4.6.4 Responsive development standards

Calls for responsive development controls have been made and Ogu (1999) is in agreement with such. He cites Wegelin (1983) and calls for the “formulation of building standards and planning regulations that take cognisance of the demands of, and affordability to, low-income earners” (Ogu, 1999: 233).

4.6.5 Accessibility to affordable building materials and technology

With the implementation of responsive development standards, expectations are that this should also be extended to the accessibility to affordable building materials and technology. It is with this in mind that Ogu (1999: 233), in reference to Hamdi (1991) calls for the “improvement of ...avenues through which formal and informal builders gain access to building materials and cheap and better utilities”.

4.6.6 Role of other role players besides government

The importance of involving other stakeholders other than the state has been encouraged. It is with this in mind that Ogu (1999: 233), citing Choguill (1996), calls for efforts to provide “encouragement to, and support for, households, community organisations and NGOs” to be involved in the development process.

4.6.7 Development partnerships - public, formal and informal

UNCHS (1994) recognises the untapped potential in the informal sector and it is with this in mind that Ogu (1999) calls for development partnerships between the public, formal and informal private sector. He calls for these entities to “complement and mutually support each other, and help resolve “needs-demand gap” in housing that people can really afford and what the market is capable of producing” (*ibid*: 233).

It is with these in mind that Ogu (1999) argues that there is need for a supportive policy environment coupled with implementation of the policy recommendations. He is convinced that once the above aspects are put in place, the housing sector can perform to the expectations. He argues that the limitations to exploiting housing for poverty alleviation, as discussed under section 4.5 could be dealt with once all the factors that are essential for an enabling housing environment are put in place. Based on the argument put forward by Ogu (1999) it is obvious that different stakeholders have to play an active role in the realisation of the housing policy’s objectives. This observation emanates from the fact that many of the factors that have to be in place to create an enabling housing environment do not directly fall under the control of the housing sector. This calls for a coordinated approach to development.

4.7 TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSING THE LIMITATIONS OF THE HOUSING POLICY WITH RESPECT TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Poverty alleviation has been singled out as one of the many national challenges facing Botswana (GoB, 2006). It is argued that the Government has come up with strategies such as the

“adoption of a Fiscal Rule, extending the principle of cost sharing and recovery to services that have traditionally been provided freely by Government, public sector reforms, promoting efficiency in the parastatal sector, accelerating the transition rate from junior to senior secondary schools, and increasing resources available for youth programmes.as an effort towards dealing with these challenges” (*ibid.*: 2).

Kerapeletswe and Moremi (2001) argue that people’s participation is vital to the realisation of the above in Botswana with government playing a facilitation role. They however point out that the government still fails to provide for the poor as evidenced from the high incidence of poverty more especially in the rural areas. Bar-On (2001) is more critical and argues that there seem to be lack of enthusiasm when dealing with poverty in Botswana by the government. It is further argued that it seems the government would prefer to keep the poor alive rather than have social mobility and the poor moving out of poverty (*ibid.*). The failure to provide for the poor is acknowledged by the GoB and UN (2004). They observe that “Botswana has a serious problem of poverty...with limited capacity for sustainable employment creation and poverty reduction” (*ibid.*: 21). In an effort to attend to this shortcoming, the GoB has devised a ‘three pronged’ approach to deal with poverty which aims to address “trends in patterns of livelihood, unemployment, education, health, economic growth and investment” (GoB and UN, 2004: 22). Gaetsewe (2002) indicates that the three-pronged approach is made up of income, capacity and participation.

The existing housing instruments and programmes supported by government are mainly for ownership of assets such as houses and automobiles. The Self Help Housing Agency loan facility promotes home ownership to qualifying households. This programme is meant to provide only housing to those who own land in either rural or urban areas. There is also the Government Employee Motor Vehicle Advance Scheme (GEMVAS) which promotes home ownership and purchase of motor vehicles by government employees only (SYA-FMA, 1997 and GoB, 2000). Another mechanism in place is an arrangement that government has with Botswana Building Society (BBS). BBS is a bank that the

government holds some shares (GoB, 2000). The arrangement is such that government will be able to guarantee 25% of loans secured from the bank by citizens (in their first loan with the bank) to either purchase or develop property (GoB, 2000). There is also the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC). This is a parastatal organisation which has been mandated to provide “middle income rental housing in urban areas and major villages” (SYA-FMA, 1997: 92).

These arrangements have not been without controversy. SHHA has been critically affected by defaultment running into millions of Botswana Pula (Botswana currency). SHHA also left out critically poorer people from housing provision. GEMVAS has also been affected by misuse before new mechanisms were put in place to curb the abuse. BHC has since built houses that are out of reach for the intended beneficiaries more especially the middle income group. The realisation that there are other people that are not catered for by the already existing housing programmes prompted the GoB to come up with the ‘Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme’.

Based on the objectives of this research report, the framework of analysis will cover the following aspects:

4.7.1 The housing policy environment in Botswana

A general overview of the policy environment is essential so as to give a picture of the setting within which the housing policy is implemented. This should cover general aspects of property rights, housing finance, housing subsidy scheme, residential infrastructure, and the regulatory regimes (Angel, 2002). All these add up to the creation of an enabling environment for the effective and efficient implementation of the policy.

4.7.2 The facilitative role of the Department of Housing in the implementation of the National Policy on Housing in Botswana

It is important to establish what is entailed in the facilitative role of Government that is promoted by the housing policy (GoB, 2000). Davidson and Payne (1983) argue that the state should provide an enabling environment for low income households to provide their

own housing according to their affordability. They also add that there might be need for governments to come up with initiatives that could help some of the low income households to realise their housing and other related needs. Lankatilleke (1990) indicates that due to the conventional planning process most households were left out hence the coming into play of the Support Based Paradigm (SBP) in Sri Lanka. Contributing to this, Sivam *et al.* (2001) argue that “housing delivery systems are deficient in almost all the large cities of less developed countries” (*ibid*: 101) and the most affected are the poor hence the need to find a way to help them.

4.7.3 Role of stakeholders other than Government in poverty alleviation

It has been shown under section 2.4 of this document that Government alone cannot be able to address issues around poverty alleviation (BIDPA, 1997; Destremau, 2001; Erguden, 2001; UNCHS, 1996a). It is with this in mind that there is need to find out how other stakeholders are involved in the poverty alleviation drive through housing. Intended beneficiaries are also supposed to be taken as stakeholders (Moser, 1998; Munkner, 1996; UNESCAP, 2000). From this one should be able to establish the roles that other stakeholders play or could play to augment what Government has been doing.

4.7.4 Understanding the conceptual position adopted by the Department of Housing with regard to poverty

To provide a balanced assessment of whether indeed the national policy on housing has failed the poor, there is need for me to understand what the conceptual position of the DoH is with regard to poverty. It has been indicated under section 3.4 of this document that the understanding of poverty in Botswana is still based on income (GoB and UNDP, 2004). Poverty, as has been indicated under section 2.3 of this document, has various manifestations and understanding the conceptual position of the DoH should become handy in establishing the form of poverty that has been targeted by the policy. It is indicated that there is need to understand “the process by which people become [poor for]...it is a prerequisite to devising anti-poverty programmes which address root causes of poverty and meet people’s perceived needs” (Wratten, 1995: 18-19).

4.7.5 The National Policy on Housing in Botswana and its impact on poverty alleviation

The policy in Botswana has recommended that housing should not be divorced from poverty alleviation hence the implementation of the integrated poverty alleviation and housing scheme (GoB, 2000). The expectation is that the project should produce the expected results as per the recommendation. It is with this in mind that there is need to find out what has been realised so far against what was expected. This will have to highlight what was done to get the expected results and the challenges that were experienced in the process.

4.8 CONCLUSION

It is generally agreed that housing has a pivotal role to play in people's survival, poverty alleviation included. It has been shown from the literature reviewed that the importance of housing goes beyond the elementary level of the society and contributes nationally. Housing's potential in poverty alleviation has also been exploited though with mixed results. This has been documented and it is worth indicating that housing's exploitation for poverty alleviation relies on the knowledge and the supportive environment which has to be created by the existing regulatory and legal framework. The regulatory and legal framework, more especially the policies, should in no way inhibit the exploitation of housing for the benefit of the poor. It is obvious from the literature reviewed that despite the knowledge of the potential housing has, many stakeholders have not actually utilised that to their advantage.

The limitations experienced are in no way a discouragement to those stakeholders that steadfastly believe in the housing's potential towards poverty alleviation. Instead there are continued efforts to ensure that housing plays its part in poverty alleviation. It is with this in mind that the concept of enablement, advocated for by various agencies such as the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been formulated. This helps bring together various actors in housing delivery and accommodate those sections of the society that have been left out before. It is through the promotion of the concept of enablement that the potential of other stakeholders can be exploited in housing

delivery and the benefits that come with it. The concept of enablement has led to shifts in Government roles around the world with regard to development approaches. The shift is evident in the various development policies (housing included) that are currently being formulated and implemented. There has been a widespread shift from the traditional roles that Governments used to perform with regard to the development course. Governments are now required to provide an enabling environment within which other stakeholders can play their part in housing delivery and its related functions.

It is worth indicating that it was unheard of in Botswana, in the period from independence and to the late 1980s, for housing to be associated with poverty alleviation. Poverty was something that was dealt with by the Department of Social Services under the Ministry of Local Government. With the potential which housing has in poverty alleviation realised, housing has also been thrown into the fray to contribute towards the eradication of poverty in Botswana. It is therefore worth exploring how the national policies on housing in Botswana fare against the expectations of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements' Habitat Agenda and various authors with regard to exploiting the potential of housing in poverty alleviation. The next chapter delves into the evolution of housing policy in Botswana and efforts will also be made to highlight how the policies have dealt with the potential housing has with regard to poverty alleviation. The concept of enablement will also be discussed in a view to establish how it has been incorporated into the policies. It will also be of importance to establish how the housing policy in Botswana, through the poverty alleviation schemes addresses the various poverty concepts that have been discussed in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER 5.0: THE NATIONAL POLICIES ON HOUSING AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN BOTSWANA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been indicated from the previous chapter that housing has a critical role to play in poverty alleviation and this will only be possible within an enabling environment (Bratt, 2006; Chen, 1993; Destremau, 2001; Erguden, 2001; Ha, 2004; Hjorth, 2003; Mafeje, 2001; Moser, 1997; Payne & Majale, 2004; Sivam *et al.*, 2001). It is the responsibility of the government to create an environment within which other role players can contribute significantly without compromising their reasons for existence (*ibid.*). How the housing policy in Botswana fares against the tenets of an enabling environment as advocated for by various authors, amongst them Angel (2002), Ha (2004), Ogu (1999), Pugh (1994 and 2000) and UNCHS (1996) is discussed in the following section. It is relevant that I trace the housing policy formulation process in Botswana, beginning with the first 1982 policy and move on to the second and current 2000 policy. The focus of the two policies should be able to provide a clear picture on what their position is with regard to the role of housing in poverty alleviation. The review of the 1982 policy should also shed some lights on why it was deemed necessary.

