



Parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa: actors in poverty reduction?



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Eschborn, December 2003

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Published by:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH
Postfach 5180, 65726 Eschborn, Germany
Internet: <http://www.gtz.de>

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Translation:
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Coverphoto:
„Politiker in Mali“, dpa

Coverdesign:
Jürgen Platt Grafik, 60318 Frankfurt am Main

Layout:
seifert media inform, 35394 Gießen

Printed by:
WK Druck, 63868 Großwallstadt

December 2003

This study was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

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1. Preface

Parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa: Actors in Poverty Reduction? is the first in a series of publications that look at the role of parliaments in the implementation process of Poverty Reduction Strategies. The series was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and is published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.

Cooperation with parliaments in developing countries has long been an almost exclusive domain of their Northern counterparts and the respective international associations. With the notable exception of projects that aimed at strengthening scientific parliamentary services, Technical Cooperation has had so far little institutional contact with parliaments. One reason for this is the tendency of the executive to assume a dominant role in national politics at the expense of parliaments, as evidenced by the way structural adjustment programmes were implemented in many countries. In Africa, parliaments gained some influence in the wake of the national conferences held at the beginning of the 90ies. However, the dynamic generated by these *états généraux* has largely given way to parliamentary routine and its daily challenges.

Deficits in parliamentary structures and processes have become more visible in cases where international initiatives have had a direct impact on matters of parliamentary sovereignty. The HIPC II initiative and the resulting Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and Comprehensive Development Frameworks considerably influence national development processes but have generally come about with limited participation of parliaments.

In fact, it can be argued that the implementation of PRS has further contributed to the erosion of parliamentary authority through international development cooperation: As the traditional focus of Technical Cooperation are national, regional and local governments and its agencies (later joined by non-state actors, NGOs and community-based organisations), parliaments have only in exceptional circumstances been the centre of TC measures. Departing from this observation, we began to look for methods and instruments that could be used to improve international and, more specifically, donor-related framework conditions for parliaments, and to collect our suggestions in a series of publications.

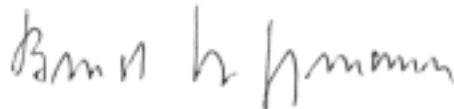
Volume one of this series investigates the role played by parliaments during the implementation of PRS in 28 African states. On the basis of these case studies, the present publication describes the complex function of parliaments in national policy making and the way PRS processes have affected this function. Suggesting future approaches for strengthening national parliaments, our aim is to contribute to a deeper understanding of how parliaments can play a productive role in enhancing good national governance.

We are particularly grateful to the authors who took it upon them to study and analyse recent processes that have the potential for further development. The study at hand can only provide a snapshot of the development engendered by processes in the wake of the HIPC II initiative. This "work in progress" perspective allows us to illustrate the framework conditions that are necessary but also conducive to capacity development in this area.



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2. Summary

- 1) Parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa have so far played only a marginal role in the development and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). This contradicts democratic principles and in some cases even breaches explicit constitutional rights. In addition, the potential offered by parliamentary involvement is not being harnessed. Practice in current PRS processes is thus not only undermining the long-term institutional development of parliamentary democracies in Africa, but also wastes opportunities for effective poverty reduction. In development cooperation, African parliaments are not adequately supported. While this shortcoming has now been recognised, it has not been corrected.
- 2) The study looks at the 28 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa currently involved in the PRS process. It examines the current status of the parliaments concerned, their involvement in the PRS processes and donors' promotional measures to date; finally, it makes recommendations on possible ways of strengthening the parliaments. One of the features of the current situation is that African parliaments are playing an increasingly active role in their countries as a result of the democratic reforms that took place in the 1990s, although in ideal terms their legitimation is still weak.
- 3) The position of parliaments vis-à-vis the executive is traditionally weak in the PRS countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. While the constitutions give them legislative, oversight and budgetary powers, the parliaments exercise these only to a limited extent, if at all. This is rooted in political systems that tend to strengthen the executive, a generally weak democratic culture, and very limited capacity in terms of members and institutional resources.
- 4) Involvement in PRS processes by parliaments in SSA has so far been limited in scope and is the exception rather than the rule. In most cases, it has been restricted to participation by individual members of parliaments in consultation sessions, mostly without institutional participation by parliaments. The reasons for this are the low significance of the legislature in political terms, donors' traditional focus on the executive, and the fact that participation is equated with civil society actors.

Interesting exceptions to this rule do, however, indicate the potential present where parliaments participate.

- 5) Promotion of parliaments is a central element in developing good governance. While good governance became a central goal for all donors in the 1990s, actual parliamentary promotion measures are still small in number and primarily focus on improving the resources available and basic capacity building.
- 6) The recommendations for systematic expansion of the current portfolio of development cooperation measures by the donor community to benefit parliaments are grouped under four headings: strengthening the legal and political conditions in the countries, promoting the functional capacity of parliaments, strengthening interaction with other actors, and improving the international donor policy environment for the legislatures.

3. Introduction

All African countries have a parliament.¹ At the same time, African parliaments have so far attracted little attention in the development policy debate, either in academic studies or among donors.²

The reality of African political systems has led to a predominant view that parliaments are not democratic organs, and they are therefore largely ignored. The primary reason is serious doubt about their legitimation and effectiveness.³ At the same time, donor policy in development cooperation concentrates heavily on the executive.⁴

The disregard of parliaments is also reflected in the new strategic approaches to combating poverty, the processes for developing and implementing Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). Although participatory formulation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) is a core of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and parliaments are the legitimate representatives of the people, they have only been involved in isolated cases, if at all. Deliberate measures to involve them have been the exception.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH have pointed out the special role of parliaments and also the real deficiencies that exist, inter alia in connection with the *PRSP Review Process* of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).⁵

The World Bank and the IMF have since accepted these and similar recommendations. The PRSP Progress Reports published by the two institutions in September 2002 as well as in September 2003 acknowledged the growing role of parliaments in PRS processes,

¹ The sole exception is Comoros, cf. Chungong 2002: 132.

² The major gaps in research into African parliaments were noted by Meinhardt (1993: 14-17) in the early 1990s (several studies on Kenya and Tanzania were all that had been published at the time). His hope that the wave of democratisation in Africa might lead to a significant increase in the attention paid to parliaments has yet to be fulfilled.

³ Kingham (2003: 32), for example, writes: "The common failure of democratic regimes in Africa can be partly ascribed to the inability of African parliamentary democracy to generate enduring popular support or assent amongst its citizens, with parliaments often viewed as alien, incomprehensible and distant."

⁴ Development cooperation funds are also mainly beyond parliamentary control, as they are used outside the regular budget.

⁵ This observation was one of the central points made in the study commissioned by the BMZ and the GTZ on "Institutionalised participation in processes beyond the PRSP"; this study was fed into the review process, where it attracted considerable attention; Eberlei 2001.

but also noted: "Parliaments face many constraints in working to reduce poverty."⁶ A draft appendix has also now been submitted for the World Bank *PRSP Sourcebook*, dealing with the possible role of parliaments in PRS processes.⁷

3.1. Objectives of the study

The present paper is based on a *desk study* and is designed to review and, if appropriate, prepare measures to strengthen parliaments in PRS countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (see table).⁸

PRS processes in Sub-Saharan Africa					
	I-PRSP	PRSP		I-PRSP	PRSP
Benin	2000	2003	Lesotho	2001	
Burkina Faso	/	2000	Madagascar	2001	2003
Cape Verde	2002		Malawi	2000	2002
Cameroon	2000	2003	Mali	2000	2003
Central African Rep.	2001		Mauritania	/	2001
Chad	2000	2003	Mozambique	2000	2001
Congo, DR	2002		Niger	2000	2002
Côte d'Ivoire	2002		Rwanda	2000	2002
Ethiopia	2001	2002	Sao Tomé & Príncipe	2000	
Gambia	2000	2002	Senegal	2000	2003
Ghana	2000	2003	Sierra Leone	2001	
Guinea	2000	2002	Tanzania	2000	2000
Guinea Bissau	2000		Uganda	/	2000
Kenya	2000		Zambia	2000	2002

Source: World Bank, August 2003

After a brief classification of the parliaments in terms of the political systems of the countries under review, Sect. 3 looks at the functions and activities of the parliaments, as these determine the scope for the role of parliaments in poverty reduction. The specific

⁶ IDA, IMF (2002: 16). The recently released new report (IDA, IMF 2003) mentions the role of parliaments in PRS processes as well as important, but again without any further specification. The increased attention is also reflected in the *Handbook on Parliamentarians and Policies to Reduce Poverty* published in 2002 by the Parliamentary Centre and World Bank (Parliamentary Centre, World Bank 2002).

⁷ Hubli, Mandaville 2002.

⁸ The national PRS documents, progress reports and relevant comments by the IMF and the World Bank are all available on the World Bank's website, and are therefore not cited individually: The national PRS documents, progress reports and relevant comments by the IMF and World Bank are all available on the World Bank website, and are accordingly not cited individually: www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/index.htm.

analysis of involvement by parliaments in the PRS process in Sect. 4 reviews the existing deficiencies and cites positive examples.

To date, there has been no broad and systematic promotion of parliaments, either in the general development cooperation context or in connection with PRS. However, various donors have implemented more individual measures in the PRS context since 2001. An overview of the international and German promotional measures in Sect. 5 covers deficiencies in terms of regions and content, but also looks at good practices.

The final section builds on the analysis to present ideas and specific approaches for possible measures to strengthen parliaments in the PRS process.

The analysis is the result of a desk study. In the course of this study, it became very obvious that the widespread disregard of parliaments is also reflected in the fact that there are only a very small number of studies available on parliamentary government in Africa. There are isolated recent papers in the PRS context on possible and actual roles for parliaments in this process. However, specific information on the function and activities of parliaments and their involvement in PRSs is very scarce, and primarily concentrates on a few (mostly anglophone) countries. The national PRS documents, constitutions and (where available) parliamentary standing orders and reports were therefore also analysed in the study.

