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A Critical Appraisal of World Bank's SAPs and PRSPs in Africa

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ABSTRACT

The official aims of the World Bank development programs-SAPs and PRSPs in Africa and other developing countries are to promote local productivities, to advance economic choices, to improve living standards, to maximize economic competencies, to reduce government expenditures, to encourage private domestic economic sectors, and to realize economic development. Based on these promising development policies, many African countries have adopted those programs in the early 1980s as a panacea to their worst political and economic problems. To this end, some scholars assert that the World Bank development programs-SAPs and PRSPs have contributed a lot to the holistic growth of many African states. They strongly believe that Africa is rising these days because of the direct involvement of the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) in the overall affairs of the African states. On the contrary, some other researchers oppositely argue that the World Bank development programs did not achieve their own intended goals and they have brought negative consequences on the social, political, and economic situations of Africa. Accordingly, this study critically examines the effectiveness of the World Bank development programs-SAPs and PRSPs in contemporary Africa. Moreover, the study rationally appraises the multi-dimensional consequences of SAPs and PRSPs in the land of Africa. To this effect, the study finds that these programs of the World Bank have brought massive socio-political and economic crises in the land of Africa. Hence, rethinking the World Bank development programs should be the prior duty of African states to escape from the existing chaos in almost every sector. Finally, in doing this study, the researcher relied on secondary sources of data such as published scientific articles, books, unpublished dissertations, newspapers, magazines, and reports of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: *Structural Adjustment; Poverty Reduction; Neo-liberalism; Privatization; Deregulation; Debt Crisis*

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1. Introduction

Examining the effectiveness of World Bank development Agendas- Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) by taking the huge continent Africa as a case study is a difficult and complicated task because Africa is a large continent with diversified ethnic groups, cultures, languages, religions, colors, political attitudes, and the like. However, regarding SAPs and PRSPs, the majority of African counties do have an identical experience. In this regard, Gedion Gamora wrote that "as many scholars indicated by the mid-1980s and early 1990s, almost every African state has adopted one form of SAPs or the other with disastrous consequences" (Gamora, 2014). Simultaneously, these World Bank development programs have been passed almost similar challenges and trends across African states. By the same token, in one way or another, the Bretton Woods sister institutions such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) together have been affecting the economic activities and systems of all African countries. Meaning, no African country is completely free from the direct or indirect influence of these sister institutions because of numerous reasons. That is why the researcher appraised rationally the pains and gains of World Bank development programs- SAPs and PRSPs in contemporary Africa.

Dealing with the policies, challenges, and impacts of SAPs and PRSPs under single research is somehow a difficult as well as a broad task. Because, as we all know, SAPs and PRSPs have broad objectives and also have been affecting contemporary Africa in many respects. It needs deep reading as well as research skills to manage these two World Bank development programs in a specified article. However, the majority of writers have been dealt with the overall trends of SAPs and PRSPs separately. As far as my reading is concerned, no scholar intensively evaluates the impacts and effectiveness of both SAPs and PRSPs in a single article. Thus, to have a clear image of SAPs and PRSPs policies and strategies in Africa, the researcher with audacity goes through the overall challenges and effects of World Bank development programs. Among the many, one of the reasons that motivated me to deal with these huge development programs is to provide adequate lessons that should be learned or considered by policymakers and countries who are continuing close friendship with the Bretton Woods Institutions.

When I turn to the central point of the study, as far as my reading and empirical observation are concerned, there are three major arguments regarding the effects of SAPs and PRSPs in less developed countries. The first group of scholars argues that World Bank development programs did nothing for the growth of African countries. The positive outcomes of SAPs and PRSPs are not observable in the majority of recipient countries. By the same token, they strongly confirm that SAPs and PRSPs didn't bring tangible economic change across African countries. The frequent ups and downs in the trajectory of African economic growth are associated with internal factors than the invisible hands of Bretton Woods Institutions. In short, for these groups of thinkers, SAPs and PRSPs produced neither positive nor negative social and economic effects in the land of Africa (Humayoun, 2010). I want to incorporate the following research output to reinforce this argument:

A structural adjustment program that is harmful to a nation's economy is not necessarily correct, based on these empirical findings. However, the study suggested that the reason for the current stage of economic development in Africa, particularly in Nigeria cannot be attributed to SAP-but to other economic problems which include: a high level of corruption, mismanagement of public funds, political instability, poor infrastructural facilities, and the pluralistic nature of the society which gave rise to a high level of ethnocentrism (Sulaiman L.A, 2014).