5.2 THE 1982 NATIONAL POLICY ON HOUSING IN BOTSWANA

It was imperative that after gaining independence the GoB put in place policies that will guide the development process, housing included. Larsson (1989: 34) points out that prior to 1982, housing development “developed over time without direction by an explicitly formulated housing policy” despite housing problems that occurred in the first five years after gaining independence that needed coordinated attention. She argues that despite the absence of the housing policy efforts were made to cater for the provision of housing in the country’s urban areas with government playing a leading role. Amongst those measures put in place is the Self Help Housing Agency (SHHA). SHHA was a unit within the town councils’ establishment meant to “provide building materials loans to the plot holders[low-income], assist them in their building activities and collect the service levy” (*ibid*: 31). The scheme has since been implemented in rural areas based on the

recommendations made by the current policy on housing in Botswana (GoB, 2000). There have been no changes in the money structures to accommodate various factors at play. A standard loan with a maximum of P20 000 is still applicable even in areas that are further from favourable trading environments.

It is also indicated that the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC), a parastatal organisation, was formed in 1971 to provide housing “on a cost-recovering but non-profitable basis” (Larsson, 1989: 33). This entailed the provision of low-income housing but Botswana Housing Corporation’s involvement in this income category was short-lived because SHHA-programme “was considered the most appropriate way of providing houses for the majority of low-income people” (*ibid.*). Despite these developments within the ‘undefined’ housing sector it was still evident that something has to be done to ensure a focused and defined housing sector in Botswana. It is with this in mind that there was an appointment of the Morake Presidential Commission on the Housing Policy (MPCHP) in Botswana. The commission and what obtained after it completed its assignments are discussed in the following sections.

5.2.1 The 1980 Presidential Commission on Housing Policy in Botswana

The commission was instituted to find ways in which the housing sector could be guided and focused. This was with the view that achievement of desired results in the housing delivery process could be enhanced (Larsson, 1989 and SYA-FMA, 1997). The commission’s terms of reference included reviewing:

- “The activities of all existing organisations and/ or institutions involved in housing.
- The financial policies with special attention to the use of subsidies.
- Rental policies.
- Housing standards and their cost implications.
- Land policy including land tenure.
- Distribution of investment in rural areas and possible implications for housing development.” (GoB, 1981: 1)

From what came out from the review, coupled with inputs from sectors that had influence in the housing sector, observations were made that needed attention (*ibid.*). The commission found that “[t]he role of the housing sector is not clearly defined; there is no comprehensive national housing implementation plan and the formal housing sector planning process is weak” (*ibid.*: 2). It is with this in mind that Larsson (1989) indicates that the recommendations made by the commission in 1981, though modified, led to the formulation of the 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana.

Citing GoB (1981: ix), Larsson (1989) points out that the commission realised that the development process in Botswana didn’t accord housing the importance it commanded in human lives. With this in mind she indicates that the commission argued that “housing must be given the attention... [it deserves]... if we [Botswana Government] are to meet our goals of creating decent, safe and sanitary housing for the majority of Batswana” (Larsson, 1989: 35). In agreement with Larsson (1989), SYA-FMA (1997: 1) further argues that the 1982 policy “was the first comprehensive housing policy in the country” which was expected to guide housing process. This policy “covered a variety of issues on both the supply and demand sides of the housing process including the institutional capacity, roles of the public and private sectors, subsidies, rental policy, housing standards and rural housing” (*ibid.*: 7). It is further indicated that the commission recommended that the housing policy should be reviewed after each an every ten years so that the policy could be made more responsive to the obtaining housing situation (SYA-FMA, 1997).

5.2.2 Objectives of the 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana

SYA-FMA (1997) points out that there has been a lot that was achieved in Botswana through the 1982 policy. Among the achievements realised are “the rising prominence of housing issues in national policy making and investment priorities culminating in the creation of the Department of Housing” (*ibid.*: ii). Besides the changes brought about within the housing portfolio, some other changes were initiated by the policy in such issues as land reforms and the development control codes so as to make them responsive, accessible and affordable to many (SYA-FMA, 1997).

The main thrust of the 1982 policy was to “insure safe and sanitary housing for everyone” (GoB, 1981: 3 and SYA-FMA, 1997: 7). This was to be achieved through two goals which are indicated below.

- “to encourage the building of new urban housing for all income levels at a pace which will ensure that no citizen of an urban area is forced to reside in an unauthorised settlement.
- to begin improving the quality of housing in rural areas by offering Government assistance in the form of additional village and regional planning, and the introduction of a modified version of the self help site and service scheme (SHHA) following a study of that issue” (*ibid.*)”

To achieve the abovementioned goals, a set of specific targeted objectives was developed covering the following aspects;

– **New status for the housing sector**

GoB (1981) argues that housing was not given the attention it deserved in over a decade after independence. This is attributed to the government having concentrated on certain development objectives that were of importance then and needed urgent attention-housing was not one of them. With the new 1982 policy, the government was of the view that housing should be given a status of national importance in the development process (*ibid.*). This was motivated by the realisation that “housing is connected to the fundamental objectives in the fields of health, education, and economic productivity” (GoB, 1981: 4) and as such giving housing the attention it deserves will provide the needed impetus and growth in other development sectors. With this in mind, the policy called for the creation of the central housing division to ensure adequate management and coordination of the housing process. Both Larsson (1989) and SYA-FMA (1997) pay tribute to the 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana for having contributed to the creation of a fully-fledged DoH.

– **Mobilisation of housing resources**

Government has been involved in the housing process as a “financier, direct producer of housing units and landlord” (SYA-FMA, 1997: iii) and GoB (1981) argues that this role is not sustainable. It is with this in mind and the rapid urbanisation process in Botswana (see Larsson, 1989; Gwebu, 2003) that the policy proposed that the “Government [of Botswana] should provide a framework which encourages increased self-help and private sector initiative in partnership with its own efforts” (GoB, 1981: 5). This was with a view that additional resources that could be mobilised from the partnerships will complement government’s efforts to better meet the housing need. The policy gives a breakdown on who could be responsible for what type of housing and what role various stakeholders can play in the housing process. The role-players range from financial institutions, non-governmental organisations and parastatal organisations (*ibid.*). It is however worth indicating that despite approval of some recommendations with regard to mobilisation of resources nothing much has happened because there has been continued dominance of Government through the SHHA programme and the Botswana Housing Corporation in housing delivery (SYA-FMA, 1997). There has been no interest from the financial institutions to provide housing finance to the low-income category and even on land assembly, the main role player is still government (*ibid.*; GoB, 2000).

– **Housing subsidies**

The commission pointed out that the prevailing situation prior to the implementation of the 1982 policy, with regard to housing subsidies was not enviable. The commission’s point of contention was that the subsidies were limited to a few members of the country’s population. There was also biased towards urban areas where the subsidies were consumed by people who might not be in need of them (GoB, 1981). With this in mind, the commission argues that if subsidies are to be allocated as per the arrangement that it was against, it was not going to be sustainable and the process would even fail to meet the projected housing demands. This would also impact negatively on other sectors which might be in need of similar resources (*ibid.*). The policy therefore called for the issuance of subsidies where they are needed mostly and also argues that the “Government should

not give sub-economic loans to Botswana Housing Corporation, because that, is in fact, a subsidy and most people in BHC houses do not require subsidies” (*ibid*: 7).

– **Rental policy**

SYA-FMA (1997: 51) indicates that the terms of reference required the Commission

“[t]o review rental policies-particularly whether the current pool housing scheme is suitable, cost effective and fair or whether the related rentals reflect the market conditions; and to review the basis for determining rentals by councils, the BHC, the mines and the corporate developers as to whether these reflect the market conditions”.

GoB (1981: 7) argues that this was with the view to ensure that economic rentals are adopted because the government was convinced that it was the “most appropriate way to redirect subsidies”. It is also indicated that the changes in rentals will in a way play a critical role in incentivising home ownership. Infact, this was seen as a new way in which the Government was dealing with subsidies which have been abused in the absence of the housing policy (*ibid.*; Larsson, 1989).

– **Housing standards**

GoB (1981) argues that Government’s and institutions’ involvement in the housing process more especially with regard to subsidies distorts the housing market. The argument here is that there are many people who live in Government’s and institutional housing which they could otherwise not afford if it was not of the contribution by the mentioned stakeholders. This is also worsened by the fact that in most cases the houses built are of higher specifications which would not be affordable to most ordinary people (*ibid.*). SYA-FMA (1997) argues that the adoption of development and building regulations and codes from developed countries has been the downfall of the housing sector in the country. It is argued that the regulations were found not only to be irrelevant but also unaffordable. This has not been helped by the reviews that were carried out on such instruments as the Urban Development Standards (*ibid.*). It is obvious that despite

the intensions of the 1982 housing policy to create affordable housing standards, there has been little progress made in this regard as what transpired then is still guiding development even to date (*ibid.*).

– **Improving rural housing**

GoB (1981) points out that there was need to create an enabling environment for the growth of the housing market in rural areas. This has been necessitated by the observation that “the land tenure system [in rural areas] has slowed the progress of rural housing development and rural economic development” (*ibid*: 9). Calls for changes in the land tenure system in rural areas were met with scepticism. It was argued that it was not as if land tenure was the only problem faced by rural areas besides the assumed difficulty the land allocation process could bring to land users (GoB, 1981). Other problems experienced by rural areas are “lack of marketability, lack of rural job creation, difficulties in providing infrastructure to rural areas, higher costs of materials and transport, and lack of technical assistance” (*ibid.*:9). It is therefore argued that despite the observations made above, there should be ways through which rural areas can be made competitive and viable investment areas. Among the proposals was the introduction of SHHA in rural areas. The expectation was that since the programme is guided by modern development and building regulations, the quality of houses built in rural areas will be improved. Introduction of SHHA in rural areas had to wait until 2001 when its implementation in rural areas started (GoB, 2003).