3.2. Overview

The “second democratisation” or “second liberation” took place in Africa after 1989.⁹ New governments were elected in free elections in a number of countries (headed by Benin 1989). In many, constitutions were reformed (including the introduction of multi-party systems). In several countries (e.g. Kenya and Madagascar in 2002), the political developments initiated at the start of the 1990s have only recently led to remarkable fresh starts on a democratic basis. However, the minimal definition¹⁰ of democracy as participation with equal rights by all citizens and freedom of opinion and expression is only met in a few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

⁹ Cf. Bratton, van de Walle 1997; Meyns 2000.

¹⁰ Cf. Shell 1991.

Of the 28 countries studied in SSA, Freedom House rates seven as “free”,¹¹ 16 as “partly free”¹² (in some cases with significant restrictions) and five as “not free”.¹³ However, for all the shortcomings, there has been a considerable increase in political freedom in Africa since the 1990s (cf. e.g. Erdmann 2001). This also includes the opportunities for parliamentary work.

Even so, the political environment for parliamentary work is mostly heavily authoritarian and dominated by structures that Bratton and van de Walle (1997) describe as “neopatrimonialist”. According to these authors, the systemic features of neopatrimonialist government are presidentialism, clientism and the use of state resources for the purposes of political legitimation.¹⁴ In many African countries, members of parliament in particular are still tainted by the reputation of being part of the system of organised political patronage.¹⁵

Besides these specific structural features of SSA, the ability of parliaments to exercise political influence is determined worldwide by

- the structure of the political system and the role of parliament in relation to other constitutional organs;
- their political legitimation, which is primarily determined by free and fair elections.

3.3. Political systems

In the 28 SSA countries studied, the primacy of parliament (at least in theory) over other constitutional organs is constitutionally established in only two cases: parliamentary democracy in Ethiopia, and the parliamentary monarchy in Lesotho. The overwhelming majority of countries have presidential systems in which the president plays the dominant role.¹⁶

¹¹ Cape Verde, Sao Tomé & Príncipe, Benin, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali and Senegal.

¹² Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Uganda.

¹³ Chad, Guinea, Cameroon, Congo DR, Rwanda. Cf. Freedom House 2003.

¹⁴ Bratton, van de Walle 1997: 63-68.

¹⁵ In a survey conducted by IDASA (Institute for Democracy in South Africa) in six southern African nations (Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, Malawi), one result was that “either local government councils or Parliament are consistently the least trusted institution in each country” (IDASA 2000: 28).

¹⁶ Democratic systems take various forms, and there are established democracies with presidential systems, e.g. in the USA and France. Other factors, such as neopatrimonialism, have to be taken into consideration in order to understand problems with presidential systems in many African countries.

In francophone Africa (half of the countries studied), the strong position of the president is based on the French model. The president is elected directly, rather than by parliament, and has far-reaching powers (e.g. in Benin he can annul parliamentary resolutions by decree). Even so, a change has taken place since the 1960s in this area too, leading among other things to the introduction of prime ministers elected by parliament (cf. Fomunyoh 2001: 40). However, the predominant position of the president has been retained. In anglophone Africa (ten PRS countries in SSA), the presidential system is more strongly oriented towards the Westminster model, which gives greater scope to parliament. At the same time, governments frequently have extensive ability to intervene in the work of parliaments.¹⁷

All 28 countries have constitutions which have either been adopted or heavily revised since 1990. Many countries have new and democratic constitutions, but many of the rules of democracy have never been put into practice.

3.4. Legitimation

With the exception of the DR Congo, there have been parliamentary elections in all PRS countries in SSA since 1998; these were judged to be largely “free and fair” in over half of the cases (15).¹⁸ Except for in Uganda, a number of parties took part in the election, and in at least 20 countries at least one opposition party is represented in parliament.¹⁹

There are significant differences in the electoral systems which affect the ties between members of parliaments and their constituencies on the one hand and voter identification with their delegates on the other. The majority of the francophone countries adopted proportional representation from France, while anglophone SSA is dominated by the simple majority rule. A few countries (Senegal, Lesotho and Guinea) also have a mixed electoral system.

While simple majority rule increases the direct tie between delegates and their constituencies, proportional representation has the advantage of reflecting the actual

¹⁷ In Kenya, for example, constitutional amendments are currently in preparation which will no longer permit the president in future to convene or adjourn parliament at will, determine its agenda etc.

¹⁸ Cf. Freedom House 2003. Rwanda (parliamentary elections in October 2003) is not yet included in this figure.

¹⁹ A particular problem is the severe fragmentation of the parties in SSA, which results in the significant weakness of the opposition, including in its parliamentary work.

electoral results in parliament, preventing disproportional domination by the governing party.²⁰

However, the political legitimization of parliament is more than just a question of elections, if we see it as acceptance by society of a constitutional system.²¹ In addition to the direct criterion of holding parliamentary elections, parliament's legitimization also depends on the solidity of democracy in the political system and on how parliament exercises its functions. In the countries studied, there were clear weaknesses in legitimization on both these points:²²

- Legitimation of parliament based on elections and the evolution of democracy is comparatively high in only Ghana, Senegal, Benin and Kenya.
- There are clear restrictions in 13 countries: while the parliament in these countries is mostly the result of reasonably free and fair elections, a weak democratic tradition means it has only limited significance (e.g. Mauritania, Mozambique and Zambia).
- In nine more countries, parliamentary legitimization is weak, as it is based on dubious elections (as in Mali or Cameroon, for example).
- Two of the 28 countries studied are the conflict nations Congo and the Central African Republic; here, parliament has been dissolved or there is a transitional parliament.

This poses a fundamental dilemma in the SSA countries studied. While, in a democracy, parliaments are the legitimate representative of the people under the constitution, in many of the countries studied they lack legitimization and are restricted in their effectiveness.

The occasionally dubious nature in formal democratic terms of the legitimization of African parliaments is also clear if we consider who is represented in parliament and, as a result of the economic basis frequently needed in an election, who is not. Are members of parliament really representatives of the *people*, or of a self-perpetuating elite? A similar question can and must be asked regarding the representation of women in parliament:

²⁰ Southall emphasises the benefits of proportional representation for Africa for this reason, as "plurality systems were more likely to foster majoritarianism and ethnic polarisation" (Southall 2003: 14).

²¹ Cf. e.g. Weidenfeld 1996.

²² Authors' summary based on the data from Freedom House (www.freedomhouse.org).

women are very significantly underrepresented in African parliaments – only 14.3 per cent of the members of African parliaments are female.²³

In view of this situation, is there any point in dealing with parliaments in Africa in the context of development cooperation, given that in terms of western views of democracy they have so far remained largely insignificant? The answer is clearly in the affirmative, if democracy is seen as a process and not as a dichotomy, either present or not.²⁴ This view is also advanced in recent political science publications looking at neopatrimonial structures in Africa (see above). Gero Erdmann, for example, regards neopatrimonialism in Africa as a specific form of a hybrid regime²⁵ (2002), and although he describes this system as having deep structural roots, he argues that the contradictions inherent in neopatrimonialism also have potential for change in the direction of democratic consolidation (but also on the negative side in a reversion to increased repression and autocratic rule). The authors Bratton and van de Walle mentioned above stress the impact of neopatrimonialism on African social structures, but clearly show on the basis of their empirical work that a democratic transition can lead to a phase of democratic development and consolidation through political and institutional reforms.²⁶ As he had already argued in the study published jointly with Bratton, van de Walle again claims in his latest book on Africa's "permanent crisis" that the patrimonial elements of African societies can be suppressed in favour of rational and legal features. In his view, the political transitions of the 90s were a step in this direction.²⁷

²³ Cf. IPU statistics: www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm (accessed on 11 July 2003). In several African countries, e.g. in Uganda and Rwanda, the proportion of women in parliament has been significantly increased through corresponding quotas.

²⁴ Cf. Beetham 1994.

²⁵ By this, Erdmann means types of autocratic regime where the transition to democratisation has been interrupted, which have to be classified somewhere between dictatorship and democracy and which can fluctuate between these extremes.

²⁶ Bratton, van de Walle 1997: 61 et seq., 233 et seq.

²⁷ van de Walle 2001.

4. Functions and activities of parliaments

The significance of parliament is now more frequently stressed not only in treatises on democratic theory but also in development policy publications dealing with Africa.

The *Handbook on Parliamentarians and Policies to Reduce Poverty* refers to parliaments as “a bridge connecting citizens and the state”, and AWEPA (*European Parliamentarians for Africa*) not surprisingly regards a strengthened parliament as a central institution for good governance. “The accountability of the government to its citizens, via an independent and empowered parliament, is a basic requirement for establishing a more transparent public administration system.”²⁸

In a democracy, parliament is the highest state organ after the people, and represents sovereignty. Article 8 of the Ethiopian constitution, for example, states: “Their [the people’s] sovereignty shall be expressed through their representatives elected in accordance with this Constitution and through their direct democratic participation.” Again, Art. 50 states: “The House of Peoples’ Representatives is the highest authority of the Federal Government. The House is responsible to the People. The State Council is the highest organ of State authority. It is responsible to the People of the State.”

The most important function is thus to represent the people, followed by legislation and controlling the executive. Depending on the system of government, parliament may also be responsible for electing and removing the executive. While the constitutions of the 28 countries studied all give parliament the basic functions of legislation and oversight (with variations), the parliaments studied in presidential systems do not have any electoral function for the president, who is elected independently. This strengthens the executive and weakens perception of parliament as representing the people in dealing with a president who is also popularly elected.

A specific legislative function, the exercising of which takes it into the realm of the oversight and control function, consists in approving the annual government budget and subsequently monitoring compliance with this budget. In addition to these functions,

²⁸ PC, WBI 2002: 7; AWEPA 2002: 34.

another important function of parliament – widely recognised as such in theory and practice – is to provide a forum for public information and debate.²⁹

The overwhelming majority of SSA countries have a centralised state structure, which is reflected in the parliamentary system. Most countries have only one chamber (22), and only four have two chambers; the federal system of Ethiopia is particularly noteworthy.³⁰

4.1. Legislation

The constitutions of the PRS countries in SSA define legislation as the central function of parliament. This is contained, for example, in Art. 67 of the Senegalese constitution: “*L'Assemblée nationale détient le pouvoir législatif. Elle vote seule la loi*” (“The national assembly constitutes the legislative power. It alone passes laws”). However, there are significant differences, not only in exercising the legislative function but also in its constitutional formulation. The relevant issues here are the areas for which parliament has legislative authority, and whether it can initiate its own legislation or can (must) delegate its legislative function.