The second typical argument is that the World Bank development programs have been contributing a lot to the overall progress of Africa since the early 1980s. Different infrastructures and social institutions are built on the continent because of the aids and loans of Bretton Woods Institutions-World Bank and International Monetary Fund. These people again further argue that the living standards of member states have been dramatically changing as a result of the World Bank's direct involvement in the macro-economic structures of developing countries, for instance, they provided better access to education, health, clean water, electricity, and asphalt roads because of the generous support given by the IMF and World Bank (Eduah, 2014).

Advocators of Structural Adjustment Programs more elaborately contend that free-market reforms such as privatization, deregulation, liberalization, and so on are essential for promoting a more open and efficient economy which ultimately helps to improve the worst economic conditions and reduce the rate of acute poverty. To support this claim, officials, presidents of World Bank, and sometimes sponsored writers have stated the following:-

The IMF and the World Bank's adjustment lending program with its attached conditionalities have been achieving some positive results or successes. For example, they claim that the group of developing countries which began to implement full, intense, and comprehensive structural adjustment program with its conditions and loans granted to them by the early 1980s, achieved a reduction in their budgetary or financial debts in the middle of the 1980s and obtained a rapid and speedy growth rate in their export productions and earnings (Eduah, 2014).

The third may be the dominant type of argument is that the World Bank development programs-SAPs and PRSPs have been negatively affecting the lives of contemporary Africa. They collectively argue that the USA and Western European countries designed the sister Bretton Woods Institutions to exploit and subjugate Third World countries. SAPs and PRSPs are policy instruments that are used to accelerate the economic development of the occidental world at the expense of less developed countries. Accordingly, these groups of scholars believe that World Bank development programs such as SAPs and PRSPs brought chaotic mismatch and horrific economic and social consequences (Eduah, 2014). The subsequent propositions may represent the central theme of this sort of argument:

The economies of sub-Saharan counties moved backward and did not progress, those of the Latin American countries deteriorated when the World Bank and International Monetary Fund implemented the neoliberal market reforms or changes with its attached conditionalities in the 1980s and 1990s. Some maintain that the conditionalities were not accurate or the right ones that were why they could not achieve good results. And still, the rate of poverty, inequality unemployment, and hardships rose sharply in countries of the developing world that installed or put in place the structural adjustment program with its attached conditionalities. Therefore, the claim is that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund conditionalities are not functioning or working out well to achieve their intended results efficiently (Eduah, 2014).

All of the above three arguments appeared to us good and irrefutable because the proponents of each argument have stated adequate reasons and evidence to support their central claim. In other words, the protagonists of each argument have provided sufficient facts and proofs to praise their own respective discourses. That is why many people fall into confusion to differentiate the real from the seeming, the valid from the invalid argument. Thus, students of development studies most of the time ask themselves a question that "which line of argument best explains the impact of SAPs and PRSPs in the land of Africa?"

Therefore, the major objectives of the study are to rationally investigate the exact impacts of World Bank's SAP and PRSP in contemporary Africa and to prove the certainty and validity of the above-proposed arguments.

The study is organized into six sections. The first section is the introductory part which deals with the different scholarly arguments around the effects of the World Bank development programs- SAPs and PRSPs in recipient countries. The second topic focuses on the nature and features of both SAPs and PRSPs. The third section emphasizes the triggering factors that pushed African countries to adopt and implement World Bank development programs. The fourth part deeply examines the effectiveness of the World Bank's SAPs and PRSPs in contemporary Africa. The fifth section of the research appropriates the socio-economic consequences of World Bank development programs. And, the final topic summarizes important points and provides valuable recommendations for the betterment of African people.

2. Overview of SAPs and PRSPs Policies

2.1 The Principles and Features of Structural Adjustment Programs

This sub-section gives a short description of the principles and features of SAPs in third world countries particularly Africa in focus. SAPs got birth from the two sisters Bretton Woods Institutions-International Monetary Fund and World Bank in the early 1980s. These adjustment programs are designed by International Financial Institutions and imposed on less developed countries as conditionalities for securing loans or aids (Jauch, 1999). SAPs consist of conditionalities together with loans-provided by the World Bank to countries that suffered horrific economic loss and debt crisis. Concerning this clause, the World Bank requires borrowing third world countries to practice multiple neo-liberal policies to get new loans with lower interest rates. Besides the provision of loans to developing nations, the World Bank forces borrowing countries to return their debt between two-four years (William, 2003).