SYA-FMA (1997) observes that there are other development approaches that have been adopted to help improve rural housing. One of them is the preparation of Settlement Development Plans. These are however advisory in non-planning rural areas because the Town and Country Planning Act, which guides the preparation of plans is only applicable in planning areas (*ibid.*). There is the Village Infrastructure Programme which seeks funding to service “land for residential, industrial and commercial plots with a view to attract investment and enhance the standards of living for the rural population” (SYA-FMA, 1997: 85). This programme has been implemented in major villages and as at 1997 only eight villages have benefited (*ibid.*). There is also the Rural Sanitation Programme

which is meant to “reduce the incidence of excreta-related diseases” (*ibid*: 85). Funds are provided and households are helped to build themselves some ventilated improved pit-latrines (*ibid.*).

The District Water Supply and Village Sewerage Programme is another programme that has been implemented to help improve the housing situation in rural areas. Through this programme, “funds are...provided to District Councils to operate and maintain water supply systems; as well as to operate, rehabilitate/upgrade and maintain sewerage systems in primary and secondary centres” (*ibid.*). Despite these development approaches, SYA-FMA (1997) argue that rural housing quality is poor and there is a lot that needs to be done more especially with regard to the use of locally available and affordable building materials and technology. A concern on poor coordination of programmes and projects implemented in rural areas has also been raised with a view to include other stakeholders in the process more especially the civil society. SYA-FMA (1997) acknowledges that the failure to incorporate poverty alleviation in rural housing programmes has been the downfall of most interventions and as such calls for the “integrat[ion of] rural housing with poverty alleviation programmes” (*ibid*: 85).

5.3 THE 2000 NATIONAL POLICY ON HOUSING IN BOTSWANA

The 2000 housing policy in Botswana came up as a result of the review that was carried out on the 1982 policy (SYA-FMA, 1997). With this in mind its is important that I give a brief account of what led to the review of the said housing policy and later on provide details of the current national policy on housing in Botswana.

5.3.1 Review of the 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana

SYA-FMA (1997: 7) argues that the 2000 housing policy came up because “[s]ince the introduction of the policy [1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana] 15 years ago economic and demographic changes have taken place [and this was of great importance for]...the revision of the policy to reflect the realities of the current development situation”. With this in mind, the new policy on housing had to take into account the shortcomings of the 1982 housing policy and drive the housing delivery forward. This

was also cognisant of the fact that there was “increasing awareness, both locally [in Botswana] and internationally, of the critical role housing plays in national economic prosperity and enhancing family welfare... [as well as the] advances in shelter delivery concepts and technologies...” (SYA-FMA, 1997: i).

In the review of the 1982 housing policy, it was found that the policy has made great contributions to the housing sector in Botswana. It is indicated that as of 1997 “[t]he overall performance in the achievement of the...short and long term objectives of the housing strategy...[was] generally satisfactory” (*ibid*: 9). Despite this achievement, there were shortcomings that were realised more especially with regard to implementation of some of the critical recommendations of the policy such as the one on the implementation of SHHA in rural areas (SYA-FMA, 1997). It is also indicated that there were critical development aspects that were completely left out of the 1982 housing policy such as gender issues, community participation, environment and housing, culture and housing and the legislative framework within which housing delivery is carried out (*ibid.*). These observation and other limitations inherent in the 1982 policy led to the formulation of the current housing policy. I therefore go on to give an account of what current policy entails.

5.3.2 Objectives of the 2000 National Policy on Housing in Botswana

This policy is geared towards facilitating “...the provision of decent and affordable housing for all within a safe and sanitary environment.” (GoB, 2000: iii). This works towards attaining what the Botswana’s Vision 2016 aspires to achieve (Presidential Task Force, 1997). To achieve this, the housing policy in Botswana aims at addressing various elements that are of critical importance. These aspects include amongst others, “institutional capacity building, land, finance, subsidies, rentals, housing standards, building materials and housing legislation...SHHA and the District Housing programme, BHC and private sector participation” (GoB, 2000: iv). The desire to achieve this are found in the four major areas of emphasis for the policy as indicated below:

– **Changes in Government’s role in the housing process**

Prior to the implementation of the current housing policy, the government played a pivotal role in the housing delivery process in almost all aspects of the process with little room for other stakeholders (Larsson, 1989 and SYA-FMA, 1997). It is with this in mind that the new policy calls for the change in “the emphasis of Government from home provision to facilitation in the various settlements in partnership with other stakeholders” (GoB, 2000: iii & 3). This would result in roles that differed from when the Government was a “financier, direct producer of housing units and landlord” (*ibid*: 3). It is a move that will improve on the policy decisions that were promoted by the 1982 policy but never got to achieve the desired results (SYA-FMA, 1997).

– **Focus on both urban and rural areas in housing process**

Despite the 1981 commission’s recommending that there should be facilitation of housing delivery in rural areas, there is little to show for this (SYA-FMA, 1997). Emphasis has been on the formulation of programmes aimed at addressing housing problems in urban areas (*ibid.*). It is however worth indicating that efforts have been made to make rural areas provide good living environments even though some of the programmes such as SHHA took longer than expected to be rolled out to these areas (*ibid.*; GoB, 2003). It is with this in mind that the current housing policy in Botswana calls for channelling of “more Government resources (and emphasis) to low and middle lower income housing in both urban and rural areas” (GoB, 2000: iii & 4). SHHA has already been rolled out to rural areas and the changes allowed in the land tenure system to convert from customary law to freehold has provided people with opportunities to utilise their properties as collateral and financial institutions are willing to lend to people with property in rural areas provided that property is freehold (Natural Resources Services Pty. Ltd., 2003).

– **Promotion of housing as an instrument of economic empowerment and poverty alleviation**

In acknowledging that “housing is connected to the fundamental objectives in the fields of health, education, and economic productivity” (GoB, 1982: 4), the 1982 policy paved

way for the exploitation of housing to meet various human needs. This acknowledgement played a pivotal role in SYA-FMA (1997: 85) calling for the integration of “rural housing with poverty alleviation programmes” because there was more poverty in rural areas than it is in urban areas (Bar-On, 2001; GoB and UN, 2004; Kerapeletswe & Moremi, 2001; Robinson, 2003). When the current policy came out it called for the promotion of “housing as an instrument of economic empowerment and poverty alleviation” (GoB, 2000: iii & 4) all over the country. This call led to the formulation of the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme.

– **Encourage the involvement of other stakeholders in the housing process**

The 1982 housing policy called for the creation of an enabling environment within which other stakeholders in the housing process could effectively take part to encourage home ownership amongst all Batswana (GoB, 1982). It is argued that the “Government should provide a framework which encourages increased self-help and private sector initiative in partnership with its own efforts” (*ibid*: 5; SYA-FMA, 1997: 99). The policy called for Government to be involved in “land acquisition, overall planning and control, provision of infrastructure and community services, and provision of technical assistance” (GoB, 1982: 5) with other services provided by the relevant institutions amongst them the private sector.

Despite calls for the involvement of other stakeholders, SYA-FMA (1997) argues that there is little to show for that hence calls for “greater partnerships between the Government (central and local authorities and parastatals) and the civil society (NGOs, CBOs, private sector, academic institutions, professional associations,)” (*ibid*: 87). The adoption of multidisciplinary-approaches to housing problems improves the chances of coming up with and realising relevant solutions (*ibid*. ; GoB, 2000). It is with this in mind that the current housing policy in Botswana calls for Government to “foster a partnership with the Private Sector and all major employers in home development and facilitating home ownership” (GoB, 2000: iv & 4).

5.4 THE CONCEPT OF ENABLEMENT AND THE NATIONAL HOUSING POLICY IN BOTSWANA

Pugh (1994: 369) argues that enablement in housing requires a great shift from the norm so as to achieve “simultaneous solution to problems of poverty, unhealthy urban environments, unsatisfactory housing standards, imperatives for increasing living standards, the empowerment of poor people, and good governance”. He however warns that “enablement ...in housing will not be a panacea, but some useful progress can be made in specific conditions for housing-related improvement” (*ibid.*). Despite the warning he argues that enablement has more chances of achieving the desired results as opposed to what has been promoted by the World Bank in the 1990s. The following sub-sections give some briefs on how housing policies in Botswana incorporated the concept of enablement.

5.4.1 1982 National Policy on Housing in Botswana

The concept of enablement has been incorporated into the housing policy in Botswana since the 1982 policy although results have been mixed (GoB, 1982; SYA-FMA, 1997). There is an appreciation of the fact that the absence of a Government institution in Botswana in the early 1980s to spearhead housing development was a serious omission as the housing sector lagged behind (GoB, 1982). It is argued that the presence of a Government institution is a necessity to coordinate and focus efforts of all stakeholders in the housing process. It is with this concern in mind that the DoH was established in the mid-1990s (SYA-FMA, 1997).

GoB (1982) indicates that Government alone cannot be able to satisfactorily deal with housing issues. It was therefore argued that “Government and its housing parastatals should move away from taking as much responsibility for housing construction itself” (GoB, 1982: 5; SYA-FMA, 1997: 88) and award it to developers. It is also argued that Government should create favourable conditions for financial institutions to provide finance for housing development in rural areas as they do for urban areas and this should be extended to low-income households (*ibid.*). There were many other programmes that were deemed important for Government to implement so that other stakeholders in the

housing sector can find it easier to participate. This involves programmes and projects mentioned under sub-paragraph 5.2.2 (sixth bullet) even though they were mainly in rural areas (SYA-FMA, 1997).

5.4.2 2000 National Policy on Housing in Botswana

With modest achievements made by the 1982 housing policy due to the failure by government to involve other stakeholders, the current policy had to place emphasis on the need for an effective and efficient role played by the Government (SYA-FMA, 1997).. It is argued that the GoB had realised that during the implementation of the 1982 housing policy, it was “one player among many [who also needed to be afforded the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the development of the housing sector]” (SYA-FMA, 1997: 88). It is with this in mind that government’s role has to be re-defined as an improvement to the roles that it held under the 1982 housing policy.

The overall objective of the current housing policy in Botswana is “to facilitate the provision of decent and affordable housing for all within a safe and sanitary environment” (GoB, 2000: iii). This could only be realised provided the government plays a role that espouses guidance, facilitation, motivation, regulation, innovation, training and home-ownership promotion for the stakeholders in housing (SYA-FMA, 1997). These aspects are visible in the various recommendations that are made in the current policy (GoB, 2000). It is however lamented that if the Government does not have proper and well resourced monitoring and evaluation structures in place, it would be difficult to gauge and know the level of achievement (SYA-FMA, 1997). It is therefore argued that once these aspects are taken care of by the Government, an enabling environment will be created within which stakeholders can effectively play their part (*ibid.*).

SYA-FMA (1997) further argues that there is need to concentrate efforts on the urban and rural poor who, for long, have been excluded by most of the government initiatives in housing. This will only be possible provided stakeholders are motivated to take part, more especially with regard to those who were initially disadvantaged by such activities

as the costly bureaucratic and over-regulated processes in government services (*ibid.*). It is however worth pointing out that despite all these being said about the creation of enabling environment, there has also been some modest achievements. There is continued involvement of Government and its housing parastatal in housing delivery in the country with limited role played by others (*ibid.*).