Not all constitutions allow for the possibility of *initiating* legislation (although they do in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mozambique, Senegal and Benin), and actual exercise of this power is even rarer (e.g. in Benin it was done for the first time in 2001 and 2002, in Ghana in 2002).

The constitution of Madagascar, for example, imposes significant restrictions on parliament:

- parliament can be dissolved by the executive after two votes of no confidence within 18 months (Art. 95);
- parliament can temporarily delegate its legislative authority to the president by simple majority (Art. 96).

The legislative activities of the parliaments studied consisted overwhelmingly of rubber-stamping legislation proposed by the executive. Intensive debate on content is the excep-

²⁹ In addition to the four functions studied below (legislation, control, budgetary powers, public forum) and the function of electing the executive (which, as noted, is not relevant in the countries studied here), Uwe Holtz also notes the parliamentary function of influencing international relations and policy (again, this function has no specific role in the countries studied). He describes these six functions as the “parliamentary hexagon” (Holtz 2003: 24).

³⁰ Two more countries currently only have a transitional parliament (Rwanda, DR Congo).

tion, independent legislative initiatives – if possible in principle – may not have monetary relevance and are not utilised by the parliaments as an opportunity for sharing in power.

4.2. Oversight

Parliamentary oversight and control of the executive is one of the central pillars in a system of separation of powers, and this also applies to presidential systems where the executive is not rooted in parliament. Not all the constitutions studied explicitly mention the oversight role, limiting themselves to presenting the instruments of control. One example, however, is Art. 79 of the Benin constitution, which says of the parliament: "*Il exerce le pouvoir législatif et contrôle l'action du Gouvernement*" ("It exercises legislative power and controls the actions of the government").

Control can be exercised through various instruments. These include:

- budgetary powers (see below),
- convening investigative committees,
- questions to the executive,
- votes of no confidence.

The Ghanaian parliament

Up to 1993, the Ghanaian parliament was only able to work for relatively short periods (1957-1966, 1969-1972 and 1979-1981), but in the short period since then it has gained significantly greater respect.

The 1993 constitution gives parliament the classic functions of legislation and control. One way, for example, is through the important role of the committees:

"(1) Parliament shall appoint standing committees and other committees as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions. ... (3) Committees of Parliament shall be charged with such functions, including the investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministries and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals for legislation. ..." (Art. 103, Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992)

At the same time, parliamentary rights in Ghana are associated with restrictions and problems in implementation as the following examples show:

- **Legislation:** Parliament debates bills of the executive and has the right to initiate legislation. However, the right to initiate legislation excludes bills increasing taxation, affecting public funds or government debt, and is hardly ever exercised.
- **Oversight:** Parliamentary control in Ghana can take the form of resolutions, question time, summons to executive members to report to committees, voting out of office and votes of no confidence. However, the executive does not always involve and inform parliament sufficiently for it to exercise its control function.
- **Budgetary powers:** Parliament votes on the budget, but cannot introduce its own legislation relating to revenue.
- **Public information:** The Ghanaian parliament not only has the ability to hold public hearings but also occasionally does so (with DC support).

Source: Mair 2000

In order to control the executive, parliaments generally have a right to information. This includes the right to address questions to the executive and to form special committees (e.g. Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Uganda). There are, however, also exceptions, e.g. Cameroon, where there is no provision for special committees. Several constitutions also provide for votes of no confidence (e.g. Madagascar, Mauritania).

These instruments are generally enshrined in the constitutions and can thus play an important role in monitoring executive activities if they are (can be) actively used.

So far, however, this has not been the case. Southall notes a significant weakness in the control function of parliaments in southern Africa, and this applies throughout SSA: "Parliamentary checks upon executives, as written into constitutions, have effectively been nullified by the predominance of ruling parties which operate in a hierarchical and disciplined fashion."³¹ Besides the constitutionally guaranteed rights, the actors' understanding of their roles is a major determinant of the democratic culture. The origin of many parties in liberation struggles, neopatrimonialism and presidential systems shapes the widespread perception of government parties as an extended arm of the executive, even in the view of parliamentarians themselves. This complicates the exercise of control rights by parliaments and the provision of information to and involvement of parliament by the executive.

³¹ Southall 2003: 52.

However, besides the political barriers to the exercise of parliamentary control, there are also structural problems. Basically, every administration has a clear advantage over parliament in terms of information and of personnel and material resources. This advantage in terms of information is particularly relevant in the SSA countries studied, and the parliamentary administrative apparatus is inadequate to ensure control.³²

4.3. Budgetary powers

Budgetary powers are the authority of parliament to establish the state budget in binding form through legislation. Budgetary powers arose out of the right of the various social classes to approve taxes, and are one of the oldest parliamentary control rights. This authority is of key importance with regard to the PRS process in particular. The budget is the “standard entry point for parliaments in PRSP”.³³

Budgetary powers of parliament are given in the constitutions of all the countries studied. Besides the uniform requirement for approval of the budget by parliament, however, there are definite differences in the options available to parliaments. Only a few constitutions provide for parliament to pass amendments to the budget as presented, e.g. in Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Malawi and Mali. In every case, however, parliaments can only pass amendments which are at least neutral in their monetary impact, and any vote on additional spending requires the approval of the executive. Broad rights of intervention, such as those found in the budgetary powers of the German parliament, are not provided for in the constitutions of the countries studied, and existing (and less extensive) rights are not utilised.

The same is true of parliamentary budget control as of other activities of the legislature: given the high degree of complexity of the technical questions, the ability of parliament to share power heavily depends on the existence, quality, competence and resources of the relevant committees. With the sole exception of Guinea, all of the parliaments studied have the option of setting up standing committees. There is generally (i.e. in 24 countries) a central finance or budget committee, while in Kenya, Malawi, Niger and Zambia there are at least two committees dealing with this topic.

³² “One key problem, for example, is the poor flow of information between executive and legislative branches, which limits the quality and timeliness of parliaments’ contribution to decision-making on poverty issues within the framework of their national constitutions” (IMF, World Bank 2002: 16).

³³ Schnell 2003: 10.

These committees are particularly relevant for an active role for parliament in poverty reduction. The *Handbook on Parliamentarians and Policies to Reduce Poverty* states: "Parliamentary committees can become key players by using the budget process as an instrument of accountability and policy influence."³⁴

Ideally, the following would thus be required:

- active and strong committees with resources,
- information on the budget which is publicly accessible and comprehensible,
- PR work at local level by parliamentary committees,
- institutionalised communication between parliaments and civil society,
- follow-up and monitoring.

The reality of parliamentary budget policy in SSA is much more modest. For the most part, the budgets presented are approved without amendment after a brief debate. The time available for budget deliberation is often so brief that any substantive treatment by the parliament of the budget proposal is ruled out from the start (e.g. in Gambia there was a period of 11 days between the budget's presentation and approval in 2001, and in Tanzania the constitution allows for at most five days).

There are, however, several examples of how this practice has gradually been changing over the past three to four years:

- In Benin, parliament rejected the budget in 2000 and 2002 (although the president then pushed the budget through by decree).
- In Malawi, the parliament has made greater use of its budgetary powers since 2001 (in connection with the PRS process) to debate and influence the content, integrating know-how from civil society actors in the process.
- In Kenya, the annual debates on the government budget are significantly expanding, supported by systematic external expertise. The Kenyan parliament is currently trying to push through the creation of an *Budget Office*.
- In Uganda, the parliament has passed a law giving it more rights in the budgetary process.³⁵
- Inspired by the example of South Africa, gender budget initiatives in several countries (e.g. Tanzania and Uganda) have initiated substantial debate about the

³⁴ PC, WBI 2002: 21, for the following, 21 et seq.

³⁵ The Republic of Uganda: The Budget Act, 2001.

gender-specific relevance of revenue and expenditure in government budgets, and also motivated delegates to pay greater attention to this aspect of budgeting.³⁶

4.4. Public forum

The functions of a parliament include creating publicity and transparency about its work, substantive decisions and political processes. In the PRS countries of SSA, however, parliaments have so far played a subordinate role in public debate, and are able to publicise their work to only a very limited extent. They generally lack the financial, personnel and technical resources to ensure the flow of information.

There is only limited reporting on the work of parliament in the national media of the countries studied. One reason for this is the minimal resources of the parliaments for public relations and media work. Even more important, however, are the democratic quality of parliamentary work, the extent of media freedom and diversity, and the competence and working opportunities of the journalists.³⁷ Only a few countries have political debates in parliament which are worth reporting. Benin, Mali, Malawi, Kenya, Ghana and Uganda are positive examples of regular political reporting and commentary on parliamentary debates, which thus reach a broader public.

Another indicator of the lack of transparency of parliaments, which is relevant to a few civil society actors, for example, but not to the majority of the population, is their Internet presence. A substantial number of the parliaments studied (ten) do not have their own website, and some of those that do have one offer only very little information on the content of parliamentary work.³⁸ While, for example, the Ghanaian parliament posts detailed information on the Internet (including the text of legislation, committee sessions), there is virtually nothing of any political relevance about the legislature of Madagascar.

Parliaments can also reach the public through direct contact with civil society actors. Ties with their constituencies allow delegates to establish close relations with local groups and

³⁶ Cf. for South Africa: www.case.org.za/htm/wbi.htm; for Tanzania: www.tgnp.co.tz/; for Uganda: www.wougnet.org/Profiles/fowode.html.

³⁷ The "fourth estate" is very important even in functioning democracies. Strengthening the media, e.g. through capacity building, is very important for monitoring national poverty reduction strategies, and has been neglected so far (cf. Hudock 2003).

³⁸ In all, 70% of the governments in Africa have a website (Kingham 2003: 21). This is often associated with the parliament's Internet presence.

structures. However, in most cases this potential is not actively exploited.³⁹ Parliaments worldwide have only limited institutional exchange with civil society. In principle, there are the instruments of the petition committee (for individual issues) and public hearings at which representatives of the scientific community or civil society, for example, can present their point of view.

