

**ASSESSMENT OF ERITREAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS AND THEIR IMPACTS**

**BY**  
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*“Frustration and failures will continue to mount, if we do not immediately summon the courage to revise the ways we think and take action, as well as maintaining essential services to maintain life...Saving hundreds of thousands...who are at risk of dying from malnutrition or infection is an immediate imperative. But it must be only one stage in the progress toward other activities, and one element in the truly comprehensive approach” (Green, 1989: 1).*

**(Cheikh Hamidan Kane; Minister of Planning and Cooperation – Senegal)**

**DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Date: APRIL 2004

**TECLESGHI KIDANE GEBREMARIAM.**

## SUMMARY

Development, a non-ceasing phenomenon as long as mankind has dwelt on this planet, is a complex matter which encompasses the three bottom-lines, i.e. social, economic and environmental aspects and aims at improving the quality of life. In fact, development issues are always challenging countries and their leaders as they try to introduce strategies and projects to benefit their rural sector which constitutes, especially in developing countries, most of the population who are living in poverty and continuing to stagger in very destitute level.

One of these countries is Eritrea, a nation of which more than 80% live in rural areas and which is rated one of the lowest twenty nations on the human development index (measurement of literacy, health and life expectancy status) as well as the human poverty index of which 53% of the population lived below national poverty line during the period of 1987 to 2000 (UNDP, 2002).

This paper is an attempt to discuss rural development and how it is being implemented in relation to Eritrea's reconstructions and rehabilitation efforts that took place after its freedom from foreign occupation. It is an assessment on the rural projects' planning and implementation process, and eventually also looks at the impacts they have on the life of the beneficiaries.

As a whole, this research paper consists of an introduction and nine chapters. It can be classified into five parts, i.e. the theoretical literature, the country's status in specific fields, the sample research areas, an overall synthesis and lastly conclusions and recommendations as one part.

The theoretical background revolves around rural areas and their reasons for poverty, different development theories within which rural development could be seen as one ingredient, and focuses on participatory rural development where projects can play vital roles in changing life style especially when they are managed in an integrated way touching main areas of need.

The second section of the paper is a general overview of the socio-economic status of Eritrea and some of the efforts made by the government. These are mainly the health, education, water supply, agriculture and dam construction projects, accomplished mainly by government in partnership with domestic and foreign NGOs, whereas the same time people contributed mainly in kind.

In relation to these five projects the researcher has drawn up questionnaires and personally filled them in five villages, namely Sheeb, Ade-awhi, Korbariaya, Azien and Wara, while at the same time holding discussions with the beneficiaries. In this section the assessment of the people's state and their response in relation to the planning process as well as impacts of the projects on

their lives have been made for every village. In other words, the chapter shows the practical data analysis of the research.

The next is, in similar form, an overall synthesis of the research. The researcher weighs and analyses the results in relation to planning issues, especially how far the people played a role in participation and the extent of their influence as well as their contentment with the end result in comparison to their expectations. Moreover, it investigates the projects' impact on the environment, and their influence on the socio-economic lives of the beneficiaries, and then sees how the projects have been managed at institutional level and whether the policies that are in effect have direct influence on initiating rural development projects.

Finally some conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made that could be a benchmark for further studies and provide impetus to accelerate the present rural development planning and implementation. The researcher may have overlooked some necessary elements or missed some basic factors in dealing the current way of initiating development. But with the resources were available and the time at his disposal, while faced by the limitations explained in the introductory section of the paper, the researcher has made some efforts to highlight his convictions to the best of his academic ability. The sole purpose of his final statements is based on his wish for more rural upliftment and long-term as well as sustainable benefit to the rural people of his country, Eritrea.

## OPSOMMING

Ontwikkeling, 'n verskynsel wat nie ophou nie, bestaan al so lank as wat daar lewe op die planeet bestaan. Dit is 'n ingewikkelde saak wat drie aspekte behels: die sosiale, ekonomiese en omgewings aspekte en die doel daarvan is om lewensgehalte te verbeter. Ontwikkelingskwessies stel 'n uitdaging aan die leiers van lande; die regering moet strategië uitwerk en projekte van stapel stuur wat die landelike sektor sal bevoordeel en veral in ontwikkelende lande, woon die grootste gedeelte van die bevolking op die platteland waar hulle gebuk gaan onder armoede.

Eritrea is een van hierdie lande. 80% van die mense van Eritrea woon op die platteland. Eritrea word gereken as een van die twintig onontwikkelste lande op die menslike ontwikkelings indeks (wat geletterdheid, gesondheid en lewensverwagting meet) en ook op die menslike armoede indeks. 53% van die bevolking het vir die tydperk 1987 tot 2000 onder die nasionale armoedelyn geleef (UNDP, 2002).

In hierdie studie word landelike ontwikkeling bespreek en hoe dit geïmplementeer is tydens die rekonstruksie en rehabilitasie pogings na die onafhanklikheid van Eritrea. Dit is 'n waardebeplanning van die beplanning en implementasie van die landelike projekte en kyk ook na die impak wat dit op die lewens van die landelike bevolking gehad het.

In die geheel bestaan hierdie studie uit 'n inleiding en nege hoofstukke. Dit kan in vyf afdelings ingedeel word: teoretiese literatuur, die stand van die land betreffende spesifieke gebiede, die navorsingsgebiede, 'n oorsigtelike sintese en ten laaste die gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings.

In die teoretiese agtergrond gaan dit om die landelike gebiede en die redes vir armoede, asook die ontwikkelingsteorië waarin landelike ontwikkeling gesien word as een bestandeel. Dit fokus op deelnemende landelike ontwikkeling waarin projekte 'n belangrike rol kan speel om die lewensgehalte te verbeter, veral as dit bestuur word op 'n geïntegreerde wyse en die grootste behoeftes aanspreek.

Die tweede afdeling is 'n algemene oorsig van die sosio-ekonomiese stand van Eritrea en van die regering se pogings om dit te verbeter. Die vyf projekte wat betudeer is, is gemoeid met gesondheid, onderwys, water voorsiening, landbou en die konstruksie van damme. Die regering het hierdie projekte onderneem in vennootskap met plaaslike en buitelandse nie-regerings organisasies (NGOs) maar die bevolking self het ook 'n bydrae gemaak, gewoonlik in die vorm van arbeid.

Met betrekking tot hierdie vyf projekte het die navorser vraelyste opgestel en dit persoonlik in die vyf dorpieë naamlik Sheeb, Ade-awhi, Korbariaya, Azien en Wara voltooi terwyl hy dan ook besprekings met die bevolking gehou het. In hierdie afdeling word daar vir elke dorpie 'n

waardebepaling gedoen van die toestand van die mense en hulle reaksie op die beplanningsproses asook die impak van die projek op hulle lewe.

Dan volg 'n oorsigtelike sintese van die navorsing. Die navorser weeg die resultate op en analiseer dit veral betreffende beplanning en tot hoe verre die mense self 'n rol gespeel het, hoeveel invloed hulle gehad het en of die resultaat aan hulle verwagtings voldoen. Die studie kyk ook na die impak van die projek op die omgewing en die invloed wat dit gehad het op die sosio-ekonomiese lewens van diegene wat veronderstel is om voordeel daaruit te trek. Daar word gekyk na hoe die projekte op hoër vlak bestuur is en of regeringsbeleid 'n invloed het op die beplanning van landelike ontwikkelingsprojekte.

Dan word gevolgtrekkings en aanbeveling gemaak wat tot nut kan wees vir ander navorsers en kan lei tot beter en vinniger beplanning en implementasie van landelike ontwikkelings projekte. Die navorser het dalk per abuis sekere elemente en basiese faktore oorgesien maar met die hulpbronne en tyd tot sy beskikking asook die beperkings wat in die inleiding tot die studie bespreek word, het hy sy oortuigings op skrif gestel tot die beste van sy vermoë. Hy hoop dat sy aanbevelings sal lei tot groter landelike ontwikkeling op die lang termyn en dat die mense van sy land, Eritrea, die volgehoue voordeel sal trek.

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♥ Last, but not least, I thank God the Almighty for his wonderful grace, blessings and wisdom. My great gratitude and praise raises up to Him for allowing me to have this opportunity amidst reservations at home and making everything possible through his Eternal Providence.

## **DEDICATIONS**

*TO ALL ERITREAN RURAL COMMUNITIES WHO WERE AND ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE COUNTRY, THE SOURCE OF ENDURANCE AND PERSEVERANCE WHILE ALWAYS STRIVING RELENTLESSLY, WITH GREAT ZEAL AGAINST ALL ODDS, FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE NATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR DAILY LIFE.*

*AND TO ALL INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE COMMITTED TO ENHANCE THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ERITREAN RURAL AREAS.*

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ACARTSOD = African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development

ACT = Action by Churches Together

CDA = Conventional Development Approach

CIA = Central Intelligence Agency ( of USA)

DCs = Developed Countries

DoE = Department of Environment

DoL = Department of Land

DoWR = Department of Water Resources

ECDF = Eritrean Community Development Fund

ERAP = Recovery and Rehabilitation Action Programme

FAO = Food and Agriculture Organisation

GDP = Gross Domestic Product

GNP = Gross National Product

GoE = Government of Eritrea

GoSE = Government of the State of Eritrea

IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development

ILO = International Labour Organization

IRD = Integrated Rural Development

IRDUA = Institute of Research and Development of the University of Asmara

ISRDS = Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy

LDCs = Less Developed Countries

MoA = Ministry of Agriculture

MoF = Ministry of Finance

MoH = Ministry of Health

MoLG = Ministry of Local Government

MoLWE = Ministry of Land, water and Environment

MoTI = Ministry of Trade and Industry

NDA = New Development Approach

NGOs = Non-Governmental Organisations

REU = Rural Enterprise Unit

SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa

UN = United Nations

UNDP = UN Development Programme

UNDP = United Nations Development Programme

UNEP = Environmental Programme

UNESCO = UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF = UN Children's Fund

UNRISD = UN Research Institute for Social Development

USNW = Urban Sector Network

WHO = World Health Organization

WWII = World War II

## **TERMINOLOGIES**

**Capacity Building-** It is a strategy based on job-related knowledge and skills and facts for life (Singh & Titi, 1995) that through additional investment in training and advisory services, which in effect needs long-term commitment, would assume greater responsibility in maintaining and keeping-on the project in order to increase the productivity and the ability of beneficiaries for flexible management and more sustainable earnings.

**Community Participation-** A process of people-centred approach in seeking to establish democratic decision-making institutions at the local level that would mobilise people to improve their social and economic circumstances through undertaking a variety of development projects via participation in a more dynamic way (Midgley & Others, 1986: 17), inclusively the direct involvement of even ordinary people in the community.

**Development-** The process of economic and social betterment where individuals are able to achieve ever greater self-expression, self-realisation, and enhance fulfilment of their talents and physical and intellectual capacities within a sustainable environment (Welsh & Butron, 1990:310).

**Development project-** A special kind of qualitatively investment on a new or existing infrastructure in a given location with specific purposes of setting in motion further development moves on certain people's life, so that it would allow not only to satisfy basic needs but also develop their productive capacity and human potential (Rondinelli, 1993: viii).

**Empowerment-** Enabling the powerless, even against the resistance of others, with the necessary tools and knowledge that can help them to realise their will, in equal terms to those who had already achieved power, so that they could become the agent of their own development and gain self-reliance in the long-term (Craig & Mayo (eds), 1995).

**Equity-** Right of beneficiaries to have access to and have fair share of resources needed to fulfil their basic needs as individuals.

**Integrated Rural Development-** Integration of a number of otherwise unrelated projects, each of them addressing one aspect of rural underdevelopment, that can be subdivided into three main categories such as components related to agriculture, social service and infrastructure with the aim to bring a basket of goods and service which would improve the incomes and standards of life of a large number of people in a particular area (Lacroix, 1985).

**Participation-** A basic people's right to define and determine their need actively in development projects through their involvement from the outset and included throughout the process where they would take ownership by shifting control and responsibility from development agencies to

their communities overtime (Taylor, Marais & Heyns, 1998) so that to achieve social and economic development.

**Project-** It is a temporary endeavour undertaken in a given schedule, cost and quality constraints, and under some risks (Charvat, 2003: 8) in order to create a unique product or services.

**Project Cycle-** A number of important closely linked phases in realizing development, mainly consisting of project identification, preparation, appraisal, implementation and evaluation, so that proper planning, budgeting, supervision and monitoring could be executed (Bamberger, Yahie, & Matovu, 1996: 117).

**Project's Sustainability-** The ability or capacity of a project to continue to deliver intended benefits over a long period of time by maintaining important factors that affect the implementation and long term sustainability of a project such as sound financial base and management; integrated institutional structures that coordinate various agencies and government policies; and environmental measures to conserve and protect of natural resources through application of proper technologies (Bamberger, Yahie, & Matovu, 1996).

**Reconstruction and Development-** Government post-war programme to reawaken the socio-economic life of the society by focusing on the most poverty stricken and forsaken areas and generally the rural section, which constitutes majority of the population, so that there would be balanced development in the whole country.

**Rural Areas-** A notion that denotes areas where people usually live in a farmstead or in groups of houses containing certain number of persons having common or separated farmland and pasture (IFAD, 2001) within common territory but the people are subject to be ruled under traditional administration that is recognised by the State.

**Rural Community-** A community that has some common criteria and administration and at the same time has some form of socio-economic class structure and is composed of individuals and groups with different and often opposing interests (Dixon, 1990)

**Rural Development-** A strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a group of people, the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those seeking a livelihood in the rural areas (Dixon, 1990: 57-56) by transforming their social, economic and environmental problems into better position by initiating projects that enables them to sustain their livelihoods.

**Rural poverty-** The extent of lacking the basic necessities, both tangible and intangible things, due to material deprivation, isolation, alienation, dependency, lack of decision making and freedom, lack of assets, vulnerability and insecurity (Robb, 1999 and Jazairy & Others, 1992).

**Sustainability-** It's the continuation of benefits flow to rural people with or without the programmes or organisations that stimulated those benefits in the first place, continuation of local actions stimulated by the project, and the generation of successor services and initiatives as a result of project-built local capacity (Hondale & VanSant,1985)

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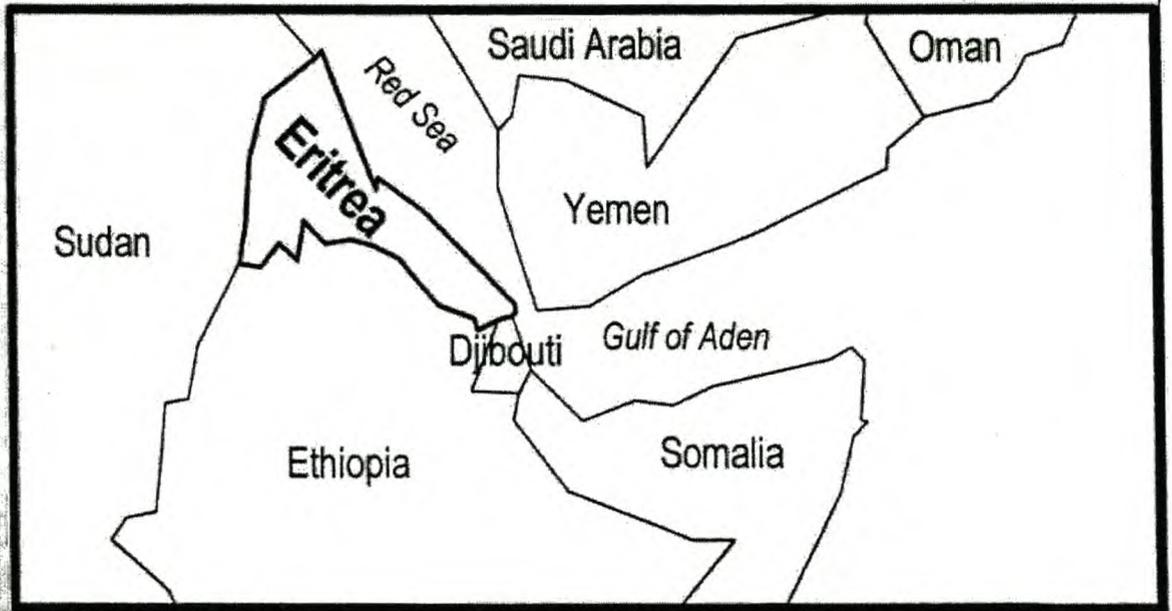
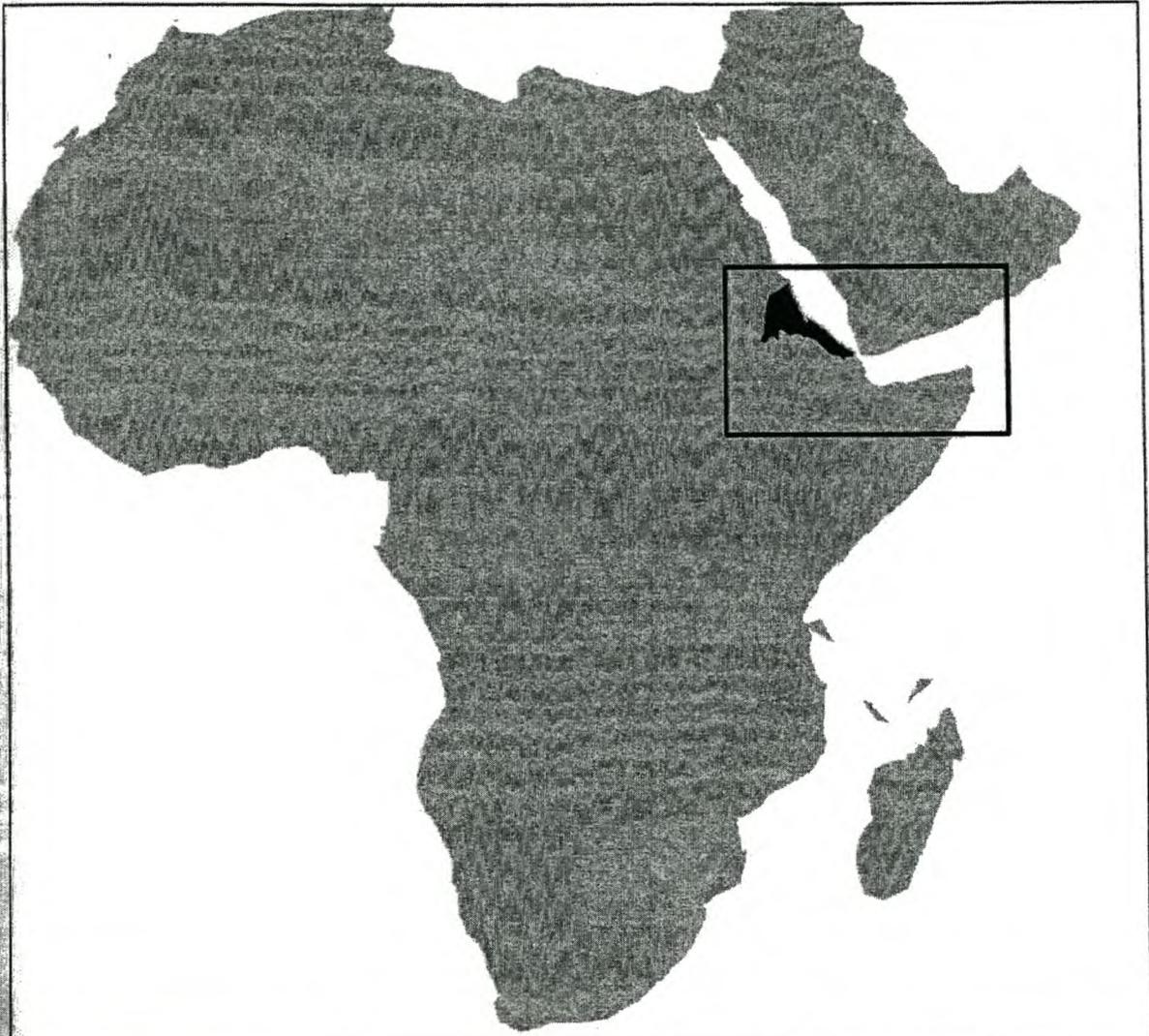
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## **Chapter One. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Eritrea, in geographical reference, is located at 15:00 North and 39:00 East in the horn of Africa sharing 1,626 km of border with Djibouti, Ethiopia and Sudan around its total area of 121,320 - 125,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It's divided into three main geographical zones; the western lowlands, the fertile and intensively farmed central high lands, and the eastern escarpment and coastal plains (Eritrea Environment, n.d.). The population of 4.1- 4.3 million, is made up of nine ethnic groups, Tigigna, Tigre, Bilen, Hidarb, Kunama, Rashadia, Nara, Saho and Afar, who practise Christianity or Islam, and a small number still practise Traditional Religion. According to 2003 estimation, the population growth rate is 1.28 – 2.6 percent, but other sources put it in the range of 3.0% to 3.9%, birth rate 39.44 – 42.52 births/1,000 populations while the death rate is between 12.07 - 13.23 deaths/1,000 populations (Eritrea, World Fact book, n.d.). Its population density ranges from 33.8 to 34.4 persons per km<sup>2</sup>.

Eritrea, creation of Italian colonialism towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Africa's newest nation regained its nationhood in 1991 after long and devastating 30 years of warfare against a much better armed and internationally supported colonizer, i.e. Ethiopia. It has been under many foreign invaders and brutal administrations, such as Egyptian, Turkish, Italian and British, who did their utmost to suck as much natural and man-made resources for their selfish and sole interests. Throughout its history till its independence, Eritrea has experienced raids and plunders which exposed its societies to misery, suffering and poverty (IRDUA, 1993: 21-22). Records also show that its agriculture, the main backbone of the economy, has suffered from repeated droughts recurring at different intervals. These have become more frequent now especially since the 1980s (Pateman, 1997: 181).

The coming of the Italians and their long administration made an impact on the rural population, who suffered again under the succeeding foreign colonizers, i. e. the British and particularly the Ethiopians (World Bank, 1994: i). This has affected the economy which has not only been arrested but actually regressed. The prevailing economic environment reflects "...the deep scars left by the deliberate destruction and neglect of the Ethiopian authorities, the devastation of a protracted war and the ravages of two decades of recurrent drought" (Harogot & Others, 1993: 1). Though it achieved freedom in 1991 and sealed its statehood in 1993's huge sliding victory in a referendum, yet it is one of the poorest countries in the world.

From the beginning of its independence, Eritrea has faced the huge and difficult task of reversing the consequences and damages of war and drought on the socio-economic conditions. The government must address the needs of the population while attempting to regenerate the

economy so that people can taste the fruit of their long awaited freedom. But its main development challenges, among others, are rebuilding infrastructures, building education and health systems, and strengthening human, technical and management capacities (Measho, 2002: 1). In order to remove the backlogs of the economy the government in 1994 proclaimed its macro-policy according to which there would be balanced growth and development at national level. And as a result, with the support of the World Bank and other donors, a comprehensive Economic Recovery and Rehabilitation Action Programme (ERAP) has been launched to revitalize the shattered economy. These assisted the country to experience, between 1992 and 1997, an average rate of GDP growth of almost 9% per annum (MoF, 2000: 1-2).

Within this framework, the Eritrean government especially focuses on the rural people, who are the majority and constitute 80 – 85 percent of the population of which 35 -40 percent are pastoralists or agro-pastoralists and are dependent on agricultural activities for their livelihood. The government has established institutions that will work side by side with other public services and foreign development agents. These have the capacity and mandate to improve and provide public services related activities, such as health, education, infrastructures, dams, etc which could play very great roles in alleviating the situation of the rural societies.

Since Eritrea's highest endowment is its human resources, its long-term development strategy is to improve the production capacity of the people, promote their role in the economic development by freeing them from subsistence and dependency level, enhance their economic performance by upgrading their human capital, and inject deliberate effort and investment for sustainable growth and development.

Thus, now there are institutions such as public, private and public-private partnerships engaged in different ways and focus areas as well as terms in collaboration with foreign aid agencies. The Eritrean Community Development Fund (ECDF) and Rural Enterprise Unit (REU) are institutes in this respect and the government has been and is still an active agent in bringing about the long-term transformation of the rural and most forsaken section of the population in order to become part of the all embracing balanced growth and development of the nation.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to investigate the impact made on the economy and the people as the beneficiaries, and to analyse and evaluate the process of the institutions' planning and implementation procedures. Parallel to the field research and different research techniques, the beneficiaries' and the development workers' standpoint with regard to the development programme initiation and accomplishment processes will be studied and compared.

## 1.2. Preliminary Literature Study

Development issues are always central to all countries' policy programmes when they try to challenge their respective economic problems. For many years the pattern followed with regard to development, vis-à-vis poverty eradication was the trickle-down effect of economic growth. This was the expectation that overall production could reduce poverty given enough time to spread among the population in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities (Todaro, 1999: 4). However, experience across many countries over the last twenty years has raised growing doubts on whether the time required to bring this about, decades rather than years, is acceptable (Jazairy & Others, 1992: xviii).

The most poverty afflicted sections of developing countries are the rural areas where there is no or minimal access to education, health care, land, water and sanitation, housing, public services, transport and communication. Rural poverty accounts for nearly 63% of poverty world wide, reaching 90% in some countries like Bangladesh and between 65 and 90 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa (Khan, 2001; 2). The rural areas of the third world are usually described as the home of impoverished people engaged in agriculture that is subject to high degree of climatic seasonality. In rural areas a high proportion of the total population lives with very low per capita gross domestic product, even if there is variation between countries (Dixon, 1990).

The causes of rural poverty are complex and multidimensional having difference across gender, ethnicity, age location and income source. Mostly the economy is dependent on primary products, which at the moment have less significant market prices due to their non-elastic nature to demand both domestically and internationally. Many scholars (Dixon, 1990; Burkey, 1993; Fair, 1992; Burkey, 1993 & Meyer, Theron and Van-Rooyen, 1995) try to explain rural poverty in terms of either socio-economic factors or broadly environmental ones. Others, like Chambers (1983: 112), try to make a combination of the two and to depict rural poverty as a trap in which isolation, vulnerability, powerlessness and physical weakness, interlinked factors in a cause-effect relationship, and act as origin and poverty-sustenance factors. According to Khan (2001: 6-7) the most influential factors to create and perpetuate rural poverty are: political instability and civil strife, systematic discrimination, ill defined or unfair enforcement of property rights, high concentration of land ownership, corrupt politicians and rent seeking public bureaucracies, economic policies that discriminate against or exclude the rural poor from the development process, large and rapidly growing families with high dependency ratios, and external shocks owing to changes in the state of nature and conditions in the international economy.

To get rid off these problems, developing countries (Berg & Others, 1978; Dixon, 1990; and Fresco & Others, 1994) try to introduce rural development strategies and projects through

methods that will increase productivity, reform the structural and institutional system, and set out sustainable and long term plan. All these are with the aim of eliminating or reducing significantly the root causes and improving the economic and social life of the rural people while at the same time empowering them to be part of all efforts. In order to practise their strategy through effective projects and implementation, governments and their agencies, in their policies, affirm and seek people's participation and try to strengthen their capacities. But "people's participation...cannot be achieved just by emotional exhortations...Nor can it be brought about only by intellectual arguments about its usefulness...Participation depends on social arrangements and political relations, economic incentives and administrative approaches. Economic benefits must give people reasons to participate. Administrative arrangements must link the decisions of the state bureaucracies to the will of local communities" (Cernea, 1992: 1). The second ingredient in development such as rural projects is to find the means to build up the capacity of the beneficiaries so that sustainability can be achieved. Capacity building is a process whereby a community maximizes its resources and is able to maintain what was initially installed for its benefit; moreover, it enhances the ability of the community to access and creatively combine outside resources with existing ones in establishing sustainable profit. It's then very crucial, not only to let people engage in a certain way in participation, but also to make people capable to facilitate tasks within the community, develop the ability to decide and discern different ways and also to identify alternative solutions (Schaeffer & Loveridge, 2000: 1).

Therefore, in order to advocate policies and strategies concerning rural life-uplifting projects, it is necessary and imperative to understand the origin and explain rural poverty. If, as Robert McNamara (Mulwa, 1994: 3) argues, one has to draw up an effective programme for the rural poor, one must first of all have a clear understanding of the system which perpetuates poverty. Secondly, as rural development is a strategy to improve the status of rural people and specifically certain vulnerable sections of the society, while trying to address the core problem applying diverse but coherent measures, a sound planning and appraisal system is needed before and after the initiation and implementation of any development projects. These require a clearly stated objective, combined efforts of different departments, full cooperation and participation of beneficiaries and the capacity to maintain and carry on afterwards. At the same time the need for developing and using practical, understandable and steadfast appraisal, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, starting from the inception and continuing after implementation of a project, is a crucial factor for any developmental project to become longstanding and in accordance with its basic objectives. These mechanisms will assist to selecting the right alternative and following up project implementation, and as management tools, will help in measuring, analysing and interpreting changes so that people can determine how far objectives

have been achieved and whether the initial assumptions about what would happen were right; and to make judgement about the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the work (Rubin, 1995: 15).

It's time to assess the many development initiatives that have been implemented within the thirteen years of rehabilitation and reconstruction programme in Eritrea. Although some assessment has been done, the researcher believes that there is ample area and enough issues for research where post-development analyses are required, and the focus will be on these fields. The study also depends to the level of cooperation of and the number of activities in which ECDF, REU and other agencies are involved.

### **1.3. Problem Statement**

Development is a comprehensive, all embracing process that includes both economic and social aspects, as well as the natural environment. It is ultimately improving the quality of life (Levin, 1992: 2). It is evident that development goals need practical methods of achieving them. Cusworth and Franks (1993:1) suggest that projects can play this role because they seemed to represent the most practical method and serve as a way of concentrating and combining scarce human and material resources to achieve maximum effect. But some development interventions by government and/or NGOs appear to render benefits that do not last long after implementation of the project or beyond the outside fund or do not have effective outcomes. The reasons behind the failure of such development interventions are many. On account of this, the research will attempt, with respect to Eritrean rural development projects implemented mainly by ECDF, REU and other agents, to study the following aspects:

How does the process of planning and identification of needs take place? And what are the criteria used for prioritizing development projects?