The major official responses behind the question regarding the goals of SAPs are:- to allow the economies of less developed countries to become more market-oriented, to reduce the borrowing country's fiscal imbalances, to adjust the macro-economic structure of the recipient countries in the long-run with short term pain, to bring economic stability in underdeveloped countries, to maximize local productivity, to promote the competitiveness of local industries, to enlarge government revenue by cutting government expenditure and so on (Ofori, 2009). The following text may briefly describe the goals of SAPs:-

The structural Adjustment Programs are economic and social reforms endorsed by the world bank and IMF after the debt crisis of the 1980s, with the goal to advocate for the growth and development of the economy by reducing the role of the government and opening up the markets in the country to multinationals, foreign investments, and private sector companies to operate business transactions with fewer government interventions (Eduah, 2014).

Hence, from the above quotation, we can conclude that the policies designed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund under the guise of SAPs would directly affect the internal and external economic power of the recipient country.

Because of the above promising and striking economic policies of the World Bank and IMF, many African countries have started to implement SAPs in the early 1980s. During the 1980s, the International Financial Institutions-World Bank and IMF have produced loan packages for the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa as they have been experienced long political instabilities and economic crises (Heidhues, 2011). As a result, the ambition of the fastest economic growth and the positive change on citizen's wellbeing and living standards among African countries have pushed them to directly adopt and implement SAPs without critical and rational discussion.

Accordingly, since the 1980s the World Bank has been imposing SAPs without considering the socio-cultural and even the economic differences among African countries. As we all know, Africa is the second-largest continent with diverse religion, language, history, literary level, ethnic background, political situation, economic level, and the like. However, the World Bank forced African countries to exercise the one-size-fits of socio-economic reforms without analyzing and recognizing remarkable differences and heterogeneity among African counties (Ofori, 2009). As economist Robin Hanhel puts it: "The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have prescribed the same medicine for troubled third world economies over two decades" (Hanhel, 1999).

The most controversial and debatable issue in the area of structural adjustment programs is the fairness and impartiality of its principles. Most of the time, scholars have drawn strong criticisms over the fundamental principles of structural adjustment programs. They believed that the principles of structural adjustment programs are inclined with the economic theory of neoliberalism and serves the interest of westerners or creditors. To clear this discourse for my readers, it is better to address questions such as - (i) what are the most fundamental policy reforms included in World Bank's structural adjustment program? What are the conditionalities of structural adjustment programs? Under the maxim of structural adjustment programs, the World Bank and IMF together have put the following pre-requisites over borrowing countries:-

a. Trade liberalization-it suggests free trade between developing and developed countries and the elimination of trade barriers in the international market transactions.
b. Deregulation-it restricts a state not to mobilize its resources for the building of public infrastructures and social safety nets.
c. Privatization-it indicates the transfer of public megaprojects and industries to international companies and private citizens.
d. Currency devaluation- it is the act of reducing or devaluating one's currency to attract more foreign investment and tourists.
e. Free capital movement-it seeks free inflow as well as outflow capital between Global North and Global South.
f. Free market- it says the price of goods and services should be determined by the market rather than the government.
g. Central bank independence-it obliges governments not to control the affairs of the central bank of recipient counties as well as not to determine interest rates (Humayoun, 2010), and (Jauch, 1999). So, to be eligible for any loan or aid from World Bank and International Monetary Fund, African countries are often obliged to implement these policies and reforms of Structural Adjustment Programs.

In a nutshell, to get the World Bank's repayable loan, the majority of sub-Saharan countries since the early 1980s have been signed a bilateral debt agreement together with the above conditionalities. The World Bank has stated the allocation of loans to developing countries without eradicating barriers of perfect market and completion which are largely existed in the continent of Africa. Moreover, African governments have begun the practice of SAP reforms without strong commitment and efficient public institutors. These are all about the short descriptions regarding the principles and features of SAPs in Africa. In the subsequent sections, I will briefly examine the effects and impacts of SAPs in the land of Africa.