In the African PRS countries, only a few have provision for public hearings as an instrument, and this has so far been used only in isolated instances:

- In Benin, representatives of civil society can be invited to hearings; this was done for the first time in 2001 (within the framework of an USAID project).
- Burkina Faso also has this possibility, but no use has so far been made of it in practice.
- In Malawi, this option was used in the 2001/2002 budget debate, in intensive hearings with civil society representatives.
- In Sao Tomé & Príncipe, there has only been one instance to date, when a hearing was held by the responsible committee on the *International Chamber of Commerce* (ICC).
- In Ghana, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) supported public hearings by parliament in 2002.
- In Rwanda's new parliament, there is provision for representatives of civil society to be heard by committees before laws etc. are passed.
- An interesting development in terms of contact between parliament and the general public can be seen in Tanzania. Here, parliamentary committees have recently begun their sessions with a public part. New laws are considered in these public sessions, in some cases attended by large numbers of the public. Visitors are even given a right to address the committee in some cases. These public sessions are having an impact. For example, at the start of 2003, the executive withdrew draft legislation on privatising a small-loans bank after strong public protest and debate in the public sessions of the parliamentary committees.

³⁹ This is a problem related at least partly to the large distances and lack of transport facilities. In Ethiopia, for example, members of parliament live in Addis for most of the year, and they can often only travel to their constituencies once a year for two to three weeks. For Malawi (during the rule of the authoritarian regime), however, Meinhardt notes that members of parliament served as a link between the central government and rural voters, and so became an "extended arm" of the executive or party organisation during this period (1993: 141). We are not aware of any more recent studies examining this aspect under the conditions of democratisation.

Generally, it can be said that the central functions of a parliament as legislature and control organ for the executive are largely embedded in the constitutions of the countries studied. However, these functions are generally performed to only a very limited extent. Besides the political environment, the lack of resources of the parliaments makes it difficult to exercise their legislative and control functions effectively. There are major personnel, technical and financial shortfalls, including the lack of know-how on the part of the delegates. This applies across the board to all the countries studied, although the anglophone countries are slightly better equipped than the francophone countries in SSA, whose “French heritage” consists of a strong presidential executive and a poorly equipped parliament.

5. Involvement of parliaments in PRS processes to date

Although broadly based participation is supposed to be at the centre of PRS processes,⁴⁰ little attention was given – in either theory or practice – to the people's representatives, the parliaments, in the PRS countries during the first two years after the introduction of the new approach.⁴¹ This is now gradually changing, following the realisation that involving the sole democratically legitimised representative of a society – parliament – can be very important and fruitful for the sustainability and legitimation of the PRS process.⁴²

In the first phase of PRS development, the donor community initially focused entirely on the civil societies of the countries (the Cologne G7 resolution of 1999 spoke only of participation by civil society in developing poverty reduction strategies, and did not mention parliaments). Criticism has since grown that the one-sided concentration on civil society actors can undermine the legitimate basis of the parliaments.⁴³

At the same time, participation is in line with the constitutional responsibility of the elected representatives of the people: “Parliamentarians need to participate in the development and implementation of these strategies to ensure they serve the needs of their constituents.”⁴⁴

How and at what points could parliaments participate in the PRS process?

The PRS cycle offers numerous starting points.⁴⁵ There are five upper levels of possible parliamentary involvement, which are compatible with the existing democratic functions of the parliaments:

⁴⁰ “The PRSP process is intended to be open and participatory and to include all major stakeholders, including Civil Society Organization” – is the opening sentence of the World Bank’s brief manual on “good practices” in the PRS process (World Bank 2002).

⁴¹ Cf. in particular World Bank, IMF, PRS Review 2002; AWEPA 2002: 14; Eberlei 2002; Stapenhurst, Pelizzo 2002.

⁴² There has been further impetus, inter alia from the focus on good governance in the NEPAD initiative. This has so far led to at least greater rhetorical recognition of the role of African parliaments. In the *Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance*, the African governments emphasise the need to work towards necessary improvements, including “adherence to the separation of powers, including the protection of the independence of the judiciary and of effective parliaments” (NEPAD 2002: 4). The new initiative for a pan-African parliament within the framework of the African Union (AU) is also strengthening this trend.

⁴³ Cf. on basis aspects Doherty 2001, Schmitt 2001; with reference to PRS processes, cf. e.g. Eberlei 2001: 3, 30-32.

⁴⁴ PC, WBI 2002: 9-10.

⁴⁵ Cf. the diagram in Hubli, Mandaville 2002: 5.

- discussion and formulation of the PRSP,
- adoption of the PRSP,
- implementation of the PRSP within the budget,
- monitoring and evaluation,
- publicity.

Ideally, the parliament as an institution should be integrated into the various phases. In the budget process, parliaments are involved by virtue of the constitutions, and in part their involvement with long-term development plans such as a PRSP, is also statutory (e.g. Ethiopia and Burkina Faso). Institutionalised participation by parliament in formulating the PRSP and in monitoring and publicity requires explicit political decisions. In the 28 countries studied, parliamentary participation can theoretically be broken down into

- (at least minor) substantive participation by the parliament (e.g. in working groups, debates etc.),
- formal participation (parliament adopts the PRSP),
- involvement of individual parliamentarians in consultations, or
- non-participation by parliament.

In the 19 countries with **full PRSPs**, we see (as of August 2003) that there are now more attempts to involve parliaments, albeit minimal and hardly institutionalised at all in some cases:

- In 12 countries, there have been at least individual substantive debates with parliaments or groups of parliamentarians (Benin, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda).
- There was a formal vote in parliament on the PRSP in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal.
- The parliaments in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Zambia were involved solely through more or less accidental participation of individual parliamentarians in consultations.
- In Gambia, there was no participation whatsoever by the parliament.

There was a similar picture in the nine countries⁴⁶ with an interim PRSP (I-PRSP):

- There was minimal substantive participation by parliament as an institution in Guinea Bissau, Lesotho and Sierra Leone.

⁴⁶ No data is available for Cape Verde, DR Congo or the Central African Republic.

- Individual parliamentarians were involved in consultations in Kenya.
- There was no participation in Côte d'Ivoire and Sao Tomé & Príncipe.

Involvement by individual parliamentarians in local and regional consultations (not only in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Zambia but also in Kenya, Lesotho and Senegal) was used in some cases by the executives to show that parliamentarians 'participated' even without the institutional involvement of parliament.

5.1. Formulation

There are only a few examples in the PRS countries of SSA of institutional participation by parliamentary organs in formulating the PRS:

- In Guinea Bissau, the vice-president of the parliament collaborated ex officio on the National Committee to draw up the PRS.
- In Chad, two parliamentarians are members of the Steering Committee responsible for the PRSP draft and future monitoring.
- In Malawi, cooperation was initiated between parliamentary committees and the thematic PRS working groups.⁴⁷
- In Sierra Leone, an ad hoc committee was set up in 2002/2003 at the initiative of delegates to support implementation of the PRS and ensure parliamentary involvement.

In several countries, parliament was informed of important aspects of the document after it had been adopted by the government and accepted by the IMF and the World Bank (e.g. Benin and Zambia). Most parliamentarians, however, are hardly aware of the PRS process, and do not make use of opportunities to participate.

Exchanges between parliament and civil society in developing the PRS were also limited to isolated instances. However, this is not specific to the PRS process; it is characteristic of the general remoteness of African parliaments from civil society actors.⁴⁸ Positive exceptions in this respect include:

- Malawi, where parliamentarians invited civil society representatives for issues relevant to the PRS (HIPC, PRS and budget, budget planning relevant to poverty);

⁴⁷ This follows the recommendation by Hubli, Mandaville (2002: 10) to integrate parliamentary committees in PRS working groups in order to harness sectoral know-how.

⁴⁸ The statement of Mali's parliamentary president in the context of the PRS process is classic: "*La société civile, c'est moi!*" ("I am the civil society!") (cf. Dante et al. 2003: 224).

- Mauritania, where there was a debate on PRSP in parliament with representatives of civil society. There is also draft legislation there now for institutionalising civil society participation;
- Zambia, where there are efforts on the part of civil society to cooperate more closely with parliament.⁴⁹

5.2. Formal approval by parliament

The procedure for the PRS process does not contain any formal requirement from the World Bank's point of view for ratification by national parliaments.⁵⁰ However, this is required by national legislation in several countries, as the PRS is a multi-year planning project.⁵¹ The PRSP been formally voted on in parliament in only four countries to date: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal (remarkably, all exclusively countries in francophone Africa).

Under the current practice of largely uncritical approval of executive drafts by the parliaments studied, a formal vote on the PRSP by the parliament is no guarantee of substantive participation by parliament in a PRS. In the four countries cited, there was only one case (Niger) where the parliamentary vote actually represented substantive participation by the parliament. At the same time, formal participation in the decision is a possible (although not sufficient) starting point for embedding the PRSP.

5.3. Budget

Linking parliamentary budgetary powers and the substantive goal of poverty reduction is a central area for parliamentary activity in the PRSP process.⁵² This is particularly relevant if major donor flows are channelled through the budget in future (budget aid).

Parliament can become active

- before the budget is submitted (through specific proposals),

⁴⁹ The network *Civil Society for Poverty Reduction* is seeking closer cooperation in the field of PRS monitoring. The Zambian civil society debt relief campaign "Jubilee Zambia" is currently seeking to strengthen parliament's rights regarding new foreign borrowing by the country, and has proposed a series of specific measures (cf. Munalula 2003) whose implementation would also result in closer cooperation between parliament and civil society.

⁵⁰ Cf. Hubli, Mandaville 2002: 11.

⁵¹ In Ethiopia, for example, the constitution states that parliament must approve any national development strategy (Art. 55,10); this fundamental right of parliament was ignored in the case of the PRSP. In Burkina Faso, parliament again is responsible for long-term development plans (Art. 101); in this case, the right was taken into consideration in adopting the PRSP.

⁵² Cf. (among others) Hubli, Mandaville 2002; Schnell 2003.

- by analysing the draft budget and possible proposals for changes, and
- by monitoring budget compliance.

Decisive here is the formal and actual political scope of the parliament's budgetary powers, and the linking of the PRS process to the national budget.