How and on what bases should performance or success of development projects' objective be measured adequately? And what are the reasonable ways of assessment of any development endeavours?

What are the best way of analysing and evaluating future development projects so that they will be sustainable and effective?

How committed community participation could prove to be of great help towards development efforts, so that the benefits it generated may continue beyond the completion of the project?

In order to create long-term and sustainable development goals on the ground and determine the environment and framework within which development can take place, how should policies and strategies have to be formulated?

### **1.3.1. The Unit of Analysis**

To carry out this study the researcher will strive, principally, to analyse information and the area of work of the institutions ECDF, REU and other agencies that do similar works.

### **1.3.2. Hypothesis**

In order to meet the needs of rural people, rural development projects need more people-centred planning and assessment of policies and strategies based on the community's objectives and requests. This could lead to genuine development intervention decisions made in the light of a project's sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness for the benefit of the people or the community in need.

### **1.3.3. Research Objectives**

It is vital to have a sound planning and appraisal system in social and economic development, since both instruments can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of project design and implementation such as rural development policies and strategies. In this context, based on the theoretical knowledge on these aspects and practical phenomenon that will be investigated, the aim of this study is to

- 1) Identify what were and are the preconditions, problems and possibilities for the promotion of rural development projects.
- 2) Analyse the linkage system and forms of cooperation between government agencies and the beneficiaries.
- 3) Find out the status of communication and information sharing between the public agents and the people concerned in producing the procedures for decision-making, particularly allocating resources, such as land, finance, labour and setting up priorities in line with the socio-economic interest of the society.
- 4) Analyse the process of designing, organising and implementing rural development programmes and recommend possible alternatives.

## **1.4. Research Design and Methods**

This research will be empirical and applied in nature, designed to analyse existing secondary data or documentary sources and collect information using various methodologies in accordance with the circumstances and kind of the research problems. Since it is going to focus on real situations that happened and/or are occurring in process, the study can also be called applied research that will highlight the problems and solutions with respect to the Eritrean situation in particular. In line with this, there will be literature reviews on development, development

projects, community and community participation and also on appraisal and evaluation mechanisms (See Chapters 1 to 5) so as to strengthen the theoretical foundation of the research's body of knowledge.

To gather all this theoretical and practical information, the researcher will use library books, journals, periodicals, internet sources, reports or documents of development agencies, and collect primary data and facts from the concerned institutions, fields or sites of development projects. The main research techniques will be the application of structured and semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and observational investigation (field research) and also the use of key informants.

### **1.5. Limitations of the Study**

The research was conducted under three circumstances which made smooth and fast investigation, so as to attain as much information of a wide spectrum, difficult. These three circumstances are the level of consciousness, misunderstanding of public information and culture.

The level of consciousness in the ordinary person with regard to development and planning is clouded by many traditional norms and values, such as respect for development agents and unnecessary conversations about past events. Much time and patience is needed, as well as slow procedures of inquiries and dialogue. However this slow process often leads to stalemate which will require different approaches.

The most difficult and to some extent unacceptable circumstances is the apathy and/or resistance of public officers, who try to guard the information and attempt to discourage the use of information. This sometimes springs from fear and/or ignorance as well as negligence, in their responsibility as public servant. This has curbed the possibility of gaining more information and the use of available time efficiently.

The last obstacle is women's cultural indifference to open discussion on public matters. It's for example considered culpable to speak to a Rashadian woman, who on traditional and religious grounds is required to cover up her face and not to speak to strangers. Secondly, the time the research was carried out coincided with the holiday of National Martyr's Day. In June 2003 there was special emphasis on the martyrdom of heroes and heroines and each family was required to remember them. It was difficult for the researcher to face respondents and households in mourning.

## **Chapter Two. Rural Areas and Poverty**

### **2.1. Rural Areas**

In order to address and plan for rural people's needs, it's important to know what rural areas are and their state or condition. The definition of a rural area is an elusive concept and may use either ecological, occupational or socio-cultural dimensions or some kind of combination. Some may define rural areas in terms of population and distance from the metropole or main city or big towns, in general therefore as non-urban (Greeff, 1993). Compared to non-rural areas, their specific economic conditions result in fewer opportunities. They are rarely able to mobilize sufficient resources to finance their own development programmes, leaving them dependent on transfers from the centre which are often meant to cover the rising costs and difficulty of providing rural goods and services that exist under imperfect factor markets operation (ISRDS, 2000: 2).

In South Africa, rural areas are defined as comprising the agricultural areas, villages and towns that exist outside of the metropolitan areas and larger towns (Urban Foundation, 1991). In terms of people per land size or relative to activities, South African Department of Land Affairs (1997: 5) uses the term either to indicate low population density or dependence on farming or forestry and the manufacturing and commerce directly associated with it.

Similarly but a little more narrowly Moskowitz (1993: 233-4) defines rural areas as sparsely developed areas, with a population density of less than one hundred persons per square mile and where the land is undeveloped or primarily used for agricultural purposes. It could be defined as area of major agricultural and/or pastoral activities inhabited by sedentary and/or semi-nomadic people of low or poor living standard. Fair (1992) has quite a different outlook and he sees rural areas as the regions soil, water, grassland and forest resources, indispensable assets that must be jealously guarded, productively used and carefully conserved.

### **2.2. Rural Community**

The term "rural community" can be used with different meanings and for different purposes. It has many kinds of narrow and wide range definitions and is applied by various disciplines. Even in social science, it implies and limits itself to the pattern of people, way of life, the different economic functions carried either out or to the location and pattern of settlement etc. The term reflects the features of a group of people inter-acting, having some ties or bonds in common, and occupying a common geographic area (Kramer, 1969).

Chekki (1979: 5) tries to look on rural life as a social system composed of people living in some spatial relationship to one another, who share common facilities and services, develop a common

psychological identification with the locality symbol and together frame a common communication network. This emphasises the territorial organisation of people, as an important subsystem of the society, through which many locally relevant functions are carried out that link rural community members.

In line with this, a local definition states that a rural community as “a social system composed of people who can freely adopt family based lifestyles and who can sooner or later develop among themselves discernable linkages aimed to cope with problems and meet needs which inevitably arise as a consequence of the sharing of a relatively definable territory” (MoLG, 2001:4). So apart economic and local factors, there are many focal points where rural communities participate, feel and decide upon common goal and interest through sharing a sense of belonging and the interaction framework.

Barton Hugh’s (2000: 178) criticism goes beyond this. In very strong words he says that “rural community” is one of the overused and abused words in the language of public policy, disputed amongst theoreticians as well as applied to almost any initiative that allows the state to withdraw resources or support to local services. In any case rural society may be classified, according to Hunter (1975: 538), into two major categories, distinguished by common locality or place and interest and identification; moreover, one can also use the following highlighting variables, as Pacione (1984: 151) mentioned:

1. A high proportion of the population is occupied with the work on the land
2. A predominantly natural as opposed to man-made landscape
3. Rural settlements are normally smaller than towns
4. Population densities are lower in rural areas
5. Homogeneous Population in their social traits, with less variation in beliefs & social behaviour
6. Class differences are less pronounced
7. Both spatial and social mobility is less intense in the countryside
8. A close-knit social network, cooperation in economic life, and a higher degree of mutual aid.

Having seen the meaning and the ways rural community can be identified depending on criteria used to for application, there is always the notion of togetherness and sharing which require active involvement of all members to absorb benefit, conserve unity, share common good and work for the same goal, i.e. to promote quality of life and get rid off poverty. On the other hand rural communities are also characterised as a place for the poor that constitute about 939 million of the one billion population members who exist below the poverty line.

### 2.3. The Rural Poor

During the last century and half the locus of world poverty and hunger has become concentrated in the countries of the Third World, particularly in the rural areas (Jazairy & Others, 1992: xvii). These are now described as the home of more than a billion engaged in subsistence farming (Dixon, 1990; Bryant & Write, 1984: 2), as well as fishing, forestry, and related small-scale industries and services (Khan, 2001: 3). In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) alone, rural areas are home to about 75% of the population, the highest proportion, despite the rapid growth of the urban population (Fair, 1992: 1). Even though rural communities are homogeneous in many aspects, rural poor are not and thus are mostly classified as small-holder farmers, the landless, artisanal, fishermen, nomadic, pastoralists and indigenous ethnic tribes.

They are also noted as having high birth rates (3% in SSA & 2.2% in South Asia) coupled with slow income growth and a growing labour of low level of human development. Known as people of ill-health, high infant mortality rate, low life expectancy, irregular income, weak bargaining position, preoccupied with survival and indebtedness, they have no voice and no participation in development activities (Dixon, 1990: 50-1 & Oakley, 1991: 3). They are branded as dispersed, isolated, uncommunicative, rarely asked their views, frequently masked by others, selectively perceived, and deferential (Chambers, 1983: 141), unarticulated and unorganised (Kramer, 1969: 215). Rural poor households are usually larger and headed by individuals who are either illiterate or have little formal education, and have less access to education, health care, sanitary facilities and so on (Sathiendrakumar, 1996).

**Table 1 Comparing Rural and Urban Conditions With Implications For Poverty Alleviation**

Rural	Urban
Low productivity & limited contribution to the GDP. Limited potential for generation of economic activities for the poor	High productivity; centre of economic growth. Greater potential for absorption of poor in productive economic activities
Population is widely dispersed & difficult to contact	Population is concentrated & easy to contact
Low density	High density
Expensive to reach	Economical to reach
Difficult to organise: population is dispersed & more easily controlled by local elites	Easier to organise: population is concentrated & less threatened by local elites
Focus on economic programmes: potentially threatening to local economic interest	Focus on provision of social service: less threatening
Many programmes, particularly social organisation, threatening to local economic political elites	Most programmes not a threat to local elites
Poverty is invisible and can easily be ignored	Poverty is highly visible & cannot be ignored. fear of violence stimulates remedial programmes
Largely outside the market economy: limited potential for private sector or cost recovery	Within market economy; private sector already playing active role. Strong potential for cost recovery

Source: Bamberger, Yahie & Matovu, 1996

Most of them are concentrated in the fertile areas and the relatively favourable climates where the density of population is great and many holdings are less than 1/3 hectare in size in small and fragmented form which never permits them to produce and generate income enough to cover

their costs and save some. But they exist also in sparsely populated areas where the land is infertile and the climate adverse (World Bank, 1975: 22). The above table 1 presents some of the basic differences, for the sake of comparison, between rural and urban conditions which have implications for development planning. However, some of these are controversial.

The socio-economic conditions of the poor are affected by various agents, both natural and man-made and they lack the necessary assets. They are victims of poverty's vicious-cycle and become the source of moral degradation and social tensions as they invade to congested cities (Themba, 1978: 12-13). Therefore, nearly all poor people since they cannot sustain themselves on their assets and primary jobs, they attempt to provide labour to others and engage in tradable and/or non-tradable activities within different economic sectors either around their environment or by migrating to towns or cities for temporarily and sometimes for long periods. In general, most rural poor, particularly women, are vulnerable to serious risk owing to changes in weather, health, education, markets, investment, national and global policies. In addition, economic crises and natural disasters can bring about a sharp increase in their poverty level, making it more difficult for the poor to escape (Khan, 2001: 5-6).

It is true that most rural people are poor and live in poverty because of many factors. Those reasons or factors for poverty could be classified into many categories but each would need detailed explanation in respect to the specific area and its socio-economic histories (Dixon, 1990: 52).

#### **2.4. Rural Poverty**

Poverty is one of those acute, very complicated and problematic issues that affect huge areas and populations, and will continue if some decisive measures are not placed appropriately (World Bank, 2003). Normally, it could be described in different format or style, for instance the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) talks about "human poverty": a denial of choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life; the World Bank of "income inequality": living on less than a dollar a day. Then there is "absolute poverty": those below a defined poverty line or threshold; and "relative poverty": poor in relation to those around you. There is the term "social exclusion" to describe what poor people experience (Nikki, 1999).

Different degrees of rural poverty can be defined in terms of different degrees of ownership and access to rural services, at the same time it could mean many things to different people, depending on their current situation and their persistent lack of what they call essential resources. Whatever meaning it holds, there is no uniquely correct way of measuring the extent of poverty, or rural poverty, but one can use absolute measures, look in terms of region, health and education services shortages, quality and amount of self-sufficient production, environmental and

geographical criteria, social and economic standards and cultural impacts on the daily life of rural people. Different characteristics of rural poor may be used too to describe or measure poverty, such as dependency, source of income, asset holdings etc (Philip & Others, 1984: 23). Currently it's believed that rural poverty accounts for nearly 63 percent of poverty world wide, reaching 90 percent in some countries like Bangladesh and between 65 and 90 percent in SSA. In almost all countries, the conditions, in terms of personal consumption and access to education, health care, potable water and sanitation, housing, transport and communication, faced by the rural poor are far worse than those faced by the urban poor (Khan; 2001: 2).

### **2.5. The Causes of Rural Poverty**

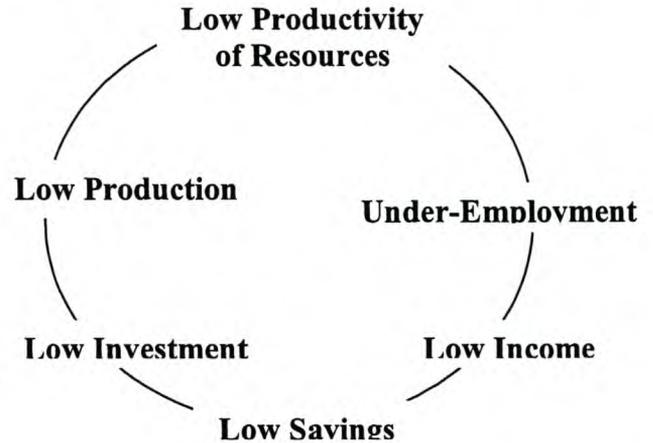
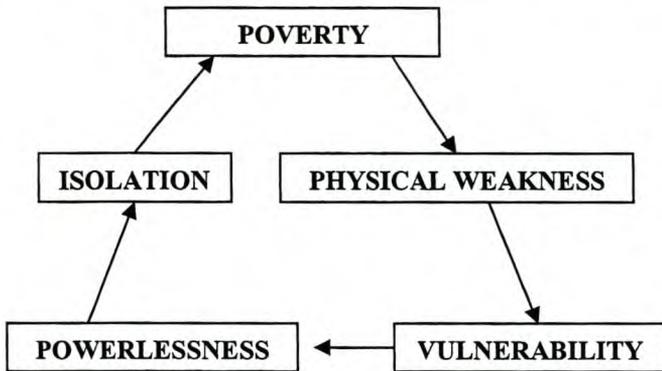
Complexity Theory indicates, "We can't necessarily understand a system by isolating its components and analysing each component individually. But, looking at the system as a whole might provide greater or at least equally helpful insight" (Williams, 1997: 234). Indeed, rural life is a complex system, and the causes of its poverty are multiple and interdependent. To segment one by one as the main driving element would seem to simplify the interconnections among the causes. Often if we try to isolate the connections between causes, we are caught in a vicious cycle. It is better to look on the whole picture than to press hard to detect the sequences of cause-effect relationships. It becomes evident then that the more one attempts, the more interconnected issues lie for more investigation. In this case, although there is no uniquely correct way of describing exhaustively how rural poverty is created, various characteristics may be used to illustrate and analyse the roots or causes.

Different scholars try to classify reasons for rural poverty under different titles. Dixon (1990: 52) numerates them as: the extraction of surplus production under colonialism and neo-colonialism; uneven exchange between Third World and Developed Countries, and rural and urban sector; pre-modern social structures and attitudes; poor environment and shortage of resources; inappropriate and biased development policies due to inefficient government administration and capacity; lack of proper education on nutrition, population and environment; natural and man-made destruction of the environment; wars and disruptions etc. Burkey (1993: 6) gives five reasons as the main sources for the continued existence of poverty. They are: lack of modernisation tendencies, physical limitations, bureaucratic stifling, dependency of Third World countries on foreign aid, and exploitation by local elites. And Meyer, Theron and van-Rooyen (1995: 3-11) under the category of external and internal factors add East and West rivalry, imposed development path, pressure on land, urbanisation, and insufficient infrastructure. In their effort to classify rural poverty, Jazairy and his colleagues (1992: 3), indicate causes of poverty as: material deprivation in terms of power, ownership and technology combined with

isolation and alienation, overcrowding and limits of resources, and vulnerability to natural calamities that create insecurity as well as dependency. Honey and Thomas and Robert Chambers also elaborate this later thinking as a circle of deprivation (Fig. 1), while Jones and Arnon & Raviv attempt to relate rural poverty to a vicious cycle of low productivity (Fig. 2) (Greeff, 1993).

**Fig. 1 Circle of Deprivation,**

**Fig. 2 Vicious Cycle of Low Productivity in Agriculture**



What Khan (2001: 6-7) believed to be causes that perpetuate rural poverty, broadly they can be organized into the following sections:

1. Economic Reasons: direct and implicit taxation, ill defined or forceful property rights, international economic shocks, market imperfections and distortionary policies, overvalued exchange rate, and favouring export crops over food crops
2. Political & Administrative Structure: instability and civil strife, corruption & rent seeking bureaucracies
3. Environmental Factors: unexpected phenomena, such as earthquakes and other exogenous climatic forces, which cause flooding, drought, soil degradation etc
4. Exclusion: systematic bias based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, minority or caste
5. Attitude and Inadequate Funds: policies that discriminate against or exclude the rural poor, bias in favour of landowners and commercial producers, subsidies for capital intensive technologies, urban bias in public investment for infrastructure and provision of safety nets.

All, despite the way they explain the origin and connections of the causes, focus on the real causes of poverty in terms of social, economic and environmental factors. If broadly grouped there are be two perspectives, i.e. socio-economic approach, sometime referred as the political economy view, which sees the root cause of poverty in the distribution of wealth and power in

society; while in contrast the environmental school focuses on shortage of resources, poor environmental conditions and degradation of environment (Dixon, 1990).

## **Chapter Three. Development Theories and Evolution**

### **3.1. The Meaning of Development**

Development is a comprehensive and integrated approach that interplays with and can be seen in terms of human (personal), economic, political, social changes or betterment in a complex and slow-moving process involving people on the one hand and the factor of production and organisations on the other (Burkey, 1993: 33). It differs from economic growth as it takes into consideration the economic conditions or activities vis-à-vis their effect on the environment, society and human welfare.

Richard Peet and Elaine Hartwick (1999) regard development to be inherently a contentious issue that needs to be evaluated in terms of economic and social alternatives, where then the meaning of development could be broad or narrow and differ according to various orientations and background. For the Development Society Of Southern Africa (Van Wyk, 1989:25) development is “a process of directed, determined and controlled change to economic growth, political autonomy and a broad basis of social and structural reconstruction for the improvement of human condition as the ultimate goal.” In this case, the scope takes a much narrower perspective as it undermines or ignores the sustainability of resources and resource-use. In other words it never considers the third party of the three bottom-lines of sustainability, i.e. the environment. Jan Knippers Black (1991:15), after arguing development could have as many meanings as there are many competitive theories, interest groups and ideologies, pronounces development as a standard accepted by those who would

- Expand the reach of the most industrialized states and those who would shield the least modernized from nefarious influence
- Stress the virtues of entrepreneurship and individualism and those who would nurture communities' collective concerns
- Pursue strategies of top-down initiative and decision-making and those who advocate a bottom-up or grass-rooted approach
- Exploit and maim Mother Nature for the benefit of either business or labour in today's world, as well as by those who concern themselves with a bountiful and liveable environment for future generations.

NGOs define development differently according to their set of objectives. These are indication that development is an ambiguous term and is subject to different interpretations (Griffin & Knight, 1990: 217). Some of these are;

- Redistribution with growth and increased social justice (World Bank)

- Must meet basic needs in order for a life of dignity (ILO)
- Basic service that the poor and underdeveloped people require to alleviate suffering (UNICEF, and WHO)
- Eco-development as a correction to degradation of nature and traditional cultures (UNEP)
- Ultimate values of culture as deep-rooted in the people are source for development & ensure advancement efforts (UNESCO) (Van Wyk, 1985).

The objective or goals and concern of any development effort or plan should be to provide all humans with the opportunity to live a full and meaningful life. Moreover, the goal should be to render all basic needs in continuity by letting the people to participate to act in all aspects of the development process to reduce and eventually eliminate poverty, ignorance and diseases and expand the well-being of all (Esman, 1992: 5). Singh Katar (1986: 9-10) sees development objectives as life-sustenance, self-respect and freedom, and Michael Todaro (1989: 90-91) has elaborated them as the three vitals in all societies, i. e.

1. To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods
2. To raise levels of living by provision of more jobs, better education and greater attention to cultural and humanistic values, all of which serve to enhance material well-being and generate greater individual and national self-esteem
3. To expand the range of economic and social choices to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependency, mostly in relation to other people and national states, but also to forces of ignorance and human misery.

As the fourth element, one could add the eco-development or sustainability of natural resources; meaning to live within the carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystem (Bell & Morse, 1999: 10) while achieving maximum development without degrading the capital assets of nature.

These are very detailed, elaborative and wide ranging development objectives that any nation has to portray in its national macro policies. But since rural poverty has multi-faceted causes that could range from economic to social, cultural, and political aspects, a development plan must focus on certain aspects and problems, as well as offering a general outline. One without the other would be of little value. However, basically it should encompass the different aspect of development based on and in relation to the general development framework. In addition, when development's objective is to address poverty spatially, there are two main sections; i.e. development of rural and urban settlements or areas. These have separate as well as common problems that deserve planning for interrelated goals.

### **3.2. Development Theory's Shift**

Development as comprehensive, all embracing process includes economic, social and environmental aspects; eventually, for improving the quality of life (Levin, 1992: 2). Cusworth and Franks (1993: 1) stated that a variety of theories have been advocated as the best method of achieving development.

Traditionally, prior to the 1970s, developing the capacity of a national economy to generate and sustain an annual growth of 5-7% meant development, or more increase in its gross national product (GNP), or the ability of a nation to expand its output at a rate faster than the growth rate of its population. This approach was dominant in both free market and centrally planned economies. However, problems of poverty, unemployment, and income distribution were of secondary importance to "getting the growth job done". The economic and social benefits of growth were believed to "trickle down" to the masses in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities (Todaro, 1999: 4).

Cusworth and Franks (1993:1) noted further that when this approach did not appear to be succeeding, the neo-classical approach based on industrial growth was replaced by an emphasis on the direct satisfaction of basic human needs particularly for the poorer members of the society. Burkey (1993:29) refers to this as "Another Development". The proponents of this theory believe that development should be need-oriented, endogenous, self-reliant, ecologically sound, and based on structural transformation as an integrated whole. Hence, in the 1970s and early 1980s, the focus was on the study and improvement of projects as a mechanism of successful development whether directed towards growth or the satisfaction of basic needs (Cusworth & Franks, 1993:1). In the meantime, the emphasis in development continued to transform ultimately

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the emphasis shifted to the study and analysis of policies focusing on the general direction and framework of government measures rather than specific actions represented by projects. At the same time, attention was given to institutional development particularly in the public sector. However, projects were still recommended as a way of attaining community development. Projects can bring to a targeted section of society, enhancement of their ability to control and sustain the conditions, and access to the means to sustain that improvement in self-determination. In the case of rural development, it would thus mean an overall improvement in the welfare of rural residents and in the contribution which the rural resources base makes more generally to the welfare of the population as a whole (Buller & Wright, 1990: 4).

### **3.3. Development Theories**

Most development theories, as inter-disciplinary field of research, do not arise only from economic problems but also from political, social and cultural problems. Development theories would then differ, according to the political positions of their adherents, their philosophical origin and the time and place of origin. To mention some development theories:

**3.3.1. Modern Development Theory:** It is mostly affected by Neo-Classical thought, interested in trade, labour specialization under the comparative advantage principle, and with certain Keynesian School's role. Saving and investment are considered as the central forces that can guarantee the continuity for capital accumulation, which includes knowledge and skills (Todaro, 1989). In this development strategy, the question of balanced and unbalanced growth form two trends of development planning, where the former focuses on the vicious circle of poverty, the latter sticks with the growth and trickle –down effect principle.

**3.3.2. Marxist Development Theory:** According to this approach development of a society starts with the process of production, i.e. forces of production and the relations of production. Whenever conflict or necessary change do not occur between the forces and relation of production then development in society is slowed down, therefore a new and more advanced systems and technology must replace the old method or system of production in order to continue and reach higher level of economic development.

**3.3.3. The Theory of Dependency and Underdevelopment:** This is explained by one of the founders of this theory, T. Dos Santos. As S.C.Dube (1988: 42-43) has quoted him saying, "underdevelopment... is rather a consequence and particular form of capitalist development known as dependent capitalism...And dependence is a conditioning situation in which the economies of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependence becomes a dependent relationship which some countries can expand through self impulsion while others... can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries ..." It stresses external causes of underdevelopment rather than those internal that are manifested in different ways in the social, political, cultural and ideological interactions of a country. It also rejects the comparative advantage of trade theory, regarding it as the source of benefit to the Developed Countries (DCs) at the expense of Less Developed Countries (LDs) all throughout history. The strategies would be to apply protectionism instruments and other promotional assistance such as state supervision, planning and intervention and increase of educational opportunities with the aim of adopting and focusing on indigenous society's values and traditions.

**3.3.4. Basic Needs Approach:** The aim and high priority of the basic needs approach is to achieve and satisfy the basic minimum standard or needs, as each person's right, so that everyone and especially the poor will be productive and self-reliant. Based on this principle, any development plan must strive to provide as many people as possible with the means of overcoming their helplessness and misery arising from lack of food, shelter, health and protection since economic development is a necessary condition for the improvement in the quality of life, i.e. development (Todaro, 1989: 89). In order to achieve a better society where there is fairer equity, economic growth, and development that must be measured by the rate of meeting the basic needs and by redistribution of income. There must be, as the Pakistan economist Mahbub ul Haq suggests, "New development strategies based on the satisfaction of basic human needs rather than on market demand. And development styles should be to build development around people rather than people around development (Dube, 1988: 40). To experience these needs required desperately by the poorest part of a society the basic human needs approach to development bases its policy on two elements, i.e. (1) an emphasis on local and national self reliance and (2) preference for styles of decision-making and problem-solving which induce non-elite population to participate" (Goulet, 1995: 87). As its main policy the basic needs approach promotes popular participation as the means and ends of the development process.

**3.3.5. Global Interdependence:** A theory looking for improvement of international relationships and collaboration with other countries, based on mutual partnership but relying largely on one's own strength to improve. It strongly discourages any kind of protection measures that can hamper international trade and relationships as well as foreign investment, but advocates the free market where private and public sectors can act jointly or individually in making use of local and foreign resources. The north and south relationships, south-south relationships, regional economic markets and treaties, are all intended to achieve better economic relationships and fair international trade. At the end all nations can build up a new international economic order where all will benefit as well as have greater participation in international decision making. Moreover, all can appeal to distributive justice, to aid, to just prices for commodities and to preferential and non-reciprocal treatment for developing countries, wherever feasible, in all fields of international economic cooperation (Little, 1982: 335).

**3.3.6. Eco-development:** A new trend of economic development theory with the aim of sustaining the environment and the wise-use of the natural resources; in other words it advocates the decrease of over-consumption and environmental friendliness. According to Ray Dasmann (Richard, 2000), there are three basic premises for eco-development. They are (1) it must meet

the basic needs of people, in particular the poorest people, before attending to the wants of the well-to-do: (2) it must encourage self-reliance and a degree of self-sufficiency in essentials, based on the knowledge, traditions, and skills of the people concerned: and (3) it must be based on a symbiosis between people and nature, to maintain the diversity of the natural world and to provide for the diversity in the social world. All these can guarantee the sustainability of all essential activities (David, 2001: 84).

All members of society are then responsible and have to act in harmony with nature. The combined efforts of all in every corner of the planet could bring about a complete and holistic change to and lead to new and better development that could sustain for the coming generation. This new approach aims at harmonizing ecology and development where both of them try to eradicate underdevelopment of people and at the same time safeguard nature, yet almost always the two streams flow in opposite directions. One is concerned with protecting nature, the other with promoting economic justice. These make it tricky beside many difficulties, such as fundamental problems of language and meaning, disagreements of diagnosis, discordant policy preference and conflicting value assessments (Goulte, 1995: 119-120).

Despite these complications, Roy utters a definite warning that must be taken into account, i.e. the importance of restoration. There is no choice in this matter, either we restore the damage to ecosystem or continue down to the bottom of the hill, and...there may be some environmental conditions that humans cannot survive. If we occupy the planet, we need to take care of it; otherwise it'll be uninhabitable (David, 2001: 85). He suggests for change of people's thinking to maintain, protect and conserve. But if all efforts do not involve betterment of the poor who are mostly found in the LDCs, the objective, and long as well as short plan to restore past damage, to harmonize different segments of the ecosystem, to plan for a better world will be futile.

This is well stated by Richard Clinton (2001: 118) who said that the changing relationship between man and his natural environment dictates a new approach to the global poverty problem by the rich countries...Unless the poverty problem can be effectively dealt with, the prospects of controlling population growth and alleviating...the environmental threat are nil and the prospects of deteriorating quality of life for all become very real. The widening gap between the rich countries and the poor can no longer be viewed in economic terms only. It must be viewed in the context of a shared ecosystem and mutual dependence on the earth's life support system.

## **Chapter Four. Rural Development**

### **4.1. Meaning**

Nowadays, the importance of rural development (in the development studies) is enjoying much attention. Some major reasons are that: a large proportion of LDCs' population live in rural areas known for their poor living conditions; necessity of agricultural production for domestic and international market; failure of series of attempts to achieve development by means of projects and programmes in which a wide range of organisations were involved; and also the existence of contrasting views and differences of opinion, partly related to the confusion about the definition of the concept and about the best road to rural development (Hinderink, 2001: 23). So it's important to have a clear definition so as to build policy around it and determine what to include and exclude during the implementation phase. But usually, as is the case in many social sciences' terminologies, there is neither a universally acceptable nor fixed and final definition of development, merely suggestions of what it should imply in a particular context. The same can be said of the term "rural development".