5.5 ACKNOWLEDGED LIMITATIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON HOUSING IN BOTSWANA

There are various factors that affect the implementation of the housing policy in Botswana. Those that are covered below are those that have been officially acknowledged. Kalabamu and Morolong (2004) have pointed out that in trying to meet the housing needs of the middle and low income people, the GoB is faced with a number of constraints. A similar view was expressed by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning in Botswana when he presented the 2006 Budget Speech to parliament (GoB, 2006). Honourable Minister Baledzi Gaolatlhe acknowledged the existence of problems with regard to the realization of housing in Botswana (*ibid.*). The following issues were prominent in his presentation and are in agreement with what Kalabamu and Morolong (2004) have observed.

5.5.1 Delays in land acquisition

SYA-FMA (1997: 27) argues that there are “a number of factors [that] have delayed land delivery process” in Botswana and this is with regard to the 1982 housing policy. It was with this in mind that various recommendations were made in the current policy. It is however worth noting that there is little that has been achieved in that regard because the Minister of Finance and Development Planning has conceded that there are continued delays in land acquisition (GoB, 2006). This issue is still giving Government the same problem as it did prior to the current policy (SYA-FMA, 1997).

5.5.2 High cost of servicing land and development standards

Natural Resources Services Pty. Ltd. (2003) indicates that land for housing is very scarce and it is even worse for low-income housing in urban areas. It is argued that “the land

market and government's allocation guidelines give priority to the wealthy" (*ibid*: 75). Kalabamu and Morolong (2004) further argue that "Government's ambition to successively improve the planning, infrastructure and construction standards it adopts and the new financing arrangements it is encouraging have, in recent years, placed publicly provided residential plots beyond the reach of lower income households" (*ibid*.: 7). With this in mind it is obvious that the poor would not be able to adequately realise home ownership and its inherent importance.

5.5.3 Wide-spread failure of plot development

GoB (1997b: 421) acknowledges that there is "lack of adequate capacity to purchase and develop the [residential] plots" by the potential plot owners. Despite efforts made towards addressing this problem, Kalabamu and Morolong (2004) argue that there is continued wide-spread failure in plot development for those who have acquired them. They argue that "[m]any [people] have neither the need nor the resources to develop (or even complete payments for) these plots, resulting in large numbers of undeveloped plots" (*ibid*.: 7). They further observe that failure to develop these plots has far-reaching consequences more especially that "government capital [is] tied up unnecessarily but also [that] those in need of a plot for their own occupation have to wait for an unduly long time before they are allocated one" (*ibid*.). The high number of undeveloped plots led to the recommendation on the revised national land policy calling for the development period of a maximum of two years failing which the plot is repossessed to be given to another deserving person on the waiting list (Natural Resources Service, Pty. Ltd, 2003). Though this recommendation has been approved, it was met with objections. Proponents for the objection argued that they don't see how people will afford to comply with the recommendation when they failed to comply with a longer period of four years (DoH, 2005).

5.5.4 Limited access to housing finance

GoB (1997b) points out that there are various sources of housing finance available. There are those where the government is the only role player and those where the commercial financial institutions play their part (*ibid*.). It is however worth noting that despite the

said availability of housing finance in the country, there is still wide-spread failure by most people especially the poor and the middle income earners to access the finance (*ibid.*). DoH (1996: 57) argues that “the involvement of the formal financial sector in mortgage lending has been limited both in the volume of the funds committed as well as the number of beneficiaries”. The failure to access the finance by households is attributed to “low household incomes” (GoB, 1997b: 422) and the limited access to employment opportunities due to the ‘narrow economic base (GoB and UN, 2004). GoB (2003) also points out that for those who are able to access the finance, more especially with regard to SHHA, they fail to produce ‘acceptable’ dwelling structures due to the funds being inadequate (GoB, 1997).

5.6 CONCLUSION

An expectation has been created by both the 1982 and the 2000 housing policies that the Government will play a facilitative role in the housing sector. This however seems to have not been transformed into action during implementation. This observation should be surprising more especially after evidence has been made available to the fact that involving other stakeholders in poverty alleviation programmes has contributed to the successes of such undertakings. Stakeholders such as the Non Governmental Organisations, Community Based Organisations and the poor have been found to play a significant and important role in poverty alleviation undertakings.

Despite the housing policy in Botswana calling for the Government to create a conducive environment, it is still to be realised as the Government seems to be having difficulties in relinquishing some of its traditional roles. The failure to relinquish some of its role and create an enabling environment has been instrumental in perpetrating the woes that bedevil the housing sector. The factors that have been acknowledged by Government as being impediments to the realisation of the housing policy objectives are some of the issues that could be outsourced to well qualified and resourced institutions outside the public sector. This outsourcing has to be done within the ideals of an enabling housing environment which has to be created by the Government. In an effort to show the limitations of the housing policy in Botswana in dealing with poverty alleviation, I

studied the poverty alleviation project in the City of Francistown. There are other issues that have a direct bearing on the project that are also discussed. In the following chapter I discuss the poverty alleviation project in Francistown. The discussion covers the general overview of the city, the project and the research findings.

CHAPTER 6.0: THE CASE STUDY, RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been indicated under section 5.4 of this document that the concept of enablement is well entrenched in Botswana's housing policy but there is little to show when it comes to implementation of the policy recommendations. Instead there is widespread creation of dependence on Government programmes, which I don't want to believe that Government is unaware of. The current housing policy is clear on responsibilities of various stakeholders but when it comes to implementation, there is dominance by Government. This dominance has, as has been pointed out in the previous chapter, created more problems for government sponsored programmes.

There is competition, for both attention and resources, between various government-sponsored programmes and projects and this is not helped by the already over-stretched government resources and capacity. One of the projects that are government-sponsored and has not differed in any way from those that came before it is the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme. This project was conceived in 1992 but the actual implementation was carried out in 1999 on pilot basis in three urban areas (DoH, 2003). Amongst the three urban areas, is the City of Francistown, which is the subject of discussion in the following sections. I will start off by giving the general background of the City of Francistown and thereafter give a profile of the poverty alleviation project. I will then provide findings and their analysis with regard to what obtains at the said project.

6.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA: THE CITY OF FRANCISTOWN

The City of Francistown, located in the north eastern part of Botswana (See **Figure 2**), is the second largest urban area, after Gaborone. The city has a population of 83 023 as per the 2001 population and housing census (GoB, 1997a and 2001). Francistown was developed as a small gold mining settlement, after the discovery of gold in 1866 (GoB, 1984). It is however indicated that as years went by the prominent role played by mining

in the town's development dwindled and ultimately mining stopped. The town then relied on "its function as the commercial, administrative and communications centre for the northern part of the country [Botswana]" (*ibid*: 5) even to date, the city still performs these functions for the northern part of the country. Most of government and private institutions serving the northern part of the country have their regional offices operating from the city (GoB, 1997a and Bogorogile, 2000). Francistown is well serviced in terms of communications, roads, railway line and air transport compared to nearby urban areas of Selibe Phikwe and Orapa hence its role in the northern part of Botswana (*ibid.*). Francistown also serves as a gate way to foreign countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe (*ibid.*).

6.2.1 Population

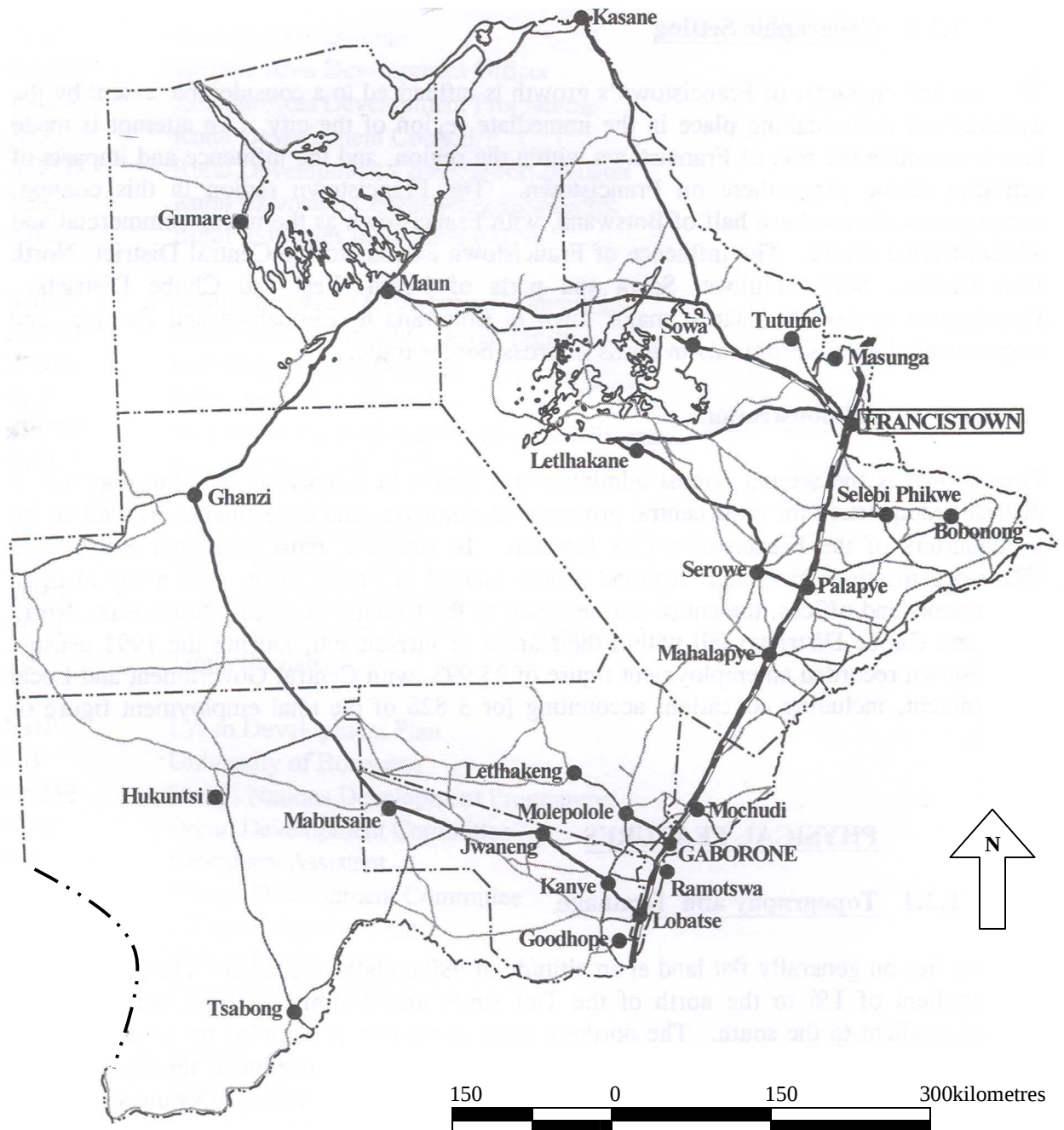
Since its discovery the city has experienced a steady population increase attributed to in-migration (GoB, 1984, 1997a, 2001). There was an influx of people from rural areas surrounding Francistown when gold mining operations began (*ibid.*). The city's population growth in the years leading to 1991 was slowed down by the rapid growth that Gaborone experienced as the capital city (GoB, 1997a). In the 2001 national population census, Gaborone had more than double Francistown's population at 186 007 and Francistown had 83 000 (*ibid.*). The average household size recorded in Francistown in 1991 was 3.9 as opposed to the national average of 4.8 persons (GoB, 1997a). **Table 1** shows the population trend between 1964 and 2001 as per the population census conducted by the GoB (GoB, 2001).