2.2 The Objectives and Components of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

This sub-section reviews the PRSPs approach and addresses questions such as - what do PRSPs mean? Why the Bretton Woods Institutions have changed their policy program from SAPs to PRSPs in 999? What are the differences between SAPs and PRSPs? What are the components of PRSP Policies? Hopefully, a clear explanation of these questions may give a complete understanding or knowledge regarding the World Bank's PRSPs. So, in the subsequent paragraphs, the researcher will try to address the questions that have been raised frequently by commentators of this area.

The poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was first designed in September 1999 by a joint act of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund as an instrument for attaching poverty reduction efforts of Third World countries with debt relief. Under this new approach of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, poor countries with a huge amount of debt crisis were required to prepare PRSPs to get relief from the previous debt bankruptcy (Jenina Joy, 2003).

In principle, PRSP is prepared by donor and loan recipient countries together with different local stakeholders-under the general supervision of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund professional teams. In other words, the document is supposed to be internally prepared and owned by a state and developed through a wide range of participation. Moreover, it is expected to analyze the causes of poverty in a country and formulates a strategy to overcome poverty-related problems, and bring sustainable growth in economically less developed countries (Jenina Joy, 2003).

Unlike SAPs, PRSPs have carried valuable components or guiding principles for the sake of an efficient and effective poverty reduction process in financially indebted Third World countries. Concerning the components or guiding principles of PRSPs, AlanWhaites (2000) has stated the following brief description:

PRSPs are envisaged as comprehensive development strategies aimed at poverty reduction. Whereas previously governments and donors pursued uncoordinated, and sometimes contradictory, policies, now a more systematic approach is to be used. The acceptance of PRSPs by all development actors and funders is therefore integral to their chances of success. Equally important is the idea that these strategies will be rooted in the national policy framework of the country concerned—a fully owned part of the program of the government itself. The World Bank and IMF state that PRSPs will be genuinely country-owned and reflect the outcomes of an open participatory process involving governments, civil society, and relevant international institutions and donors.

Therefore, from the above features of PRSPs, one can simply deduce the following five basic components or process guiding principles of PRSPs that are mandatory in the preparation and implementation stages.

- Country-Driven- it tells us the PRSPs must be directed by the local government based on a wide range of participation together with responsible bodies and stakeholders.
- Results-Oriented- it focuses on the monitoring of outcomes that benefit the poor.
- Comprehensive-it is a holistic activity that integrates macro-economic, sectorial, structural, and social dimensions of poverty.

- Participatory and Partnership Oriented-it allows all relevant stakeholders in formulating and implementing strategies.
- Long-Term-it refers to reforming institutions and building capacities based on a long-term poverty reduction perspective (Levinsohn, 2003).

In line with the above guiding principles of PRSP, scholars posed questions such as: Does PRSPs have different objectives compare to SAPs? Or Do SAPs and PRSPs have the same goals? In theory, PRSPs were designed to achieve a variety of goals that are different from SAPs. But in practice, according to scholars PRSPs have been employing identical means and realizing the same end (Jenina Joy, 2003). When I turn to the main point, PRSPs have the following principal objectives that are different in terms of content and structure from the former World Bank and International Monetary Fund agenda i.e. SAPs. (i) To support macro-economic structural policies of developing countries under a condition of Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative; (ii) To improve the governance and management of public financial sectors; (iii) To strengthen sectoral policies and programs of poor countries; and (iv) To reduce the intensification of absolute poverty in developing countries through debt cancellation.

When we see the above objectives of PRSPs, we found it very interesting and it identified the problems of Third World countries. However, the central questions among scholars regarding World Bank's development programs are: "Why the Bretton Woods Institutions have changed their policy program from SAPs to PRSPs?" Why the World Bank has shifted its motto from "growth promotion" to "poverty reduction?"

There are some assumptions proclaimed by researchers in the process of addressing the above basic questions. The first hypothesis is: to curve the challenges and criticisms that directly came from the failure of SAPs in many recipient countries. The second assumption is: to refresh and reshuffle the instruments of domination and exploitation of Third World countries by a new strategic approach. Thus, these two assumptions have been frequently quoted by writers to explain and answer the question "why the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have transformed their policy approach from SAPs to PRSPs in the year 1999?" (Wang, 2003).