Nevertheless, one can see rural development as a viable and organised means of activity in facilitating many changes in society and responding to the consequences of socio-economic change in order to satisfy certain common needs. It may differ for different level of development, like the way LDCs and more developed countries view development. Each focuses to its respective current situation and the changes are not similar. The former targets education, basic needs, provision of services and uplifting the quality of life, while the latter may consider the organisational and super organisational level of decision making process by the society and /or the administration (Chekki, 1979). It is used also in different ways and in vastly divergent contexts. These can be; as a concept with the view to improve the quality of life of rural people, as a phenomenon resulting from interaction of various factors, as a strategy designed to improve the socio-economic well-being of a specific group i.e. the rural poor, and as a discipline representing multiple social and natural sciences (Singh, 1986: 18).

Some rural development definitions focus only on an overall improvement in the living standard of low income population as the outcome of a series of quantitative and qualitative changes in time (Buller & Wright, 1990: 4 & Themba, 1978: 11). Others see it in terms of changes in technologies, organisations, activities and values as strategy to raise the proportion of available resources allocated and production for short-term adjustment, long-term growth and the provision of basic needs (Philip & Others, 1984: 5). For this very reason, it becomes a process of many interconnected parts. In this case, "it aims at the systematic improvement of living and working conditions of underprivileged communities... And it becomes a field of practice where

various disciplines meet and influence each other” (Jacobson & Servaes, 1999: 212-13). This condition is complicated further by 3 distinct but interrelated policies and planning at local, national and international levels (Fair, 1992: 2-3).

Acknowledging the necessity of participation of local people as an essential factor for effective deployment of rural people’s maximum resources, regardless of whether it is a top-down or bottom-up planning development programme, some people equalise rural development with people’s involvement. They express this in decision making process, implementing programmes, sharing in the benefit of development and taking part in efforts to evaluate such programmes (Oakley, 1991: 6). This implies that rural people have an essential role to play if change from an economic growth to developmental model is to happen. Thus, rural development is a means of empowering the rural poor so that they might improve their standards of living and make that process self-sustaining ((Bryant & White, 1984: 3). Otherwise, all the benefits of rural development too easily could be diverted to those with more influence. And even if the poor receive the benefits in the short-run, unless they are organised and are involved in maintaining them, they are not apt to retain the benefits over time.

#### **4.2. Rural Development Implementation and Results**

The eradication of poverty and ending of hunger have long been recognised by LDCs as among the most important challenges and they took measures to tackle these age-old problems with special focus on the rural sector. All expressed their commitment to rural development, despite difference in political ideologies or orientations; even though, these thinking did not in themselves constitute any guarantee for progress (Berg & Others, 1978: 8).

The LDCs’ main agenda were how to develop and improve agricultural productivity targeting and designed to enhance the economic gain of the farm population. This aim was in fact one part of rural development that is distinct from agricultural development policy. Even though this concept is shifting to the redistribution with growth or growth with justice strategy, still all is preoccupied with raising productivity. The redistribution is of new resources and incomes, not of old ones. In other words, the structures that lie behind the inequitable distribution of power and resource are left intact (Dixon, 1990: 58).

In terms of rural development, this strategy has failed in most areas. Some specific failures are lack of attainment of food (nutritional) security; inadequate basic services as to access, quantity, and quality; less overall agricultural production growth compared to that of population; inadequate and frequently declining standard of life; and non-sustainability, i. e. ecological degradation, which impairs yet further production levels and quality of life (Green, 1989: 2).

What some professionals claim is that the deficiencies were not caused by the failure of the above policy, but there are other reasons that have occurred in decelerating performance of the rural economies. Some of these are: coups and wars; recurrent droughts; high rate of population growth with little improvements in cultivation and limited arable land; environmental degradation in the form of overgrazing, soil erosion and deforestation; unfavourable terms of trade as a factor deleterious to raw material producers; and adopting inappropriate policies by governments such as over valuating currency and decreasing producers' prices (Fair, 1992:1).

On the other hand, there are those who claim that the main reasons for disappointing results, despite huge amounts of money and millions of man-hour of experts, originate due to misunderstanding and /or negligence of some aspects. In line with these, an interview with 150 rural development academic and practitioners, the following reasons are mentioned:

1. Target groups are not homogeneous
2. Technological options do not always correspond to the motivations of target groups and to the constraints of the environment
3. Equitable distribution of revenues and benefits may be a myth.
4. The strategies of governments and NGOs for projects conception and implementation do not necessarily represent the aspirations and interests of target groups.
5. The human and social factors are too often neglected.
6. Projects are planned in a rigid manner based on an overly idealised economic, political and institutional environment.
- 7 The already existing or newly created organisational entities do not foster efficient/effective project management (Burkey, 1993: xvi-xvii).

In addition to these, the economist Ul-Haq mentions some characteristics of development planning contributed to failure, such as adherence to pressure of subscribed foreign models in order to get aid, wide divergence between planning and implementation, exclusive quantitative approach that ignored the social impacts of policies, and excessive and direct economic controls (ACARTSOD, 1990: 15-16).

Over all, it's widely accepted that there is no doubt of few recorded improvements for few rural people, and it's evident growth could have the capacity to reduce poverty by increasing overall production and given enough time; however, the majority have benefited little or even become worse off (Oakley, 1991). Experience across many countries over the last twenty years has raised growing doubts on whether the time required for growth policy to bring effects is acceptable.

Secondly, a more fundamental question is that in countries where a substantial part, sometimes the majority, of the population are absolutely poor, is it feasible to achieve aggregate growth, over extended period of time, without mobilising more fully the underutilised capacities of the poor? The critical issue then is not so much how to bring about growth with poverty alleviation, but whether it's possible at all to maintain growth while allowing the bulk of the population to languish (Jazairy & Others, 1992: xvii). Therefore, the realisations of rural sector development as a crucial force in order to uplift the majority in new way become visible.

### **4.3. Policies for Rural Development**

For many years, rural development has been a major issue for policy makers in the third world countries in dealing with the extensive problems of rural areas. As a result, several, often conflicting, methods are pursued, among which the most important is increasing the level of income for people in rural areas while at the same time ensuring the sustainability of rural development projects (Fresco & Others, 1994: 312). These LDCs, having common interest to bring development benefits to the rural areas, might have different reasons depending on the argument they emphasis, which could be moral, political or economic and some time a mix of these (Van Wyk, 1985; 306).

Many opted for industrialization as the major force upon which rural development was supposed to sustain and progress. Yet many studies have revealed that developing nations are facing more than ever a series of interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges, which show that development has not thus far been sustainable (Morah, 1996: 41-7). In this case, one of the main reasons is that, agricultural development was equated to rural development in the process of improving the living standards of rural poor. In other words, they intended economic growth as necessary means to development. However, economic growth is not the same as economic development. The limitations of this perspective on rural development soon become apparent as technologies that helped to boost and increase production did not help the poor, rather they only widened the gap between the poor and the wealthier.

The new concept of rural development implies then that plans that focus only on agricultural production are part of the problem, as they do not deal effectively with the demand for food and the question of distribution as well as rural incomes. Therefore, an adequate concept of rural development must not only be limited to increase in agricultural production. As it is impossible to tackle all interrelated rural problems (poverty) at the same time, the aim should be to encompass a broader objective and strategy by identifying and targeting on certain factors. This would likely have a greatest multiplier effect on others, particularly on those where some leverage exists for bringing about change (Bryant & White, 1984: 2-4). Seen in this light, the

underlying premise on which strategies rest is that the major objective of a rural development policy should enhance the quality of life in a sustainable manner.

Given that this is the case, rural development policy is subject to different formulations and applications. Studies dealing with policy options fall into two distinct categories, i. e. those of predominantly ideological type and those of a more pragmatic nature. Both favour external intervention in the sense that governments intervene in the existing conditions with specific objectives in mind. In contrast, policies of minimal or no-intervention are advocated by those who emphasise self-reliance and see rural development primarily as a process undertaken by and at the initiative of the rural people (Hinderink, 1988; 27).

There are many approaches to rural development as a form of strategy. The following three kinds illustrate how various groups attempt to set out rural development policies based on different orientation and convictions attaching specific rural problems and phenomenon as their point of reference. First, the most general review classified and based on social and political considerations and focusing on objectives, access to and control over productive resources is illustrated by Griffen (Dixon, 1990; 59) and reflects very different views on development strategy, such as technocratic, reformist and radical, as seen in table 2.

**Table 2 Development Strategies, Beneficiaries & Main Process under Various Ideologies**

Development strategy	Objectives	Major Beneficiaries	Dominant Form of Tenure	Ideology	Main process
Technocratic	Increase output	Landowning elite	Large private & corporate farms, various tenancy systems	Capitalist	Maintain inequality of incomes & access to resources
Reformist	Redistribute income & increase output	Middle peasants, & progressive farmers	Family farms, co-operatives	Nationalist	Attempts to redistribute power, income & access to resources
Radical	Social change; output, power, and wealth redistribution	Small peasants & landless labourers	Collectives, communes, & state farms	Socialist	Removal of the processes that perpetuate poverty

Source: Griffen (1974: 204) as cited in Dixon (1990: 59).

Second, the World Bank (1975: 3) policy option is a strategy designed in recognition of 3 points that would improve the economic and social life of a specific group, the rural poor, and these are;

1. The rate of transfer of people out of low agricultural production & related activities.
2. The relationship between unprecedented population expansion rate & poverty.
3. The possible impact of mobilisation of resources on poverty reduction.

The main focus is on population as the cause of poverty and the receiver of development benefits. For instance it's believed that population growth in developing countries has accounted for 72% of the expansion of arable lands during 1961-1985, leading to desertification, soil erosion, deforestation and deterioration of many natural environments (Pelser & Kherehloa,

2000). So these strategies call for checked population growth to lessen pressure and for proper management of resources via participatory activities for making optimal use.

And thirdly, focusing on three-pronged strategy, i. e. on production, services, and institution, Johnston & Clark (Hinderink, 1988; 29) initiates a policy that also incorporates the World Bank's. This strategy encompasses:

1. To create of a broad based and employment oriented improvement of the agricultural sector with more effective utilisation of available resources, and expansion of non-agricultural productive activities.
2. To Strengthen limited social services that could lead to a lower rate of population growth.
3. The improvement of the institutional infrastructure and management skills. In both the emphasis is to be selective in the choice of programme and undergoing learning process. These would need time for incremental improvement and long-term change. And this reality would have to be faced and accepted.

The creation of employment for cultivators and especially non-cultivators, whose number have been rising rapidly because of natural increase in population and de-peasantisation (due to market forces and policies), in agriculture and non-agriculture activities is of higher necessity particularly in slack seasons as they depend on seasonal demand (Khan, 2001: 4). Concerning institutional improvement, it's often the political context and the interactions (international and/or unforeseen), not primarily the technical aspects, that are fatal to any rural development (Green, 1989: 5). A huge task lies ahead to provide the necessary basic needs by upgrading and expanding services to build up a healthy and self-sustaining population. The requirements are an effective strategy for dealing with the problems of poverty by focusing on resources production and people, enhance health care and education, and strengthen employment and income generation programmes (UNEP, 1992: 31).

A quite distinct and specific focus for rural development strategy, with special consideration for SSA, is described by Haswell and Hunt (1991: 2-3), with the aim of endorsing change in the production process in contemporary Africa if agriculture is to get its assumed dominance. These focus on:

1. The need for rural technologies that are both environmentally sustainable and can support rising population at higher income levels; as well as the need to recognise the value of local knowledge and initiatives in developing such technologies.
2. The need to plan & appraise technical innovation relative to full household economic systems.

3. The search for varying degrees of autarky by African rural producers in the face of market failure, cash constraints and other pressures.

It is a fact beyond debate that no solution to the problems of the majority of SSA peasant household appears possible without changing production patterns i. e. including technology, input and institution. Caution is needed with regard to new technology, as there are problems perceived by peasants, like access, costs, user-friendliness, and whether they yield a significant net return (given the actual input and output costs confronting peasants). Moreover, peasants suspect new technology's riskiness, i.e. danger of reducing yields in bad years, lumbering the user with debts, not succeeding for unforeseen reasons (Green, 1989: 14). It's clear that designing rural development to increase production and raise productivity needs some capital, as complement not as alternative, since its application could improve the material needs and develop talents, skills and abilities. This capital will promote people's involvement in the development process.

Rural development as policy has been accompanied invariably by different strategies relative to the basic nature of a nation's macro-policy plan. So long as the efforts are to combat the causes of underdevelopment and all backlogs of poverty, there are some basic questions to consider when pursuing rural development. These are: (1) Which options are technically feasible? (2) Are the endeavours of policy makers also consistent with the objectives of rural household members? and (3) What are the environmental spill-over effects resulting from directions of development? (Fresco & Others, 1994; 312-13).

#### **4.4. How should it be done?**

The alternative method, which would incorporate and pursue a broad outlook to rural areas and their real causes of poverty, should set a system in place that is based on multi-pronged strategy. It must be development-oriented on all aspects of the rural life rather than focusing only on the growth of their economy or agriculture. So the need to have a rural development policy and strategy is imperative because without an acceleration of rural development the prospects for recovery from the deteriorating economic conditions currently being experienced in large parts of SSA are poor (Philip & Others, 1984: 9).

Since rural poor are not homogeneous and by essence development is an on-going and essentially interventionist process, in order to have lasting positive effects it should mainly focus on bringing cumulative and durable gains to targeted or defined groups or classes of society. These are the poorest section of rural groups such as small-scale farmers, tenants, herders, women-headed households and the landless who seek a livelihood desperately. They are mostly at risk, since they cannot afford or produce enough or secure access to adequate services,

preventative health care, infrastructure and opportunities (Ibid, 1984 & World bank, 1975). They need then to be self-sufficient about food, jobs, diversification of rural activities and increase of income. In other words they have to be emancipated, which is more than economic development.

And so, rural development as a problem-solving strategy specifically has to aim at providing rural people with satisfactory incomes and access to a broad range of services, and to use rural resources in a manner consistent with the demands of the population welfare as a whole (Buller & Wright, 1990: 4-6). In addition, it has to ensure equitable distribution & reduce regional inequality, minimise rural-urban & rural-rural migrations, increase per capita output & food production commensurate with the rapid population growth, and gain precise and scientific understanding of the social and ecological environment in which rural change is to occur (Pala, 1976: 2).

To meet these goals a strategy needs to be wide-ranging, integrated and long-term programme that interconnects many parts within the context of local and national plans and should attempt to act upon all key role players involved in the rural situations. For this reason, rural development has to be the joint venture of the citizens, the government and the experts; with the citizens relying on their competence to start action with the help of technical and administrative professionals as well as funding from the local government, and the know-how of public and private experts including freelance specialists (Stump Michael, n.d.). However, no direct efforts to promote rural development are likely to succeed if the wider economic and social policy environment is inimical to government professed goals (Philip & Others, 1984: 8-9).

But there are numerous and varied bottlenecks to rural transformation, such as poor knowledge of the socio-cultural and institutional environment, lack of trained man power, planning and implementation capacity etc. Beside these, as Themba (1978: 15) discloses, there are common but basic questions that require answers during rural planning, i. e.

1. What really are the critical constraints to development in a specific situation?
2. How feasible is it to remove the constraints?
3. What types of inputs are necessary to develop the required capability?
4. What time horizon is implicit in the results to be expected from a development programme?

As the objectives of rural development extend beyond any particular sector, even to the level of influencing and contributing to the national economy, in the process of harnessing all efforts to be directed towards improving the complicated rural conditions, it requires involving many different factors simultaneously (Bryant & White, 1984). Moreover, it needs to enhance the distribution of assets and access to technical inputs and services, close assessment on resources

mobilisation's impact on poverty reduction, and to close the income gap between rural producers and urban workers. And it must use active participation of the rural community as the keynote of the strategy, i.e self-organisation, community contribution and minimum imposition of outside structures and personnel that are not consistent with requirements of innovation and technical improvements (Philip & Others, 1984: 24).

Moreover, since the primary objectives of rural development are to sustain community action in response to real problems and to develop the competence, so that it will be possible to confront the problems about which there is genuine concern, hence there are certain elements inherent to the rural development process that must be underlined and that require attention. These are:

1. Each rural community as a unit of action, because it may vary in size, location and other peculiarities, must be dealt with individually according to its peculiarities.
2. The significance lent to local initiative and leadership in identifying the needs, planning to meet the needs, and implementing the plans.
3. The wise use of local & outside resources after discerning which are necessary, available, importable and can be used without diluting the determination and strength of the community.
4. Assuring maximum participation by individuals and groups in the development process so that they become supportive and committed and the development programme will be effectual.
5. An organised comprehensive approach and democratic, rational, task accomplishment that takes into consideration long-term effects and involvement of the majority and the direct beneficiaries (Chekki, 1979: 16-18).

The Millennium Declaration and Strategies for 2015 stated its intentions of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and suffering (UN, 2001). In order to do this, the authorities must keep the above elements in mind when directing action plans that will bring forth favourable economic and social change with the active participation and initiative of the community. After all rural development is a people-oriented/centred approach where according to Cernea M.M., cited in Tylor's work (1994: 64), the development slogan 'Putting People First' should be read as a firm demand to give priority to the people as the basic factor of development in any development project. Furthermore, this would empower people and promote their capacities to enable them to improve their access to and better utilize available opportunities, basic services and productive resources, and in the end they will transform their communities to prosperous and self-sufficient ones.

## **Chapter Five. Participatory Rural Development**

### **5.1. The Need for Participation**

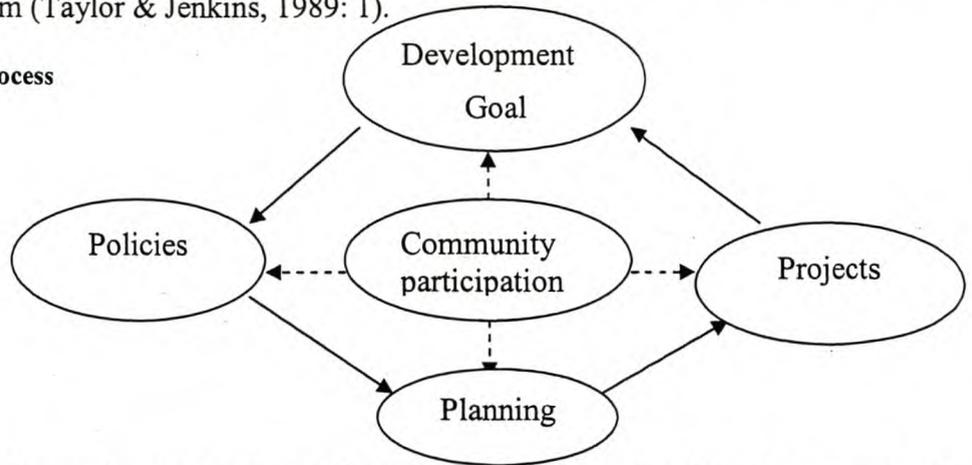
Most development works emphasise industrialization, capital and technology more than agriculture and labour. These development strategies never benefited the majority of the world's poor; they are not enough. Financing agencies usually got criticised because so many development programmes were not effective and do not sustain over time (Van Wyk, 1985:300). Developing countries lost faith in these kinds of strategies and no longer relied on them in addressing development issues (Njoh, 1999: 248). Beneficiaries rarely participated in development programs designed to influence their lives. Moreover, often rural people had little or any control over either the micro and /or macro determinants because the many constraints and multiple uncertainties confronting them are factors beyond the control or influence of the local community (Bryant & White, 1984: 7).

To deal with these and other core causes of rural conditions after taking into account the many components of the economy and society, and to alter these experience, development practitioners began turning their emphasis to the need of popular participation in development (MoLG, 1995:2). For this reason, rural development entails the self-reliance model, a theory that takes the abilities, organisation, and vision of specific people as basic foundation and asserts that farmers and peasants have to play an essential role in bringing the necessary changes (Sargent & Others, 1991: 172). This in turn implores the need for an achievable integrated rural development strategy that aims at efficient use of the natural and human resources with the objective of providing the basic needs of certain areas as well as maintaining the viability of the ecology (highly related in many ways to the main source of livelihood of rural life). The issue would be how rural society could have enough strength and capacity to allocate and mobilise resources in order to attain these objectives, using different activities as the first fundamental step and then setting up initiatives to control the benefits.

In line with this, the notion of participation is an important key element whenever decisions and choices are to be made. To achieve success for social development programmes, to strengthen, make effective and sustainable the principal goals of development by ensuring opportunity of conscious and active involvement of people, all walks of life must be engaged in community participation processes (Gupta, 1999) to link up all the segments of the development cycle shown in figure-3 below. Since development without participation often means that poor planning decisions are made and that the development will not necessarily produce the desired results, especially when the past experience and indigenous knowledge are not taken into account (Singh & Titi, 1995: 150), promoting people's participation is fundamental to the provision of services.

It is vitally necessary to bring previously marginalised sections of a society into relationships with their economic, political and social institutions on viable and equitable terms (Jazairy & Others, 1992: 342). This is because they understand the power structure of their communities; and so they will quickly appreciate a change brought into the community that has a better likelihood to benefit them (Taylor & Jenkins, 1989: 1).

**Fig. 3 The Development Process**



In relation to rural development, participation is desirable as means and end in the process of sharing resources, control, and responsibilities. Likewise, it could support one to get and promote his/her dignity, self-sufficiency, special insight, information, knowledge and experience. For these reasons, the global trend is towards accommodating the public or community in the process of participation (Theron, 2002:1). This has been evidenced by various international declarations. The Manila Declaration on People's Participation for Sustainable Development (Meyer & Theron, 2000:156); the ethical principle that people should be allowed to control the actions that affect them (Kellerman, 1997:52) are some out of many that can serve as point of departure at the international level.

That people should have control over actions that affect them is implied indifferent sections of the South Africa's constitution, such as in sections 9, 10, 19 and 32 which speak about and refer to equality, human dignity, political rights, access to information etc (Meyer & Theron, 2000:23). Moreover, community participation is regarded by law as part of the integrated development planning of local government as manifestation in their democratic and developmental objectives and duties working in harmony with community based organisations and NGOs in order to establish minimum conditions of good governance and to implement effective developmental projects (USNW, 2001). This principle of participation is mentioned too in the following South African acts: the Development Facilitation Act 1995 section 3(1)(d); Municipal Structure Act 1998 sections 19(3), 44 (g) and 72 (3); and Municipal Systems Act 2000 chapter 3 sections 9, 28 and 33. According to these acts participation includes; (a) direct input by community, (b) community control, (c) consensus, and (d) mediation and conflict resolutions (Ibid).

So it is a "must", to develop the ability of rural people to learn to discuss about development activities (acquiring skills, resources utilisation, and acquisition of technical assistance) among themselves and with others as well as regarding how they should be done. More importantly, they should have a say in and influence on the forces that perpetuate their poverty, which are often structurally rooted in their socio-economic and political conditions. As Sethi said (Burkey, 1993: 40) the problems of the rural poor in the final instance cannot be solved by anyone but themselves, and the solidarity efforts must be aimed at strengthening their own capacity for independent action; however, without denying the assistance of government and other development agents. In the end, the community action programme will succeed or fail, not on its record in delivering more or better social services, but on its record in involving the poor, in persuading them that they can control their own environment (Kramer, 1969: 215).

## **5.2. Meanings and Thoughts Concerning Participation**

To uplift rural conditions the right method with the potential to conserve resources, increase local productivity, and equitably distribute benefits require having enough emphasis on human development that will create skills and talents confidently (Sargent, 1990). Often during development programmes, such rural projects, a difficult element from those essential factors that must be among the primary means and objectives of rural development strategy is community participation. It is a key component of development from within (Taylor & Mackenzie, 1992). At the same time, it's an active process by which beneficiary or client group influence the decision, direction and execution of processes, programmes and development projects with the view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish (Oakley, 1991: 6; Brown, 2000: 173 & Slocum & Others, 1995: 3). Saxena described it similarly as the essence of exercising voice and choice, and developing the human, organisational and management capacity to solve problems as they arise in order to sustain the improvements (Cornwall, 2000:6). In giving an answer to the question "what do we mean by participation," we can use the definition given by The Peasants' Charter, FAO, as cited by Burkey (1993, 56) which state that

Participation by people in the institutions and systems which govern their lives is a basic human right and also essential for realignment of political power in favour of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development. Rural development strategies can realise their full potential only through the motivation, active involvement and organisation at the grassroots level of rural people, with special emphasis on the least advantaged, in conceptualising and designing policies and programmes and in creating administrative, social and economic institutions, including cooperatives and other voluntary forms of organisation, for implementing and evaluating them.

Taylor (1994: 102-03) in his thesis, after stating that it is very difficult to give a clear and comprehensive meaning to participation as it's characterised by considerable disagreement amongst both development practitioners and scholars, presents the UNESCO resolution 1929 (LVIII) definition. That is, participation requires the voluntary and democratic involvement of people in contributing to the development effort, sharing equitably in the benefit derived therefrom, and decision making in respect of setting goals, forming policies and planning and implementing economic and social development programmes. The complexity of participation can be illustrated by comparing definitions given by UNRISD and the World Bank, and we can identify the difference on the way they interpret the level of participation. The former, cited in Stiefel and Wolf (1994: 5) and Taylor and Mackenzie (1992: 236), looks upon participation as organised effort to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control. On the other hand, with a narrower scope and limited influence the latter defines it as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them (Rietbergen & Narayan, 1998: 4). In agreement with the UNRISD definition, Cornwell (2000: 8) demonstrates it as recognition and enhancement of people's ability to speak out, act, and determine their own development through fundamental changes in power relations.

Many ways have been suggested to classify and describe the extent of participation in terms of origin, scope, comparison etc. For instance, Goulet argues that there are many kinds of participation and suggests a fourfold typology in terms of goal or means, arena in which participation operates, originating agent, and moment at which participation is introduced (Taylor & Mackenzie, 1992: 236). On the other hand the typology given by White (1996: 6-7), as shown in the table-3, could indicate within the development context the different meanings and understandings of the contrasting tendencies within the potential range of interpretations and implementation. These are:

**Table 3 Different Forms and Meanings of Participation**

Form	What participation means to implementing agency	What participation means for the recipient	What participation is for
Nominal	Legitimizing – to show they are doing something	Inclusion – to retain some access to potential benefits	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency – to limit funders' input, draw on community contribution & make projects more cost effective	Cost – of time spent on project-related labour & other activities	As a means to achieving cost-effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	Sustainability – to avoid creating dependency	Leverage – to influence the shape the project takes & its management	To give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	Empowerment – to strengthen people's capabilities so that to take decisions & act for themselves	Empowerment – to be able to decide & act for themselves	Both as a means & an end, a continuing dynamics

Source: White 1996

Community participation, though is an elusive and controversial concept and hard to define, still is an umbrella term for a new style of development intervention (Theron & Meyer, 2000:1) and when it's applied and supported by the members of the community and local authority, could be a source and means (Kellerman, 1997:52) of improving their quality of life. At the same time, it's an essential part of human growth, which is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, responsibility, and cooperation. Without such a development within the people themselves, all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be immensely more difficult, if not impossible (Theron & Barnard, 1997:36).

In the context of development there are few aspects pertaining to community participation that could be interpreted or may be viewed as a process that serve one or more of the following objectives. These are as instrument of empowerment, building beneficiaries' capacity, enhancing project effectiveness, the desire to share the cost of the project, improving project efficiency, hard skill transfer, a two way communication process of views, wishes and interest and the promotion of equal access by members of the community irrespective of sex (Kellerman, 1997:53-54; Paul, 1987: 3-4 and Oakley, 1991: 8-9). As a community-driven process of learning for successful and sustained development, community participation the potential to promote the conservation of natural and environmental resources, mental and physical welfare, adoptive and responsive administration, integrated development practices, respect for individual values and support for people's groupings and self-help efforts (Dotse, 1997: 8-13).

Singh (1986: 354) suggested a simple rule of thumb for enlisting people's participation in development projects. These are, creating a human relationship on the basis of equality and institutionalising it; knowing the traditions and social customs of the beneficiaries; introducing programmes gradually and adapting them to the community's ability to enable to absorb the changes made; finding a partner from amongst the local leaders; and encouraging and promoting development leadership among both project employees and local people. However, to use

4. A sense of self-obligation and commitment towards community improvement to fulfil the needs and produce a sort of common well-being;
5. Having enough information and knowledge on issues and opportunities, so that every one will participate consciously with devotion and a clear vision of their purpose; and
6. Creating a comfortable atmosphere within the development group to help participants feel comfortable, so that no one will feel excluded or secluded due to social status differences and disparities, but allowing the issue to harmonize all to mobilise the necessary efforts and resources (Ohio State University, n.d.).

In this kind of atmosphere, participation will not only change the nature and direction of development interventions but will lead to a type of development which is more respectful of poor people's position and interest, self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, cooperation etc. This process whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems is the essence of development (Burkey, 1993: 56), where it emphasis human transformation as strategy.

### **5.3. Views Regarding Participation**

Participation can occur in all levels of community development planning although the degree or extent of influence depends on the nature of the project or programme relative to the knowledge and power of the community as a whole and its representative committee. Participation also depends on social arrangements and political relations, economic incentives and on administrative approaches (Cernea, 1992; 1). Besides this, the make up of a community, its demographic composition, racial composition, number of interested groups, area of settlement, religious outlook, political condition etc, have their own impact on participation level. This is because participation is an opportunity where everyone tries to incorporate his own input into the managerial decisions and have his perspectives accounted for in the decision made (Jack & Others, 1995: 402). The extent and intensity of participation within and between the different community agents or participants, i.e. field workers, community workers (committee) and user groups, naturally vary between projects and at different stages of a project. These differences may occur during information sharing, consultation, decision making and during initiating action (Paul, 1987: 4-5).

A principle often referred to in the planning field is that it is important, as a process of humanisation, to plan with people and not for people in recognition of the fact that individual people with no formal planning training and/or with the absolute minimum levels of education can make an important and often significant contribution to the planning process. However,

some development agents or supporters are reluctant to emphasize participation, because they consistently disregard local knowledge and confuse tradition for backwardness. They only need participation as management tool that can help shift costs to recipients to enhance project effectiveness (Cornwall, 2000: 8).