Malawi: cooperation between parliament and civil society in the budgeting process

The *Malawi Economic Justice Network* (MEJN) is a civil society actor in Malawi focusing on budget analysis. MEJN analyses the budgets submitted in terms of their contribution to poverty reduction and passes the results to government and non-governmental actors in order to effect changes in the budget and create public pressure.

For the 2001/2002 and 2003/2004 budgets, MEJN provided its report to the parliament for the budget debates. In 2002, this led to a public hearing on the budget in parliament, with strong involvement by MEJN. However, the strengthening of the budgetary capacity of Malawi's parliament also suffered a setback when at the end of May 2003 the parliament approved – largely without debate – a supplementary budget, much of whose funds were not earmarked.

Source: Jenkins, Tsoka 2001; Fozzard, Simwaka 2002; current reporting in *The Malawi Nation* 2003.

The strength and role of the budget committees are particularly important, as their ability to recommend amendments to parliament can significantly influence and improve parliamentary debate.⁵³

The practice to date of approving the submitted draft budget quickly and largely without debate has not increased the capacity of parliamentarians to deal with the extremely complicated budget issues. As a result, few parliaments have so far actively exercised their budgetary powers to help shape poverty reduction policy:

- In Malawi, a critical budget analysis by a civil society organisation formed part of the parliamentary debate (see box).

⁵³ Cf. e.g. Krafchik, Wehner 1998.

- In Uganda, reference to the PRSP was an important part of the 2002/2003 budget process.⁵⁴
- In Niger and Zambia, the future role of parliament in reviewing the draft budget in PRS terms is being emphasised, at least in the PRSP documents.

Uganda: parliament with more rights

In its Budget Act 2001, the Ugandan legislature has given itself significantly greater rights. The right of parliamentary institutions to review budgets and propose amendments is consolidated. In particular, these opportunities to influence the process should affect the formulation of the draft budget, and not be delayed until the final debate (when it is virtually impossible to make changes). To strengthen timely and competent participation by parliament, the Budget Act makes two key improvements: Firstly, the executive must submit a provisional draft of the budget three months before the final deadline for approval, which adds more than two months to the time available compared to former practice. Secondly, the Act provides for the creation of a Parliamentary Budget Office, which provides parliament with analytical capability. This has already started work.

Uganda's civil society has been involved for years in public debate on the budget through critical and constructive contributions. Issues including gender aspects, the poverty orientation of expenditure and new government debt are recurring subjects for intervention by civil society actors. Cooperation with parliamentarians, who are in some cases affiliated to civil society organisations, has increased.

Source: The Republic of Uganda: The Budget Act, 2001.

The two examples of Uganda and Malawi clearly show that the poverty orientation of national budgets must not be an issue of participation by either parliament or civil society, but that cooperation between the two actors is helpful in achieving "budgets as if people mattered".⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Cf. Sharkey, Stapenhurst 2002.

⁵⁵ Cagatay et al. 2000; cf. also Heimans 2002: 30.

5.4. Monitoring

Monitoring – controlling the actions of the executive – is one of the fundamental functions of parliament, and is also embedded in the constitutions of the African PRS countries studied. However, in reality this control hardly ever happens. One example of this is that audited government accounts are generally submitted to the parliaments studied with a delay of years, if at all. In only one fifth of the HIPC countries are the audited accounts submitted to parliaments within 12 months.⁵⁶

The PRS cycle, like the policy cycle, provides for ongoing review, which offers various opportunities for participation by parliaments. Besides the ongoing budget analysis (see above), these include participation in the PRSP review and in the preparation of the annual PRSP Progress Reports, and the institutionalisation of debates and fora on poverty reduction. Communication of relevant information is another possible activity of parliaments in PRS monitoring.⁵⁷

Parliamentary monitoring has so far been explicitly applied to the PRS process in a few cases only. There are, however, interesting exceptions:

- In Gambia, members of parliament are represented (inter alia) in the *SPA Stakeholder Monitoring Group*.
- In Ghana, the executive intends to report to parliament monthly on implementation of the PRS; and parliament has also set up a committee to continue monitoring the process.⁵⁸
- In Guinea, the committees are to participate sectorally in monitoring, and budget debates are to be extended to include monitoring of poverty reduction.
- In Malawi, members of the two relevant committees are to be represented on the *Technical Working Committee* for monitoring, and there is also provision for reports by the ministries to parliament.
- In Mauritania, parliament is to be included in the annual monitoring process (see box).

⁵⁶ Cf. IMF, World Bank 2001: 21. This deficiency is only gradually being rectified, among other reasons at the insistence of the IMF and the World Bank. In Benin, for example, an audited account for the 1998 budget was submitted at the end of 1999, for the first time in 30 years. - The analysis by the IMF and World Bank covered 25 HIPC countries, including 21 PRS countries in SSA, and noted major deficiencies in the management and control of public spending (IMF, World Bank 2001).

⁵⁷ Cf. Schnell 2003 for a comprehensive review.

⁵⁸ Cf. Sharkey, Stapenhurst 2002: 5; see also Ghana's PRSP, p. 9.

- Mozambique's PRSP provides for PRS monitoring to be included in the regular reporting by the executive to parliament.⁵⁹

Mauritania: parliamentary monitoring planned

In Mauritania, the participatory structures created to prepare the PRSP are to be used for monitoring as well. This means (among other things) that there will be annual consultations with participation by parliamentarians (and civil society) to investigate the development of the PRS process. In addition, parliament is to review the executive's annual PRSP progress report and present its own proposals. It remains to be seen whether this monitoring model, which has virtually no institutional anchors, will be viable in practice.

The Mauritanian government itself describes lack of capacity as the main problem in implementing and monitoring the PRS. The National Capacity Building Programme is intended to relieve this problem and attract support from various donors (including the GTZ) (Islamic Republic of Mauritania 2002: 24).

The extent to which these monitoring options are really used, however, remains unresolved or doubtful. Recognition of the role of parliament in PRS monitoring is an important component, but inadequate by itself unless viable institutional procedures are created (see box on Mauritania). Institutionalisation within the PRS process would also be a good starting point for general parliamentary capacity building; conversely, bypassing parliaments in the PRS process fundamentally weakens them.

5.5. Decentralisation – local parliaments

The attempt to ensure broad participation in the PRS process necessarily includes the fact that the debate cannot be restricted to the national level. In most countries, local and regional consultations have therefore been held, albeit mostly on an unsystematic basis. The overwhelming majority of the 28 SSA countries studied have provinces and districts as administrative units, but are primarily centrally structured. Ethiopia is the only federal state. Relatively few countries have elected local institutions with any significant role (e.g. Uganda, Senegal and Ghana). There is inadequate information to determine whether existing representative structures at sub-national level have been involved in the PRS

⁵⁹ According to Schnell 2003: 16.

processes. There are reports from individual countries, e.g. Uganda, Kenya and Ghana, that individual members of local councils were involved, although not the bodies as such. In Senegal, the president of the elected regional council was appointed chair of the regional PRSP committee. The Village Development Committees in the Kenyan district of Kilifi were included in the consultation process. However, leaving aside such exceptions, it can be assumed that elected local and regional bodies have been even less involved institutionally than the national parliaments, and that inadequate attention was paid to the results of local consultations in the final development of the national PRS.⁶⁰

It is also doubtful how far local and regional parliaments are being included in implementation and monitoring after formulation of the PRSPs. In Ethiopia, responsibility for implementing much of the PRS (e.g. for all measures in the health and education sector) lies clearly with the federal states. However, the state parliaments were only elected during the past two to three years, and are a long way from being functional. In the few countries where central governments are now trying to decentralise the national PRSPs (or have decentralised PRSPs developed, e.g. in Zambia), the role of elected bodies at local level is completely open. One positive example is Senegal, where the elected regional council is taking on a role in monitoring regional PRS implementation.⁶¹

The extremely weak participation of local democratic institutions is also reflected in the World Bank's PRS policy documents. The World Bank *PRSP Source Book* does not have a single section on aspects of decentralisation. While there is a section on *Community Driven Development*, this makes no reference to democratic institutions. If anything, a top-down approach seems to dominate at the World Bank as well. It is regarded as sufficient if the central government informs subordinate levels.⁶²

⁶⁰ Kenya provides some interesting aspects for the analysis of local consultations. Here, the national executive laid down the following quotas for participation in district consultations: women 30%, youth 10%, local government 20%, private sector 10%, handicapped 10%, community leaders 20% (cf. Abong, Eberlei, Hanmer, Ikiara 2003: 183). For the approach in Kilifi, which was supported for years by a GTZ advisory project, cf. Salzer 2003. However, the results, including those of the consultations in Kilifi, were largely ignored: those responsible at national level had four working days to review consultation reports from around 70 districts, some of them over 100 pages long – systematic analysis under these conditions was obviously impossible.

⁶¹ In Senegal, the president of the (elected) regional council will chair the Regional Committee for Monitoring the PRSP, while the governor chairs the PRSP Steering Committee. Originally, the governor was supposed to perform both functions. The change is due to pressure from civil society, among other things. In a separate forum promoted by the GTZ, civil society had agreed on a position in favour of the president of the regional council chairing both committees, and it presented this to the executive in a national forum. The outcome is a compromise.

⁶² Cf. IDA, IMF 2002: 15.

6. Parliamentary capacity building measures by DC to date

Since the 1990s, parliaments have for the first time been attracting rather more attention in Development Cooperation (DC) in the context of the debate over good governance, but the number and scope of measures worldwide are very small. According to a joint study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Union Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 24 parliaments in Africa received support between 1991 and 2000, although “most of the parliaments benefited from one project only.”⁶³ The PRS process was also late in recognising parliaments and has so far led to only a few individual measures for parliamentary promotion.

6.1. Promotion of parliaments within the framework of good governance

Few donors and institutions have become involved in parliamentary promotion so far. As a way of promoting good governance, major multilateral donors such as the World Bank and UNDP, and USAID as a bilateral donor are running comparatively large parliamentary promotion programmes, which are the origins of the majority of measures to date.

The **World Bank's** “Parliaments” governance programme has three promotional components: parliamentary control, parliaments and poverty reduction, and parliamentary networks. Improving parliamentary control is primarily concerned with capacity building for budget and finance committees, and has been implemented in anglophone PRS countries (Ghana, Kenya and Uganda).