3. Triggering Factors for the Adoption of the World Bank Development Programs in Africa

There were internal and external factors that triggered developing countries to adopt and implement the first World Bank's development program-SAPs in the early 1980s. Because of the above two major triggering factors, many developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia had started the practice of structural adjustment reforms such as privatization, deregulation, trade liberalization, currency devaluation, free capital movement, and cut of government subsidies over their respective territories.

The first factor that motivated African countries to accept the whole policies of SAPs with its conditionality was the failure of the state-led development approach throughout Africa in the 1970s. As we all know, the immediate post-independent African leaders in the 1960s had started the political and economic ideology of command economic system to boost the material growth of their respective states. Under Marxist-Leninist political and economic ideology, leaders expected to bring better economic growth and a good living standard. Unfortunately, because of several reasons such as the inclination of the system to a one-party monopoly of power, lack of belongingness and care to government-owned industries, inefficient public servants and managers, the prevalence of corruption in state-controlled companies, the problem of translating and understanding of socialist philosophy, and finally, by the anti-socialist movement of USA and westerners, the state-led economic system in Africa was collapsed in the 1970s. Thus, the unexpected failure of all socialist development projects in the 1970s over Africa has completely changed the discourse and emphasis from state to market (Mazuri, 2001); (Nur, 2015).

Based on the above historical fact, the post-independent African leaders didn't solve the pre-colonial and colonial problems of the continent by using socialist economic and political ideology. The philosophy didn't mitigate the worst living conditions of African people. As a result, the hope and expectation of leading a good life by using socialism as an instrument became deteriorated. The occurrence of this conducive situation and event in the history of Africa has paved the trajectory for the emergency of a neoliberal economic and political system in the name of Structural Adjustment Programs all over Africa since the 1980s (Humayoun, 2010).

At this particular historical time, African political leaders, as well as elites, didn't have other options to escape from the simple acceptance of Structural Adjustment Programs that were imposed by International Financial Institutions- the World Bank, and IMF. African leaders and elites have simply advocated Structural Adjustment Programs because of two factors. On the one hand, Marxist-Leninist economic and political ideology didn't realize economic success. On the other hand, the peoples and intellectuals of Africa were persuaded by the dominant argument of the time i.e. developing countries in Africa and Latin America are economically backward because of the unlimited intervention of government in each step of market transactions. As a result of the above reasons, African governments had been implemented Structural Adjustment Programs without modification and critical appraisal until the year 2000 (Nur, 2015).

The unusual decline of the price of exporting cash crops and other precious raw materials in the year 1970s was also contributed a lot to the mere entrance of Structural Adjustment Programs inside Africa. At this time, many African countries exported huge and bulky primary products, but they have received very little amount of hard currency. Subsequently, to solve the problems of the local budget deficit and to repay foreign debt, African countries were forced to negotiate with the World Bank and IMF for aid or loan. As I said earlier, since the 1980s, the Bretton Woods Institutions didn't grant any kind of loan or aid to less developed countries without the full-fledged acceptance of SAPs. Hence, the austerity financial policies of the World Bank and IMF have directly entered into the continent of Africa simply by taking this price decline in export commodities in the 1970s as a favorable condition (Humayoun, 2010).

In addition to the failure of the central-panned economic system and the decrease in the price of export commodities, the world petroleum crisis of the 1970s combined with the debt crisis pushed the African governments to change the existing economic and political philosophies as well as to seek aid or loan from International Financial Institutions. This worldwide event-triggered African countries to directly receive the World Bank's SAPs with the highest ambition of economic development. Concerning this claim, Herbert Jauch has puts the subsequent insightful thought:

SAPs were born as a result of a debt crisis that has hit especially developing countries since the 1980s. This debt crisis has its origin in the early 1970s when oil-producing countries that had united in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) increased the oil price to gain additional revenue. Most of these profits were invested with banks in industrial countries. These banks, in turn, were interested to lend this money to developing countries to finance the purchase of products from the industrial countries. In this way, the loans given to developing countries helped to stimulate production in the North. At that time, both private and public institutions encouraged the South to borrow. Even the World Bank preached the doctrine of debt as the path towards accelerated development. As a result, huge amounts were borrowed by the political elites, often wasted on luxuries, white elephant projects, or stolen by corrupt officials. Very little was invested productively to achieve sustainable economic growth (Jauch, 1999).