In addition, there are several flawed assumptions about participation concerning its possibility and its impact. As for the possibility, it's assumed that people are not interested in group activities and they are too committed to traditional values. As for the impact, the assumption is that the slowness of project implementations could inject needless complications (Bryant & White, 1984; 9-10).

And thus some of the various arguments typically put forward to discredit participation are;

1. The planning professionals and management already know what the wishes of the community are and thus it's not necessary to involve them.
2. Participation delays planning exercise and hence makes it more costly.
3. It's often difficult to mobilise the population for participation.
4. It's unavoidable that many codes, by-laws and other rules and regulations hamper the true involvement of project participants (Technikon RSA, n.d. & Theron, 2002).

Participatory development is also a complicated process with no clear-cut guidelines and no straight pathways to success. Studies by the ILO have identified five basic facts that make participatory development difficult:

1. Participation will develop in different ways in specific situations depending upon the problems faced by specific groups of the poor and the specific factors inhibiting their development.
2. The poor need to be approached as a specific group and their economic situation must be improved, but possible conflict with the well-to-do could arise that needs to be resolved.
3. Complex relationship between self-reliance and the need for external assistance, which could create dependency if not on the short term, then on the long term strive of development.
4. Organisation that is easily convertible into centre of power control by few.
5. Participatory processes seldom begin spontaneously. If a visionary person or leader whose aspiration is quite external to the majority's perceptions and aspirations initiates development, it would be difficult to resolve these contradictions (Burkey, 1993; 59-60).

In opposition to traditional values, Young (1998: 72) argues that rural communities have considerable local knowledge and they make rational decisions within the framework of the

external constraints in which they operate. Moreover, outsiders can learn from local people, as well as vice-versa. And any approach to rural development with less use of traditional and indigenous knowledge, if it is not productive at least could have negative effects. Thus, there must be greater interaction between modern and traditional values; otherwise, as history has illustrated that the obsession with modernisation as the only highroad and driving force behind development planning has brought about human and environmental misfortunes (Green, 1989). As a matter of fact, when changes do not take existing socio-economic and political context into consideration, usually they are doomed to failure due to conflicts of interest, needs, norms etc.

Four arguments can be used to motivate community participation; namely;

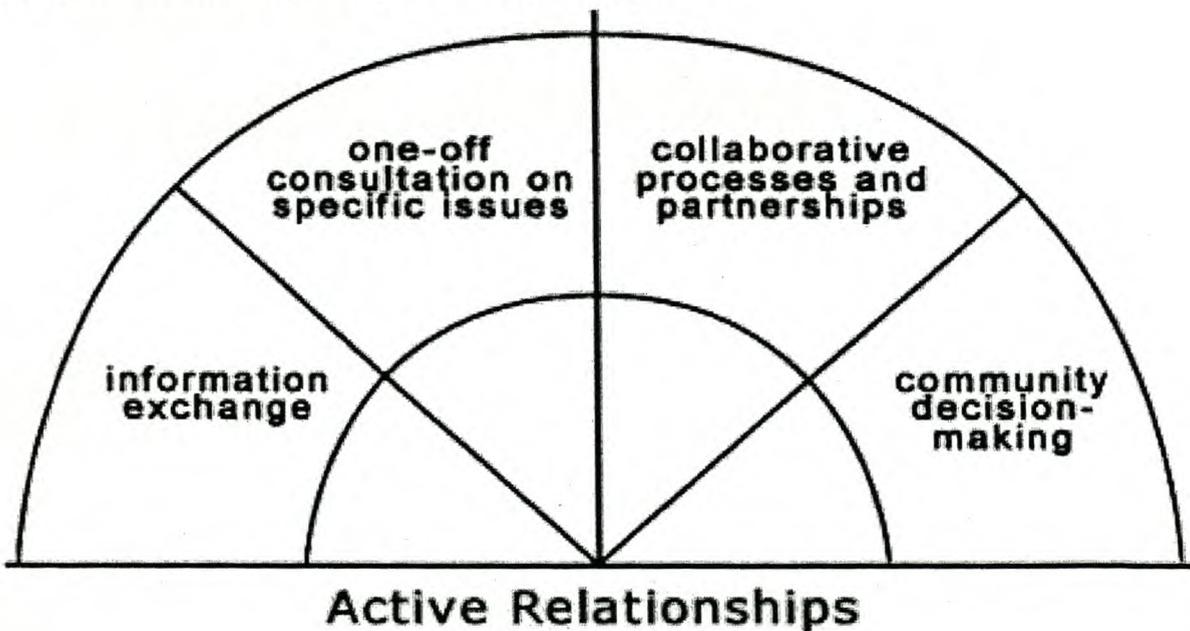
1. It is an end in itself; people have the right and the duty to be involved in affairs that concern them.
2. Participation is a means to improve and enhance facilitation of project results.
3. It is a self-generating activity that stimulates people also to seek it in other spheres
4. Participation transfers skills and empowers people to have self-created jobs (Technikon RSA, n.d. & Theron, 2002).

In the context of development projects, it's desirable, not only for cost-effectiveness but also for promoting sustainability and replicability, to take advantage of the best traditional practices that are especially suited to the environment and the absorptive capacities of the people. These could facilitate training, extension, input delivery, credit and services and also enhance the cohesion of the community (Jazairy & Others, 1992: 343). Moreover, it has been consistently found that when people are involved in this process they are invariably more satisfied and contented with the results of the planners' efforts. Solutions reached by consensus and group effort are invariably perceived to be superior to imposed solutions (Bryant & White, 1984: 9-10).

Participation, as a basic human need, is an essential part of human growth. It is a means to release the people's own creative energies for development and their understanding of their own situation, of the socio-economic reality around them, of their real problems, the causes of these problems, and what measures they themselves can take to begin changing their situation (Monitoring & Evaluation, n.d.). It can also strengthen the confidence of all members of a group in the knowledge and capacity of each and may foster the ability to question and contribute to both local and international systems of knowledge (Slocum & Others, 1995: 3). Without such a development within the people themselves all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be immensely more difficult, if not impossible (Burkey, 1993: 56-57).

It is true that development is a process of collective action that involves cooperation between diverse actors in the pursuit of a common goal and the negotiation of these goals is an integral part of the process of collective action (Emmett, 2000: 516). Within this process, community participation in development, though essential and very noble, is complex, difficult and challenging endeavour. This is due to some members of community having different convictions and interest. In this case being active within the various levels of participation process (see Fig. 4) may try to divert from and manipulate the original aim and mandate of participation for different purposes. These internal constraints, often manifested as conflict of interest, internal power-struggle and lack of public interest in becoming involved, which Stiefel and Wolfe (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000: 48) refer to as a difference in rationalities, signify that it would be naïve to conclude that all forms of participation are always beneficial to the participants. Moreover, they stipulate that involving people can be expensive and in some instances can paralyse decision-making, holding development investments hostages to unproductive activism and reinforce local power structures and power struggles (Ibid, 2000: 55). Thus, it is appropriate to note that participation is as much a problem as it's a solution, as much a goal as a tool. It is a problem when it's in a disorderly fashion practiced and if it's assumed to be a substitute for democratic representation. It is a solution when it changes a conflict into negotiated losses (World Bank, 1997).

Fig. 4 Levels of Active Relationships within Participatory Process



Source: [www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/the-basics/checklist](http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/the-basics/checklist)

Nevertheless, it's possible that planning and decision-making can be too slow and frustrating at times, besides lacking quantifiable outcomes in its early stages. That is what happens in reality, where it is frequently apparent that decisions made through traditional, local institutions may

need more time. One will have to wait for the community to secure full ownership. This reality has to be accepted, as participatory capacity cannot be built like a road or a dam: it must be developed. Thus investing in participation is not only worthwhile but also essential to the success and sustainability of a development program (MoLG, 1995:2).

Thus, rural people must not be inhibited from developing as humans by taking away their rights, since development means participation by people. Nyerere said that people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves by participation in decisions and cooperative activities in which they involve themselves, their local resources with external change agents and outside resources (Oakley, 1991: 1-2).

Nevertheless, every member of a community can enjoy benefits if s/he involves himself actively and uses participation appropriately in a condition that is conducive to take place. S/he can fulfil individual and/or community needs, learn to make desired changes and how to resolve conflicting interests for the general welfare of the group by beginning to understand group dynamics as it applies to mixed groups (Ohio State University, n.d.).

Before finding ways to create favourable circumstances for introducing and enriching people's participation, it's necessary to recognise the powerful, multi-dimensional and, in many instances, anti-participatory forces which dominate the lives of rural people, as it cannot merely be proclaimed or wished upon rural people in the Third World Countries (Oakley, 1991: 4). The qualified participation of citizens in public planning finally became popular with the implementation of the decision taken at the UN-Conference in Rio 1992 (Stump, n.d.). Yet, the inclination of denying consultation with rural people but confining participation to the implementation phase still exist, while development projects in rural areas are supposed to be given priority by government agencies.

## **Chapter Six. Development Projects**

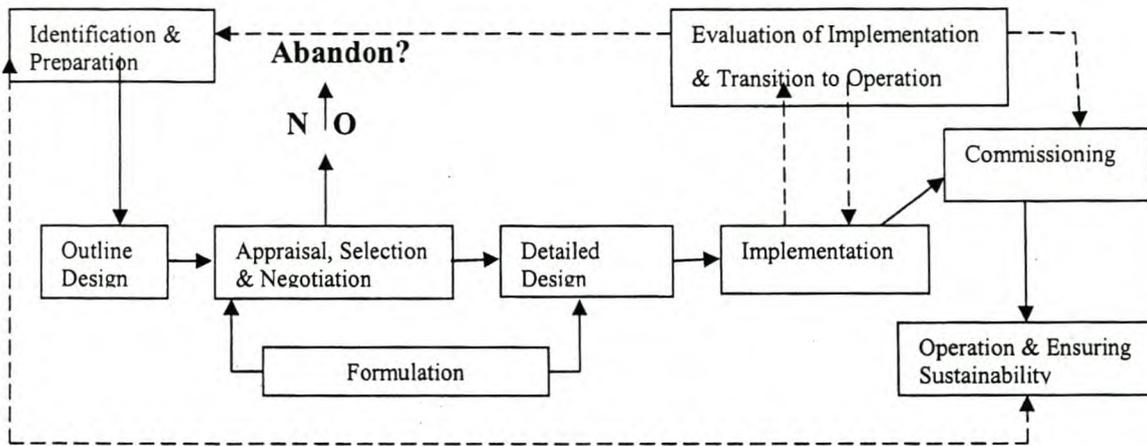
### **6.1. The Meaning of Project**

One of the instruments of development and a crucial means for change in the socio-economic life of any society is to create projects that can meet the needs in a specific time and using available resources efficiently, interpreted as delivering the right results on time and to a predefined budget (Young, 1996: 169). In development planning, a project is the first concrete portion of a larger, less precisely identified programme and is the cutting edge of development. It is something with a well defined boundaries, inside which there is extensive investment of capital and efforts in a time-bound intervention to create productive assets, often in many sectors (Smith, 1989: 10 and Cusworth & Franks, 1993:2), aiming at a specific activity intended to accomplish a specific objective which logically seems to lend itself to planning, financing and implementation. A project can be seen as a sequence of intended changes and each of these can be presented as an objective for policy implementation to produce goods and services that could have multiple effects in contributing welfare and other behavioural changes (Honadle & Klaus, 1979: 13) defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives (Burke, 1992: 2).

Broadly speaking, projects are important channels through which governments, NGOs and local communities invest their resources to attain visual outcome of comprehensive development plans and strategies by which they test their development theories and approaches that aim at addressing the plight of the poor (Kellerman, 1997: 49), in order to achieve betterment of living conditions. The important characteristics of projects are that they involve capital investment, and have a limited time frame within which they create assets, systems, schemes or institutions, which continue in operation and yield a flow of benefits after the project has been completed. According to Cusworth and Franks (1993:2) projects and project approach are means to put policies into practice. As such they serve as demonstrations of the effects of policies at practical level and provide a means of assessing the impact of development initiatives on people.

Within cost and time constraints, project planning is expressed in a cycle or chain format of different activities (Conyers & Hills, 1992: 73) framed by purposes or goals. Many authors limit themselves to five to eleven stages incorporating some wider perspectives of information, formation and analysis variables as separate constituents of the planning model. Commonly, most project cycles consist of the following: 1. Identification, 2. Formulation, 3. Implementation, 4. Commissioning, 5. Operation, and 6. Evaluation, which could be depicted as shown in this diagram below

Fig. 5 Project Cycle



Source: adapted from Cusworth J.W. and Franks T.R., 1993 and Bamberger, M. & Others, 1996

In most cases, projects are formulated and designed either in blueprint or in adaptive (process or participatory) approach, within the framework of government structures and procedures. In the former kind, the provision of a logical framework and sequence of priorities are guaranteed with project alternatives and sector policy issues under considerations. However, this approach has many drawbacks such as a long preparation period, inflexibility and difficulties in incorporating participation. In the latter case beneficiaries and management share resources and knowledge while building the institutional capacity that allows the poor to analyse their need, initiate their own efforts, and stress their demands. Yet it is difficult because projects involve changing behaviour (Bamberger, Yahie & Matovu, 1996: 119-120).

Table 4 The Difference between Blueprint and Learning Process Plannings Based on Various Aspects

Aspects	Blueprint	Learning Process
Initiated in	Capital city	Village
Begins with	A plan	Action
Organised by	Technical specialists	Teams
Leadership	Limited, changing positional	Strong, sustained individual
Primary Resources Base	Central funds & technicians	Local people & their assets
Design	Static, expert	Evolving, collaborative
Technology	Scientific	Indigenous/ Scientific
Growth	Rapid, mechanistic target-oriented	Gradual, organic, flexible
Error	Buried	Accepted
Supporting Organisation	Existing or built top-down	Built bottom-up
Duration	Time bound	Indefinite
Staff Development	Intermittent and formal	Continuous action-based
Evaluation	External Intermittent	Self-evaluation continuous

Source: Baldwin (1990) in Bamberger, Yahie & Matovu,( 1996)

The table-4 above could have depicted more difference between the two approaches. But whatever the differences are, both types of planning tended to be less successful if the planners on the project preparation teams ignored established socio-economic and cultural patterns

(Cernea, 1985), with the assumptions and unreliable justifications that projects are inherently capable of introducing innovations if they are not interfered with.

There are two views on whether or not projects are adequate vehicles for development interventions. Those who strongly support projects claim that concentration of resources on selected priorities, in specific areas and targeted groups can address constraints on development. They can also be intensive social laboratories that use an innovative approach for replication. The opposition argues that projects are only examples of segmented intervention with the possibility to bypass overall structure and create enclaves, siphon resources from parallel non-project activities, and may not generate sustainable development beyond their limited time frame (Ibid, 1985: 4).

Since there are no other alternative ways, despite the weakness and strength controversy and whatever the inclinations are, the project approach will be used and remain as development mechanism in identifying and addressing issues (Cusworth & Franks, 1993:2). The most important problem is the difficulty of designing a blueprint project. It's desirable to keep designing projects according to individual conditions that naturally vary widely from one area to another so that at the end all sections of the community may benefit. At the core of any programme, putting people first in development projects comes down to tailoring the design and implementation of projects to the needs and capabilities of people who are supposed to benefit from them (Cernea, 1985: 359).

## **6.2. Rural Development Projects**

Rural development programmes fall into the category of poverty-targeted investment, whether aimed at regions or individuals, in accordance with the social equity and poverty reduction objectives of a country. Together with donor agencies, LDCs in the 1970s began significant investment in five types of projects in rural areas: integrated rural development, single crop development, agricultural credit, freestanding agricultural services, and irrigation (Rural development, Poverty Reduction, n.d.). Among many kinds of development projects, rural development project that follow the project cycle model have been one form of strategic policy pursued in LDCs, over the last 30 years, to improve the level of economy and progress of rural poor people. It can be defined as an investment activity where resources are expended to create a producing asset from which one can expect to realize benefits over an extended period of time (Singh, 1986: 107).

Whatever the type, with the above meaning framework any development project, a purposive planned intervention commonly used to accelerate progress, could be initiated and implemented at different levels of administration, i.e. national, sub-national, local and special project

management unit, where each one has its advantages and disadvantages, having different supporting contingencies requirements (Honadle & Klauss, 1979: 14).

What experiences in LDCs show us is the disappointing failure of many rural development projects to achieve self-reliance through capacity building, or to become financially sustainable because they were not community-initiated (The Design and Sustainability of, n.d.). Moreover, they evolved and planned on dualistic economic models which considered the rural sector as a passive development partner with the sole purpose of sourcing inputs to the modern or industrial sector (ACARTSOD, 1990: 12). Moreover, some other reasons, beside the problem in implementation of development programmes, are overriding attention to technical aspects, planning for short-term gains, conceiving and funding by foreign interests, forcing people into foreign systems without due regard being paid to their social problems and needs (Kotze & Others, 1987: 10). Much of this can be traced to poor project preparation and inappropriate survey and research work. For most rural development activities, careful project preparation in advance of expenditure is essential to ensure efficient, economic use of resources and to increase the chances of on-schedule implementation (Van Wyk, 1985: 311). Otherwise, ill-conceived, hastily planned projects virtually improvised on the spot or no project at all are too often the result.

So far development projects in the Third World are featured (with some exceptions) as failing to achieve magnificent successes. To reverse the trends only an integrated model of rural development with social and environmental dimensions that extends the economy and its institutions would be able to draw the rural poor fully into the national mainstream of social, political and economic life and redress rural-urban economic imbalances (ACARTSOD, 1990: 12-17). The mechanism by which these could be implemented is using projects where the people would manage the resources sustainably; as a matter of fact that is what has been realised from experience in development planning (Young, 1998: 72). This kind of approach extends beyond any particular sector with the mandate, as Todaro (1999) puts it, to improve levels of living, decrease inequality, build capacity of the rural sector to sustain and accelerate the pace over time. Moreover, the people could develop skill to empower themselves to resist the threats of the dynamic environment and to utilise all opportunities for their own advantage in a responsible way (Burger, 1994: 23). This requires various but interrelated development projects.

Rural development projects can be classified as belonging to one of three types namely: minimum package projects – provision of basic inputs such as agricultural instruments and services. Secondly, comprehensive projects which could be either nationally integrated programmes or area development, in the form of single-product projects or comprehensive

projects with more diversified and integrated farm systems. Lastly, sector and other special programmes include rural public works, education and training and credit schemes (ACARTSOD, 1990: 20). Each one has its merits and disadvantages and also needs a certain condition to be in place. A minimum package, it requires a first class technical package, an intact social structure, favourable land tenure, and a proper system of credit supervision. Its great advantages are the promise of low-cost, extensive coverage with comparatively simple objectives and operating procedures. In the case of the comprehensive type, there must be coordination of national programmes characterised by careful definition of the needs and resources of the target population, detailed planning of preparation and implementation, phasing of multi-sectoral components, and extensive adjustment or complete restructuring of related institutions. And for the sectoral and special programmes the prerequisites are: an appropriate blend of local initiative and decision making, safeguarding the programme from influential groups from altering it to their own benefit at the cost of the poor, phasing in and finishing the project in time before the period of peak demand for labour, and proper selection and design of projects to save from high cost investment and low efficiency (World Bank, 1975: 40-51).

Throughout the project cycle and afterwards rural development projects should have the intention of, in the words of Atkins and Milne (1995: 5), (a) maximising the short-medium and long term benefits to alleviate poverty in a sustainable and replicable manner, (b) using projects as a vehicle for training and capacity building, (c) minimising any negative social or environmental impact that may result from the project, (d) ensuring sustainability through community commitment and responsibility for operation and maintenance of the assets created, and (e) gaining from the project a sense of achievement and pride of ownership leading to social and economic advancement (empowerment). These aims are not so easy to achieve as the socio-economic systems operating in rural areas are often hostile to the objectives of rural development, serving to reinforce rural poverty and to frustrate the efforts of the poor to move up. Some of the elements that are combined from Honadle and Klauss (1979: 143) and Gran (1983: 22) as ideal characteristics and the key to a successful rural development projects are;

1. Identifying proper technological and organisational aspects which are culturally feasible, monitoring the behavioural changes necessary for project activities to succeed, and in some cases developing a system for modifying these activities if the anticipated changes are not imminent.
2. Building effective local organisations that increase and ensure the flow of benefits to target groups, and creating functional linkages with the larger economic and political systems.

3. Involving a significant percentage of the specified people to participate in, and control many elements of project initiations like, designing, operation and evaluation and also in project decision making while mobilising local resources in support of the development effort;
4. Developing a strong project planning, management, and evaluation capacity that can tailor development activities to different local environments so that the potentials of self-reliance and self-sustainment that are necessary for offensive and defensive strategies to current and possible problems will be evident.
5. Having some reasonable standard of ecological soundness that is clearly defined to guide the project & reflects an empirically defensible analytical framework arranged by the participants, that must be enhanced by self-directing learning (free of intellectual dependency) and creativity.

Another requirement would be designing a good project that takes into consideration the social and institutional development which will enable learning and empowerment of partners and lead to sustained benefits. Some good practices for project design developed by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are;

1. Involve all relevant stakeholders in participatory processes of project design.
2. Undertake a thorough situation analysis, together with primary stakeholders, to learn as much as possible about the project context as a basis for designing a project strategy and implementation processes that are relevant.
3. Develop a logical and feasible project strategy that clearly expresses what will be achieved (goal and purposes) and how it will be achieved (outputs and activities).
4. Agree and focus on crosscutting issues of poverty, gender and participation.
5. Plan for long-term capacity development and sustainability so as to ensure that the project contributes to the empowerment and self-reliance of local people and institutions.
6. Build in opportunities and activities that support learning and enable adaptation of the project strategy during implementation.

Moreover, to make development projects sustainable requires establishing a multi disciplinary approach to the management of the projects, which includes environmental consideration alongside social and economic impacts. And the best way to apply sustainability at the project level is to apply a set of working rules covering equity, resilience and efficiency to existing valuation techniques based on use and non-use values. The resulting estimates are then used as inputs into existing methods of project appraisal and investment analysis; although this faces the problem of measurement at different levels of project assessment for quantitative and qualitative impacts (Analoui, 1994; 259-270).

It would not be right to limit ourselves to the above elements, since there are some required elements from all players, at both national and local levels in the form of planning and setting up necessary organisations and allowing all possible kinds of participation. On the other hand, given the multidisciplinary nature of rural development & multitude agencies engaged in diverse development programmes, it's absolutely necessary that all programmes underway in an area be integrated and coordinated for optimum results (Singh; 1986).

### **6.3. Integrated Rural Development as Project Approach**

Rural development policies are designed to improve conditions under which rural people work and live. The process they follow to achieve these goals is understood to be multi-dimensional, encompassing improved provision of services, enhanced opportunities for income generation and local economic development, improved social infrastructure, social cohesion and physical security within rural communities, active representation in local political processes, and effective provision for the vulnerable (ISRDS, 2000: 19). Therefore, development projects have to facilitate changes to enable rural poor people to earn more, develop themselves, meet their expectations and needs, and boost their position in line with the socio-economic transformations of their country. For these purposes rural development projects have to be structured in a way that will integrate programmes into a coherent whole through designing an effective mechanism which specifies what happen at the various levels, who does what, and how the integration will be accomplished (Ibid, 2000: 20).

Integrated rural development (IRD) as development strategy is one of the new development approaches (NDA), which is different from or contrary to the conventional development approach (CDA), well entrenched during the 1970s and 1980s. IRD is still evident in many countries (Analoui, 1994: 61) realising that rural issues, poverty and degrading conditions are not mere agricultural problems, but wider than this, and cannot be overcome with piecemeal and uncoordinated development planning systems (Dotse, 1997). And to deal these very difficult problems of human development, socio-economic, environmental, political and cultural in nature, such as agriculture (the main one), health, education, and transport, often demands joint efforts of more than one component for each particular sector. The intention is to embrace the main sectors within a given rural area. IRD projects are thus wide-ranging, complex, ambitious and expensive requiring a significant increase in the recurrent expenditure of the host government and a relatively large increase in labour input from farmers (Johnny Morris, n.d.).

This often makes IRD as a concept seem vague but on practical application as project, in the form of agriculture, social services and infrastructure, it is less vague when trying to bring the necessities to the poor rural areas (Lacroix, 1985: 15). But in principle, congruent to the Cocoyoc

Declaration, it is conceived as an instrument for human well-being rather than only for national economy. IRD can be used in countries with different political systems, at various development stages and degrees of world market integration. In this case, it is both a strategy precept and a project approach for integrating rural communities into the economic and social life dynamics of the whole country.

Under the following preconditions of political willingness for economic growth in subsistence and market production, effective participation of rural target groups in planning and implementation of development programme, and to reduce urban bias, IRD needs instruments such as self-help activities, government programmes and institution building and/or upgrading (Zurek, 1985: 5). If these conditions are met, IRD could have, according to Beuks cited in Coetzee (1988: 185), the following goals: satisfying the most urgent needs (economic), the use of appropriate technology (technical), a development approach not exceeding the inner limits (within nations) and the outer limits (on global scale) set of available resources (ecological), participation of the local population (social), appropriate political and institutional framework for development (political), and promoting motives, values and norms of the development process. In line with this, Freidmann cited in Coetzee (1988; 185) mentions that IRD involves:

1. Preparation of a territorial plan which formulates development objectives
2. An organisation capable of designing such a plan and levels of programme integration
3. An organisational structure for co-ordinating programme and services delivery, and
4. A political structure capable of responsibly articulating a sense of local priorities, identifying projects, and mobilising resources for development.

On both philosophical and pragmatic grounds IRD projects cannot be implemented smoothly. There are some possible problems to face in most LDCs, that could originate from the management, beneficiaries or a third party. These could be;

1. An inhospitable economic situation making proposed development impossible sometimes due to budget constraints
2. Insufficient knowledge before and during project implementation and insufficient time for projects to be able to proceed confidently.
3. Over-optimistic assumptions and expectations from the project proposal which expects results in too short a period.
4. Insufficient attention, in terms of value and time, to the labour required which often is taken for granted to demand at any cost.

5. Proposals not attractive for the rural people regarding rewards for their inputs and expectations in terms of different benefits.
6. Suppressing marketing and inappropriate pricing policies for farm products due to inefficiency of marketing and lack of supportive institutions.
7. Incorporation of unnecessary institutions into the projects that, overload management and create more complexity and difficulty in coordinating multi-sectors implementation.
8. Establishing new organisation often too divorced from existing institutions and their well experienced management skills (Johnny, n.d.).

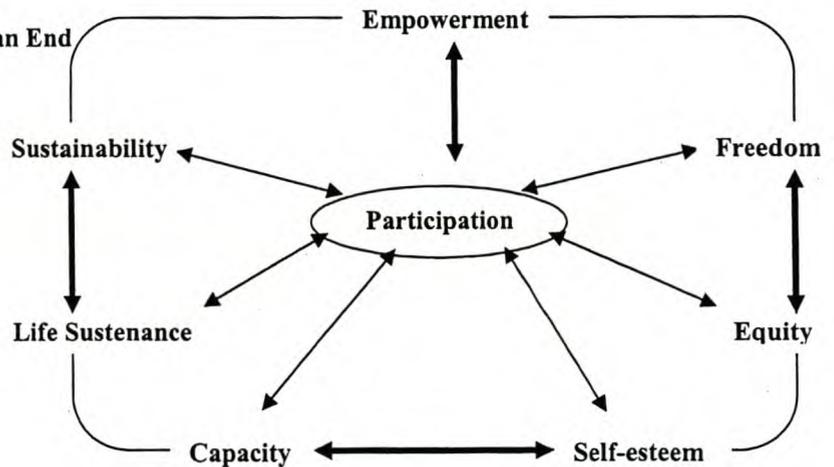
No development approach can come up with the ultimate solution to development problems and at the same time have no effects; so it is true that IRD has some weakness, and there are controversies regarding its legitimacy as theory and real application. The main flaws mentioned are its capacity to result in the weakening of locally based institutions and the development of non-sustainable alternatives (Analoui, 1994: 259). Some criticisms also label it as false theory because it stabilises the existing economic dualism by neglecting structural change, too much emphasis on basic needs and participation, and forgetting capital formation and employment generation. IRD is also criticised because it denies LDCs' dependency on world market, and it remains wishful thinking to solve complex issues based on programmes and projects often not manageable in practice due to high costs, unsystematic administrative arrangements and foreign expert dependency. Lastly, it is considered as superfluous having trickle-down effects which is similar to growth-oriented policy's objectives (Zurek, 1985: 8-9).

To make amendments for the aforesaid deficiencies and disapproval, while claiming that IRD is true and correct theory, some try to view it as part of the wide-scope of sustainable development. They suggest that the technical errors of participatory planning and the setting up of other supportive institutions are the causes for criticism of IRD since most rural development projects are carried out by existing public sectors. Thus, it is a matter of evolving to adjust to proper methods and making up for the missing elements. Despite all the doubts and shortcomings Zurek (1985; 9) argues that the IRD concept is worthy continuing as the: (a) major theoretical tool to analyse rural poverty, (b) major programming framework for practical policies which have to take place at the same time at national, regional and local levels, and (c) major instrument to combine economic, social and environmental elements in the general programme of rural development.

### 6.4. Representing Criteria of a Project

To protect the interests of the public following the main steps of, as Theron and Barnard, (1997:38) and Meyer and Theron (2000:5) highlight, the so-called building blocks of development, that public participation is as an essential human need that enhances development efforts into sustainability, even if it could not occur overnight. From inception to finalisation, participation will make it easier for projects to implement policies in the interests of the beneficiaries. This would mean weaving development around people not people around development, and empowering rather than disempowering them (Titi & Sigh, 1995: 6). So to transform rural socio-economic conditions, and restore society's ability of revival to pursue economic and social development that last longer, deployment of participator initiative is the best tool. Creating genuine community participation will facilitate social learning where learning is mutual learning, in which each party has something to offer and get. Social learning lays the foundation to self-reliance, which leads to capacity building. Capacity creates empowerment that ultimately maintains development to be sustainable (Meyer & Theron, 2000:5). These interrelationships can be seen from figure 7 below. Thus, the keywords used in this research are capacity building, empowerment, sustainability plus equity (an issue related to poverty).