The World Bank is supporting exchanges between parliamentarians in various countries by promoting networks. One result of this is the *Parliamentary Network on the World Bank*, which organises consultations and training for 140 participating parliamentarians from 60 countries – for example, a budget workshop was held in this framework at the end of May 2003 for East African parliamentarians. The promoted networks also include the *African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption*.

At the **UNDP**, parliamentary promotion plays an important role in the field of democratic governance. Various capacity building measures aim at improving parliamentary control and legislative competence. Training and exchange programmes are also being carried

⁶³ IPU 2003: 8.

out jointly with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in some cases.⁶⁴ In addition, the UNDP is also promoting parliamentary reform processes on a small scale. In the PRS countries in SSA, however, the overall scope of UNDP measures is very small.

Building Democracy in Africa is the name of the **USAID** programme in which several measures for parliamentary promotion in the PRS countries in SSA are embedded; their funds are to be increased by 53% in the 2003 budget.⁶⁵ USAID has carried out measures for capacity building and improving parliamentary resources in several PRS countries in SSA (including Ghana). In addition, USAID has also supported initiatives for parliamentary reform in Ghana. Other actors of less importance in parliamentary support in SSA are the EU, the IPU, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), AWEPA and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

As with most bilateral donors, parliamentary promotion in **official German DC** is a new, very small field in relationship to DC as a whole. It is part of the promotional field *good governance* and is embedded in the newly formed priority area “Democracy, Civil Society and Public Administration”.⁶⁶

Until recently, cooperation with parliaments and parliamentarians was regarded by the BMZ like other measures of direct democracy promotion as a field exclusively for the political foundations.⁶⁷ Since the 1960s, the foundations have carried out various measures in democracy promotion in Africa. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), for example, has held various training courses for parliamentarians, including in Ghana, Cameroon, Zambia and Senegal (see box on the work of the FES in Ghana). The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) is active in promoting parties, including in their parliamentary work, for example in Uganda and Kenya. The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNS) and the Hans Seidel Foundation (HSS) also have corresponding programmes in individual countries. However, the programmes implemented by the foundations are predominantly geared towards parties or individual parliamentarians, and rarely at parliament as an institution in its own right.

⁶⁴ Cf. e.g. IPU 1999.

⁶⁵ Cf. USAID, www.usaid.gov/democracy/afr/africa.html (17.7.2003)

⁶⁶ Cf. BMZ 2002. Unfortunately, there is no systematic overview available of the past and present GTZ projects directly or indirectly promoting parliaments. The GTZ sectoral project “Promotion of democracy and the rule of law” has started work on a corresponding database. It is notable that parliaments have also been perceived at best marginally if at all in the conceptual work of German DC. The 1999 BMZ participation concept does not mention parliaments at all (cf. BMZ 1999).

⁶⁷ Cf. BMZ 2002.

There have been few specific promotional measures for parliaments in official technical cooperation (TC) to date. There are, however, points of contact with parliament in a number of cases. Important examples of this are measures to strengthen budget systems and procedures in developing countries. The GTZ is currently supporting explicit budget projects or projects to strengthen the control of public finances (through courts of audit or auditing institutions) in some 20 countries worldwide. In these cases, there are generally explicitly maintained links with the parliament, and specifically with the parliamentary committees responsible for finance, budget and budget control.⁶⁸

Parliamentary cooperation: the example of the FES in Ghana

In 1993, when the parliament in Ghana resumed work, cooperation with the FES also started. This was hesitant at first, but has been intensive since 1996. The foundation's cooperation particularly concentrates on capacity building for the parliamentary committees and an improved perception of parliament among the public. To a lesser extent, events on electoral and parliamentary reform were also supported.

However, capacity building for committees primarily focuses on the foreign policy committee, which has no central role in questions relevant to poverty. An interesting exception in 2002 was a workshop on budget issues for representatives of all committees.

Improving the public and representative function of parliament was also a special focus of parliamentary cooperation in Ghana. The parliamentary information events funded by the FES in six provinces promoted both popular understanding of the work of parliament and awareness on the part of parliamentarians of voter expectations. The public events also had a significant positive influence on the perception of the parliament in Ghana.

Source: Mair 2000,
cf. also <http://ghana.fes-international.de/pages/parliament.html>

In various projects promoting decentralisation and federalism, contacts with parliaments or promotional measures also play at least a marginal role (e.g. in Ethiopia).

In summary, in the 28 PRS countries in SSA, various individual measures have been promoted by the donors mentioned, most of which were isolated measures. The first step

⁶⁸ These include two projects in Africa (South Africa and Mauritania).

in parliamentary promotion often consists in improving the material resources before further measures are subsequently carried out. For example, the World Bank, the EU and USAID first provided funds to improve the resources of the parliaments. A fundamental problem in parliamentary promotion plays an important role here: measures in this area are perceived as being politically highly sensitive. This applies to a slightly lesser extent to improving the material resources of a parliament.

Much of the other measures involved capacity building through individual workshops (parliamentary functions, budget, gender, communication and media work). USAID implemented several Internet projects (including in Guinea and Rwanda). An interesting case of structural support was the creation and funding of a budget analysis unit in Benin's parliament by the UNDP. A comparable project is planned for Burkina Faso.

Support for parliamentary reforms is the furthest-reaching form of parliamentary promotion, and has only occasionally been provided in the countries studied (e.g. by USAID and the FES in Ghana). While the UNDP is promoting parliamentary reform processes in other countries, a more detailed evaluation of the impacts of these politically sensitive measures has yet to be carried out.

6.2. Promotion of parliaments in PRS processes

The core statements on parliamentary promotion in general also hold for measures within the PRS process:

- There are only a few isolated measures (in all, 13 were identified in ten countries,⁶⁹ mostly in francophone countries).
- The World Bank and the UNDP are central actors, and in addition to the actors already cited, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and for some time now the GTZ have also become involved.
- The majority of the measures were in the area of capacity building (on PRS in general, budget and statistics).

In response to the criticism made in the PRS review by the IMF and the World Bank of the lack of parliamentary involvement, a joint programme was initiated at the end of 2001 by the *World Bank Institute* and the UNDP. With the participation of the *Parliamentary Centre*

⁶⁹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, Tanzania.

and the *National Democratic Institute (NDI)*, a pilot programme is to be implemented in six countries⁷⁰ to improve the role of parliaments in the PRS process, based primarily on capacity building for members of the relevant committees. In Ghana, work started in 2002 with individual capacity building measures for parliamentarians.

A number of donors have provided small-scale support for the efforts of parliaments or parliamentarians to participate in PRS consultations in their countries (by the GTZ in Benin and Ethiopia, for example).

German TC projects explicitly and directly aimed at parliamentary promotion currently only exist in Mauritania, plus a smaller training measure in Ethiopia (see the two boxes). Further advisory and training measures by the GTZ in 2003 are in preparation for the parliaments in Ghana and Madagascar.

Analysis of the very hesitant parliamentary promotion in the PRS countries of SSA by the donor community to date confirms the critical conclusion of Meyer et al.: “One notes with concern that direct support has not flowed to parliamentary commissions, or other *elected* bodies, for instance provincial ones, in the way it has to civil society associations without further mandate.”⁷¹

This conclusion is in line with the following observation: Within the World Bank, a debate has begun over the idea that involvement of parliaments in PRS processes should be made a more important element of the *Joint Staff Assessments (JSAs)* of the IMF and the World Bank (these documents evaluate PRSPs and the annual PRS Progress Reports for the decision-making bodies in the World Bank and the IMF). An internal paper expresses concern that the role of parliaments is given too little weight in the JSAs. This contrasts with the fact that the role of civil society is always taken into consideration.

⁷⁰ Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali and Niger.

⁷¹ Meyer et al. 2001: 19.

Support to the Mauritanian national assembly

Since the start of the 1990s, Mauritania has shown a slow but steady process of democratisation, which it is hoped will be maintained even after the failed coup in July 2003. Although the national assembly has comprehensive constitutional competence (control of the executive, power to adopt and amend legislation, votes of (no) confidence, approval and control of the state budget), it was only able to exercise its role vis-à-vis the executive to a limited extent in the first two sessions.

Reasons for this – which are representative of many parliaments in SSA – include the following:

- Delegates are not always aware of their role as representatives of the people. They still lack broad experience of parliamentary work.
- The dialogue between the national assembly and civil society groups is still inadequate.
- The exercise of parliamentary control rights over the executive is often misunderstood as disloyal criticism of the government.
- Ongoing and adequate provision of information to parliament by the executive is not always ensured.
- Parliamentary work suffers from the lack of capability of administrative and parliamentary services and from a deficient infrastructure.

A GTZ-assisted project that has been running since the start of 2003 aims to support the Mauritanian national assembly in exercising its constitutional functions more efficiently.

Key sub-goals (“results”) of the project are:

- preparing a strategic plan to improve the infrastructure and resources;
- significantly improving delegates' access to information;
- giving the public regular access to information on parliamentary work;
- supporting the parliamentary administrative services in their function of meeting delegates' requirements more effectively;
- strengthening delegates in their capacity to deal with the technical content of submissions.

PRS training for the Ethiopian parliament

Since 2002, in cooperation with a local university team, the GTZ has successfully carried out a number of training measures for Ethiopian delegates. The workshops in December 2002 and January 2003 (PRS basics, PRS monitoring, and budget and PRS) were attended by up to 70 parliamentarians. A second series of training measures followed between April and June 2003 with three workshops on the topic of “pro-poor budgeting”. To begin with, the budget-relevant aspects of the PRS priority sectors education, health, agriculture and food security, infrastructure and roads and – as a cross-cutting aspect – statements on gender equity were analysed. This was followed by analysis and discussion of budget practice in these areas before the introduction of the PRS (2002). In the third stage, the parliamentarians analysed the new budget presented in June 2003 from the point of view of the PRS.

The workshops were run by academics from Addis Ababa University's Department of Economics. Two more stages are planned, namely increased attention to monitoring budget compliance and (in preparation for next year's budget debates) a workshop on gender budgeting. The series of workshops in 2003 was aimed at the budget committee of the Ethiopian parliament and representatives of other committees. For the gender workshop, all the members of the budget committee and the women's committee have been invited.