In short, the collapse of 'maximalist state' economic and political policy, the decrease in the price of exporting primary products, the increase of oil price across the globe together with debt crisis contributed a lot to the introduction of neoliberal or 'minimalist state' economic theory in the name of Structural Adjustment Programs around the 1980s.

4. Examining the Effectiveness of SAPs and PRSPs in Africa

Under this section, I will try to critically examine the success and failure of the World Bank's two giant development programs-SAPs and PRSPs in the land of Africa. Hereafter, I will discuss the pains and gains that have been experienced in Africa as a result of SAPs and PRSPs implementation. Heretofore, I have stated the three different arguments on the consequences that came out from the practice of SAPs and PRSPs in different African counties. Scholars at different times and places produced identical and sometimes extremely contradictory empirical research outputs on the same problem statement i.e. do SAPs and PRSPs achieved their intended goals in developing counties? Researchers of the area have generated three different findings on this research question.

For some groups of thinkers, SAPs and PRSPs are neither effective nor ineffective. For them, SAPs and PRSPs do not have the capacity or potential to shatter the social, political, and economic foundations of African countries. Moreover, they argued that African leaders accepted both programs of the World Bank and IMF not for implementation but to get financial support either in the form of aid or loan. So, for these scholars, it is arbitrary to say and judge the positive and negative effects of both SAPs and PRSPs without effective implementation in the continent of Africa. However, for me, the argument doesn't hold water because many countries in Africa practically changed their previous economic and political ideologies and they replaced the old one with SAPs and PRSPs reforms.

The second line of argument emphasizes the positive contributions and valuable roles of the World Bank and IMF development programs in the socio-economic life of African people. These groups of scholars have argued that Structural Adjustment Programs combined with Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers have been served as an instrument to support the efforts of poverty reduction and to build economic growth. For me, this line of argument is also inconsistent with the feasible reality that can be seen in different parts of Africa. In my study, I have experienced the situation that these kinds of arguments most of the time came from either the annual reports of the World Bank and IMF or from scholars who are sponsored by these institutions. This argument is constructed by subjective claims, unrepresentative samples, false premises, and distorted statements to safeguard the interest of one group. Hence, I found this argument also unfair and biased that drawn from invalid sources and evidence (Gore, 2000).

My critical reading and appraisal of the subject area have a strong resemblance to the third maxim of argument that SAPs and PRSPs have been producing lots of crises and chaos in contemporary Africa. Like the supporters of this argument, I also believe that SAPs and PRSPs are the hidden weapons of the USA and the Western world to prepare Africa for the new wave of colonization i.e.

neo-colonialism. I do have many illustrations and scientific researches to prove the claim that the World Bank's development programs have impacted Africa more negatively than positively. Accordingly, I shall briefly give you a clear picture of the question: 'how SAPs and PRSPs have failed in the continent of Africa to realize their specific policy reforms and objectives?'

Sometimes, even in the annual reports of the WB and IMF, they have admitted the ineffectiveness and failure of SAPs in debtor countries. That is why after conducting a survey study in a very few developing countries, they have concluded that SAPs are completely failed in achieving their objectives and should be replaced by another development approach-PRSPs with the content that incorporates the human face of development (Benjamin Addo, 2010).

According to researches, the new World Bank and IMF policy reform-PRSPs also facing numerous challenges. It is incapable of reducing or eliminating the poverty level of Africans since its introduction-the year 2000 until now, however, the degree of poverty and income inequality has to raise at an alarming pace since the declaration of PRSPs in Africa. Let me take the very good work of Jenina for this issue:

We contend that little has changed in the substance, form, and process of World Bank and IMF programs. "Poverty" is used as window dressing to peddle more or less the same Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) to low-income countries that led them into a state of chronic economic crisis, to begin with. Stringent policy conditionalities still rule supreme in Bank-Fund operations, the latest of which include an assortment of prescriptions loosely categorized as "good governance." Major international donors, however, appear to have blindly acquiesced to the Bank-Fund model of development, which is encapsulated in the PRSP and which has clearly failed over the past twenty years in numerous countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Countries as diverse as Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Bolivia, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Indonesia were all forced to apply the Bank-Fund development model at one time or another, and all have suffered from deep and shattering economic crises as a result of Bank-Fund policy prescriptions. And yet today, the same policies continue to be supported even more ardently than before by donors, in a new package called the PRSP (Jenina Joy, 2003).