Fig. 6. Participation as a Means and an End



Source: Wetmore & Theron, 1998: 37

#### 6.4.1. Capacity Building

Development in terms of social change could be interpreted as increasing capacity and empowering people in order to address social issues via development projects. In this matter communities have to build their capacity and learn to promote it during the participation process, where continuous effort and application of successful approach as a social learning act will be practiced. This could promote the creation of efficient and effective planning by the community as collective and by individuals. Both, in the sense of being and doing, have to nurture enough capability which is the ability to realise and achieve the potential set of alternatives that a person can get with his/her economic, social and personal characteristics (Ellis, 2000: 7). In line with

this, Bryant and White (1984: 15) see capacity as a means to determine ones own future, and as community and individuals, moving towards raising up such awareness where enough capacity to sustain development projects in the long run could expand. Esman (1991: 6) explicitly supports this by saying that capacity includes a concern for self-esteem, people's ability to invest in themselves in caring and shaping their own future. Then in the whole community, everyone could make a conscious effort to develop this asset to a level of self-empowerment in which the capacity of the poor could also be strengthened to share in decision making equally. Therefore, good capacity building is essential for sustained development which considers all partners and attempts to answer these questions positively, i.e. whose capacities are being built through the project, and will these capacities reduce rural poverty (Monitoring & Evaluation, n.d.)?

#### **6.4.2. Empowerment**

Empowerment, defined as beneficiaries seeking to increase their control over resources and decisions (Bamberger, 1988: 6) and be the main actors (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998: 23), comes as an outcome through the process of involvement, education, skill development and proposed change in existing conditions. To empower a community is then to bring it into a state of belief in its ability/capability to act with effect (Sleeter, 1991: 3) which would provide a way of giving poor people a voice, and enable them to set out their priorities. It's a process whereby individuals develop skills to become independent problem-solvers and decision makers by gaining control, obtaining needed resources, and critically understanding their social environment (Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996: 4). In addition, it's a struggle to reduce personal powerlessness and dependency by gaining increased control over their lives (Martha & others, 1997 & Susan; 1997), as the result of a personal positive and lifelong process of changes, awareness, connecting and learning, mobilisation (taking action) and contribution (Susan, 1997). In any form, empowerment must be distributed and used well to serve the needs of the poor and enable them for more rights to complaint, redress and appeal against administrative incompetence or bureaucratic insensitivity (Barton, 2000: 179), and thus challenge authority's perception, so as to change attitudes and agendas in managing development projects. After all, participation without power is an empty and frustrating process of planning for the powerless, even if it requires knowledge and understanding to make correct decisions with the help of the community worker (Swanepoel, 1997: 6-7).

#### **6.4.3. Sustainability**

Development is an ongoing process of qualitative, quantitative and/or distributional change leading to some degree of betterment, and having accumulative and durable gains in people's ability to control and sustain their improvement and self-determination (Buller & wright, 1990:

3-4), even if government and NGOs assistance and aid is withdrawn at the end of time. This is not an easy job; in fact, given the multifaceted rural poverty, sustainability can be a tricky issue to address, since in general it refers to a long-range concern for the future (Bryant & White, 1984: 17) in all perspectives of people's state of condition, the environment and ecology. In relation to projects, sustainability is defined as the capacity of a project to continue to deliver intended benefits over a long period of time. And the three important factors or dimensions of a project to have an impact on project sustainability are 1. Institutional; sustaining the project benefit and cherish it feasibly through community participation; 2. Financial; introducing a cost recovery mechanism for renewing and adding new inputs, so to have economic viability; and 3. Environmental; introducing appropriate technologies to conserve the natural resources, (Bamberger, Yahie, & Matovu, 1996: 153). But these are not the only criteria for sustainability to succeed; the availability of expert know-how and the skills to motivate key multipliers to participate also have a role to play. At the same time sustainability necessitates active and adequate (directly or indirectly) involvement of all stakeholders concerning the post-project possibilities and putting a remedial plan in place. Additionally, the key to sustainability is not being competitive but perceptive of what we have, what we need, and what are the long-term consequences of the short-term choices we are making (Roseland, 1998: 213). Together with the issue of participation during design and implementation, the centrality of education, training and empowerment of beneficiaries and their organisations in meeting the objective of sustainability are crucial. This process leads to the much-needed sense of responsibility and ownership of the beneficiaries and their organisations of the project, and consequently willingness on their part to maintain project activities (Ibid). In the case of many similar rural projects, expecting them all to have long-standing benefits for the ordinary rural poor would be illogical, so the role of the government in this context is of importance, not only in terms of their commitment, but also to provide appropriate institutional support and an enabling policy framework (IFAD, n.d.).

#### **6.4.4. Equity**

Poverty to a certain extent is an outcome of inequality, which is unjust and misuse of resource distribution that depriving of adequate access to opportunities and makes many citizens live far below society's normal or typical standard of living (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1999: 10). This highlights understanding of poverty problems and origin by expounding the degree of inequality in income distribution. To minimise, if not to eradicate, this problem and build a fair community, the gap between the two ends of power sharing must be narrowed by shifting to those who have been disadvantaged, through promoting their ability to participate and make-decisions. In line with this Badshah (1996: 141) states that it's a truism that greater equity in the distribution of income and wealth requires wider participation of the people in the economic, social and

political processes through which wealth is generated and distributed. The reason is that, in development principles, an increase in output without improvement in rural welfare by even spread of the benefits that are generated, will not maximise sustainability of the community. More over, Weeks Dudley, cited in Badshah (1996: 20-21), asserted that equity as a condition in which the dominant patterns of interaction not only promote justice and fairness, but also it firstly facilitates a condition of life beyond that of bare survival (a survival-plus); secondly, it limits the unequal distribution of power, resources and benefits to a differential too low to facilitate monopolisation and exploitation; and thirdly, it promotes a sufficient degree of autonomy, so that each society sustenance and development is not merely a dependent consequence of another society's activity, but rather the result of its own decisions.

### **6.5. Conclusion**

As observed from the World Development Report 2000/2001 poverty in the developing world is shifting toward South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2000: 24). These areas are known mostly for having a high rural population living under continuous severe poverty conditions. Having common elements of socio-economic identification and geographical location, rural people are regarded as helpless and branded most of the time with terminologies that imply qualities such as weakness, passiveness and ignorance. In other words, they are considered as incapable of developing themselves due to different causes, and thus guilty of perpetuating their poverty magnitude.

The reasons for of rural poverty can be many and can be classified under social, economic, cultural, environmental, natural and man-made or political factors. Although one of these is beyond the reach of human capacity to counter, but most of the time the human element is crucial in influencing the status of rural community. Thus, in the past half century many development theories have emerged and been modified, some of which still exist mixed up within local or national general policies; since development takes place in political context.

In relation to rural development, most of the pursued policies by LDCs have not yielded the intended outcome, in fact have failed, due to internal and external factors, as well as to the lack of comprehensive understanding of the root causes of rural poverty, and proper planning and methodologies of development projects implementation. In most cases, the reason for failure could be attributed to the lack of a wide perspective, integrated and long-term programme drawn up after analysing some common but basic questions of the problem to be addressed and setting out the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat of the expected development project. Within this framework, the core element of development, i.e. rural participation has deliberately or

negligently been ignored as most of the planning phases have been transferred from top to bottom, with little or no involvement of the would-be beneficiaries.

Realising the necessity of the people's participation, not only as means but also as their right to be the key element in planning and decision making process for achieving desired results, development practitioners are now searching and implementing various forms of projects where communities can be actively involved. Any kind of participation, regardless of its scope and origin, requires certain conditions to exist. These could depend on the socio-economic and cultural context of a specific rural area. But in general people must foresee some benefits, have enough information, create well established and transparent organisation etc.

These do not mean that participation is always free of controversy, particularly from those who see it from a financial or time perspective as waste and unnecessary. And so they try to take short cuts and they intend to treat participation as a formality by doing as much as possible within a short period. In addition, participation does not always lead to perfect results. This happens since it's a process where one can raise some flaws, such as conflict of interest and unexpected manipulation of the development project or turning away from the general objective and veering towards different outcome. But most importantly, the consistent vigilance of the community members and commitment to the improvement of their community, taking this responsibility as obligation can lead to success.

Nevertheless, there is a common consensus that participation is fundamental to development projects, especially in rural areas, if the intended objectives are to be sustainable. This in turn necessitates the existence of equitable share of benefit, capacity building in terms of knowledge and skills and empowering of the local people to manage, and experience the sense of ownership. The best way of approaching these goals of development projects is by establishing integrated rural development coordinated by multi-disciplinary programmes. This could be the most feasible way of tackling the complex nature of rural poverty where most rural development projects would be consistent with the people's needs while addressing their basic problems, rather than implementing projects separately as they were so far.

## **Chapter Seven. The Country and Post-Independence Reconstruction and Development**

### **7.1. Historical Overview**

The newly independent State of Eritrea was created as a nation by the Italians after the Berlin Conference, which led to scramble for Africa. To achieve this Italy made treaties with Ethiopia, the British and the French. Formerly the present territory of Eritrea, to certain extent, had also been invaded and occupied governed by Egyptians and Turkish (Ottoman Empire), which have left deep scar on the country and the people's memory. Five hundred years of continuous foreign power incursion and colonisations have often led to violence and bloodshed for the Eritrean people (Gebremedhin, 2003).

After officially being recognised as an Italian colony (1890-1941), Eritrea became a British Protectorate (1942-1952) when they defeated the Italians during World War II (WWII), which was eventually ended by a UN decision, against the will and voice of the people, to federate with Ethiopia (1952-1962) for the sake of the superpowers' geopolitical interests. Later Ethiopia in 1962 forcefully annexed Eritrea to be its 14<sup>th</sup> province, without any opposition from the UN, and occupied it until May 1991 (MoTI, 1994: 1).

It's a fact that colonisation can have benefits and cause damages. In this case Eritrea was exploited and faced destructions for at least 50 years (Harigaot & Others, 1993: 1). The British sold out all its assets, worth billions of pounds, in order to justify a sham argument against the case of Eritrean independence and to show the UN observers that Eritrea's Economy was unviable. Meanwhile they had relied heavily on Eritrea's economy as key source to help fund their war effort (WWII) (Firebracec & Holland, 1985: 70). This was followed by more than three decades of Ethiopia's systematic suppression and total obliteration that stagnated and retarded what was left from Eritrea's modern economy. At first Ethiopia used Eritrean wealth to underpin their monarchy on the pretext of balancing development with their feudal economy. Later they adopted a communistic style of government with central (enforced) economic planning.

These resulted in thirty years of armed struggle that ended with the defeat of the militarist and would-be socialist regime on May 24, 1991 (Abraha, 2001: 1). The liberation movement, after setting free the country, had to wait for two years before holding a referendum, which ultimately would decide the status of Eritrea. Hence the referendum was held in April 1993 resulting in a huge response in favour of independence, unlocking access to global communities.

After independence the provisional government, despite lack of formal status and foreign assistance, commenced its development programme. This trend was accelerated after the formal declaration as a State, enabling Eritrea to obtain investment and awaken the economy. The average growth rate reached about 9.5% in 1998 (MoF, 2000: 2). But this speed began to reverse

to 4% by 1999 due to the border conflict with a former ally, the existing governing body of Ethiopia. This post-independence war that lasted up to 2000 was very destructive in all sectors and the economic and social damage still looms large (Arey, 2003: 3).

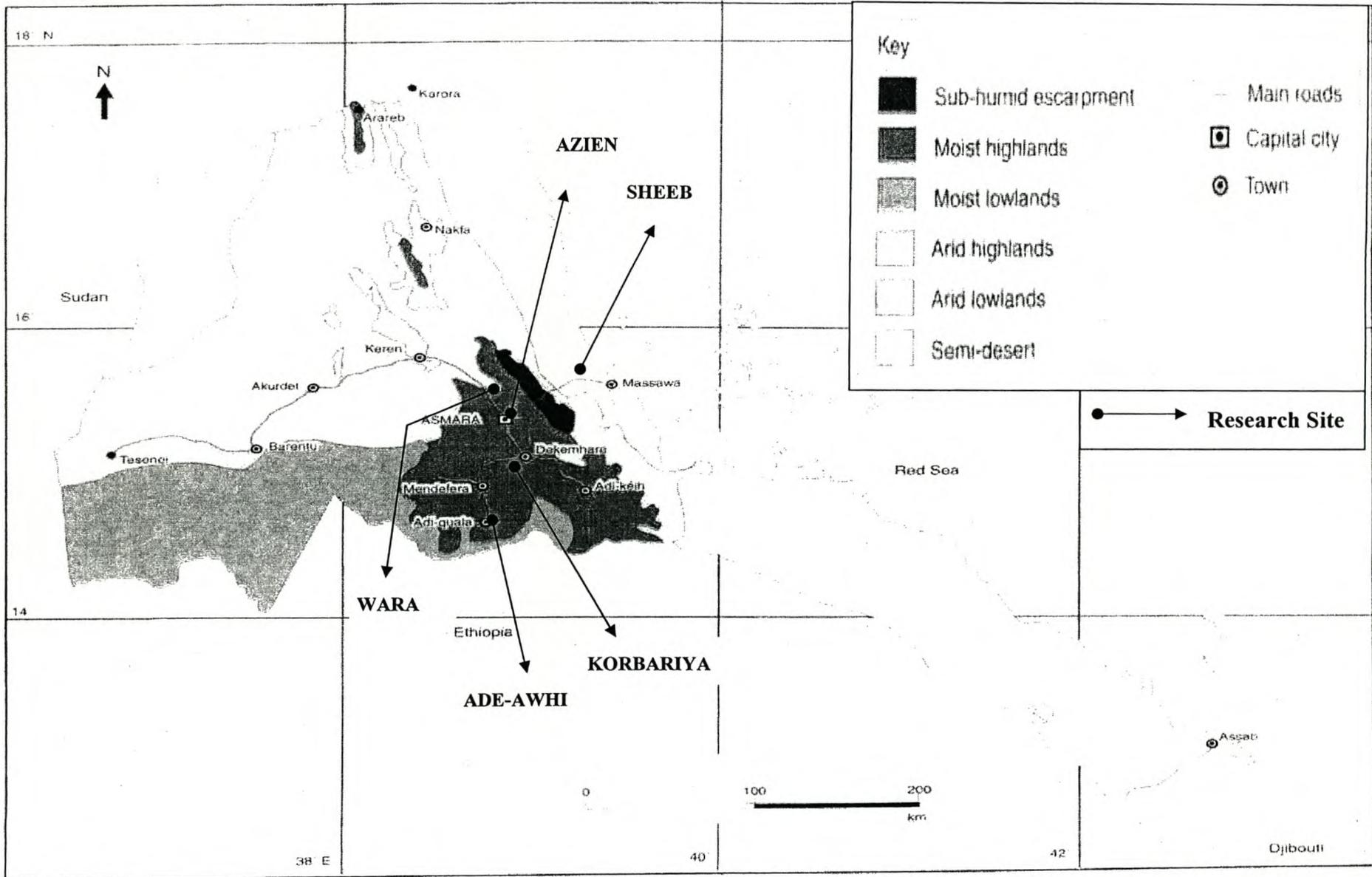
In general, the entire social and economic fabric and means of self-reliance of the rural and urban populations were disrupted or even destroyed. The legacy was widespread poverty and underdevelopment (Gebremedhin, 2003) that reversed what had been achieved within the last 10 years, and the status of development take-off was forced to return to the rehabilitation and reconstruction stage. At the moment, after the signing of a peace accord on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2000 and the border ruling on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2002, the initiatives of the government are to introduce and carry on a kind of Marshal Plan to rekindle the economy.

## **7.2. Geographical Features**

Eritrea's geopolitical location in the horn of Africa, and its possession of more than 2,234 Km in total (mainland on Red Sea 1515 Km & Island in Red Sea 1083 Km) of sea shore and hundreds of islands, is both a source of future development and continuous threats of external pressures. It occupies a strategic position along the world's busiest shipping lines (Eritrea World Fact Book, n.d.) which link Europe and the Indian Ocean and the continents of Asia and Australia, besides being a bridge between the African States and the Middle-East countries.

Topographically, (see Map 1) the country can be divided into three regions; a narrow lowland strip along the Red Sea coast that accounts for around 33% of the land area, the northern extension of the Ethiopian plateau in the north-central region which is dissected by the valleys of westward flowing rivers, and the western plains near the Sudanese border (Eritrea, n.d.). These regions have different climatic conditions relative to their average altitude, i.e. 500m, 2000m and 1000m above sea level respectively; reflecting tropical highland climate in the central highland while arid or semi-arid climate dominates the eastern lowland and western regions (IRDUA, 1993: 7). The temperature in maximum and minimum for the three regions above is +40°C and 18°C for the Red Sea coastal area, 30°C and 16°C for central highland, and the western low land has +40°C and 15°C. Rainfall varies with elevation and geographical position which influences the rate of moisture and wind directions. The exception is the Eastern Escarpment, known as the Green Belt, which runs between the Eastern lowlands and the Central highlands receiving rain during two seasons, i.e. summer and winter (Fierbrace & Holland, 1985: 84). Generally, annual rainfall varies from lows of 100mm in the arid coastal plains to highs of over 700mm in the eastern escarpment and central highlands, but in most areas is highly variable (Eritrea Project Concept, n.d.) (See Map 2). The amount and distribution in the past three decades indicate that it's not reliable to base agriculture on rain since it's vulnerable to droughts, and consequently

Source: Negassie & Others: 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea



Map 1. Major agro-ecological zones of Eritrea

famines are frequent.

Eritrea as the result of prolonged colonisation, war and the oscillating climatic conditions does not have wide a range of flora and fauna. The soil is exposed to erosion and many factors that diminish its quality, such as population density in the central high land which leads to over-utilisation and land fragmentation (Fierbrace & Holland, 1985: 84). In addition, consistent grazing, deforestation, land mismanagement, erratic but torrential rainfall as well as man-made interventions and natural hazards pose great threat to vegetation cover and the fragile ecosystem, and make it very difficult to safeguard the biodiversity and endangered species (DoE, 1995: 90-96). For this reason Eritrea possesses less than 1% of vegetation cover and only 25% cultivable land (3.2 million hectare) at present, of which only 5% is being worked. There is a possibility of expansion if the country's water resources are harnessed for irrigation (Eritrea Economy, n.d.). The unreliable rainfall and scarcity of perennial rivers and underground water make the efficient and effective utilisations of existing potential resources crucial (IRDUA, 1993: 10). This could help to meet some of the needed food production.

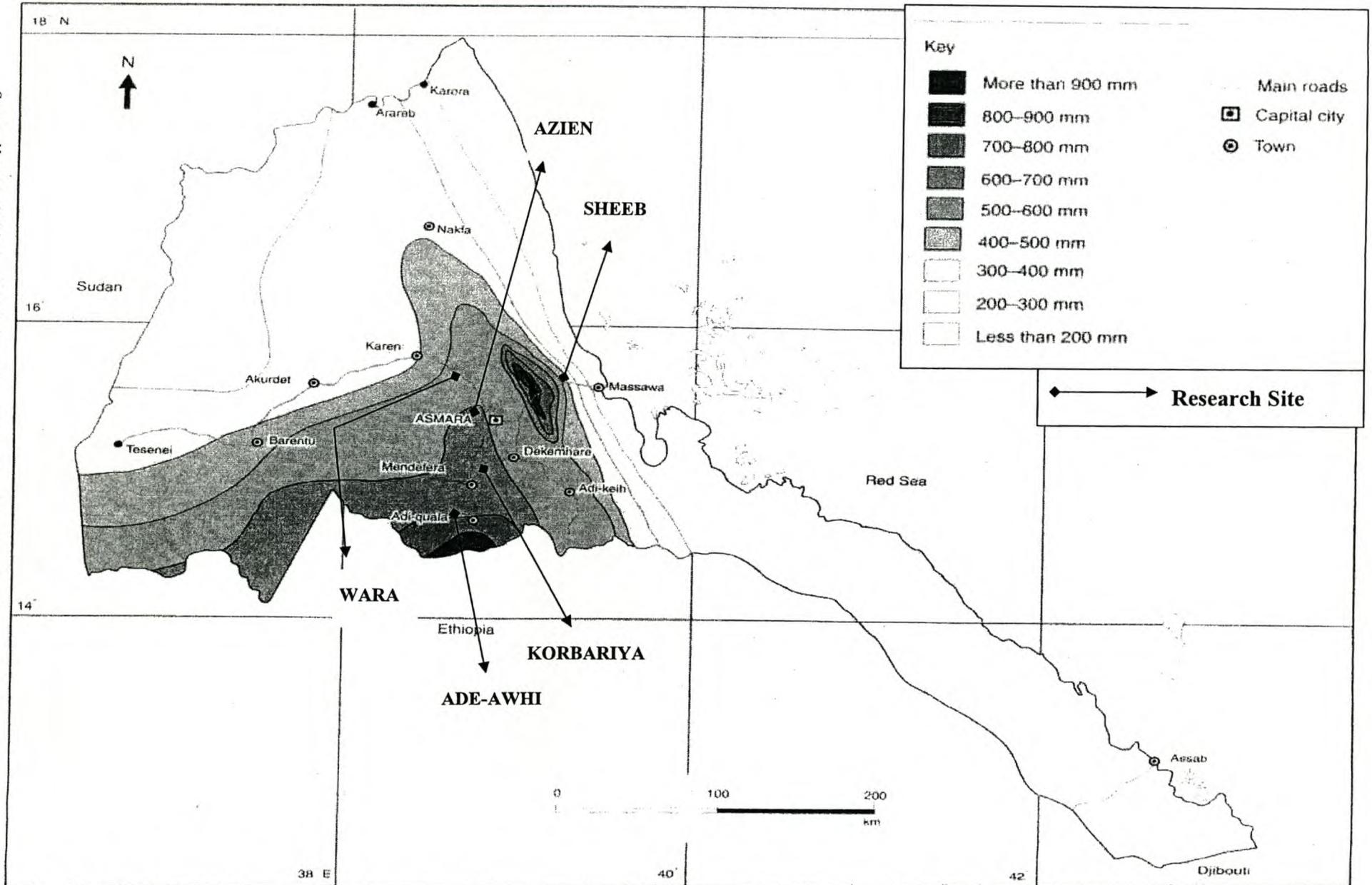
### **7.3. The Socio-Economic Context**

Eritrea's population is ethnically heterogeneous in terms of culture and language and due to the long struggle for independence they have developed a strong sense of integration and commitment to development as well as family and community solidarity (World Bank, 1994: 1). According to the estimation of 2003 by the CIA (Eritrea, World Fact Book, n.d.) the age structure by gender is approximately,

0 -14 years	= 44.7%	(977,447 male, 972,068 female)
15 – 64 years	= 52%	(1,121,077 male, 1,147,109 female)
65 & above	= 3.3%	(71,620 male, 72,933 female)

This shows the population is young, which is typical of a developing country's population, indicating a large proportion of children and young persons and a small proportion of old people. The overall dependency ratio of 92.3% indicates a heavy burden on economic and social development creating great demands for economic necessities and other needs. It should be understood that the true dependency load (the load of non-workers to workers) in the population may be much higher than is indicated by the conventional dependency ratio, because not all persons in the working age group are actually employed (MoH, 2002: 10). In addition pressure is imposed by increasing the potential of high fecundity & the problem of sustaining the fertility rate.

Source: Negassie & Others: 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea



Map 3. Mean annual rainfall in Eritrea

Like most developing countries' experience of dramatic population boom through natural growth, with an average annual rate of 2.5% in the 1961-1980 (David, 1981: 7) and now 3% in Sub-Saharan Africa (though there is slight decrease in Asia, 2.2%) (Sathiendrakuman, 1996: 153), Eritrea is also feeling the rapid rate of population expansion and as a result both the rural and urban areas are becoming more populated. Although, it is assumed that the rate of natural increase of population has always been higher in rural area than urban (James, 1974: 48), in the case of Eritrea, beside the natural increase, both areas are experiencing increase of population due to the number of returnees from exile and the recent forceful expulsion of more than 50,000 Eritrean from Ethiopia. If we take on average, to represent many studies and information, 2.6% for natural rate of population growth, then using the formula of doubling time ( $\text{Double time} = 70/\text{Natural rate}$ ) the time range is 26 years. This would be the minimum as there are almost more than half a million in exile awaiting repatriation that could shorten the estimated time span for doubling population.

In economic terms the society is poor as the country was and again is emerging from complete war engagement. Historically, it was one of the most advanced countries in Africa, and as Firebrace & Holland (1985: 70) narrate, by the standard of other African colonies of the period 1930s-1950s industry in Eritrea was highly developed. In 1939 there were over 846 registered transport companies, 624 construction works, 2198 trade companies and 728 light industrial concerns. With their development, Eritrea generated a highly skilled and extensive working class. In 1952 there were several electricity power stations, printing presses and various manufacturing enterprises. Tragedy struck when systematically most of them were transferred by the Emperor to Ethiopia, and during the last 17 years of communism when new investment and rehabilitation or replacement were not allowed in the previously flourishing industrial sector while nothing was done to develop the human resources (MoTI, 1994: 1).

The current government's intention is then to revitalize the economy and develop it beyond its former status. There should be speedy take off with a long term strategy of private-sector led market economy after most of the development processes now undergo the mixed economy (Rock, 1999: 134) to create conducive and balanced growth and development. The main economic sources are agriculture 80% and industry and services account for 20% (Eritrea, n.d.). Beside mobilising and raising funds for special purposes, such as drought, defence and for other social services for their country, many citizens in Diasporas enjoy good relations in terms of assisting home-based relatives, and in total terms about half the State's income comes as private transfer from outside the country (Pateman, 1997: 240).

#### **7.4. Administrative System**

Regardless of settlement type and spatial distribution, there were always traditional customary laws and administration according to which they had leaders and systems to govern activities within their jurisdiction and could associate with neighbouring districts. The usual method of electing an executive body in the highland was done by and from elders during the local assembly “Megabaeya” that has the responsibility running and executing the routine activities within their locality, to represent the community officially and to communicate with government bodies/officials at district level (MoLG, 1996: 4). In the case of the low-land communities it’s a clan (“Quebila”) leader with his close assemblage, that makes any decisions and has authority to act on his convictions as well as impose ideas and views which could contradict the community wishes (Ibid, 4-5). These approaches, though to some extent they have been replaced by foreign style and have been moulded during the liberation struggle, are still influential as they manifest on the way people conceive and behave in practising modern governance. From government point of view they are also used to a certain extent as mechanism of dissemination of development initiatives and nodes of communication to enhance and build gradual participation practices for more mutual cooperation (IRDUA, 1993: 33).

After liberation the provisional government continued to use the same administrative structure, which had been frequently altered by each colonising state. It had four levels i.e. province (“Awraja”), sub-province (“Sub-Awraja”), district (“Wereda”) and village, later on brought down to three by the cancellation of the sub-province level by the 1992 declaration number 26. A few years later a completely new format was introduced in 1996 by the proclamation number 86/1996 creating a three-structured administration with a regional, sub-regional and village/area (the smallest unit) administration (Abraha, 2001: 4). Each level has a governor, a deputy and various functional units where the government appoints the executive bodies in which the structure and the personnel are to operate under the ministry of local government (Tsegai, 2000: 16). In a way, this assignment implicitly make them adherent to the central management while the people remain with the right to nominate their representatives for a legislative body in the council (“Baito”), with the exception at the village level where all members are participative in the village council.

However, the village management has a committee as functional unit to be responsible for all village issues, such as those who distribute land for agriculture, housing, settle disputes etc, some times with the help of a temporary committee that does specific assignments. In any case they are responsible for the day-to-day activities and represent the community officially at high levels of the government. Thus a governor, an executive director and various committees will form the village/area administration in which the committee represents the village/area council (MoLG,

1996: 4). And they have to work under the direction, guidance and supervision of the regional governor who could appoint the village/area administrator. At the same time they still have their community meeting (Megabaya), which enables them to keep the traditional way of handling village affairs and act as units of local government since they are close to the villagers.

The other two levels have executive bodies which have the upper hand in decision making because the council is not empowered with the veto to override the executive's decisions, due to their weakness and some legal and resource constraints (Abraha, 2001: 18). This indicates that the new structure and administration is still highly centralized giving more power to the higher levels of government. Neither does it contribute much to local democratisation, decentralized development and participation as effectively as it should be or is expected to. And so the present 6 regions, 40 sub-regions and 1484 village/area administrations have no the real power to initiate, decide on and implement various plans and programmes based on their own resources, needs and priorities without central government decisive support and acknowledgement.

### **7.5. Reconstruction and Development**

After many decades of colonisation, the dismantling of infrastructure, protracted wars, recurrent droughts and famines, dispersing of the large skilled labour force, skewed and deliberate anti-development policies, Eritrea showed no growth or progress economically, sociologically, environmentally as well as culturally.