Table 1: Trends in the population of Francistown, 1964-2001

Year	Population	% Population Change
1964	9521	-
1971	18613	95.5
1981	31065	66.9
1991	65244	110
2001	83 023	27.3

Source: GoB, 1997a & 2001

Figure 2: Location of the City of Francistown in Botswana



Source: GoB, 1997a.

6.2.2 Structure of the City

In its initial development, the City of Francistown was divided according to racial lines and even today still maintains some of the features. Areas that were mainly inhabited by

the Whites, in the eastern and central parts of the city are predominantly occupied by them and some wealthy locals (GoB, 1984, 1997a and Bogorogile, 2000). Areas that were designated for the African population, west of the two main rivers of Tati and Nchwe, still have some characteristics which show the African way of living more especially with regard to the traditional mud and thatch huts. These houses are still found in areas such as Tatitown, Bluetown, Monarch and Riverside which are predominantly inhabited by native low-income households and former mine workers from the rest of African (*ibid.*).

6.2.3 Development Constraints

Despite the development that the city experienced over the years, there still remain some problems that need to be addressed. GoB (1997a) identifies the following as some developmental constraints that the city is facing;

– Physical constraints

Francistown is surrounded by freehold farms with the majority of them owned by one of Tati Company (GoB, 1977a). This is also made difficult by the fact that the city is 'landlocked' in that it is also surrounded by the North East District and Central District and as such failure to acquire the freehold farms is a serious limitation to the growth of the city (GoB, 1984 and 1997a). Also of concern is the type of soil that covers most of the city area. It is indicated that the dominance of black cotton soil (a type of clay) increases development costs. It is pointed out that most developers turn down offers from the city because of this soil and this has put paid to the development process in the city (GoB, 1997a). One other factor is that there are some abandoned mining sites that have made most parts of the city undevelopable and dangerous (*ibid.*). These mining sites have not been rehabilitated and efforts are being made to rehabilitate them. They however still pose a development constraint in that some of them are not traceable and only get to be recognised when there are some cave-ins around the city (*ibid.*).

– **Economic constraints**

GoB (1984) argues that the discovery of gold in Francistown in its formative years has made people move in, in large numbers in search of employment opportunities. The available job opportunities could not absorb all the unemployed and this led to higher rates of unemployment in the town (*ibid.* and GoB, 1997a). This has also been made worse by the economic recession that the city experienced in the mid-1990s until to date. A number of industries have closed down and their closure added to the already high rates of unemployment (*ibid.*). It has also been indicated that this brought other development problems such as squatter settlement proliferation because the city could not provide accommodation to all. The squatter settlements were described as being unsightly (GoB, 1997a). There is an appreciation that the housing conditions in some informal settlements were unsightly and inhabitable and this led to a drive to eradicate these informal settlements. This eradication did not necessarily remove the poor housing condition in the former ‘African’ areas. This is still a problem in areas such as Gerald Estates where squatters were relocated to (*ibid.*).

6.3 HOUSING SITUATION IN THE CITY OF FRANCISTOWN

GoB (1997c) indicates that SHHA, at 58.9%, accounted for most of the residential development in the City of Francistown as at the beginning of 1997. This is followed by squatting at 15.8% of the overall residential development. BHC and other development approaches accounted for the remaining 25.3% (See **Table 2**). The situation has since changed more especially with regard to squatting. People who used to stay in informal settlements have since been resettled in Phase 6, Pelotelele and Gerald Estates (GoB, 1997a; 1997c).

There is continued demand for housing in the city and this is attributed to the “rapid rate of urbanisation of Francistown, with its attendant problems of population influx and demand for services” (GoB, 1997b: 14). GoB (1997c: 70) points out that “the economic attractiveness of the City of Francistown to migrants and job seekers has significantly contributed to housing shortage in the city”. It is further argued that the demand for housing is dire in the lower and middle-income groups who have since been pushed out

due to the unaffordability of the available housing (GoB, 1997b). This has created problems in terms of squatting, higher densities and poorly built illegal dwelling structures more especially in areas designated for Africans (*ibid.*).

Table 2: Housing Stock in the City of Francistown as in 1997

Housing Type	Number of Houses	% of Total
SHHA	11216	58.9
BHC: Low Cost	1194	6.3
Medium Cost	538	3.1
High Cost	219	1.1
Flats & Town houses	190	0.9
Institutional	1030	5.4
Private	1612	8.5
Squatter	3000	15.8
TOTAL	19044	100

Source: GoB, 1997c

It is indicated that there are poor housing conditions in the low income areas and squatter settlements (GoB, 1997a; b; c). Moving the illegal settlers to formal areas tended to bring along the poor living environment in these formal areas. There was nothing much done for those that did not have resources to build acceptable housing units. Realising this gap, the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme was introduced (DoH, 2002).

6.4 INTEGRATED POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND HOUSING SCHEME

Despite overwhelming evidence that housing can be used as a poverty alleviation tool, the 1982 housing policy failed to exploit that potential. This is surprising in that the policy does acknowledge the potential housing has in poverty alleviation (GoB, 1982). The policy was mainly concerned with the delivery of housing units as more emphasis was placed on various programmes that delivered only housing units. It is however worth noting that for the housing potential in poverty alleviation to be exploited, efforts must be made to ensure create an enabling environment (SYA-FMA, 1997).

The 2000 housing policy in Botswana fares better than its predecessor as efforts, that specifically target poor, have been made. The efforts are meant to provide the beneficiaries with skills, income and ultimately housing units. One of the policy's goals is "to promote housing as an instrument for economic empowerment and poverty alleviation" (GoB, 2000: iii) and it is from this goal that the integrated poverty alleviation and housing scheme has been launched in various areas of Botswana. This project is said to be the best performing in terms of the profit made and the number of housing units built for the beneficiaries (DoH, 2002).

6.4.1 Background to the project

DoH (2003) points out that, although the poverty alleviation programme was conceived in 1992, it took time for the idea to be crystallised. As pointed out under section 1.2 of this research report, the programme is meant to cater for those sections of the low income people who do not have access to the SHHA facility (*ibid*; DoH, 2002). Through this programme the Government expects to "facilitate economic empowerment of poor households who do not qualify for SHHA loans through employment creation, poverty alleviation and home ownership" (DoH, 2003: 1)

6.4.2 Poverty alleviation strategy

It has been indicated that the GoB has adopted a three-pronged approach (income, capacity and participation) to poverty alleviation (GoB and UNDP, 2004) and this is what has been applied in the poverty alleviation project. DoH (2002; 2003) points out that the main thrust of the project is to impart productive skills to the poor households alongside provision of allowance. It is also indicated that the beneficiaries are assisted with the building of houses through self-help means (*ibid.*). The project intends

- "to train poor households to acquire productive skills.
- to train and assist poor households to manage the respective projects as well as earn incomes which will qualify them for the SHHA loan...and
- to train and assist households to build their own houses through self help practices" (DoH, 2002: 1).

6.4.3 Project Description

According to DoH (2002), the Government is responsible for the start-up capital of the project that will ensure the availability of land, machinery and infrastructure. The government continues supporting the project until such time that all the necessary requisite skills and resources have been transferred to the beneficiaries. It is only after this has been satisfied that the project running is handed over to the beneficiaries.

The main focus of the project is in the production of “standard building materials such as stock bricks, blocks, pavement slabs and kerbstones for sale at competitive prices on the local market” (DoH, 2003:2). Skills acquired during training are used in the production process and the marketing of the products (*ibid.*). Proceeds from the sale of the products help run the project as well as provide for the beneficiaries’ allowances. The project is also expected to use its sale proceeds to pay back Government the initial investment capital for the creation of a revolving fund (*ibid.*). During the course of the project, beneficiaries are then trained in basic construction skills so that they can be directly involved in the construction of their houses (DoH, 2002; 2003).

6.4.4 Project Management

There is a management structure for the project and DoH (2003) indicates that the project is coordinated by the DoH with assistance from the Francistown City Council. The Technical Officer oversees the running of the project on a daily basis. Ideally the technical officer should be assigned to the project for one year so that more projects can be started (*ibid.*).

As the overall coordinator of the project, the DoH assists in the procurement of needed equipment and machinery for the project. The department also plays an active role in the selection of beneficiaries with the assistance of the Social and Community Development division of the City Council (DoH, 2003). Other responsibilities are delegated to city council and these include

- “the day to day management of the project,

- organization of members into self-help production and housing association groups
- training of beneficiaries in the production of building materials and basic business skills with assistance of Integrated Field Services
- house construction
- development of the project into a viable poverty alleviation and housing scheme
- submission of monthly reports to DoH; and
- Other related necessary duties as may be assigned by the Ministry of Lands and Housing.” (DoH, 2003: 4-5).

There is also the Project Coordinating Committee which is made up of various institutions from all concerned stakeholders. The committee oversees the running of the project on behalf of the DoH (DoH, 2003). At project level, the project should have its own administration made up of beneficiaries and this is mainly to “ensure that members develop a viable business for themselves under their own management” (DoH, 2003: 5). Consideration, in appointing beneficiaries to the various positions in the running of the project is given to the literacy and any other additional skills that a beneficiary has, in addition to those acquired from the training offered by the project (DoH, 2002; 2003).

6.5 FINDINGS FROM THE ENQUIRY: FRANCISTOWN CASE

A set of objectives, based on the overall aim of the research report, were developed to unravel the relationship between housing and poverty alleviation in Botswana. Therefore findings are structured around the research report’s objectives. The findings are meant to either confirm my held-belief or prove it otherwise.