In theory, both SAPs and PRSPs consist of good policies and approaches to realize the firmest economic growth, to improve living standards, to maximize competitiveness, to provide market alternatives, to reduce inflation, to avoid trade barriers, to minimize government expenditure, and the like. However, in practice, based on different research outputs, these attractive economic and social policies have produced the opposite (Beneria, 1995). The next point may be better to make this bone of contention stronger:

In theory, SAPs were meant to assist countries to attain economic recovery. In practice, however, the opposite took place. SAPs destroyed any chance to achieve sustainable economic development. In terms of short-term socio-economic effects, the reforms were even traumatic. The austerity measures introduced by SAPs hurt the poor most, including in the long run (Nur, 2015).

To summarize, the neo-colonial intention of the BWIs development programs, the unfavorable intellectual climate (i.e. the existence of socialist-oriented thinkers in Africa), incomplete or half-hearted implantation, weak governmental institutors, the communal behavior of Africans, social unrests and civil wars, the availability of corrupted public servants, and the like are researched out as the major causes for the ineffectiveness as well as failures of the World Bank development projects-SAPs and PRSPs in contemporary Africa (Sulaiman L.A, 2014).

5. The Consequences of SAPs and PRSPs in Contemporary Africa

The implantation of both development programs in Africa ended with a social, economic, and political crisis. According to some writers, the practice of SAPs and PRSPs in Africa is totally failed and at the same time brought myriads of negative consequences on the economic as well as social life of the debtor countries. In light of the aforementioned failures that SAPs and PRSPs encountered, in this part, I will briefly present the socio-economic and political consequences of SAPs and PRSPs in contemporary Africa.

One of the negative consequences of the WB and IMF development programs in Africa is a food crisis. The IFIs have forced recipient African countries to repay their debt between 2-4 years. As a result, countries in Africa were directly engaged in the export of their cash crops without compromising the needs of their people. The total export of food stocks to foreign countries has created a food crisis as well as hunger across Africa. To substantiate this discussion, Malawi's president on a BBC declared the following point:

The government has been forced (to sell maize) to repay commercial loans taken out to buy surplus maize in previous years. So, Malawi duly sold 28,000 tons of maize to Kenya. Under pressure from her creditors, led by the World Bank and the IMF, Malawi exchanged maize-her people's staple diet-for dollars. Three months later Malawi had a major food crisis and according to Action Aid, 7 million of the total of 11 million were severely faced short of food (Ofori, 2009).

The other negative consequence that came out from the implementation of SAPs and PRSPs in Africa is the increase of unemployed professionals. One of the programs of SAPs is retrenchment /cut back/ the public sector employment, due to this policy, many civil services in Africa minimized their staff dramatically. Under this specific policy program, not only the number of civil servants but also different public service institutions were either officially closed or merged. As a result, many African young and economically active individuals became Jobless (Benjamin A., 2010). For example "In Ghana, the civil service had to reduce its staff by 45,000 between 1987 and 1989 and the education service also had to reduce its staff by 20,000 during the same period" (Ofori, 2009). Moreover, "In Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, 300,000 civil servants were retrenched in 1995" (Jauch, 1999). The above pieces of evidence illustrate us the World Bank development programs have objectively aggravated the unemployment rate in Africa.

The collapse of domestic industries and small-scale companies in Africa between 1980 and 2000 was also associated with the World Bank and the IMF development programs- SAPs and PRSPs because, in the name of free-market and trade liberalization, many manufactured goods have crossed the borders of Africa. Foreign companies have started to dump their finished commodities in Africa at cheap price and high quality. At this time, local large scale and small scale industries became incompetent and at the end of the day, they became bankrupted (Ofori, 2009). For example: "In South Africa cloth and textile industries between 1991 and 1997, 50,000 out of a total of 200,000 workers have lost their jobs because South African industries were unable to produce goods as cheaply or at the same quality as competitors from Europe and East-Asia & finally had to close down" (Jauch, 1999).