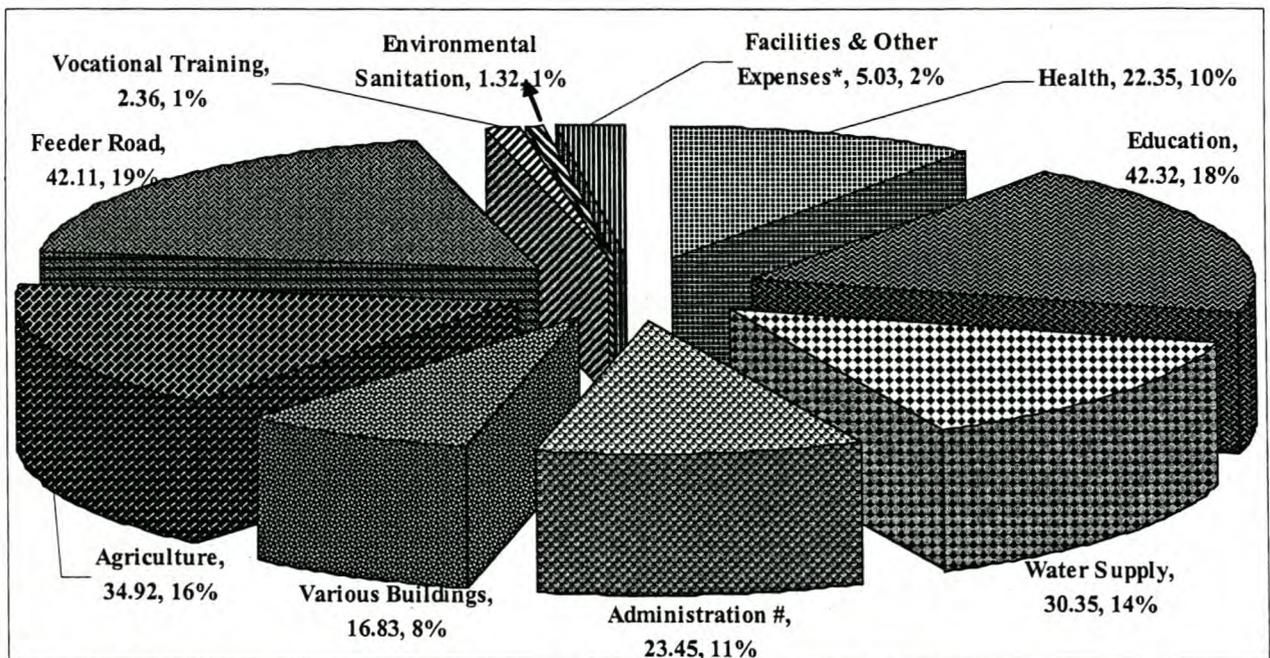
At the time of its liberation in 1991, Eritrea inherited enterprises that were non-operational; an agricultural sector that was severely disrupted; a damaged infrastructure; and health and educational facilities as well as significant environmental had been destroyed or damaged, while inherited institutions that were geared for managing a command economy (World Bank, 1994: ii). Furthermore, the lack of immediate response of the international community for two years, till Eritrea sealed its independence through referendum, was another setback to the dilapidated economy. Nonetheless, the new provisional government plunged ahead with its own development priorities, focusing on universal primary school education, improved expanded public health; rebuilding the country's infrastructure etc (Connell, 1997: 249), based on its long and experienced principle of self-reliance as ideological drive and the economic necessity, not only to meet material needs but also to preserve the will and zeal of the population to participate in the economy.

Few months after independence a conference on economic policy reached consensus on post-war economic guidelines and on principle conceded on long-term market economy while the State would play a critical role in managing the transition to peace time production, in regulating investment and commerce and in setting national priorities, chief among which was commitment

to rural development focused on peasant producers (Ibid: 254 & Harogot & Others, 1993: 2). Since then, the government has established cooperation linkages with international aid agencies and financial institutions in the field of finance and technical assistance, to boost its comprehensive recovery and the rehabilitation programmes which had already been launched to revitalise the shattered economy of many sectors (Eritrea Reconstruction, n.d.).

Excluding other projects implemented in regions, the government in cooperation with external funds and community participation have undertaken activities with the special programme of reconstruction and development to realise basic social services and to ensure the successful implementation of development objectives already set in motion in the beginning of independence. For these reasons until 2001 more than 221.02 million US dollars have been expended (MoLG, 2002: app i-ii). The extent of the three parties' involvement differs on different years and the focus of allocation of money is also done in coherence to the then socio-economic needs and specific phenomena, such as drought. This can be seen from figure 7.

**Fig. 7 Budget & Budget Utilisation for Regional Reconstruction & Development of 1992 – 2001 in Percent & Million US Dollars**



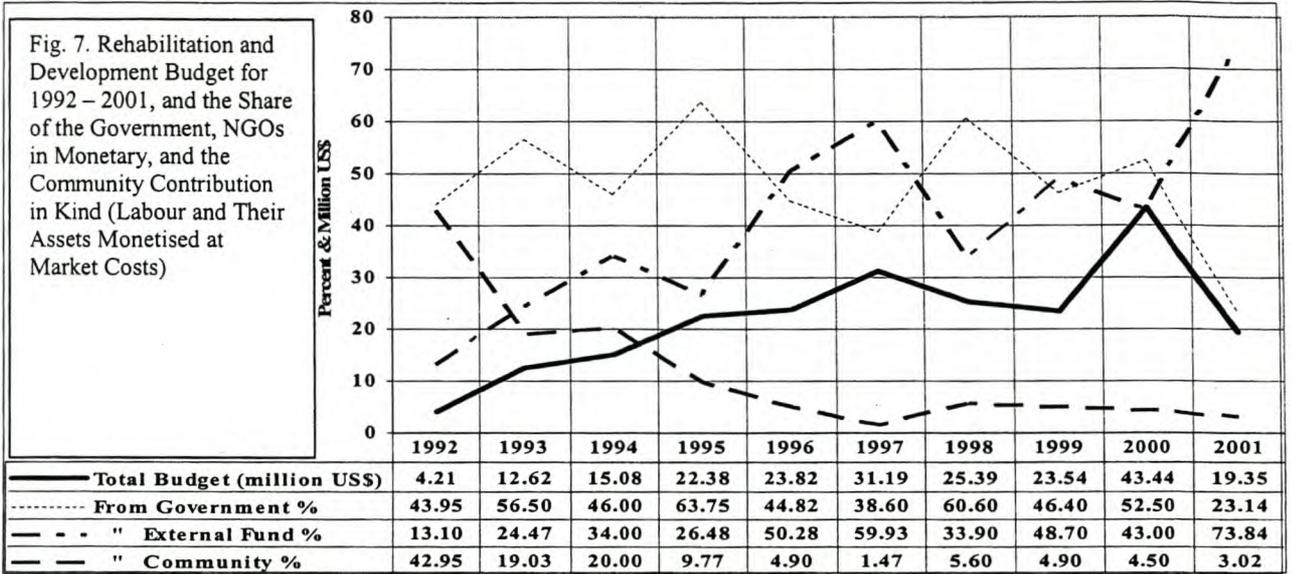
Source: MoLG, 2002, *Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001 appendix i*

The ups and downs of the budget for reconstruction and development, as is illustrated in figure 8 below, were subject to the slowness of the projects of prior years which led to the reduction for the coming period's budget allotment. In this case even contributors could react more cautiously. The clearest decline was in the community share, which used to participate through its free labour and assets as well as sometimes on the basis of food for work, due to their poor status coupled by harsh circumstances. Overall, comparing 1992 to 2001 the budget has increased by 78.25%, while on average the contribution by government and external sources shared 46.64%

and 46.44% of the total budget for 1992 to 2001 respectively, the remaining 6.92% was an input from the community.

Most of the budget was channelled to projects that relate to rural socio-economic activities. The government budget increased with the increase in reconstruction and development activities.

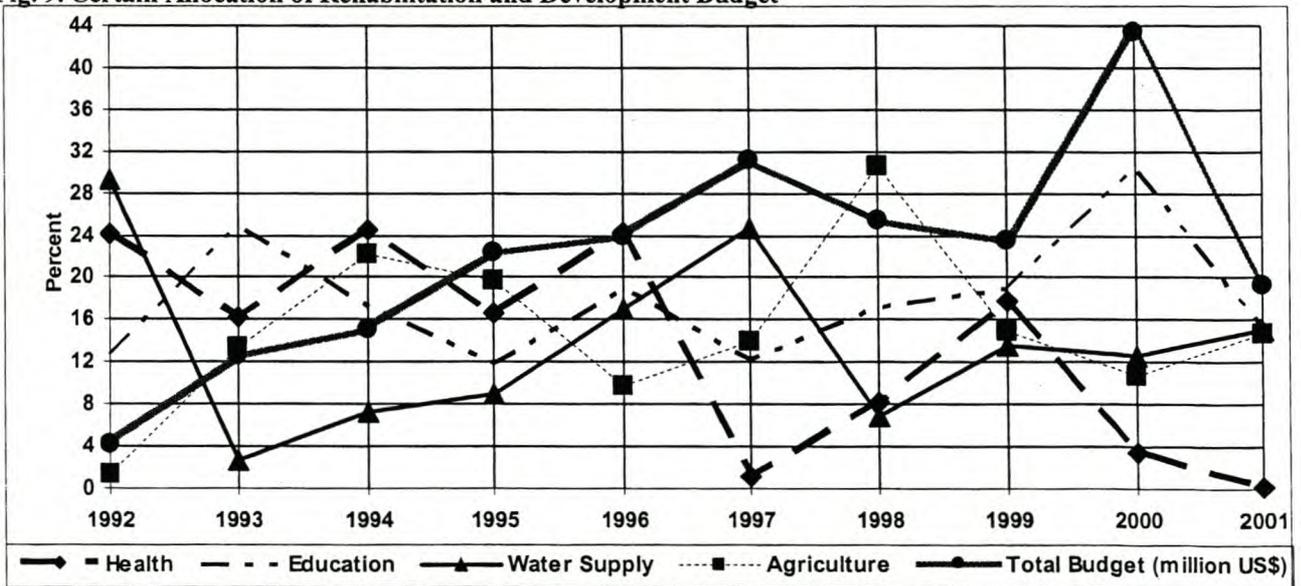
**Fig. 8. Government, NGOs, and Community Inputs for 1992 – 2001 Rehabilitation and Development Budget**



Source: MoLG, 2002 Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001, appendix i-ii

In their order of money share the main sectors are education, feeder roads, agriculture, building institutions, and health (App. 1). This doesn't mean that there wasn't variation in time in disbursing on conditions and crucial events. Some of these variations can be seen from figure 9.

**Fig. 9. Certain Allocation of Rehabilitation and Development Budget**



Source: MoLG, 2002 Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001, appendix iii

Before analysing some of these sectors related to rural development and the projects undertaken there, it would be appropriate to survey their conditions so far at national level. The sectors that

the researcher is aiming to investigate are thus in agriculture, health, education, water supply and dam construction.

### **7.5.1. Agriculture**

Like the economies of many other African and LDCs, subsistence farming and pastoralism are the mainstay of the economy of Eritrea, besides contribution of substantial remittances that augment the GDP, producing for local markets and 70% of exports (IRDUA, 1993: 29). In good seasons the harvest can meet up to 2/3 of the national requirement, while in bad years less than 1/3 of the needs are satisfied, so food security is a major issue in a country where close to 70% of its total area has an average annual rainfall of less than 400mm (Eritrea, Project Concept, n.d.). Realising the magnitude of the problem and the necessity for national food security to end food dependency, while laying foundation for sustainable agricultural development, as the President stressed on in the 1991 economic policy conference, agriculture is given paramount priority (Connel, 1997: 254). This includes enhancing farmers' productivity, extension services, provision of seeds, fertilisers, implements (tools) and securing reliable water resources. Moreover, the size of the agriculture sector is expected to expand from the present 8.9% cultivated area (of the land suitable for agriculture) to about 33.07% (DoE, 1995: 75).

Despite some problems, output has increased by 4.3% average change for the years 1993-1999, while yields of crop production per hectare, except for 1998, have decreased (MoF, 2001: 3-4). The reasons are failure of rain (in terms of time and distribution), pests, traditional farming system, and even the land issue (tenure system) has its role. Regarding tenure system Estifanos Seyoum pointedly criticized the liberation movement's negative historic land reform programme for creating impacts of disincentives and perpetuating fragmentation of land holdings (Connell, 1997: 255). For the past two and half years the momentum is even more strangled due to border conflict and its influence especially on two regions (which are Eritrea's most important agricultural areas) causing food production to drop by 62% (Eritrea World Fact Book, n.d.).

To challenge the consequences of war and drought and to improve agricultural production so as to meet the required rural food consumption and decrease the food deficiency of the country, the government reacted with reconstruction activities in different fields of the sector making use of various interventions. These are in terms of loans and free assistance to advance asset holdings such as livestock, water pumps, fertilizer, seeds, agricultural tools etc; extension services in crop protection like spraying insecticides, medicating and vaccinating livestock; and soil conservation applying different terraces and forestation programmes in which every summer all secondary school students have to participate for forty five days (see App. 2). In a year of adequate rainfall, Eritrea used to produce only about 50% of its food requirements before 1998 (IGAD, n.d.).

However, adding heavy human and material investments, using additional arable land, from 327200 hectares in 1992 to 472400 hectares in 1999, (MoF, 2001: 3) and some form of collective farming, a significant improvement in production was seen in 1999 that that increased food sufficiency reaching almost 90% (IGAD, n.d.). And between 1992 and 1997 the number of livestock have shown a significant increase of 76.26% on average annually (see App. 3).

### **7.5.2. Health**

One of the basic needs for life is to have good health and it's the responsibility of government to provide enough and accessible health facilities and assistance. Like all kinds of infrastructure the health system was in complete degradation and is not well developed enough to meet the basic needs of the population. Moreover, most of the institutions were concentrated in the urban areas aiming at curative services (IRDUA, 1993: 89), while in the rural area those decentralised & free primary health programmes launched during the movement before independence again diminished after freedom as all personnel began to concentrate in main towns (Pateman, 1997).

Based on the macro-policy's health objectives of providing basic health services to both the rural and urban population, priorities have been set-up to close down discrepancies in regional distribution and fill equipment and personnel shortages, so as to improve the health profile of Eritrea, with great emphasis being placed on preventive and primary health care, particularly in rural areas (World Bank, 1994: 123). This should be compounded by adequate and varied diet, access to clean water and creating a clean environment safe from unwanted garbage and wastes.

According to the UNDP statistics, the present health related indicators show that in Eritrea 13% use adequate sanitation facilities and 46% improved water sources; while in 1999 those with access to essential drugs were 50-70 percent. In 1999 and 2000 the percentage of those one-year olds who are fully immunised against tuberculosis and measles reached 88% and 98% respectively. Within 1995-2000 those births attended by skilled staff amount to 21% in a country where there are 3 physicians per 100,000 people (UNDP, 2000). The most leading causes of deaths for children under 5 years are acute respiratory infections, all forms of diarrhoea, and anaemia & malnutrition, cumulatively 62.12% of all deaths, while the leading causes for people above 5 years are all types of malaria, HIV/AIDS, and all types of TB accounting for 43.86% of total deaths (Hagos & Others, 2001: 44) and for the remaining causes see (App. 5).

For the past ten years the rehabilitation of existing and the constructions of new health establishments have been underway, and some private institutions have also contributed in installing health centres and stations. But most of the institutions are built and administered by government with the exception of two regions as it can be seen from the table 5 below and appendix 9. And likewise the numbers of people served, in terms of access to these facilities,

increased by 59.23%, and on average from 1992 to 2001, 1654639 patients have visited health institutions annually (App. 4).

**Table 5. Regional Distribution of Health Institutions by Ownership**

Region	Total Health Institutions' Ownership				Ownership rate (%)		
	Government	Mission	Private	Total	Government	Mission	Private
ANSEBA	25	7	0	32	78.1	21.9	0
DEBUB	37	12	0	49	75.5	24.5	0
S. RED SEA	12	1	0	13	92.3	7.7	0
GASH BARK	47	5	0	52	90.4	9.6	0
MAEKEL	37	3	1	41	90.2	7.3	2.4
N. RED SEA	36	2	0	38	94.7	5.3	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>

Source: DoE, 1997, 31

According to the Ministry of Health's current Standard, a Health Station has to serve about 10,000, Health Centre & Sub-regional Hospital about 50,000 and Regional Referral Hospital 200,000 patients (MoH, 2003:17). Among others population size and type of settlement as well as conducive environment are factors influencing the rate of utilising of the health service. These can be seen in the following table (Table 6) where despite the high concentration of professionals and institutions the worst off Region is Maekel that has a high population, followed by Anseba with few personnel and where it's geographically very difficult to operate.

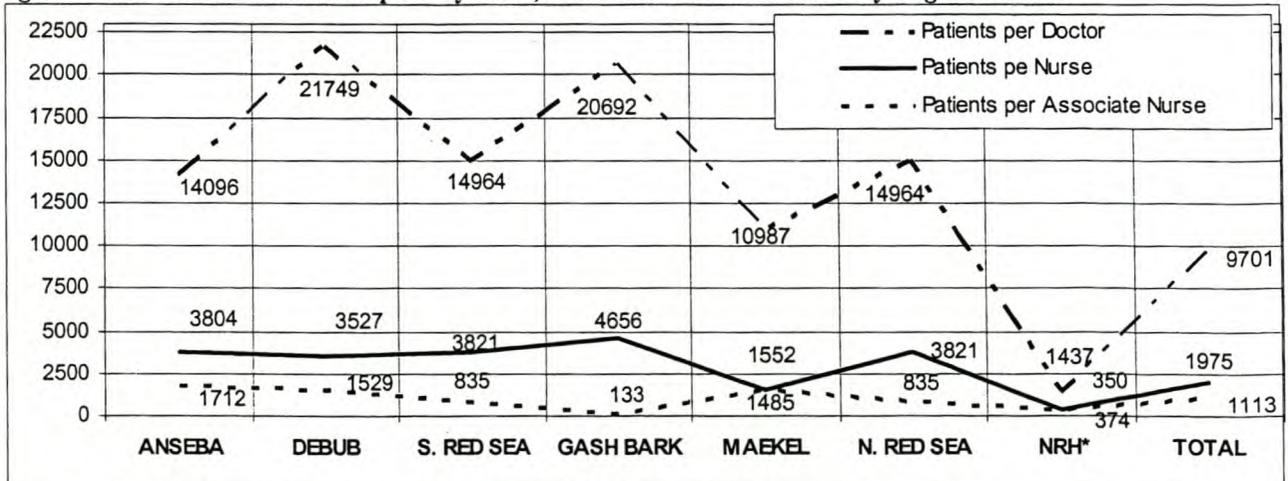
**Table 6. Number of Health Facilities per 10,000 Population per Region in The Year 2002**

Health Facility	Anseba	Debub	S. Red Sea	Gash Barka	Maekel	N. Red Sea	National
Hospitals	0.03	0.05	0.15	0.05	0.04	0.12	0.08
Health C.	-	0.03	0.15	-	0.02	-	0.02
Health S.	0.23	0.15	0.15	0.2	0.18	0.32	0.2
All Types Of clinics	0.62	0.66	1.81	0.79	0.55	0.61	0.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>1.32</b>	<b>1.42</b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>1.24</b>

Source: MoH, May 2003, Annual Health Services Activity Report (Jan-Dec 2002), p.17

In the case of the distribution of health professionals, there is more concentration at the Maekel Region and National Referral Hospitals (located in the Capital City, Asmara, which is part of the same Region) holding jointly 43.5% of all personnel, while the other regions have no major

**Fig. 10. Total Number of Patients per Physician, Nurse and Associate Nurse by Region in 2002.**



Source: MoH, May 2003, Annual Health Services Activity Report (Jan-Dec 2002), p.11

variation, except Gash Bark Region which has more Associate Nurses. It could be expressed in terms of ratio of patient to a doctor as it's demonstrated in the above figure 10.

The condition is a great burden on the health personnel and one can estimate how heavy the work load is when it's calculated in contact hour per patient, and the effectiveness of the service on the health of a citizen; even though the number and type of professionals are much better and improving due to training and upgrading programmes (MoH, 2003: 7-9).

### **7.5.3. Education**

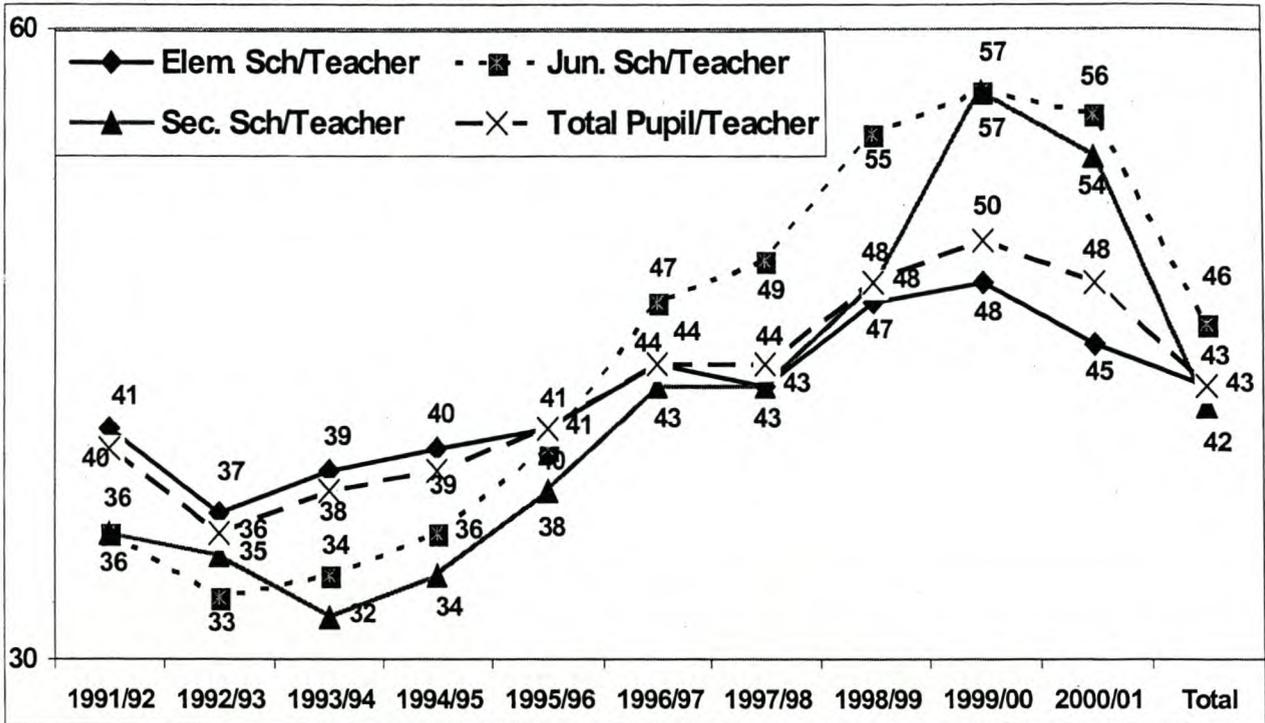
A key for any long-term development programme is the qualitative and quantitative expansion of education among all population. For a country like Eritrea which is as dependent on its human resources as the most valuable treasury and inexhaustible resources, educating its people is decisive to ensure progress in social and economic changes. Altering the education system that was designed to create only small elites with the aim of serving the objectives of colonizers (Fierbrace & Holland, 1985: 117) was a big task and is still a huge challenge to government. It needs for to produce a population equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and culture to build a self-reliant and modern economy, self-conscious and self-motivated to fight poverty, disease, and all the attendant causes of backwardness and ignorance (GoSE, 1994: 39).

For formal education the government is investing resources to solve the backlogs in terms of distribution, conduciveness and quality, even if the amount budgeted for recurrent expenditure of education decreased for the years around mid 1990s (MoF, 2001: 83). For instance expenditure on education for the years 1995-1997 as percent of GDP (average 667 million US Dollars) is 1.8% where most of the funds were allocated for pre-primary and primary, 44.5% and 17.6% for secondary levels. In both primary and secondary education levels the net enrolment ratio in 1998 reached 34% and 19% respectively, while in 1995-1997 70% of children reached grade 5. Comparing adult (age 15 & above) and young (age 15-24) literacy rate for 1985 and 2000 the UNDP (2000 and 2002) reports indicate a significant improvement, i.e. 41.9% and 55.7% for the former type and 55.9% and 70.2% for the latter.

One of the strategies "to expand education for all" means letting education play a critical role in the advancement of Eritrea's economic and social endeavours. As it's main commitment, in the past ten years (1992-2001) in terms of building new infrastructure, under the reconstruction and development programmes, 16 kindergartens, 264 Elementary, 55 Junior and 8 Secondary schools have been built, while for the same levels 280 schools have been upgraded. Parallel with this, various general training and reintegration programme for adults were given (App. 6).

The rate of students' enrolment, comparing 1991/92 and 2001/01 academic years, has increased by 49.49% in elementary, 63.54% in Junior and 56.80% in secondary schools, at the same time improvement has been shown in technical and vocational centres rising up by 74%, but the rate for teachers candidates declined by 31.95% despite some improvement in the first four years after independence. On the other hand, employment of professional teachers did not pick up, thus the ratio of student-teacher escalated most of the years (App. 7). This can be seen in figure 11 below. However, the situation with technical and teachers training is much better.

**Fig. 11. The Student-Teacher Ratio For The Three Educational Levels and Total Pupil-Teacher Ratio At National Level In The Years 1991/92 To 2000/2001**



Source: MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators 2000/01, November 2001, p.9-10

Most education expansion was done in the Elementary and Junior levels. Regions now have more schools than ten years ago or before independence, since other players, such as mission (Christian Churches), community (foreign), public (Municipalities or Villages), and Awkaf (Islamic Religion Association) also took initiatives. The rate of ownership in all regions indicates that the main driver in sponsoring both in rural and urban areas is the government, having 92% and 72% respectively, followed by the mission's involvement with 8% and 17% for each (App.8). The distribution of education in the regions by location, as is seen in the table 7 below, demonstrate that there is a lack of Secondary schools in rural areas in three regions, and it is most crucial in the Dehub and Anseba Regions which have a relatively high population with the advantage of a high rate of sedentary settlement.

In all government schools so far education at any level in the country is given free of any fees with the aim that all would have at least basic education in their mother tongue without any ethnic or gender disparity. Yet serious resource, institutional and managerial constraints make it

**Table 7. Regional and Spatial Distribution Of Education by Level**

REGION	RURAL (number)				URBAN (number)			
	Elementary	Junior	Secondary	TOTAL	Elementary	Junior	Secondary	TOTAL
ANSEBA	87	12	-	99	23	7	5	35
DEBUB	185	30	-	215	29	13	10	52
S. RED SEA	18	1	-	19	6	1	1	8
GASH BARK	118	22	3	143	14	3	3	20
MAEKEL	54	12	3	69	54	23	14	91
N. RED SEA	60	9	1	70	19	9	3	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>237</b>

*Source: MoE, Eritrea: Essential Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics 2000/01, November 2001, p.28-29*

difficult to meet these objectives in full scale. Still 7 in 10 school-age children (7-11) are do not attend primary school; for every 100 girls starting grade 1 only 40 graduate from grade 5; and 8 in 10 men and 9 in 10 women are illiterate (ACT; 2002: 2). Thus, there is a long way to go to improve the rate of literacy and formal education.

#### 7.5.4. Water Supply

The maxim “water is life” does not need more expounding for any Eritrean as the shortage has not only existed in the past or for a few weeks or months. But there is almost an entire year of shortage and the scarcity is felt by all people. Unfortunately, Eritrea is a water scarce country and one of the ten African States which has less than 50% coverage for water supply (Global Water Supply & ...n.d.). The provision of clean and constant drinking water is a big issue due to Eritrea’s geopolitical position along the Sahelian line, cyclical and prolonged droughts, massive environmental degradation, especially deforestations and desertification (that caused the vegetation cover to drop from 30% to less than 1% within one century), and inappropriate land use as well as traditional farming and livelihood methods (DoE, 1995: 90-91).

One of the main sources of water supply is groundwater. According to the National Water Point Inventory, there are an estimated 5345 water points in the rural and urban areas, and 77% or 4131 of them are groundwater, with virtually all rural water points relying on groundwater (ECDF, 2001: 61). However, the management of the rural water points is one of the key issues, since at present approximately 20% of them are non-functioning, largely due to lack of maintenance and poor management (MoLWE, 2002: 23). Therefore, water supply is becoming very critical and it’s a big challenge to provide sufficiently for people and animals as abstraction or depletion of ground water, the most dependable source for domestic use and irrigation, increased faster than the recharging rate, thus dropping the water level sharply (ACT, 2002: 4 & DoE, 1997: 45). This phenomenon is well manifested in some areas, like in the Alla and Tsilima

plains where the depth of wells is getting deeper all the time as many is hand-dug or drilled in the same area due to competition and the increasing need for more water.

The other source of water supply is rain that has the characteristics of erratic and uneven distribution, strong intensity and torrential in flows, and short duration (starts late & ends early) (DoWR, 2003: 2). In addition to these in the highlands the uneven topography of the regions of relatively higher annual rainfall, emaciated and light top soil, insufficient vegetation cover (see Photo 1), and the existence of very low porosity and permeability rock strata; and the strong heat of the low lands make the rate of absorption very low while they accelerate the rush of rain water, thus making it difficult to manage and use it (DoE, 1995: 62). Therefore, it's clear that why there is a chronic shortage of water for industrial and commercial uses, and human consumption, since only about 25% of the population have access to it (GoSE, 1994: 7).