7. Approaches to promoting parliaments in PRS processes

In principle, parliaments can be promoted at four levels to enable them to play a more vital role in the ongoing PRS processes:

- improving the legal and political environment;
- improving functional capacities,
- improving interaction with other actors,
- improving the international donor-policy environment.

7.1. National legal and political conditions

Influencing the legal and political conditions for parliamentary work through DC measures is a difficult and lengthy process and involves numerous other actors (and it is therefore difficult to document the impacts). This work is done, if at all, using a few approaches to support parliamentary reforms and embedded in programmes to promote good governance in general, as well as within the framework of general political dialogue.

During the BMZ/GTZ conference in May 2002 on “Assisting Good Governance and Democracy”, one of the topics discussed were the conditions under which good governance can be promoted. Attention was drawn to the need for appropriate country-specific concepts, donor coordination and concerted action, as well as formulating and pursuing a long-term agenda.⁷² Typically enough, even the conference workshop on “The changing role of parliaments in Africa” supplied few concrete approaches for improving the political and legal conditions for parliamentary work, though Chungong pointed out the legal environment for the work of opposition parties and the necessary parliamentary immunity laws.⁷³

In the process of establishing co-operation priorities in German DC, it can be assumed that in the countries where governance is a priority area, new experience will be gathered in connection with this task. It is not yet clear how far special attention is to be paid to the role of parliaments here. However, in 2003, in the BMZ's guidelines on development policy with “Europe's partner Africa”, the ministry emphasised yet again that measures to strengthen democratic structures and representative parliaments, to promote decentralisation and self-administration and to strengthen civil society are seen as a priority level for

⁷² Cf. GTZ 2002: 177 et seq.

⁷³ Chungong 2002: 134. On the situation of opposition parties in African parliaments, cf. also IPU 1999.

action in development policy in Africa.⁷⁴ The German implementation report on the G8 Action Plan for Africa also stresses effective participation by parliaments as a “basic prerequisite for democracy and good governance” and announces that parliaments will be strengthened by German DC.⁷⁵

Improving the political and legal environment undoubtedly also includes efforts to establish democratically secured decentralisation. Small units in particular, e.g. at community level, can be relevant to poverty reduction, as emphasised by the World Bank in its PRS Sourcebook.⁷⁶ GTZ experience with *Village Development Committees* in Kilifi, Kenya provides concrete illustration of this.⁷⁷

7.2. Functional capacity

The overwhelming majority of measures geared towards capacity building and resource development are designed to narrow the gap between the functional performance of parliaments and their constitutional scope. Promotion thus seeks to reduce existing shortfalls in parliamentary work – the low standard of information for members of parliaments and limited functionality due to lack of resources.

In principle, it is necessary to take account of the very different contexts and situations of the national parliaments when devising concepts. Comparison of the 28 countries has revealed many differences in terms of the constitutional functions and actual activities, which should result in differentiated promotional measures. This also applies to national differences in the course and basis of the PRS process. In addition, the principle of model neutrality also applies to democracy promotion: “There are no blueprints for the best institutions”.⁷⁸

There are important starting points for promotional measures at all levels of parliamentary functions, as they can helpfully contribute towards the PRS as well as revealing major deficiencies to date.

⁷⁴ Wiezorek-Zeul 2003.

⁷⁵ The Federal Government of Germany 2003: 28.

⁷⁶ World Bank, no year, section on Governance, p. 282.

⁷⁷ These elected councils at village level participated successfully – measured in terms of output – in PRS consultations at district level in Kenya in 2000/2001, cf. also Salzer 2003.

⁷⁸ BMZ 2002.

Legislation

Ideally, parliament should be able to evaluate the executive's legislative proposals in terms of their impact on poverty and present its own legislative initiatives aimed at reducing poverty.

Possible measures:

- capacity building: legislative procedures, poverty reduction as a cross-cutting theme,
- increasing and upgrading working capacity, including in upstream parliamentary administration, to make it possible for parliament to take its own legislative initiatives in the first place,
- promoting exchanges between parliament and civil society and the private sector in the legislative process (hearings),
- strengthening committee work on poverty-oriented issues, particularly where committees have specific responsibilities in the field of poverty reduction (e.g. Ghana).

Budgetary powers

The legislative framework gives parliaments in the PRS countries of SSA a primarily controlling function in the budget, with little scope for actually shaping it. To play this limited role usefully, the responsible committee would have to analyse the budget in detail in terms of its impact on poverty, and where appropriate propose precise changes to parliament.

However, exercising parliamentary budgetary powers also depends on other institutions. If the executive and independent institutions such as a court of audit lack the facilities to create the necessary basis for parliamentary monitoring, the exercise of parliamentary budgetary powers will suffer from serious weaknesses.

Possible measures:

- capacity building: budgetary powers, PRS budget, gender budgeting (see box on Ethiopia),
- improving resources available to the budget committee (see box on Uganda),
- assistance from external or internal research capacity (see box on the example of Kenya),

- cooperation between parliament and civil society actors (see box on the example of gender budgeting in Tanzania),
- further strengthening of cooperation between courts of audit, audit institutions and parliamentary committees.

Oversight

The parliaments studied generally have the legal prerequisites to critically review the poverty orientation of the executive in a large number of political procedures – through questions directed to the executive, orientation towards the goal of poverty reduction in the work of all committees, or holding hearings. Parliamentary monitoring in the PRS process should go beyond budget monitoring.

Possible measures:

- capacity building: (exercising) parliamentary control functions,
- strengthening the relevant committees,
- systematic improvement of the information flows between constitutional control institutions (e.g. auditor general) and parliamentary committees (also requires improved capacity in the parliamentary administration).

In all areas of parliamentary work in the countries studied, a significant increase is needed in transparency and the flow of information between executive and legislature. The institutionalisation of mechanisms (e.g. a regular reporting system) would significantly improve parliament's capability to perform its functions.

Another approach to general parliamentary promotion might be assistance for parliamentary reform commissions which review and reform the standing orders and organisation of work.

The fundamental problem to date of the low political acceptance of a parliament which is actively seeking to fulfil its role as legislature and executive control body cannot be directly solved by DC. However, measures creating **a higher public profile** for the role and work of parliament (see Sect. 6.3) could make a contribution here.

Generally, parliamentary promotion should be embedded in national good governance measures. The problem of the lack of involvement of parliaments in the PRS process has

been properly recognised; the measures now aiming to make this involvement possible must take account of the general framework of political structures and democracy promotion.⁷⁹

The need to strike a balance between the necessary substantive input and preserving the sovereignty of the parliament is considerably more apparent in capacity building and parliamentary reform initiatives than in measures to improve resources. As there is no blueprint for good institutions, measures should be differentiated at national level and neutral with respect to results.

7.3. Interaction with other actors

In view of the complexity of political processes designed to reduce poverty, which is also reflected in the call for country ownership (i.e. for cooperation between *all* socially relevant actors and institutions), the role of parliament in PRS processes cannot be considered in isolation. What is needed is the interaction of parliaments with the executive, with civil society and the private sector, and with external actors, specifically donors (on the last point, see Sect. 6.4).

Interaction and cooperation between parliament and civil society seems to have particularly high potential relevance for poverty reduction in the poorest countries. While parliaments have democratic legitimation and constitutional rights to make and affect policy, civil society actors are extensively (if not always) rooted in the social movements in the country, and have specialist knowledge of issues relevant to poverty which parliamentarians generally do not have. A potentially promising scenario in many countries would thus be close cooperation between parliaments and civil societies vis-à-vis the executives. Poverty-oriented expertise and capability for political implementation could be strengthened in such “alliances”.

Approaches to such cooperation, e.g. in the analysis and discussion of the annual budget, control of expenditure, implementation of PRS principles in sectoral programmes etc.

⁷⁹ Cf. the opinion expressed by Meyer et al.: “The international discussion has recently been growing a keen interest in partner countries’ parliaments. We have however made a point against donors now insisting on ‘including parliaments’ the way they used to insist on ‘including NGOs’ in the process. We prefer to stress the importance of the progress made during the first PRSP cycles by both donors and partner governments in terms of transparency, an open policy debate and democratic procedure which should, of course include parliaments. And we have expressed the hope that these gains coupled with the breadth of outstanding reform issues eventually will automatically oblige the executive to transfer part of its responsibility to the legislative” (Meyer et al. 2001: 37-38).

could and should be promoted by the donor community. One particular aim should be to institutionalise cooperation (as opposed to ad hoc activities). Experience in South Africa with the preparation of *Gender Budgets* or in Uganda with the *Poverty Action Fund* provides useful examples.

Possible measures:

- fora for citizens and parliament to meet,
- assistance to parliamentary public relations work (e.g. press office),
- strengthening capacity for parliamentary reporting by the media, cooperation between parliament and the media,
- Internet presence,⁸⁰
- strengthening project- or process-related cooperation between parliament and civil society (e.g. in analysing the executive's draft budget),
- strengthening the instrument of public hearings.

7.4. International donor policy environment

Last but not least, it should be noted that the donors also have considerable opportunities in their political presence in the partner countries to implicitly or explicitly strengthen or weaken parliaments.

An example of the *implicit* weakening of parliaments is where a PRSP submitted by the executive of a country is accepted by the IMF and the World Bank even though the country's constitution lays down that fundamental strategies must be approved by the parliament in the country in question. This applies to Ethiopia, for example. Another example is that most *Consultative Group Meetings* by donors in African countries are now attended (at least for some of the time) by civil society actors as observers or even with the explicitly requested right to speak, while this invitation does not apply to parliamentarians.⁸¹ The strong focus of donors on civil society participation in the PRS processes has generally led to an implicit weakening of parliaments.⁸²

⁸⁰ "In these circumstances, it may seem possible that the introduction of new information and communication technology could be used to improve the standing of parliaments in Africa and thus buttress democracy itself" (Kingham 2003: 32).

⁸¹ This is all the more remarkable if we consider that influence on a country's international relations is one of the traditional responsibilities of parliaments, as Uwe Holtz rightly points out (Holtz 2003: 24).