6.5.1 The facilitative role of the Department of Housing and the National Policy on Housing in Botswana

A question on the facilitative role of the DoH as promoted by the housing policy was posited to the department’s officials. In response they indicate that despite the call for a facilitative role, that has not been achieved as expected because “housing delivery in Botswana is fragmented and since the Department does not have the powers over most of the processes, there is nothing much that can be done” (Officer 1). He went on to point

out that among other things, the facilitative role is hampered by such aspects as capacity and resources. This was corroborated by Officer 2 who indicates that, though the DoH came into existence in 1994, it is still small with a staff turnover of around fifty. They also point out that the Department has a regional office in Francistown which deals mainly with central Government housing for civil servants.

The national office in Gaborone is also mainly focused on housing for civil servants and the disbursement of SHHA loan funds to local authorities. The DoH relies on local authorities (local authorities fall under a different Ministry from that of the DoH) for the implementation of SHHA. Besides the above, there are no guidelines and/ or strategy on the way the DoH is to execute the recommendations of the housing policy, let alone the monitoring of the policy recommendations (Officer 1; 2). There is an implication that all those that were in the reference group of the policy know what is expected of them with regard to implementing the policy recommendations. Officer 2 points out that “Government’s facilitative role is severely affected by the malfunctioning housing policy environment”. In an effort to show how the environment affects the role he argues that despite efforts made to make land accessible to all citizens, there are some bottlenecks that need to be attended to. He also points out that government provides residential infrastructure on cost recovery basis and this course is hampered by the residents’ failure to pay for the services provided.

On the other aspects, the officials point out that the regulatory regime is not supportive of the department’s role. They argue that almost all the programmes under the auspices of the department are executed on cooperation basis and by institutions falling under different ministries. In addition to this problem, Officer 2 points out that efforts to realise the department’s vision are hampered by the restrictions imposed by the existing regulatory framework and the costly bureaucratic process that one has to go through. With this in mind the abovementioned officer calls for the promulgation of a housing act. He argues that the Act will contribute to the creation of a better environment for the delivery on the department’s mandate.

It is discernable that the state is failing in its facilitative role and this hampers the creation of an enabling environment. Proponents of enablement such as Pugh (1994; 1999; 2000) and many others call for the state to create an enabling environment and desist from doing everything. This could only be realised if the state reforms its institutions and accompanied by appropriate guidelines on how the enablement is to be carried out (*ibid.*; Destremau, 2001; Hjorth, 2003; Mafeje, 2001; Moser, 1997).

6.5.2 The policy formulation process

As a follow-up to the question on the facilitative role of the DoH on housing issues, I asked on what is involved in the policy formulation process. This was to establish if indeed the process is accommodative to the diverse needs of the society. Officer 1 reveals that the process relies on government officials, parastatal organisations and the private sector. To compound matters Officer 2 points out that normally the government adopts a concept and then goes out to consult so that “people should buy into the concept with no chances of making changes to the initial concept”. It also comes out that little time is accorded people during public consultative meetings. Even at these gatherings, not all people could speak and the poor are more often disadvantaged (*ibid.*). He argues that “[t]his practice is entrenched in the society and there is some sought of discrimination around poverty to such an extent that the society is of the view that the poor have nothing positive to offer” (Officer 2). With the failure by the poor to state their case, it will always be difficult for their needs to be accommodated in the policy. He argues that there are also no pressure groups that could push the agenda for the poor.

It is therefore clear that what might come out form the policy is what professionals think is good for the people while in actual fact that might be flawed and fail to provide for them. This means that the formulation process is not accommodative as some proponents of an inclusive process would like to see. Chambers (1995), Moser (1998), Munkner (1996), Petesch & Narayan (2002) and UNESCAP (2000) call for policies to provide the poor with a platform through which their voices could be heard and addressed. Chambers (1995) and Huchzermeyer (2004) call for the realisation that professionals can learn from the poor and come up with appropriate solutions to problems that have to be addressed.

6.5.3 The conceptual position adopted by the Department of Housing with regard to poverty

On the conceptual approach adopted by the Department with regard to poverty and the poverty alleviation project, Officer 1 argues that “[t]he realisation that providing housing to the poor was not useful unless mechanisms were created to ensure that they will be able to pay for housing related costs”. Officer 2 adds to say that “the existing housing schemes do not consider poverty alleviation as they focused mainly on housing delivery”. With this in mind the officials indicate that the department adopted the national approach to poverty alleviation of income, capacity and participation. They argue that there has to be some form of income generated in whatever the poor are doing and for them to do that they need to be trained in the elementary skills. They are also made to be actively involved in all the processes so that they own the project which gives them a sense of belonging (Officer 1 and 2). The approach has pitted the government against the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries point out that the approach adopted does not necessarily address their problems. They (beneficiaries) therefore argue that government should involve them in coming up with appropriate poverty alleviation interventions.

The approach covers some aspects that are manifestation of poverty, but there has been too much emphasis on the economic indicators of poverty at the expense of social aspects (see Amis, 1995; Golbert and Kessler, 1996; Huchzermeyer, 2004; Lal and Myint, 1996; UNCHS, 1996a; 2001; UN-Habitat, 2003; Wratten, 1995). This approach is also not helped by the income based definition of poverty in Botswana which leaves out some other aspects that could not be defined monetarily (GoB and UN, 2004). There has never been any study to determine the causes of poverty other than the economic indicators as outlined by GoB and UN (2004).

6.5.4 The role of housing in poverty alleviation

The GoB does recognise the role that housing can play in poverty alleviation and Officer 1 points out that “[h]ousing as an asset provides a steady income, a growing asset in terms of property values and a hedge against inflation”. Officer 2 also points out that “housing is considered both as shelter provision and form of investment, therefore it

plays a vital role in poverty alleviation”. They further point out that Government has channelled resources towards the exploitation of this potential. Officer 2 argues that the environment within which exploitation of housing for poverty alleviation is carried out is enabling. His argument is that “all factors of production are either availed or facilitated such as capital, land, machinery” and he fails to reconcile this with what he said about housing policy environment that it is not conducive. Officer 1 is however of a contrasting view in that he admits that the housing policy fails to exploit the potential that housing has in poverty alleviation. He is of the view that the policy “does not explicitly exploit that potential but simply recognises that housing is a powerful instrument for poverty alleviation”.

The importance of housing in poverty alleviation is however realised by the beneficiaries. They point out that there is more to their shelter than just a place to stay. Beneficiary 1 argues “we can establish some home-based enterprises such as shoe mending, sheebens, renting and kiosks at our residential places”. Beneficiary 2 however points out that there are some problems with using their residencies for any other use. She argues that “the law enforcement officers from the City Council and the Police Service would not allow such undertakings as sheebens and kiosks without a license and as such our efforts to survive poverty are always illegal”. It has been proven that housing has a critical role to play in poverty alleviation (Abram, 1964; Cross, 2006; Erguden, 2001; Hirsch, 2005; Larsson, 1989; Moser, 1998; Nordberg, 2000; Rogerson, 2001; Tomlinson, 2006) and the limited use of it for such in Botswana leaves much to be desired. Findings that the regulatory framework does not allow any other use for housing is also baffling in that if the regulation could allow (see Chen, 1993; Lankatilleke, 1990; Payne and Majale, 2004; Sivam *etal*, 2001) the residential areas to be used for other uses this could help in poverty alleviation. Payne and Majale (2004), with reference to Adusumili and Shekdar (2004) point out that development standards were made responsive to the poor in India. They also point out that these standards are also different from those applicable to general development.

6.5.5 The role of stakeholders other than Government in poverty alleviation

On the role of stakeholders other Government in poverty alleviation, Officer 1 argues that:

“Housing Policy does not have an explicit statement on the involvement of other stakeholders [in poverty alleviation]. However other stakeholders participate through administrative arrangements to implement the programme [Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme].”

He further points out that the various stakeholders and their responsibilities in the programme. The responsibilities were defined during the conceptualisation stages of the programme. He argues that it is important to involve other stakeholders in the process because they provide input which government might not be able to provide if it was to go it alone. He indicates that:

“Councils implement the programme on behalf of government; the private sector provides inputs for production; CBOs assist with selection of beneficiaries; Government Agencies provide technical training.”

It is however worth pointing out that information gathered from the beneficiaries, proves otherwise. The beneficiaries point out that what they were told about the project has not occurred as per their expectations. They indicate that one can just pitch up at the project’s premises and be ‘employed’ and this they said is against the guidelines of the project. They point out that there is neither the private sector is involved nor community based organisations and the poor. Beneficiary 3 argues that:

“the failure to involve the community based organisations might be because of the way the project has been structured. The project serves the whole city and it is difficult to bring together the poor as it serves only a few of us. This is made worse by the absence of community based organisations which are location-

specific. I am of the opinion that it would have been ideal had the projects been location specific, e.g. each-low income area in the city having its own project.”

On the issue of Non Governmental Organisations, it would have been ideal that I received feedback from one NGO that I sent a questionnaire to. Unfortunately I have not received feedback from the said institution.

It is obvious from the findings that there is a limited role played by other stakeholders, let alone the beneficiaries, in the project. This is against the shift in roles that various authors have advocated for. It has been pointed out that NGOs and CBOs are key role players in poverty alleviation but for them not being involved here robs the poor and even government of that chance of reducing poverty (See BIDPA, 1997; Destremau, 2001; Erguden, 2001; Harpham & Allison, 2000; UNCHS, 1996). Chambers (1995: 202) calls for “decentralisation, democracy and diversity” with a view to make poverty to be managed at a local level where the structures are in touch with reality.

6.5.6 The objectives of the poverty alleviation scheme against the outcome

A question on whether the objectives of the project are being met was asked and the response confirmed my fears that the project is failing. In an effort to show that the project is achieving its set mandate of “employment creation, poverty alleviation and home ownership” (DoH, 2003: 1) Officer 1 points out the Technical Officer is better placed to provide project specific details but that did not stop him from giving out general information on all the projects. He indicates that as at October 2006, the records from the three projects showed that there are more than 290 beneficiaries trained out of a target of 250. He also points out that over 60 houses were built and the beneficiaries were now having access to SHHA. Another achievement, according to Officer 1, is the support work groups which have been involved in the construction of houses for the beneficiaries. On the issue of handing over of project management to the beneficiaries, he observes that “the mechanism is being worked out” and efforts are being made to implement it (Officer 1).

In providing the above information, Officer 1 points out that the DoH relies on the “[p]eriodic reports [that] are submitted to Government (Dept of Housing) [by the technical officers]. A forum (Project Coordinating Committee) determines if progress is being made.” The said officer does not provide the time frames within which the outlined achievements were to be made. There are no specifications on the type of houses to be built, something which the department seems not bothered about. The above-mentioned forum ceased to function long ago and the project has been run by the technical officer since its launch (Council Official at Francistown City Council).