**Photo 1. A Degraded Area in the Highlands**



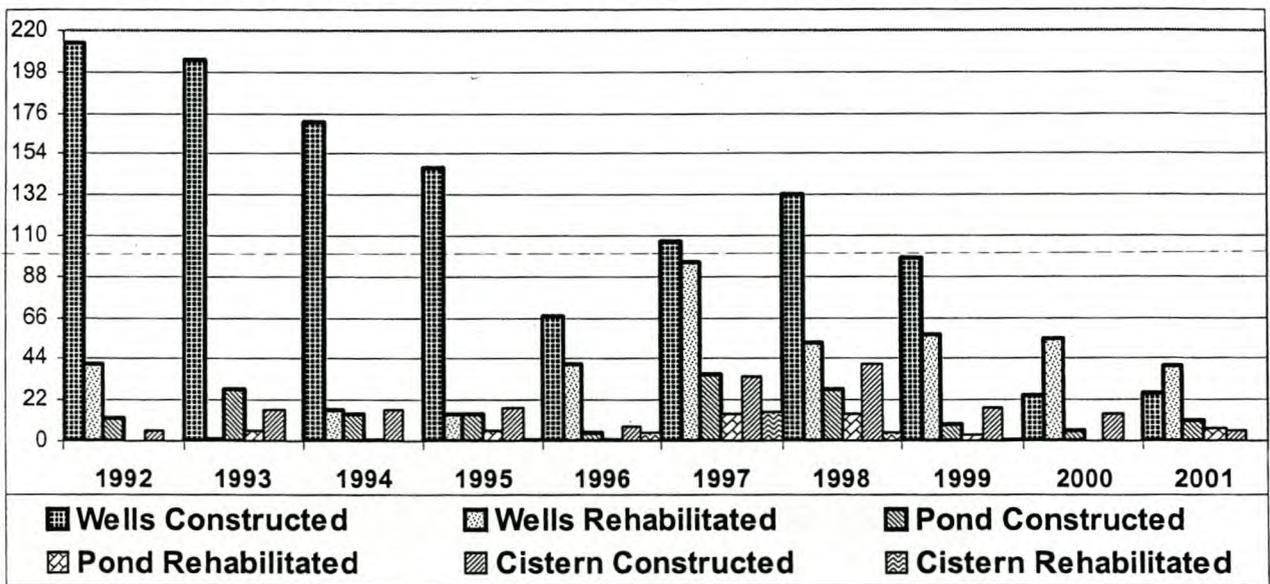
*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

Rural poverty is associated with the daily struggle to obtain fresh water for human consumption, for animals and raising crops. Rural dwellers are forced to walk a distance of an average of 5-10Km (MoLG, 1996: 4) and this is worse during drought. At present many girls and women often walk more than two hours each day to fetch water, and it's estimated that only 7 in 100 rural inhabitants have access to safe water (ACT, 2002: 2). According to the study made by department of Water resources (DoWR) in 245 villages the availability of safe water in litres per capita per day is very low at about 3 l/c/d for rural areas in the highlands, which is 1/5 that of the urban areas, and 10-20 l/c/d in the lowlands, far below the WHO's recommended standard of 25-40 l/c/d (DoE, 1997: 24 & ECDF, 2001:61). In addition, as the result of low sanitation facilities

the water quality, particularly biologically, is deteriorated from time to time in the rural areas, causing an extremely high rate of water born diseases (communicable Diseases) like diarrhoea, parasitic infections, and skin diseases (DoWR, 2003: 3 & DoE, 1997: 24-25).

Based on experience and realising that the country is a drought prone country, the government followed a strategy of finding complementary sources of water supply for the rural population that they could raise up crop production through efficient use of rainfall and underground water. For these objectives from 1992 onwards great attention has been paid to the rehabilitation and construction of water supply (see figure 12 below) and by 2001 in total new 1189 wells, 163 ponds and 181 cisterns had been constructed, while the rehabilitation of 414, 65 and 26 respectively had been completed.

**Fig. 12. Number of Constructed, Rehabilitated Wells, Ponds and Cisterns; 1992 - 2001**



Source: MoLG, 2002, Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001 appendix xxi

Most of the wells are multi-purpose and they have hand pumps while few both use solar- or motor pump and in very few cases electrical motor pump. There are a good number not functioning and sealed till they get hand pumps or because they are salty not suitable for irrigation or agriculture which some are utilized for. In the case of ponds, many capture water during the rainy seasons and are used for human and animals as well. They will eventually dry up or decrease their capacity due to leaking and/or lack of maintenance like clearing the silt and repairing their structure, or rain delay. Few cisterns are not functioning and are leaking (MoLG, 2002, app. xviii-xx).

**7.5.5. Dam Construction**

Rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes include the restoration of the different sectors, building new and repairing existing infrastructure etc. In line with this, dam construction can be seen within sectoral perspective as a mechanism to solve the basic problems of the majority of

the population, rural people, as Estifanos Seyoum said, through enhancing their development in fighting against poverty by better utilisation of local resources (Connell, 1997: 255).

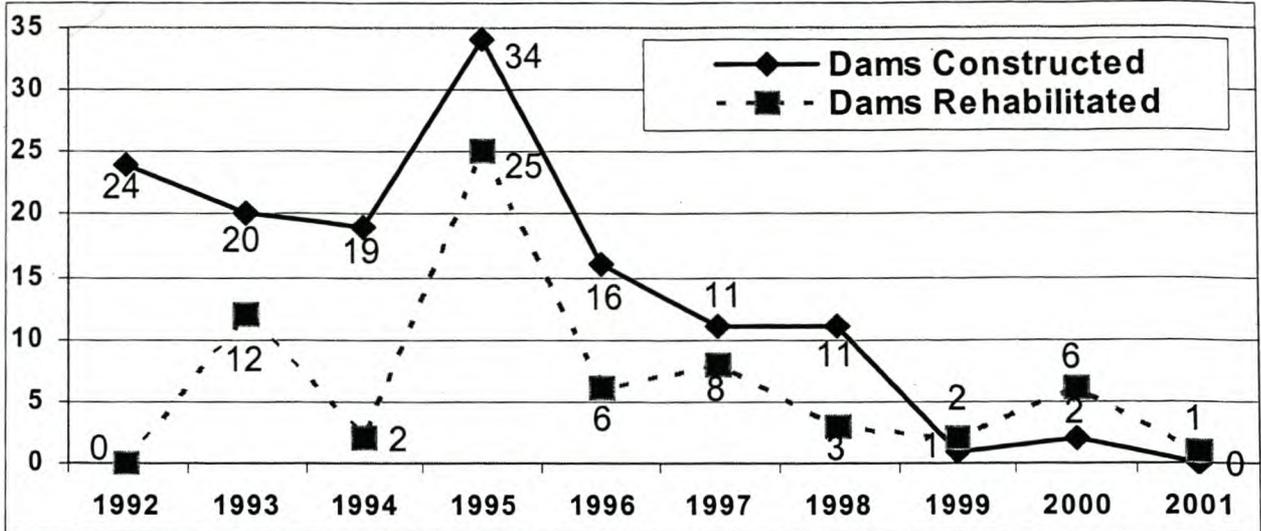
The construction of dams is necessary for many reasons: they play a role in water conservation and irrigation, and their contribution to self-sufficiency and food security are fundamental as they can boost agricultural production, create employment and generate income as farmers could engage most of their time during slack seasons more efficiently and enhance their productivity (GoSE, 1994: 10). Furthermore, due to increase of population and animals, and the need for irrigation expansion most of the water resources will continue to be used for agriculture and rural people, that might be more than the present share in which agriculture utilises 73%, industry 21% and domestic needs 6% (MoA, 2002: 23).

Above all building dams is imperative to catch enough rainfall since the variability of rain, the seasonality of streams and their rate of discharge fluctuates in response to rainfall inputs which make reliability of securing enough water uncertain, if measures to collect the run off are not introduced. In the rural areas crop production is highly vulnerable to drought and in the absence of supplementary irrigation low yields result. Worst of all, lack of water also affects livestock productivity, influencing their potential to work, and in times of extreme drought entire herds of animals can be wiped out, hence incurring major losses of income for a large proportion of the rural population (World Bank, 1994: 186-187).

Most rivers contain water only during rainy seasons and few months after, and the run offs have gone unused and been absorbed in the lowlands. Therefore, the government launched programmes for the better use of this water by building small local dams to store peak run off which can be used for irrigation and as drinking water (Optimising the Use of Water...n.d.). Some experts believe the development of irrigation systems in the absence of regular rainfall is an essential requirement to attain food self sufficiency (Economic Trends, n.d.) and for optimal use of water. In the past ten years, under the reconstruction and development programme, mostly micro-dams and few medium sized dams have been constructed and rehabilitated, especially during the early 1990s i.e. in the aftermath of 1990 and 1994 heavy droughts (see figure 13 below). In total 138 new dams were built and 65 were rehabilitated, but in both cases the rate dramatically decreased after 1995 and almost nothing was done in 2001.

Due to many reasons 11 of the micro-dams are not functioning, 18 are filled or partially filled with silt, while 7 of them are leaking, and 8 have fallen down. Two of them have water only during the rainy season, and one has no water (MoLG, 2002, appendices. xviii-xx).

Fig. 13. Number of Constructed & Rehabilitated Dams between the Years 1992 to 2001.



Source: MoLG, 200 Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 20012, appendix xxi

The storage capacity of individual dams varies from less than 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> to over 1 million m<sup>3</sup>, with an estimated total of 24 m<sup>3</sup>. Most of these are used for domestic consumption and a little small-scale irrigation, comprising some 22,000ha and few being under perennial irrigation from dams. This is nearly 6% of the cultivated land, but only 0.2% of the total land area of Eritrea; despite its potential which varies from 107,000 to 567,000 hectares (Negassi & Others, 2002:129). The main constraint for dams' storage capacity is siltation, due to soil erosion, which reduces and shortens their useful life in a very short period of time. Though the rate varies, often it takes 3 years or less to fill a dam with silt making water management hard as removal is expensive (World Bank, 1996: 17). The reasons for this problem are the rising population & grazing pressures in the southern highland, a region of medium rainfall and source of most rivers but a place where more than 65% of the population lives, expose the entire ground to torrential rainfall which result into significant land degradation (Ibid, 1996: 14).

In connection with the above reconstruction fields, focusing on rural development projects, the researcher has administered closed and open questionnaires beside direct personal observation on each site where the historical development of the projects and their current conditions have been discussed with concerned and ordinary village residents.

**7.6. Conclusions**

Eritrea, Africa's newest nation, is a creation of colonial treaties in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Historically, it has endured tyrant administration and harsh environmental disasters before and after it was declared as a colony. Unlike other colonies of the same coloniser, it was forbidden of its right to exist as a nation by UN's unlawful and unjust decision, which prompted before long Ethiopia's forceful unilateral annexation. This has sparked

off a long and costly war for independence, ultimately ending after thirty years and two pre-referendum years, when a new chapter of reconstruction and rehabilitation began.

It is not easy to address and restore all sorts of destruction that has accumulated over a long period. The only option was to act in response to the needs of the people and thus the government emerged to take responsibility in special way for the majority of the population, i.e. the rural communities. The constraints are many, in particular financial, and as usual the environmental conditions are frequently hurdles for progress, since Eritrea's geographical features and location are not favourable to rural life.

If we consider the condition of Eritrea's economy in 1930 – 1950, the country could have been in much better condition now assuming that economy had not been dismantled by foreign powers, and its social fabrics had not been so severely damaged. At the same time, the environmental destruction would have not spread its negative effects widely and would not be as deep as it is now. Hence, its people could have escaped what they have already experienced and the current poverty level could have been less problematic.

To reverse the trend of poverty and rehabilitate the economy and the standard of living the present government was working on a recovery programmes. These sooner or later could have led to taking off the economy and as a result more development had it not been for the recent border conflict with neighbouring country, Ethiopia. However, one can assess the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts implemented in the rural sector and understand how far endeavours aiming to enhance the living conditions of rural people have borne fruits. Comparing the situation of pre- and post independence, the resources invested and changes made in the field of education, health, water supply, agriculture and dam construction can highlight the considerable transformation. These changes could occur as the State established cooperation with foreign and domestic NGOs, while having people's participations often in terms of labour and assets that were mobilised via their customary system. To accelerate the pace of socio-economic progress, parallel to the different economic initiatives, the government has adopted various legislations, policies and regulation which incline more to a centralised-management style, which might be in some instance highly restrictive.

Overall the trend of reconstruction is encouraging, first as it proves that it's possible to make a difference, and secondly as it shows that more to be done since the responsibility of creating balanced development is not easy, as constructing any infrastructure, and needs consistent transformation of human capacity and a decrease in the amount of all kinds of constrains.

**Chapter Eight. The Peoples' State in the Research Areas and Their Responses**

**8.1. The People and Their State**

The researcher has studied five of the many rural development projects. Spatially these five activities are found in four of the six regional administrations. Under the same socio-economic and political conditions, the research sectors are also the same as those mentioned in the previous chapter, i.e. agriculture (irrigation), education, health, water supply and dam construction. The places in respect to these are Sheeb, Korbariya, Ade-awhi, Azien and Wara rural areas.

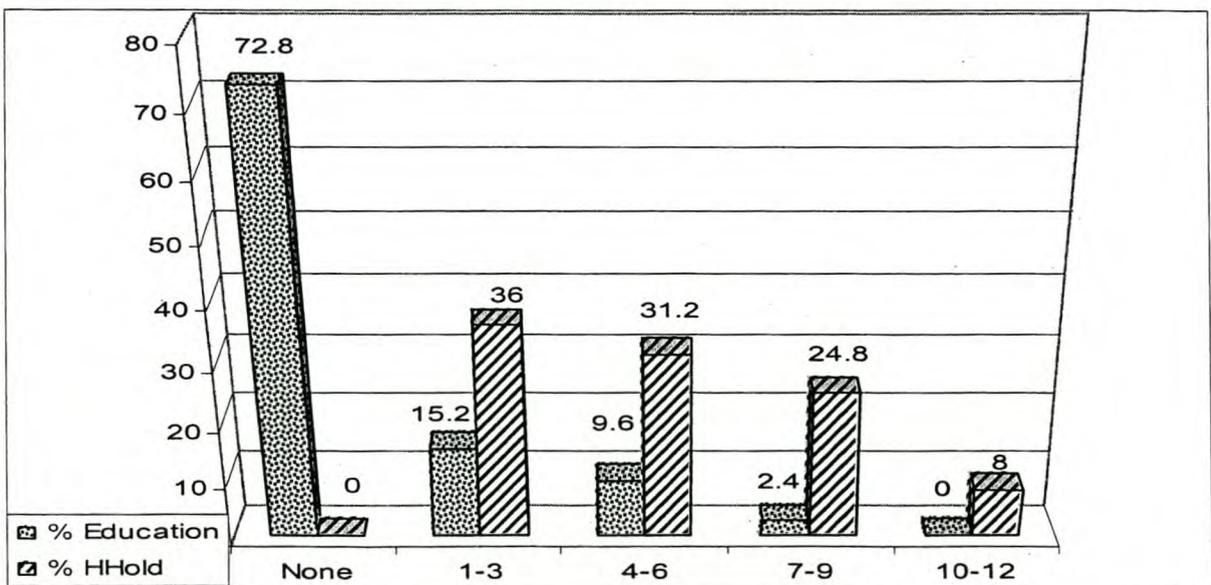
The researcher contacted one hundred and twenty five respondents in total, 92% male and 8% female, 95.2% of them were between 31 to 60 years of age and 72.8% had no basic education, while few reached grade one to three. The majority (36%) of the households have children 1 to 3 followed by 31.2% having 4 to 6 offspring and 24.8% having 7 to 9. The education and family size level are illustrated in table 8 and figure 14. Families having their children living with them are 63.2% while out of the rest 36.8% those having children somewhere are 65.2% (which

**Table 8. Family Size and Educational Level of the Samples in the Research Areas**

Range	Family Size		Education	
	Number	%	Number	%
None	0	0	91	72.8
0 - 3	45	36	19	15.2
4 - 6	39	31.2	12	9.6
7 - 9	31	24.8	3	2.4
10 - 12	10	8	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>		<b>125</b>	

also includes those abroad) of which 34.8% of this live in the towns within the country. In spite of their illiteracy 81.6% chose not to attend adult literacy and education programmes, or did not have the opportunity to learn. In addition, about 76.8% of household members are illiterate or did not join the national adult education programme.

**Fig. 14. Household Size and Educational Background**



With regard to their current occupation, it's clear that most of them (71.2%) are farmers. Farming, according to their replies, is their prime job, but some of them do have extra activities throughout the year depending on the season and proximity to business centres or urban areas. However, 28.8% consider other employment as their principal source of income besides doing their farming occasionally. Among the respondents, a great number (80%) intend or are seriously thinking of changing their present occupation. This might be the result of despair about present agricultural conditions or the influence of the income difference between the urban and rural sectors when they see the amount people can earn from other employment. This could also be as many of them (75.2%) are not engaged throughout the year in agricultural related activities such as irrigating any portion of their land, and some said that they did not have enough land while others admitted to the underutilisation of their land (see table 9).

**Table 9. Respondents Answers on their Current Job and Land**

Questions	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Have you thought seriously of changing your current job?	38.4	41.6	12.8	7.2
Was there any of your land(s) that remained underutilised (unused)?	38.4	24	22.4	15.2

On the other hand, the lack of enough labour support could be a factor in letting their land lie idle, since they cannot hire labour. They do help each other especially during harvesting (54.4%) and ploughing (23.2%) periods (see table 10).

**Table 10. Respondents Reply on Labour Exchange and Hire**

Questions	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you hire Labour to assist in your farm?	12.0	28.0	21.6	38.4
Do you ever get help from other farmers for any rural works?	49.6	33.6	16.8	0.0

This general overview hints at the main issues and objectives of the research at each research site and help with the comprehensive synthesis to be done later.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the objective of the research is to analyse the planning process, the extent of people's involvement, and find or assess the socio-economic benefit as well as the existing problems. It is also to investigate the relationship between the people's conditions and the projects' impact by applying two types of questionnaires and doing field observation of the project sites. Parallel with these, it would be appropriate also to describe each village or area and then relate it to each rural development project taking place or happening in that specific rural area.

## **8.2. Responses from Research Areas**

### **8.2.1. Sheeb.**

It's found 42km North West of the port and main town of the Northern Red Sea Region, Massawa. According to the agro-ecological zoning of Eritrea, it's a semi-desert area situated few kilometres down the Eastern Escarpment (Green Belt) at the Red-Sea basin, where most rivers, sourced from the escarpment, drain or pass through in their lower course to the Red Sea (see Map 3). Due to its geographical position and influences of the sea, Saharan and Saudi Arabian dusty winds, it has a very hot temperature with less than 200mm of annual rainfall. So the agronomic & grazing potential of this zone is low; however in areas where flooding occurs, as a result of heavy rains in the highlands, spate irrigation is practised (Negasi & Others, 2002: 9) which is often and commonly used by lowland pastoralists as they leave the area to migrate to better conditions.

The local residents are mainly Tigre ethnic groups, but recently the government is encouraging and taking measures in an attempt to resettle the only islander tribe, the Rashaida. This rural area holds a minimum level of 3280 households (as of 2001 population estimation) made up of the two Rashadian communities & the Tigre people. In the lowland, it is often difficult to distinguish land tenure as there is no clear cut system for land ownership, since most of the population is nomadic and semi-nomadic. Nevertheless, this does not mean that anyone can settle anywhere there and engage in activities related to land.

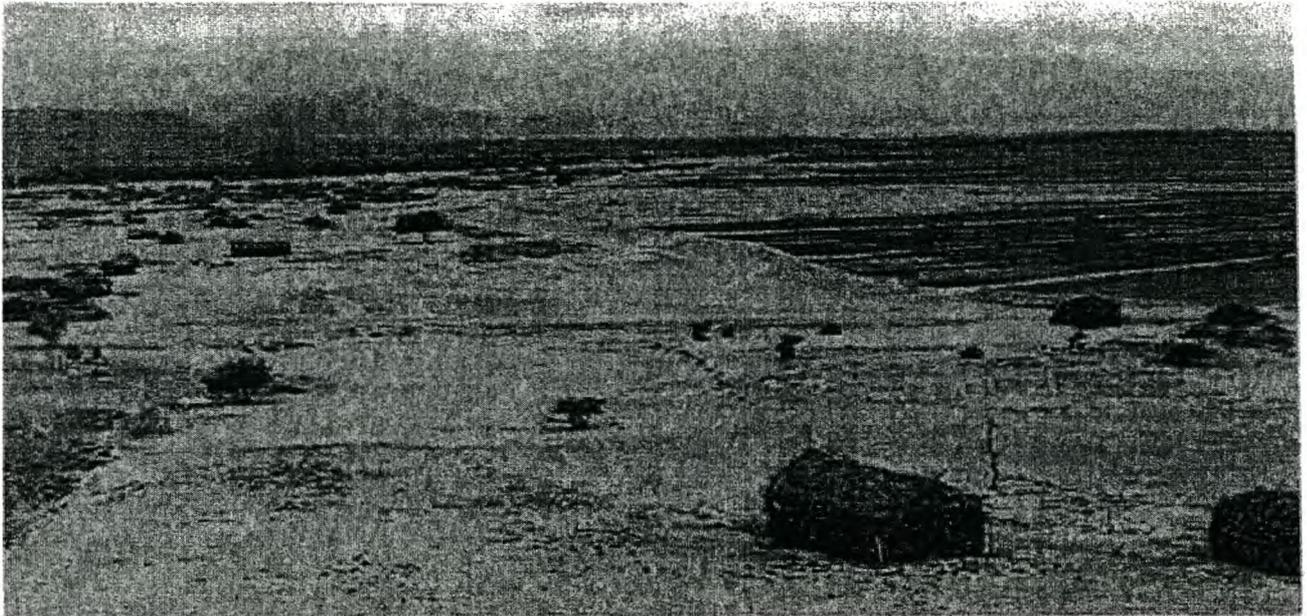
Here the focus of the research is the Commercial Date Farm, about 70 hectares, initiated 7 years ago by a Rashadia national, Mr. Abdella. After clearing the land and planting the first two hundred batch of imported Dates, he is at present in the process of expanding the farm along the river bank where he draws underground water using open wells. Six years after starting he was even identified and selected by the REU to be a beneficiary of the direct assistance or grant (free of interest) of 70, 000 US dollars (REU, 2002: 8-9 & Mr Alem).

Even though all land by decree of Land Proclamation No. 58/1994 is State owned (GoE, 1994: 5), the question in this case revolves around the acquisition of land, pre-hand knowledge of the concerned people of the area, the benefit and costs for the people, decision-making, impact on the environment and the economy, and the social and political issues for present and future implication. So the researcher approached all relevant authorities and people from the three communities, and attempted to perceive what the overall gain from this rural development scheme would be in terms of the current situation and possible future consequences.

It's natural to see the discontent of the Tigre and the second Rashadian community from their answers, as the core issue is the ownership of land and the benefits used to get from that area, in

terms of grazing and spate irrigation and source of fuel etc, and also some form of competition for acknowledgement and entitlement for similar project. Concerning these, about 80% expressed the need for land as their wish besides citing the lack of tractors and farm tools as obstacle not to pursue Date farming.

**Photo 2. The Settlement and Spate Irrigated Area at Sheeb**



*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

The responses clearly indicate that all decision-making took place somewhere else with no consultation or any community meetings beforehand. According to the replies of the respondents 84% declared that the real power was in the hand of institutions, which decided on the initiation and location of the project without due consideration and consultation of the pre-existing Tigre and the other section of the Rashadian community. They felt strongly as they had been negatively affected and neglected and they could not see any direct or indirect connections between the project’s establishments to their priorities and needs (see table 11).

**Table 11. The Level of Sheeb People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priorities & needs of community
<b>Yes</b>	4%	0%	4%	88%	24%
<b>No</b>	96%	100%	96%	12%	76%

Thus, it is not surprising to find that there are no activities related to the project. On the contrary, 84% of the people feel offended as they did not get the opportunity to participate at any levels of the planning or of the decision-making process. They are feeling totally forbidden from exercising their right and choice, in an issue so close to their livelihoods; so they express their anger in different ways, which could result sometimes in conflict and damage to the project. Therefore, the conclusion of the people is that 80% believe that they have not benefited, and in terms of job creation, 84% claim the project does not create any opportunities for the local

people and hence there is no positive influence on their income. In general, they believe the introduction of the project has not helped to improve their overall quality of life. However, a few of them (24%) admit that they learnt new and relevant skills and knowledge.

### **8.2.2. Ade-awhi**

A village closer to the Eritrea-Ethiopia border, to be found south of the capital city and the Southern Region's main town of Mendefera, and is established along the main national highway within the current UN Temporary Security Zone. It's a small village situated in the moist-highlands with an average temperature of 17.5°C, and receiving a high rainfall (600-700 mm/year) at the same time experiencing much soil erosion (31-50 tons/ha/year) from its rich and fertile land. There are 110 households (2001 estimation) who are of the Tigrigna racial group. Here, like in many highland villages the population density is higher. Continuous land sharing is leading to fragmentation and the people are experiencing a decline of output from their total land holdings, which often induces them to opt for chemical fertilizers, as if it would be the only remedy to enhance the mineral richness of the soil.

In this rural area, its Health Centre is the main point of research as health facilities are an important part of the rural development strategy in enhancing the society's well-being. The ECDF and the surrounding people's input (who contributed 10% of the total cost) of 537,868.28 Eritrean Nakfa in kind and cash established this institution. Its physical design and services are of national standard and as such there are rooms for a pharmacy, injection, waiting, registration, examination, toilets and garbage, plus an administration block and an underground water reservoir. The size and its future expansion depend on the offered land, the construction and expected costs and the number of people it will serve. At present about 26 villages with a total number of 2767 households or 11552 individuals are direct beneficiaries, which is much better than the national current ratio of 0.02 Health Centre facilities per 10,000 population. However, in terms of personnel and capacity as well as quality or the contents it should have, the Centre lacks many basic instruments, medicine, water and electricity. Despite all these constraints it's undeniable that it is serving the people free of charge with minor expense, i.e. only for registration.

To questions concerning their satisfaction with the introduction and project service provision, 68% of the people have responded affirmatively, and 60% have given their consent to its location. However, a few (28%) disagree not because of distance, but the place where it's positioned; being on a slight slope, in a shallow area across the main road from the village whereby agricultural activity takes place.

Concerning gaining benefit from the project, the response from a personal perspective is positive (80%) but looking from other people’s perspective the positive impact reported from their reply indicates 60%, i.e. a decline of 20% which might be due to drop of or poor service quality or unable to pay for the service and medicine that often has to be purchased from nearby towns’ drug vendors or pharmacies. Their answer may be related to the employment issue as 92% are dismayed since they could not get job opportunities during the implementation of the project and/or after it started giving service. But it is definitely clear that the erection of the facility has saved many people from different costs, while providing some medicine free of charge. This can be understood from the response of 76% in favour of the project for the positive influence on income and local people’s benefit from the project, as well as 80% who declared the location has affected their community positively. According to the respondents, in general terms the main beneficiaries (60%) are the poor, followed by 20% each for women and children, who are usually the most vulnerable sections of society.

Regarding the planning process, many felt that they were not encouraged to participate (48%) and some claim rarely being considered (36%). This leads to the perception that only 16% expressed their responsibility within the project as committee members and the same number as employee, while 48% played a tacit role and 20% had completely no role. This can justify the reason why many (76%) asserted that the power to make real decision-making was bestowed on the agents who primarily prefer to work more closely with committees rather than the community. In line with this table 12 indicates how the people reacted on the issue of participation and decision making.

**Table 12. The Level of Ade-awhi People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priorities & needs of community
<b>Yes</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>56A%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>44%</b>

What seems strange is that the people stated that their first priority was something else, which does not mean that the health institution was not a priority but that it might be second or third in their agenda. At the same time, they asserted that they had some meetings with the agents and within the community, but their opinions had no real effect in terms of setting priorities and making decision, so one could assume the meetings were superficial phenomena or only intended for show. Even if 40% had the opportunity to partake in the decision making process and 56% even are able to exercise their rights and choices in different forms, with the exception of those who were committee members and those who got the chance of employment to participate in implementation, most of them (68%) had no part in the planning process.

Nevertheless, 40% of respondents said people still believe in relying on themselves by getting together all their resources while 52% in partnership with donors or agents to improve their conditions. Yet, 76% of respondents felt that they have not totally engaged in project related activities, nor contributing to maintain the project. This may be the result of a perception problem as 72% of the respondents think the controlling power is in the hands of the Ministry of Health that manage all the expenses and thus it's the Ministry's responsibility to combine all the remaining adjacent activities.

### 8.2.3. Korbariya

It's located in the moist-highlands of the Southern administrative region, 50km from the capital city, Asmara, and is a place which has a mild temperature (on average 17.5<sup>0</sup>C) and enough rainfall (500-600 mm/year). It's one of those villages in the eastern part of the region with a high population of 660 household (2001 estimation) and also high soil erosion, estimated as 16-30 tons annual soil losses per hectare. The villagers, ethnically Tigrigna, are mostly peasant farmers, relying on summer rain, with few people engaged in horticulture and seasonal employment in the nearby town of Dekemhare. It's positioned on the main road and suitable to deliver public services to other surrounding villages. Like most areas in the highlands, the population density per cultivated area is extremely high and localised scarcity of arable land occurs (World Bank, 1994: 61) to the extent of 0.1 hectare of cultivated land per person ([www.uncdf.org](http://www.uncdf.org)). The same situation exists in the Korbariya village. Land ownership or tenure follows reallocation of land every five to seven years, known as the "Diesa" system, since land is collectively owned, which has a detrimental effect on the fertility, production, conservation and sustainable management of the land (World Bank, 1994: 68).

**Photo 3. Landholdings and Fragmentation in the Highlands**



*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

Korbariya's Junior Secondary School is the researcher's focus of study. It was built with the cooperation of ECDF and the people of six villages who promised to pay 10% of the total cost of 1,162,935.49 Eritrean Nakfa. The sponsors' engineers predetermined the structure and the design, as in the case of Adewhi Health Centre. The configuration of the structure is in blocks where each of the three buildings has four classrooms of 4 by 6 metres. In addition, there are blocks for demonstration, staff and administration plus small pit latrine cells and an underground concrete water container. Concerning its size, taking into consideration future extension (upgrading) to a secondary level, in addition to some needs of space for different educational purposes, the farmers have offered, within their territorial boundary, a big portion of good quality agricultural land. The site is near the main road making it suitable for the staff and pupils those who wish to use any kind of transport, and the needs of communication and supervision will be met without difficulty.

In a village like Korbariya with many households, it's likely that there will be many students who will complete their elementary school every year, and so the need for another level will mount as well. The creation of new education service was a great relief to about 80% of the respondents, despite 48% of them who expressed their disagreement with the project's location. The main reason is that the project is located on fertile farm plots that dispossessed many farmers' holdings. However, 72% of the people feel that the overall impact and benefit due to the project initiative has improved their quality of life.

Usually it is difficult to assess the immediate benefit of education and its long term return; however, in terms of solving some problems and taking into consideration the reason behind the promotion some advantages can be mentioned that could impact on the parents' income positively. 60% of the people indicated this in their responses. Moreover, the impact is not only money wise (which includes means of transport, in some cases housing rent, daily expenses and other personal needs which would exceed the normal expenses had the student stayed with his family all day). This also includes securing personal safety, minimising time cost, sustaining continuation, decreasing social and personal costs as drop outs will be lower and enhancing support for their parents in peak seasons. So it is clear why 72% said that the local people's benefit from the project is positive, and most of the beneficiaries are the poor and women, who are unable to afford and continue their education by travelling on foot about 20 km every working day. Before, student had to pay house rent almost for nine months every year, till they had completed their secondary education.