⁸² Cf. also Schmitt 2001, who sees this as applying to donor policy generally, and not just specifically to the PRS process.

An example of an *explicit* weakening of parliament is provided by aspects of IMF policy in Kenya in the period 2001–2002, when significant pressure was exercised on parliament to approve certain legislation and reject other legislation.⁸³ However strongly the IMF position may appear to be rooted in a rational economic view, it still greatly undermines longer-term processes of democratisation. The latter require parliaments to be given the freedom to make decisions which are actually or even just presumed to be “wrong”.

Possible measures for strengthening parliaments through modified donor policies could be:

- capacity building: specific information and training sessions on institutional and policy-related aspects of major donors for the country,
- invitation of an official delegation from parliament to the *Consultative Group Meetings*, including the right to express an opinion on the central discussions,
- explicitly enquiring how parliaments were involved in the approval of a PRSP and reporting on this in the IMF/World Bank *Joint Staff Assessments*.

Generally speaking, parliamentary promotion in the PRS context must not be considered solely in instrumental terms; the political preconditions as well as time frames set by donors must also allow active involvement by a strengthened parliament, accepting their opinions and decisions even (and particularly) where they may oppose donor interests and not regarding these as obstacles.

⁸³ For the background, cf. Eberlei, Siebold 2002: 27-33.

8. Appendix

8.1. List of abbreviations

AfDB	- African Development Bank
AFD	- Agence Française de Développement
AWEPA	- Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa
BMZ	- Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CIDA	- Canadian International Development Agency
DC	- development cooperation
DFID	- Department for International Development (UK)
EU	- European Union
FES	- Friedrich Ebert Foundation
FNS	- Friedrich Naumann Foundation
GTZ	- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HBS	- Heinrich Böll Foundation
HIPC	- Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HSS	- Hanns Seidel Foundation
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
IPU	- Inter-Parliamentary Union
JSA	- Joint Staff Assessment
KAS	- Konrad Adenauer Foundation
NDI	- National Democratic Institute
NEPAD	- New Partnership for Africa's Development
PC	- Parliamentary Centre
PRS(P)	- Poverty Reduction Strategy (Paper)
SSA	- Sub-Saharan Africa
TC	- technical cooperation
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
USAID	- US Agency for International Development
WBI	- World Bank Institute

8.2. Parliaments in PRS countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

	PRSP status	Structure and make-up of parliament	Involvement of parliament in the PRS process	Role of parliament in the budget process	Cooperation between parliament and civil society	Promotion by donors (2000-2003)	Parliament website
Benin	PRSP 2003	One chamber, 83 members	PRSP debated in parliament. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; parliament has rejected budget (2000 and 2001/2002). President can then impose budget by decree	Public hearings possible, but hardly ever take place	UNDP: budget analysis unit; World Bank: capacity building; USAID: capacity building; USAID: PRSP consultation involving MPs	http://www.bj.refer.org/benin_ct/cop/assemble/ and http://afrikinfo.com/lois/assembly/index.htm
Burkina Faso	PRSP 2000, PRSP Progress Report 2001, 2002	One chamber, 111 members (2nd chamber abolished in 2002)	Parliament adopted PRSP. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament that do not affect expenditure. No knowledge of real budget changes	Public hearings possible, but hardly ever take place	EU: resources and capacity building; DFID: capacity building	http://www.primature.gov.bf/republic/fparlement.htm
Cameroon	PRSP 2003	One chamber, 180 members; constitution provides for 2nd chamber, but this has not been set up yet	Draft PRSP provided to all parliamentarians. Individual MPs involved in consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Not known	FES: capacity building	http://www.assemblee-nationale.cm and http://www.cm.refer.org/assnat-cm/

Cape Verde	I-PRSP 2002	One chamber, 72 members	Not known	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Not known	Not known	http://www.parliament.gh/
Central African Republic	I-PRSP 2001	One chamber, parliament dissolved in 2003	Not known	Constitutional vote on budget	Not known	Not known	
Chad	PRSP 2003	One chamber, 155 members	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Two parliamentarians members of PRSP Steering Committee, which is also to be responsible for monitoring. Parliamentary monitoring in general to be strengthened	Constitutional vote on budget	Not known	Not known	
Congo, DR	I-PRSP 2002	Transitional parliament, 300 members	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	

Côte d'Ivoire	I-PRSP 2002	One chamber, 225 members, 2nd chamber to be established by 2005	No involvement	Constitutional vote on budget; before the internal political crisis, parliament made more active use of its budgetary powers	Not known	DFID: capacity building	
Ethiopia	PRSP 2002	Federal system, two chambers – House of Representatives: 550 members; 2nd chamber: 120 members from regional councils	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Only occasional and chance contacts	UNDP and CIDA active in parliamentary work (advisers for 2 years); EU: technical resources; GTZ: capacity building; FES: capacity building	http://www.ethiopar.net
Gambia	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 53 members	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Public hearings possible and to be used in future in the budget process	Not known	

Ghana	PRSP 2003	One chamber, 200 members	Debates on PRSP with parliamentarians. Ad hoc committee on poverty reduction involved in PRSP. Several MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; parliament also confirms the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework	Public hearings possible, increasing use being made of these	USAID: resources and capacity building; WB: capacity building; FES: capacity building; KAS: capacity building; GTZ: project on capacity building planned	http://www.parliament.gh/
Guinea	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 114 members	Draft submitted to parliament. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Not known	USAID: Internet	http://www.assemblee.gov.gn
Guinea Bissau	I-PRSP 2000	One chamber, 102 members	Institutional involvement in PRSP preparation	Constitutional vote on budget	Not known	Not known	

Kenya	I-PRSP 2000, draft PRSP	One chamber, 222 members	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; changes possible but only symbolic use made in the past. Parliamentary Budget Office planned	Weak contacts	USAID: capacity building, supporting parliamentary administration; UNDP, FES: capacity building; HBS: capacity building	http://www.parliament.go.ke/
Lesotho	I-PRSP 2001	Two chambers – national assembly: 120 members, senate: 33 members	Individual MPs involved in local consultations	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Not known	AWEPA: capacity building	
Madagascar	PRSP 2003	Two chambers (since 2000) – national assembly: 160 members, senate: 90 members	Cooperation was planned between parliamentary committees and PRSP committees, but the completed PRSP provides no information on this. Parliamentary budget control and monitoring to be improved	Constitutional vote on budget	Not known	GTZ: project on capacity building planned	http://www.assemblee-nationale.mg

Malawi	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 197 members, 2nd chamber abolished in 2001	PRSP debated in parliament. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament that do not affect expenditure. Greater parliamentary control since 2001	Increasing contacts since 2001 budget process and PRSP; public hearings possible and used in isolated cases	WB: capacity building; UNDP: capacity building; Paris21: capacity building; DFID: capacity building, NDI: committee promotion	http://www.malawi.gov.mw/parliament/parliament.htm
Mali	PRSP 2003	One chamber, 147 members	Parliament adopted PRSP. Committees involved in PRSP formulation. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament that do not affect expenditure. Finance committee plays an active role	Not known	AFD: capacity building; IPU: capacity building	
Mauritania	PRSP 2001, PRSP Progress Report 2002	Two chambers – national assembly: 81 members, senate: 56 members	PRSP debated in parliament. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget	Draft legislation submitted to institutionalise involvement of civil society organisations; debate on PRSP with civil society in parliament	GTZ: resources, capacity building and exchange; AFDB (planned): poverty monitoring	http://www.mauritania.mr/fr/legislation/legislation.asp and http://www.senat.mr

Mozambique	PRSP 2001, PRSP Progress Report 2003	One chamber, 250 members	No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Provided for in the constitution; no information on implementation	UNDP: capacity building; FES: capacity building	http://www.mozambique.mz/parlament/index.htm
Niger	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 83 members	Parliament adopted PRSP. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Contacts before legislation on decentralisation	NDI/WBI/UNDP: establishing PRSP Steering Committee in parliament; WB: capacity building; UNDP: capacity building	http://www.assemblee.ne
Rwanda	PRSP 2002	Two chambers, 80 members in 1 st chamber, 26 in 2 nd chamber	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Not known	Greater cooperation planned in future; public hearings planned on legislative procedures	Unifem: gender budgeting; IPU: capacity building; AWEPA: capacity building; USAID: Internet	http://www.rwanda.parliament.gov.rw/
S. Tomé & Príncipe	I-PRSP 2000	One chamber, 55 members	No involvement	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes. No knowledge of real budget changes	Public hearings possible, but hardly ever take place	Not known	http://212.54.130.162

Senegal	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 120 members	Parliament adopted PRSP. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring	Constitutional vote on budget; budget committee can recommend changes to parliament. No knowledge of real budget changes	Not known	FES; capacity building	http://www.assemblee-nationale.sn/
Sierra Leone	I-PRSP 2001	One chamber, 124 members	Institutional involvement in PRSP formulation by ad hoc committee	Not known	Not known	NDI: capacity building	
Tanzania	PRSP 2000, PRSP Progress Report 2001, 2003	One chamber, 275 members	PRSP debated in parliament. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget	Contacts within framework of Gender Budget initiative	USAID/DFID: joint assistance project; UNDP: technical assistance; FES: capacity building	http://www.parliament.go.tz/

Uganda	PRSP 1997, 2000, PRSP Progress Report 2001, 2002	One chamber, 305 members	PRSP debates in committees. Individual MPs involved in local consultations. Institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget; proposals can be made in advance. Parliamentary budgets powers recently expanded. Budget Office created	Weak, non-institutionalised contacts	DFID: assistance to parliamentary administration; USAID: capacity building; FES: capacity building; KAS: capacity building	http://www.parliament.go.ug/
Zambia	PRSP 2002	One chamber, 158 members	Individual MPs involved in local consultations. No institutional involvement in monitoring planned	Constitutional vote on budget	Weak contacts	USAID: assistance for parliamentary reform project; UNDP: assistance for committees; FES: capacity building, South-South exchange	www.parliament.gov.zm/

Source: Own summary of data based on a desk study (finalised August 2003). The list therefore does not claim to be complete. The authors would highly appreciate to get further country specific information and data material: walter.eberlei@uni-duisburg.de and henn@bmz.bund.de

8.3. Primary sources

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