The beneficiaries argue that the income they earn is too little to help them realise their desires to move out of poverty. The income (allowance) earned per month, ranges between P400 and P1200 depending on the type of job one does and the overtime that one has worked. The income range earned per month converts to R464.13 to R1393.40 (<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi>). Labourers earn around P400 without overtime and earn more with overtime worked. At the top end of the allowance structure are those that have been offered positions in the committee and oversee the running of the project in the absence of the technical officer (Beneficiaries). It has also been found that most of the beneficiaries are tied to a vicious debt circle which they are not capable of breaking free from due to their limited income (*ibid.*). With most of the beneficiaries being labourers, it was also found that there are sacrifices that are made along the way in terms of prioritising the needs of the household so that they fit within the income earned. Beneficiary 4 points out that

“[d]espite the project yard being far from where I stay (around 7km), I prefer to walk to work so that I save the income for other needs of my households such as food, education for my children and housing. On a daily basis I walk 14km to and from work which might is not good for my health. I would like to indicate that I face risks on my way because I leave home very early in the morning when I come to work to avoid arriving late for work.”

It is difficult to say the project has achieved its set mandate more especially that I failed to get feedback from the technical officer. The houses that I visited in Francistown have nothing to suggest that the project has achieved. Four out of the five houses were incomplete. There is no clear measurable indication of what the housing policy expects to achieve with the project. The guidelines for the project point out that beneficiaries should be able to move out of the project within a time frame of two years but fails to indicate whether they would have benefited to stand alone. It also fails to say how the project can be made in such a way that beneficiaries don't become dependent on it as is the case now. The beneficiaries interviewed indicate that they have been with the project for a long period and do not think of leaving. Their reason of not leaving is that the project is the only source of their livelihood. Besides most of the beneficiaries point out that they are investing in the education of their children with the hope that they will be able to help them out of poverty once they complete their education. The debt crisis they are involved in is also a serious problem that has to be addressed failing which the poor will not leave the project.

The outcome of the project confirms what Bar-On (2001) has indicated, namely that most government-sponsored projects tend to make the poor dependent on government rather than to facilitate their independence. Doing this makes the poor even more vulnerable and it is worsened by the fact that government left them out when formulating the project. The scope of the project is limited because it serves the whole city yet it has less than thirty beneficiaries, who do not make even a percentage of the city's poor.

6.5.7 Enablement in the poverty alleviation project

Beneficiary 5 argues that

“[t]he training acquired from the project is not enough to make us be able to run the project on our own, more so that we are expected to train others who joined when the project had started. The training arrangement does not give us the opportunity to progress in life as it makes us stick with the project yet we are expected to create openings for other poor people”.

Another, beneficiary argues that

“We are not treated properly here. When we joined the project, we were told that we will be actively involved in the running of the project but today we are told what to do by the project overseer. We have tried to bring this up with the committee here but nothing has come out of it. We even tried to talk to the City Council but we were told we are not the responsibility of the council. Trying to communicate with the DoH, we were told that we are not employees of the Department. This has left us in a situation where we are exploited with no one to turn to because we are illiterate and poor” (Beneficiary 6).

From the above quotes, it is obvious that the beneficiaries have not been empowered to take responsibility for the running of the project any time soon and they are now desolate. Despite officials indicating that participation exists, the beneficiaries argue that it does not exist. Amongst their worries is that a committee that was set up as their platform is “useless as it is always overruled by the project’s technical officer and does not have any say on how the project should be run” (Beneficiary 7). The beneficiaries argue that their failure to have a say in the project makes it difficult for them to influence the direction of the project and ultimately the potential impact that the project can have on the lives of many other poor households. Beneficiary 8 argues that “[w]e are not well-treated by those we thought we have to look up to for assistance because both the City Council and the DoH have disowned us. This has left us at the mercy of the technical officer”.

There is limited impact of the ideals of the concept of enablement on the project. Issues on empowerment of the beneficiaries have not yielded any results. The period within which the beneficiaries were supposed to have taken over the project has elapsed and even the beneficiaries are not well-equipped (training and self-confidence) to take over the running of the project. The department has delegated some responsibilities (UNCHS, 1996a; Chambers, 1995) to the City Council but that has not been met with requisite powers. Infact it looks like the Department just dumped the project in Francistown. This

approach is against what Pugh (2000) and others advocate for, more especially with regard to empowering beneficiaries. The current arrangement where only income, home ownership and training are targeted is a piece-meal kind of approach which will fail to meet the expectations hence calls for holistic approaches (Ha, 2004; Hjorth, 2003; Pugh, 1994; UN-Habitat, 2003).

6.6 CONCLUSION

The housing problems experienced by the City of Francistown were expected to be improved with the introduction of the poverty alleviation project. This has not been the case given that a very limited number of the poor have had access to the project since its inception. The achievement levels of the project are also worrisome more especially the number of houses built and the number of trained beneficiaries. The study has confirmed that as opposed to the official position that all is well with the project, there is more that has to be done to make sure that the project produces what it is expected to deliver.

There has been failure to create an enabling environment and this has therefore made potential stakeholders besides the poor not to take part in the project. The poor have not been empowered to have a role in their destiny and instead they have been made to be mere recipients of aid. The project has failed to deal with the vulnerabilities that the beneficiaries are exposed to. It has also failed to establish what the poor would do when faced with difficulties of being poor and this has robbed the project invaluable input from the poor. The definition of poverty places emphasis on economic indicators. The impact of the project has been very minimal considering that only 250 beneficiaries have so far benefited. Using the 2001 census for Botswana's population of 1 680 863 and assuming that there has never been changes in poverty levels in urban areas since 1994, 250 beneficiaries transforms to a mere 0.06% of the poor. This is a negligible figure and this means that the efforts have little impact on poverty.

Despite the limitations noted above, there are some traces of possible success in the implementation of the poverty alleviation projects as has been started by the GoB. Some of the beneficiaries have indicated that they have invested in the education of their

children. Some have also indicated that they have since built themselves houses, with some pointing out that they now have their own water connections. Most of those who pointed to have built themselves houses indicated that they were able to access the SHHA loan facility because of the income that they received from the project.

CHAPTER 7.0: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings on the project's limitations do not augur well for the housing policy in Botswana because the exposed limitations can be traced to the policy. These limitations can be interpreted to be the failure of the housing policy. It is therefore opportune for me to put forward proposals with a view of improving on the limitations as exposed by the enquiry. Before doing so I will look at poverty concepts that the housing policy in Botswana should take into account in its poverty alleviation drive. This will be followed by the recommendations, based on the limitations highlighted above, on how best to address poverty through housing.

7.2 CONCEPTS OF POVERTY AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO HOUSING POLICY IN BOTSWANA

From the findings, it is obvious that the definition of poverty played a pivotal role in determining the type of poverty alleviation intervention and in the process leaving out the more salient social issues. The various aspects that make up urban poverty as discussed by Satterthwaite (2001 and 2003), calling for a broader view of poverty, are of critical importance if poverty alleviation is to be achieved. This also goes to what Moser (1998) advocates for within the asset vulnerability framework. It is however worth noting that not all can be addressed through the housing policy alone. With this in mind it is appropriate to point out that there are many policies that affect housing and as such initiatives have to be formulated that will harmonise what these policies have with what the housing policy strives to achieve.

From the discussions on the definitions of poverty, its manifestations and poverty alleviation, Jenkins, Smith and Wang (2007) argue that there are three concepts of poverty that have to be dealt with in order to eliminate poverty. They argue that vulnerability, asset ownership and livelihood strategies are core to dealing with poverty (*ibid.*). They further argue that “[w]hile there are new dynamic conceptualisations of poverty which can be applied... [these are]...still not widespread as much of” (Jenkins,

Smith and Wang, 2007: 190). This is similar to what is advocated for by Amis (1995), Chambers (1995), Huchzermeyer (2004), Moser (1998), Payne & Majale (2004) and Wratten (1995). Based on what the above authors have indicated, the following aspects have to be considered by policy towards poverty alleviation. These aspects have been pointed out under section 2.4 where efforts have been made to justify the poor's involvement in poverty alleviation drives.

7.2.1 Vulnerability

This is defined as “insecurity and sensitivity in the well-being of individuals, households and communities in the face of a changing environment” (Moser, 1998: 3). She goes on to indicate that “[t]he more assets people have, the less vulnerable they are, and the greater the erosion of people's assets, the greater their insecurity” (*ibid.*). Amis (1995) argues that it is important to protect the poor against trends and shocks, affecting their assets, which further exacerbate vulnerability. With this in mind he argues that policy should target the causes of poverty instead of its symptoms and this will halt reproduction of poverty. Wratten (1995: 17) further argues that “[a]n understanding of how people deplete household assets or resources is helpful in explaining how the well-being of urban households can decline”. It is of importance that the assets of the poor are strengthened to reduce the poor's vulnerability.

7.2.2 Resilience

Defined as “responsiveness in exploiting opportunities, and in resisting or recovering from the negative effects of a changing environment” (Moser, 1998: 3) resilience provides various coping mechanisms for the poor when faced with adversity. This is linked to the type of assets that the poor have that can be utilised to help the poor through hardships. It is therefore important that the policy recognises these mechanisms and try to see how it can accommodate them. This could be something that could fall into what Chambers (1995: 201) proposes when he talks about “[a]nalysis and action by local people, and putting first the priorities of the poor”.

7.2.3 Entitlement

This refers to “the complex ways in which individuals or households command resources...[which] may include wage labour, sale of assets, own production, reduced consumption and public provision of goods and services” (Wratten, 1995: 17). This helps explain the disparities in which poverty affects members of the same household (*ibid.* and Huchzermeyer, 2004). It should not be taken lightly that poverty affects household members the same way because it is highly possible that command over resources in a household differ (Wratten, 1995).

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The poverty concepts discussed above cover a wide range of issues that are of importance to poverty alleviation. Based on the findings it is appropriate that I provide the following as recommendations which if carried out will go a long way in improving the focus of the poverty alleviation project.

7.3.1 Creating an enabling environment beyond policy recommendations

It is important that other than relying on the recommendation that Government should play an enabling role in the housing sector, efforts must be made towards creating that environment. The acknowledgement that an enabling environment does not exist should spur the government into action with a view of creating that environment. This should bring together all stakeholders in the housing sector, such as through the Housing Policy Coordination Council. Guidelines on how an enabling environment can be created should be drawn and stakeholders should buy into them for successful implementation. It is important to involve the stakeholders because they will pride themselves in seeing to it that what has been collectively agreed upon is successfully implemented. A strategy on the implementation of the policy recommendations should be made available with some monitoring and evaluation mechanisms put in place. The role of NGOs and CBOs has been pointed out as being vital more especially in working with vulnerable members of the society and through the creation of an enabling environment, this potential could be exploited.