The educational, health, and agricultural sectors in contemporary Africa are highly affected by the SAPs reforms such as the elimination of subsidies and cuts in government spending on social services. For example, when the government started to implement the elimination of fertilizer and pesticide subsidies to farmers, then the price of agricultural products would have dramatically increased to cover the costs of pesticides and fertilizers. This in turn has created inflation in the price of goods and services. The same is true when we come to the educational and health care delivery sectors. If the government cuts spending on education and health, then the majority poor will not have easy access to health care and quality education. That is why after the implementation of SAPs in Africa, the World-Wide rate of illiteracy began to grow again after a long period of decline, and inequalities in the standard of education between poor and rich communities were widely experienced between the 1980s and 1990s (ibid).

Therefore, despite the World Bank and the IMF's claim of SAPs and PRSPs success and positive contributions, it is commonly and widely acknowledged among scholars that SAPs and PRSPs have failed to achieve their respective goals. As writers of the subject matter, the above negative consequences are only a few among the many being reflected from the imposed BWIs development programs in contemporary Africa.

6. Concluding Remarks

In the 1960s-after independence, many African countries had great hope and expectation to bring the fastest economic growth by using a state-led economic system. Consequently, the post-independence African political leaders started a crucial role in each step of market transactions. They became key actors in the process of economic development and nation-building. Since the 1960s, under the maxim of Marxist-Leninist economic philosophy, the states in Africa have controlled huge companies and accumulated large amounts of wealth. However, because of mismanagement, maladministration, corruption, embezzlement, and the like the states in Africa didn't realize the expected economic growth. Finally, the imported philosophy, i.e. Marxism, has led the majority of African countries to extreme poverty and hunger at the end of the 1970s.

As a result, initially SAPs in the 1980s, and secondly, PRSPs in the 2000s were directly imposed in Africa and employed without any serious challenge and hardship. Because, at that time, Africans were looking for other economic and political ideologies to eliminate the economic sufferance that came out of socialist economic ideology. Besides these economic predicaments that many African people have experienced, the World Bank and IMF development programs-SAPs and PRSPs have appeared good and attractive. These development programs instigated and enunciated the systems that enable countries to achieve sustainable economic development within a short period. The program objectives were: to bring macroeconomic stability, to scale up production, to raise the level of competitiveness, to maximize government revenue, to create employment, to advance market choices, to reduce budget deficits, to eradicate poverty, to minimize inequality, and so on.

Based on the above smart goals/objectives, of the World Bank and IMF development programs, the African countries have an aspiration of bringing economic change and growth. To realize this, governments in the continent have implemented the reforms for more than two decades. However, the two policy approaches of the WB and IMF didn't bring economic success. For instance, the opposite outcomes such as income inequality, inflation, poverty, food crisis, unemployment, debt crisis, and so on are some of the manifestations of the failure of SAPs and PRSPs in their implementation. Therefore, from these facts, the researcher concludes the claim that Structural Adjustment Programs and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are not only failed but also proved as sources of different socio-political and economic disasters in the land of Africa.

Accordingly, I recommend the African Union, African political leaders, African scholars, and other responsible bodies to formulate and implement homegrown economic and political ideologies. Because I strongly believe that African made economic policies and reforms will help us to regain our national sovereignty which was lost by the direct intervention of IFIs over key economic sectors and issues in African countries; to reduce the greater income inequality between poor and rich communities which have produced by liberalization process; to realize social benefit and development which was affected by the cut back of government spending on social safety-nets, and to rehabilitate economic diversification which was also hampered by SAPs policy of comparative advantage.

Notes

- Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) is a policy framework that was launched by the international financial institutions (i.e. World Bank & International Monetary Fund) in the early 1980s to create the necessary institutional and policy conditions for economic growth, and, hence, to propel development in poor countries.
- The poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) is a new approach to development that was designed by the World Bank & IMF in early 2000 to help poor countries effort in the process of poverty reduction.
- “Breton Woods” is an area which is found in Washington that gave rise to the emergency of two sisters United Nations monetary and financial institutions- World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1944 just around the end of the Second World War.
- HIPC-has an aim to provide debt relief or debt cancellation to poor countries facing an unsustainable debt burden. To qualify for HIPC, countries are further required to develop a track record of reform and sound policies under IMF and World Bank-supported programs and to formulate PRSPs.
- Maximalist state economic and political policy refers to an economic system in which a state has supreme discretionary power to regulate the whole economic activities. And, it is a system that allows a state to play a dominant role in the market.
- The minimalist state is the opposite of the Maximalist state-see the above definition to compare and contrast.

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