7.3.2 Recognising the potential of the poor

Rather than seeing the poor as helpless people who always need aid, it is high time that efforts are made towards learning how they cope in life. This is because there might be expenses involved in coming with programmes and strategies aimed at helping the poor but ultimately failing to do so. With the involvement of the poor and the willingness of the professionals and politicians willing to learn from the poor, it is highly likely that the outcome will be able to address the real problem faced by the poor.

7.3.3 Defining poverty in Botswana

The income-based definition as is the case with Botswana has been shown to be limited in a number of ways. It is therefore appropriate to come up with an all-encompassing definition of poverty that will inform formulation of poverty alleviation projects. It is important that some social aspects that cannot be quantified be included in defining poverty. With that in place there will be a reduced number of poverty alleviation projects which of late have tended to create a dependency syndrome for the poor. An all-encompassing definition will see holistic approaches to poverty which will not leave room for further reproduction of poverty.

7.3.4 Responsive regulatory framework

Housing policy alone cannot be able to satisfactorily deal with poverty alleviation and it is here where other policies should come in. There is need for the policy to influence other policies so that it can achieve its intended objectives. It has been pointed out that the existing regulatory framework does not allow some HBEs. The uncontrolled rental arrangements in most low income areas are controversial and most victims are the already vulnerable. It is with this in mind that regulations should be looked into with a view of making them more responsive to the needs of the poor more especially in situations where they need to improve on their lives.

7.3.5 Poverty alleviation project and its impact

It is difficult for the project to deliver on its set objectives mainly because of the approach adopted. As mentioned under section 2.4 of this document, it is vital to involve

institutions and/ or organisations that have the know-how to deal with poverty. Taking a project that takes around fifty beneficiaries and expect it to make an impact in a city with a population of more than 80 000 is unrealistic. It is with this in mind that if any meaningful impact is to be made, the project should be done at locality level where it is easier for the involvement of CBOs and the intended beneficiaries. It might also be important if there are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure that what has been agreed is followed. If it does not succeed as expected then the above-mentioned mechanisms can be implemented to achieve the desired results.

7.3.6 Housing realised and what happens thereafter?

It needs to be clear what happens once a beneficiary gets a house through participating in the poverty alleviation project. This is motivated by the fact that having a house does not necessarily mean that one has escaped poverty as it (house) might turn out to be burdensome to the beneficiary. With this in mind it is important that rather than the beneficiaries being completely phased-out the project, some mechanisms should be instituted to ensure that they are capable of facing the reality that they are now on their own.

7.4 CONCLUSION

The enquiry has pointed out that there are limitations in the National Housing Policy in Botswana in its endeavour to address poverty. Arriving at this conclusion involved discussing poverty and poverty alleviation. This was followed by discussing the role that housing can play in poverty alleviation based on the concept of enablement. The relationship between these aspects informs the housing policy on how best to address poverty. The failure by policies to recognise that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon has seen sporadic and uncoordinated attempts at poverty alleviation with modest achievements. Botswana has not escaped that problem and this is visible in the number of projects that have to be either abandoned or reviewed so as to make them relevant.

The role of other stakeholders in poverty alleviation cannot be overemphasised and these include the poor, NGOs and CBOs. These have been singled out as better placed to work with the poor due to their experience and other advantages that they have over government. There are cases world wide to prove this. The potential of housing poverty alleviation has been documented worldwide and it is because of that evidence that now housing has been thrown into the fray of poverty alleviation. Exploiting housing's potential in poverty alleviation, within an enabling environment, supported and facilitated by government as per the requirements of the concept of enablement. It is however worth noting that creating an enabling environment is a daunting task and it should not be seen as something that can be done easily. It is observable from the Botswana situation. Having had a housing policy for the past 25 years, an enabling environment still proves elusive. There are factors that have been acknowledged by government as impediments to the realisation of the policy's recommendations. It is important that those are attended to alongside those that this enquiry has pointed out.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Department of Housing Officials

Officer 1, Department of Housing, Gaborone: Delivered questionnaire for self administration on 18th December, 2006. Completed questionnaire received on 25th January 2007.

Officer 2, Department of Housing, Gaborone: Interviewed on 15th January 2007 at Department of Housing Main Office, Gaborone.

Francistown City Council

Senior Official, Self Help Housing Agency, Francistown: Interviewed on the 20th December 2006 at the Francistown City Council Offices, Francistown.

Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme's Beneficiaries

Beneficiary 1

Beneficiary 2

Beneficiary 3

Beneficiary 4

Beneficiary 5

Beneficiary 6

Beneficiary 7

Beneficiary 8

Interviewed all on the 21st December 2006 at the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Project Scheme plot, Francistown.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW STRUCTURES

1.0 DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

1.1 Explain the facilitative role of Government in the utilisation of housing as an economic empowerment and poverty alleviation tool.

1.2 What potential does housing have in poverty alleviation, according to the Government of Botswana?

1.3 How does the national policy exploit that potential?

1.4 How conducive is the environment for the exploitation of housing's role in poverty alleviation?

1.5 What position and or/ view point on poverty informed the department in formulating the integrated poverty alleviation and housing scheme project?

1.6 To what extent does the integrated poverty alleviation and housing scheme meet the required results in the exploitation of housing in poverty alleviation?(explain)

1.7 How does the housing policy provide for the involvement of other stakeholders other than Government?

1.8 Who are other role players in the poverty alleviation projects and what are their roles?

1.9 What contribution is realised from the involvement of other stakeholders?

1.10 What challenges have been/ are being experienced with regard to the involvement of other stakeholders

1.11 What is being done to ensure beneficiaries' empowerment as opposed to making them dependent on Government?

1.12 What are the achievement levels of the national housing policy with regard to poverty alleviation in the country? e.g.

- training
- houses built
- access to finance e.g. SHHA or any other
- formation of self-help community based groups
- assumption of project management by beneficiaries
- former beneficiaries gainfully employed, e.t.c.

1.13 What mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate if the housing policy is achieving its set goals with regard to poverty alleviation?

1.14 How do you gauge the success of the housing policy with regard to poverty alleviation?

1.15 What are future plans for the project?

1.16 What are the future plans with a view of making the housing policy more responsive to poverty alleviation?

2.0 BENEFICIARIES

2.1 Where do you stay?

2.2 Where is your own residential plot?

2.3 How did you know about this project?

2.4 How long have you been involved in this project as a beneficiary?

2.5 What contribution have you made in the formulation of this project?

2.6 What is the benefit of being involved in this project?

2.7 Have you accessed SHHA loan facility?

2.8 How much do you earn at month end and what is the breakdown of your monthly expenditure (budget)?

2.9 What problems are you experiencing

2.10 What approach do you have in mind that could best make this project achieve its intended objectives?

3.0 PROJECT OVERSEER (TECHNICAL OFFICER)

3.1 What is the purpose of the project?

3.2 Project profile:

- Number of beneficiaries:
- Annual budget:
- Source of funds (other than government):
- Average income of participants:
- Special characteristics of participants (gender, age, etc.):

- 3.3 What are the achievements of this project more especially with regard to improving the lives of the beneficiaries?
- 3.4 What is the role of beneficiaries in the project? Explain.
- 3.5 What opportunities does the project provide?
- 3.6 What challenges has the project experienced that are of importance for the successful implementation of the project?

4.0 ACADEMICS

- 4.1 What is your view on the facilitative role of Government as promoted by the National Policy on Housing in Botswana?
- 4.2 How supportive is the role to the involvement of other stakeholders in housing delivery?
- 4.3 Housing can housing be used as a poverty alleviation tool and how does the housing policy in Botswana exploit that?
- 4.4 How supportive is the housing policy environment (property rights, housing finance, housing subsidy scheme, residential infrastructure, and the regulatory regimes) to this course (utilisation of housing as a poverty alleviation tool)?
- 4.5 What are your views about the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme currently implemented in various parts of the country?
- 4.6 What could be done to make the housing policy in Botswana pro-poor?

5.0 FRANCISTOWN CITY COUNCIL

- 5.1 How familiar are you with the National Policy on Housing in Botswana? Explain.
- 5.2 What is your role with regard to the implementation of national housing policy recommendations?
- 5.3 How does the facilitative role of the Department of Housing affect the roles played by the City in housing delivery?
- 5.4 What has the City Council done to ensure successful implementation of the policy recommendations?
- 5.5 What is the City Council's position with regard to the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme being implemented in Francistown?

5.6 What could be done to improve the status?

6.0 NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

6.1 How familiar are you with the National Policy on Housing in Botswana? Explain.

6.2 What is your opinion about the way the policy provides (or does not provide) for your participation in housing development and its related issues?

6.3 What is your position on the view that housing has an important role to play in poverty alleviation? Explain?

6.4 How involved are you with the housing sector, more especially the one that deals with the needy groups of Botswana's society?

6.5 How conducive or otherwise is the housing environment for your involvement? Explain.

6.6 What contribution can you make in the housing sector, more especially with regard to utilisation of housing as a poverty alleviation tool?

6.7 Government has implemented the Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme as a way through which housing can be utilised to alleviate poverty. What is your view on the project?

6.8 What contribution can you make in the projects to enhance their achievement levels?

6.9 What could be done to make the national policy on housing responsive to the involvement of the civil society in areas (e.g. poverty alleviation) where they have a critical role to play?

APPENDIX 2: PROFILE OF INTERVIEWED BENEFICIARIES

Beneficiary 1	A middle-aged woman, in her early 40s, participating as a labourer at the project. Has her own plot in the City of Francistown.
Beneficiary 2	A woman in her late 40s and participates as a labourer at the project. Has her own plot in the City of Francistown.
Beneficiary 3	A man in his early 60s and a leader at the project. He has been with the project since inception. Has his own plot in the City of Francistown.
Beneficiary 4	A young woman in her late 20s and a labourer at the project. Used her parents' plot to access the project.
Beneficiary 5	A young man in his early 30s and a machine operator at the project. Used his parents' plot in the rural area to access the project.
Beneficiary 6	A woman in her early 50s and one of the senior beneficiaries at the project. Used her mother's plot in the City of Francistown to access the project.
Beneficiary 7	A young man in his late 20s and a labourer at the project. Came looking for employment and he was offered one at the project.
Beneficiary 8	A middle-aged man in his early 40s and a machine operator at the project. Used his own plot in the City of Francistown to access the project