Concerning the process of planning, the respondents point out that they did have quite a few meetings with development agents and among themselves where 76% of them were able to

exercise their right and express choices in one way or another, such as in groups, open discussion and voting. The feedbacks on these enquiries are as follows in table 13 below.

**Table 13. The Level of Korbariya People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priorities & needs of community
Yes	80%	88%	20%	80%	60%
No	20%	12%	80%	20%	40%

From other responses to the questionnaire one could be surprised at the 72% declaration that the major decision making power was held by the agents and still 40% believe the controlling authority does not lies in their hands. In line with this, a few (24%) of them assume also the committee has some influence; in this case, it’s made up of people living in the capital city and elected residents of the village. Thus, it would be acceptable to acknowledge the negative answer of 80% of the respondents to the question about enough opportunity to participate in the decision-making process (see table 13). And as for participation in the planning level 8% stated that they have been limited to identification (who are most of them committee members), and 12% said that participation was limited mostly to implementation while the rest had no involvement; and thus 60% said they could not express their responsibility within the project. Even during the execution of the building, the number of those who got employment is very few (24%) whereas 76% thought none had obtained the option of job.

The people would still like to be a partner in the project and 56% expect cooperation rather than complete assistance from anybody, as 36% think getting together as community would also be a way of finding solutions to their problems. This feeling is starting to emerge in the form of a need to expand the school to a higher level. However, the people are neither contributing to the maintenance of the school nor taking advantage of the chance to set up activities related to the project. The building is suitable for adult education and other training programmes, but so far 72% of the villagers state that no new relevant skills and knowledge have been gained due to the project initiation. The issue of maintenance and sustenance might be assumed to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education that takes over the management and staffing role, while concerning finance for extending the school capacity to hold the coming batch from Junior to Secondary level, then the people raises the issue of poverty.

**8.2.4. Azien**

A village found in the central moist-highlands of the Central administrative region, has an annual rainfall of 500-600 mm and an average mean temperature of 17.5<sup>0</sup>C. It’s almost a town village as it is one of the few most populated rural areas in the region, having 1360 households (2001 estimation) of the Tigrigna ethnic group, and is located 29 km North outside the main national

highway but connected by 15 km of gravel (feeder) road. At the same time it's one of those very few villages with integrated rural development projects i.e., public schools, health station, electricity and water supply, whereas its dam is one of the water sources for the capital city, Asmara. It's situated on top of a mountain surrounded by plains and small chained but dispersed hills. Like the village of Korbariya, it has the problem of soil erosion (16-30 tons hectares per year) mostly due to the high altitude and its topographic (relief) features as it lacks vegetation cover all over the slopes, and also due to the highly traditional intensive farming.

**Photo 4. Common Settlement Type in the Highlands with Their Small Farms (Ghedena) in front**



*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

One of three rural development projects in this area that the researcher considered in his study is the community water supply. It consists of two boreholes complete with submersible pumps and their pump house, a concrete reservoir of 80 m<sup>3</sup> capacity, seven public fountain distributions with six taps each, an electricity power line of 640 metres and a water committee office. The total project cost more than four million Eritrean Nakfas. Unlike the usual requirement set by the ECDF of 10% beneficiaries' contribution, in this case the people were only able to cover 7.63% of the cost, while the remaining was subsidised. According to Engineer Kidane of ECDF the project's available water is about 5 l/sec, a bit higher than the demand of 3.44 l/sec (i.e. 198 m<sup>3</sup>/day), and is expected to meet the need of population of 6000 and to last without shortage until the year 2012. In order to keep the operation running and enable maintaining the management of the system, the project also incorporated the establishment and training of eight members of the water committee and their office. This first hand knowledge is supposed to enhance the sustainability of the project, but the extent of the acquired capacity is only to run and

repair the instruments and not to have deep awareness on how to maintain and check all sections of the system.

Assessing the project’s impact, 80% of respondents are satisfied with the introduction, and 60% agree with the project’s location and its distribution sites and number; moreover, 64% believe the community as well is positively affected. The latter might look like the job of an expert or a technical matter, but to a village with a large population and on an unsuitable layout, with a traditional and compact residence pattern to find the right and widely acceptable choice largely depends on the social structure of the beneficiaries. About 72% of the respondents replied yes to the query “Do you attain benefits from the project?”, and 60% think that the local people are gaining advantage from the project too. In this instance the first and foremost beneficiaries among the social structure are women (84%) who are traditionally deemed responsible to fetch water by any means, and on the second level are children, particularly girls (16%) who are considered as assistants in all domestic work. However, coming to the issue of influence on income the picture is the opposite as 56% considered themselves negatively affected due to the water tariff and assume that past access and distance was not much of a problem, despite the long queue and having one means to draw water.

The planning process in many aspects is similar to the position in Korbariya. There were many meetings within the community and a few with donors, but 56% stated that the final decision-making power and planning role were bestowed on the agent, while 20% thought the power lies in the hands of all, including the community and the committee. The latter view seems now in place as many considered the beneficiaries having equal power of controlling the project considering their 40% response for each of the players. Table 14 below illustrate issues in relation to these and the extent of involvement.

**Table 14. The Level of Azien People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priorities & needs of community
<b>Yes</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>44%</b>

Roughly, half percent replied positively about having enough opportunity in the decision-making process. Only 12% felt they had adequate involvement despite having ample opportunities (80%) to practice their rights and choices. But the extent of very low participation in the planning process, mainly in the identification, formulation and evaluation stages could indicate that the decision taken was done so despite the priority and need conflict where only 56% confirmed the project was according to the objectives of the community while the rest believe the water supply project was not their primary need. In fact, their crucial need and priority as many of the

respondents explained to the researcher, and which he experienced, is their transport problem, particularly during the rainy season and the months immediately afterwards.

The people of Azien are strongly in favour of working together (60%) and mobilising among themselves (36%). Both of these characteristics are applicable and are the right features of self-reliance in dealing with socio-economic problems in rural communities. However, 76% argue about the overall positive quality change in their lives and 64% considered that the project had provided temporary employment for many people and opened permanent job for unemployed women. Still the people have not engaged themselves to further their development through activities related to the project. Yet 64% of the people are not interested in contributing to maintain the project, assuming that a certain portion of the tariff would be allocated for this purpose.

#### **8.2.5. Wara**

A small village with a scattered settlement and a dispersed population, having 310 households (2001 estimation), which is located in the Anseba Region, 1 hour and 15 minutes walk from its sub-region town of Adi-Tekelezan towards the east, and is sited in the middle of rugged mountains and difficult terrain. It has a feeder road that is only suitable during the dry season and is used only occasionally. Almost its entire land is exposed to all kinds of erosion, experiencing 6-15 tons of soil lost per hectare/year. It has a mild temperature and 500-600 average rainfall annually. Most farm sizes are small and established along the slopes of the mountains.

The last rural project visited by the researcher is a dam in Wara village, one of those constructed in the early years of independence by the Ministry of Agriculture. Local administration made a

**Photo 5. Lamza Dam Similar to the Dam of Wara**



*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

drought survey which had to lead to some sort of political decision. Then it was introduced and planned by the Ministries of Agriculture and Mining.

The exact cost incurred is not easy to find as there is no indication of all financial and material investment at that time and the contribution made by the people in the form of food for work was not monetised. The dam’s water holding capacity is above 220,000m<sup>3</sup>, enough to irrigate more than 20 hectares. It’s an earth-fill-dam type having cultivated lands as its catchments area, a spillway of masonry, but no pipe or other kind of outlet. It has no tendency of high seepage to the lands found at the front of the dam, and according to Amanuel Negasi of MoA, based on the criteria of embankment and riprap, the condition of the dam is still in good standing.

In a reply to questions about the extent of satisfaction with the project, around 40% expressed their delight and about 24% have felt a sense of contentment. Again 64% said they are in agreement with the decision made concerning the dam’s location, but only 56% asserted that it had a positive effect on the community. Although 24% of the responses indicate that largely women are benefiting, on the other hand from personal and other people’s outlook 64% and 60% of respondents respectively think that the main objectives of the project in enhancing development and generating benefit have not been realized. This is without including the importance of the dam to their animals and the first time they worked as part of aid programmes where every participant has been able to receive some sort of earnings, which had a positive influence on their income level.

Apparently the planning process allowed for sufficient contact with sponsors (68%) and there were enough community gatherings (80%). Within these circumstances in total 76% of respondents said that they had practised their rights and choices within the planning process in many ways, such as having discussions, voting and as an interest-group. Table 15 below could indicate what the relationship looks like in situation where there were many contacts and discussions, and what the result was afterwards.

**Table 15. The Level of Wara People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priorities & needs of community
Yes	80%	96%	8%	88%	76%
No	20%	4%	92%	12%	24%

The above paragraph shows that people were not adequately involved in the decision making process as 80% of the respondents now disclose it. This meant that the villagers could only participate as labourers playing a minor role in the implementation phase, while the rest remained excluded leaving the major decision making power in the hands of development agents. This is confirmed by 76% of the response pointing to this argument.

After the completion of the project, it seems that the power of control has shifted to the beneficiaries as 80% said so. But they are not engaged in any kind of activities which could be related to the project either at collective or personal level. And their expectation of continuous support since has not materialised as about 84% of the replies illustrate that the people are not taking the initiative to contribute something to the project. This is also reflected by the lower responses (32%) towards the attitude and conviction of people's mobilisation for self-reliance and promoting community-based initiatives to meet their needs; although 52% opt for cooperation with sponsors in the socio-economic transformation.

## **Chapter Nine. Overall Synthesis of the Research**

### **9.1. Introduction**

The 2001 IFAD report on rural poverty indicates that the majority of world's poor are rural, i.e. 75% of poor work and live in rural areas (IFAD, 2001:15-16). In this case it's an undeniable truth that relatively rural areas in the developing countries are the home of impoverished people who most of their life are engaged in agriculture with very few attempting to generate income from other activities as their survival strategies (Dixon, 1990). These require reinforcements through poverty reduction programmes, if the trend and extent of rural poverty are wanted to get declining, especially in SSA, consistently for some period of time to a level where rural people could empower themselves to sustain the benefits.

These kind of efforts necessitate in turn a comprehensive and integrated development programmes as the situation of rural poverty is complex and deep rooted due to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental as well as domestic and international economic and political conditions of a country and a region. The best option would be to look back and assess the various development programmes of the past which have often been controversial and frequently unpopular as LDCs government have continued to pursue them in the absence of viable ways of facing their severe economic crisis (Bamberger & Others, 1996: xiii).

In this regard the methods of intervention towards alleviation rural poverty should be a process of participatory planning because as Fernandes & Others (Mulwa, 1994: 17) stated that the impact and extent of development are determined by the strategy applied. Participation as means and end is usually manifested as a fundamental dynamic of a bottom-up development approach, has to take the best elements of any feasible development theories provided that they yield long term socio-economic benefits, and are environmentally safe and planned with the people, particularly the beneficiary. The reason is that since behind any rural development project's failure often there is the lack of participation whereby people could have first met their needs and secondly as Meyer & Theron (2000: 5) explained that beneficiaries could have progressed well by going through the main "building blocks of development" which in due course will end up having the sustainability of the project.

Here the main targets are how to introduce development project and incorporate beneficiaries' idea, objectives while utilising their resources effectively and efficiently based on their main priorities. Thus, the initiation of a rural development project should not be compromised by agents', depending on their time-constraint, know-how and financial strength. And a State mustn't only establish policy and administrative procedures for endorsing participation ideals but also promote the formation of civil society (servants) that could play important role in the

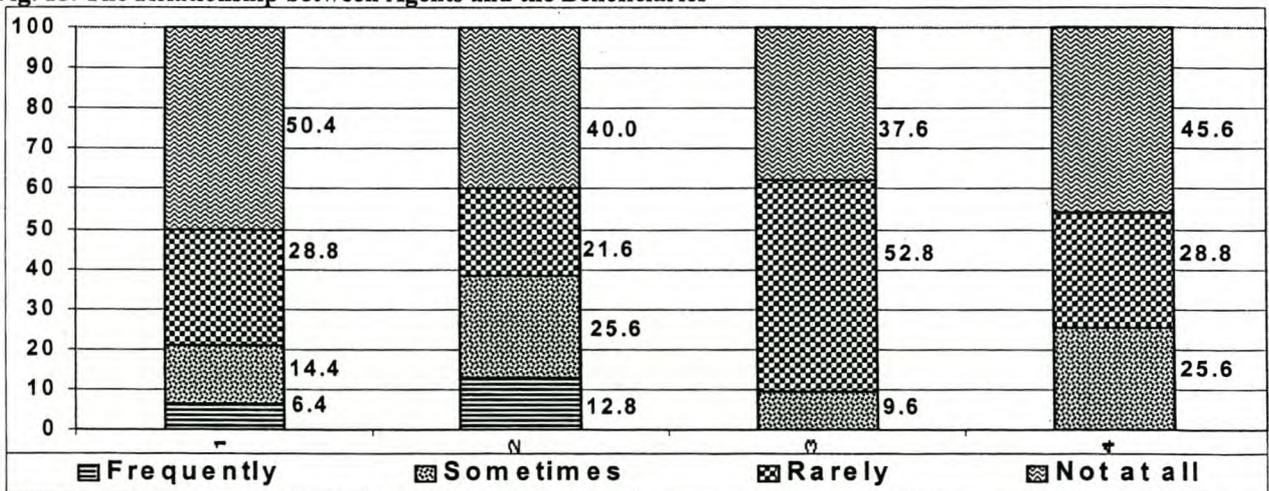
efficient implementation of policies and realisation of authentic form of community participation (Midgley & Others, 1986: 149).

In the previous chapter each research site was related to its specific rural development project, and some points of impact, planning and project related questions have been attempted in order to see how the projects were undertaken and what the results and reactions were. This chapter, within the above context of the theoretical background of the research, will attempt to comprehend the overall research feed-back and to reflect on it in relation to the policies, strategies and long term national plans on sectoral level, where at the same time analyses the environment, social and economic arenas.

### 9.2. On People's Role in Planning

One of the main ingredients of a planning process is a good relationship among parties, i.e. the beneficiaries and development agent(s). This element can enhance implementation and enrich the content of the plan so that the envisaged result can be at least as intended.

Fig. 15. The Relationship between Agents and the Beneficiaries



- 1=How many times do officers visit to evaluate the project & its influence?
- 2=Do Donors follow up & provide adequate assistance?
- 3=Do donors seek idea & suggestions from the people to use it constructively?
- 4=Have project agents encourage you to participate productively?

This relationship then can be expressed in terms of discussion, meetings, sharing ideas and knowledge, technical and material assistance. In this regard, the general feeling of the people towards the donors and their interaction, as illustrated in the figure 15 above, could be described as follows. There was minimal communication and encouragement, and often they are shrouded with loose connections and weak interface, since the interaction is often rare and it seems there is little social contact between the two groups. In another instance, 98.4% of the respondents have described the agents' resistance to allowing indigenous knowledge in the project planning process. In the case of follow-up support by the government in financial and other ways, almost half, 47.2% of the replies indicate a negative perception regarding the extent, time and amount.

Concerning the dialogue and participation on basic decisions, which they think, could be the proper way of dealing their needs and priorities, the responses seem to indicate genuine initial and other successive encounters, (see table-16).

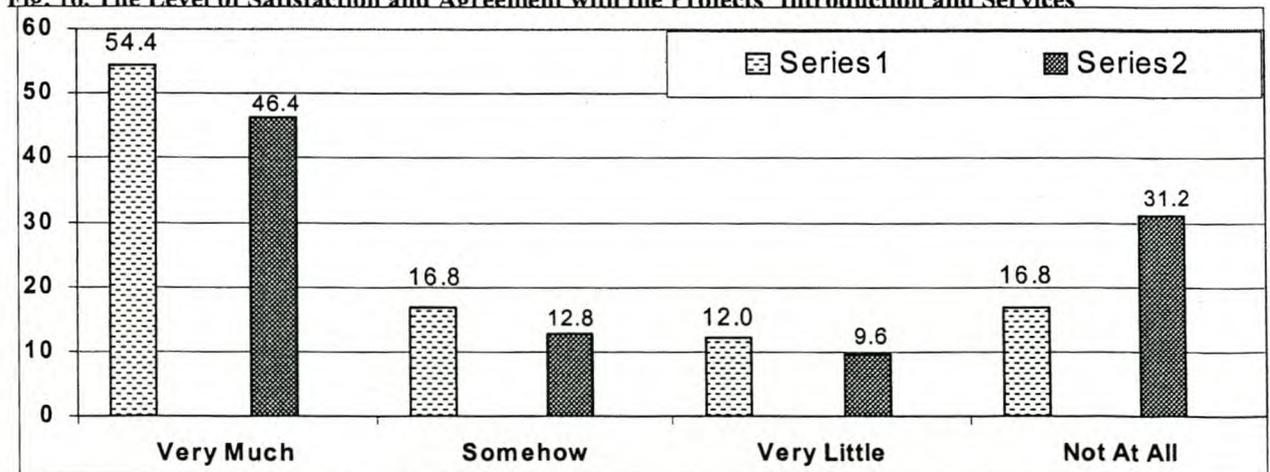
**Table 16. The General Response to People’s Involvement in the Planning Process**

	You had meetings with agents before the project started	You had meeting before project commencement with the community	You think you were adequately involved in decision making	You think it was essential for you to be involved	Introduction of Project according to priority & need of community
Yes	62.40%	67.20%	12%	86.40%	54.40%
No	37.60%	32.80%	88%	13.60%	45.60%

But there is the view that most, 88%, would like to be adequately involved in the decision making aspect of the planning course, as they consider this the appropriate way of determining their needs and priorities. Involvement could have decreased the 45.6% “no” responses that highlight that a number of peoples’ main concerns were not addressed by the projects in their rural areas. Moreover, the extent of non-exercising of ones’ rights and choices (according to 42.4% of respondents) could be lowered by giving more opportunities of taking part in the decision-making than the insignificant involvement allowed (according to 28.8% of respondents), while the agents hold the major power (as 72.8% of the respondents claim). This would allow the beneficiaries to be active and main players instead only participating in the implementation phase (28.8%) and remaining passive or submissive (58.4%) sometimes simply as employees (33.6%) or without expressing their responsibility (57.2%).

This doesn’t mean we should disregard or belittle the level of high and enough satisfaction, roughly adding up to 75%, for sufficient service generated from the projects, neither the locations where 46.4% are content, and 56.8% see the projects as positively impacting on their community; even if there are sufficient (31.2%) respondents against the site selection, and almost half percent (43.2%) of respondents feel uneasiness about the influence of the projects on the community’s socio-economic life (see figure 16).

**Fig. 16. The Level of Satisfaction and Agreement with the Projects’ Introduction and Services**



Series 1 = Are you satisfied with the introduction of the project & its provision of services?  
 Series 2 = Do you agree with the initiation of the Project & its location?

From the perspectives of employment creation and influence on the peoples' income & the knowledge and skills people should acquire or learn, all the views in support of the projects are lower than half of the population. Likewise, the reaction of the benefit gained by the people indicate more than half the population feel positive (see table 17 below). This reflection could merely be attributed to the positive impacts made upon the poor and especially the women (that includes girls), which could be summed up as 61.6%. Nevertheless, there is a high tendency to believe that the projects are undertaken in ineffective (31.2%), assumed to have missed the would-be objectives; or otherwise that they could have been successful had they been performed in a different way or targeted on another crucial need.

**Table 17. Projects' Influence on Income, Local Job, Skill, and Benefit and also Quality of Life**

	Does the project have influence on your income level	How many local people got jobs during the project implementation	Have people learnt new and relevant skills & acquired knowledge due to the project	Do people make benefits due to the project	Has the overall quality of life of the community improved due to the help & introduction of the project
<b>Yes</b>	<b>48.00%</b>	<b>48.00%</b>	<b>46.40%</b>	<b>45.60%</b>	<b>48.80%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>52.00%</b>	<b>52.00%</b>	<b>53.60%</b>	<b>54.40%</b>	<b>51.20%</b>

Since the people have trust in partnerships (53%) with any development sponsors and getting together (36%) then the way out of this confusion would be by power transfer to the people. On the other hand the people's commitment to mobilisation and changing the low level of participation, contribution to maintain the project and engaging actively in project related activities ought to be strengthened, so that multiple and sustainable gains can be brought into being.

**9.3. On the Environment**

Among the five research sites there are environmental concerns in Sheeb and Azien, and to some extent in the latter village the people have already experienced the consequence of the water project implementation. As is clearly known, the remaining part of the country's forests are found along the river banks and some metres in, and they constitute substantial part of the total area comparing to other types, especially in the lowlands (see App.9). In the case of Sheeb the project is instigating deforestation of this part of the environmental resources, putting pressure on the underground water, and promoting more farming of the same kind by other groups which definitely is and would escalate the exposure and devastation of riverine vegetation.

The project field is close to the riverbank, a sign of forest clearance which is still continuing to expand in size as more Date seedlings are planted all along the same area parallel to the riverside. Such plantation cause damage to the riverbanks, putting them at risk of erosion as the watercourses change their direction from time to time and much arable land become unproductive (Negassie, 2002: 66). In the same blueprint/manner, government owned plantation

is also taking place on the other side of the river under the same conditions and using the same technique. Then it's simple for someone to imagine what kind of competition will crop up, where already some of the same clan have got four to five hectares and the remaining two communities (the Tigre and another Rashadia groups) are also expressing interest, exerting great pressure on the administration.

This kind of farming requires an enormous amount of water, and is now relying on the underground source. In the region of high temperature and evapo-transpiration, but low groundwater recharging capacity (see App. 10), besides the soil's lower rate of water sopping up according to the present's watering system (pumping water from the well and dashing it straight using tubes, similar to Photo 6) could aggravate depletion of water resources. In the long run the threat could be strong as the plants' roots have the capacity of penetrating many metres deep and growing up to more than 15 metres too. This implies that the need for more water will steadily increase with time while the place has a very low rainfall.

**Photo 6. Typical and Widely Used Traditional Watering System**



*Source: Negassie & Others; 2002, Soil and Water Conservation Manual For Eritrea*

Some people may argue the importance of Date farming as biological conservation method for riverbank protection and the influence of the dam constructed some kilometres up stream which is serving be for many plantations around it and will be used more. But this would depend on the amount of rain on the eastern escarpment and the rate of drainage which is naturally slower than the rate of mining the water resources. So the question is, has the project been properly studied from a feasibility and environmental impact perspectives by the concerned body or is it an ambitious and politically oriented decision without due consultation and thorough investigation.

The problem with the Azien water supply project is the unprecedented huge erosion which resulted due to the water (line) canal, which is made to pass through the fields up the slope of the

village. Though according to verification of some ex-employee, who participated in the construction, the depth and design are good enough, yet the people of the village have encountered a problem which has never been seen on their field that was completely safe and intact from any such kind of exposure. Moreover, they were forced to spend more resources to safeguard and repair what has been damaged. This phenomenon appeared during the rainy season, which it would mean that there is always the possibility of it occurring every year. It could unfortunately be more devastating if stormy rains pound the softened canal. This leaves the farmers with the fear that they do not know how to come up with a lasting solution before they again see the problem exacerbated into more land erosion and distorting (breaking) their farmlands by creating more canals within the plain fields.

#### **9.4. Influence on Socio-Economic Arena**

Depending on the extent of the intervention and the socio-economic, cultural and political atmosphere, almost every development project has some sort of unwanted side-effects. Sometimes they might be mitigated to a large extent at different time spectrum, even if wicked problems' source can not be totally avoided or solved with much better inventiveness.

One of the reasons for discontent in Sheeb is the land-use conflict, which often arises between horticulturalists and pastoralist in the lowland. Most of the time the complaint is due to the intrusion of animals on the farm, hindrance to water and other resources which are always under constant threat and destruction as more lands are converted into farms. In short as Negassie (2002: 66) clearly reported that the destruction of riverine vegetation could mean the end of livestock, and therefore the end of the pastoralists' livelihood. The same discomfort is experienced also in the other research sites in terms of ownership and economic loss.

For instance in Korbariya the land on which the school is built, an institution that serves people from outside the village, is the most productive (fertile) land relative to other sections of the villages' territory. That is why many people disagree with the location, and retrospectively think that another site would have been selected had there been proper discussion and consultation. It is evident that one can feel the same in a place where there is high population density and the growth is definitely in the long run to influence the share of land holding. Moreover, the 10% share of the project cost is allotted according to land possession criteria to each household of all villages, which use the school, but not those villages who might use it sometime in the future and those individuals using it who come from other places. But this doesn't include the value of the site and no compensation is given to the village and those persons who have been designated to farm there.

At personal level, the same problem of land applies to the Wara dam project where some village members' land was included within the project circumference while the field soil of others was used for construction, as the dam is the earth-fill type. After the project completion, the affected group expected some benefit or share from activities to be conducted or compensation for the land they lost. This did not happen and those affected people are still remaining with fewer resources and some even consider themselves as being betrayed. From the village perspective the dam's optimal capacity to irrigate more than 20 hectares has never been achieved. The main reason is that the construction by the agents was not performed as it should have been. According to the people, the job was not completed but suddenly stopped without proper evaluation. Machinery was needed to intensify and expand the depth by dismantling the strong part of the earth's lower surface right from the core of the dam, where it would have held most of the water. Therefore, the dam now is only providing water for less than 8 hectares and its capacity is diminishing due to heavy siltation from the nearby fields, which are the main catchments but do not have sufficient vegetation cover. Hence, 64% of the respondents envisaged that the dam will be out of use after four to five years, which is slightly higher guess than the World Bank's estimation for the life span of small and large dams (Emerton & Asrat, 1998:27). Thus, despite some cooperation, after the construction, in terms of a loan to acquire two water-pump motors (which very soon became inoperable) the eight year old dam did not realise the premeditated dream and ambition of the villagers because its potential has been limited. Moreover, the high rate of siltation has not so far been dealt with, and the dam is facing a problem at the joint of the embankment and the spillway eroding some part of the wall. With time and strong rain all the above elements might exacerbate the condition of the dam so that it ceases to be even a source of water for animals, unless some remedies and basic re-excavation are done very soon for the sake of the revival of the people's socio-economy.

In Ade-awhi and Azien the socio-economic problem is manifested in terms of lack of income to pay and the feeling of powerlessness. In other words, the ability to pay the required minimum health fees and the standardised water tariff are becoming for some poor section of the society beyond their capacity. In these instances, the Poor's condition might worsen if they take the option of not using the services anymore, and they could be obliged to return to their old-style habits. In Ade-awhi as the service quality dwindles from time to time, according to the information gathered from the personnel and the people, the question of drug types, qualities and their availability compared to the payment to be made could lead to the poor not using the facility rather than sacrificing their scarce resources for medication. In Azien, after the water wells were integrated into the new water system, all people are now paying 2.50 Eritrean Nakfa per barrel which means that their expenses depend on their consumption rate. As such this

payment is fixed so as to cover all the running costs and to save some for future maintenance and replacement without which it would be difficult to sustain the project. But this kind of arrangement withholds their previous usufruct right on the same source and makes it difficult for them to cope to the new requirement. In practical terms, they are excluded and these cases in both villages may expose the poor to vulnerability, especially to unwanted sickness, which could have impact on their productivity that will plunge them directly or indirectly into a poverty trap.

#### **9.5. In Relation to Institutions and Policies**

According to MoLG (MoLG, 1996), Eritrea is a unitary state made up of three bodies i.e. the executive, legislative and judiciary. Regarding the share of power the judiciary body acts independently, while the remaining two are interdependent, so that sometimes it is difficult to distinguish on behalf of which one member is practising authority in spite of their distinct natures and powers. In terms of influence the Ministry of Local Government occupies an important and central part in the cabinet and in the internal administration of all social, political and economic aspects of the country (Tsegai, 2000:16), as it is endowed by the government under the proclamation of 86/1996.

This proclamation for the current regional and administrative structure authorises the executive bodies of administration, which operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Local Government, to exist at the three levels of administration, while the rest of the Ministries can have their branches as they deem necessary. The purpose of the new administration is to enhance the decentralization of public service by replacing the highly centralized four levels of administration, enacted in proclamation 26/1992.

During these two periods, in 1994 new land reform legislation was proclaimed which gives the government exclusive right of land ownership. In addition few of its main tenets as described in short by FAO (1994:1 app. 3) are, lifetime right of usufruct for those whose main source of income is the land (i.e. farmers, cattle breeders or herders...); the elimination of village or family ownership (diesa or tsilmi respectively) of land; but maintaining the village's role as an important partner in allotting land to those who qualify. At the same time it focuses on compensating proportionally for the usufructuary losses incurred by the right-holders, in case the government takes land from citizens for development purposes, etc.

Under these two key laws, i. e. the establishment of regional administration and land reform, a plan in relation to rural development projects could come from various directions and face enormous influences. The superiority of the Ministry of Local Government over the other sectors of the public services sometimes leads to incoherent and conflicting position that could never permit to come to the same terms of agreement, because the top managements and the local

administrators could view on the same issue from different perspectives and priorities. Hence, institutions, especially those responsible for land use, in their procedural work have no complete mandate to initiate, decide and follow up projects, and certainly not to advocate and repair retrospectively or to instigate mitigation measures.

The researcher has met, in connection to the research sites, with government department officials, representatives of local administrations and development agents. The main focus was on how a development plan undergoes scrutiny and approval, and what are the mandatory criteria or instructions for implementation and interdependence among different government institutions. The first impression is of disco-ordination, and the incompatibility among each other's policies and to the above-mentioned laws.

Mr. Tsegai Teamrat, of DoL, revealed that there are two forms, i.e. 020 and 005.1, from the office that need to be filled in by investors or development agents. The aims are to reassure that the project is progressing consistently within the time frame mentioned; for the purpose of information data base collection to control idleness of land allotted; and to obtain recommendations and confirmation as well as the support of other concerned institutions. These could enable the authorities, to a certain extent, to take some of the essential steps and incorporate information from concerned bodies, such as about the environment, type of land and details of the project's objective, etc before issuing permission.

But good use is not always made of these forms when considering all small and medium projects, except for some heavy projects (such as industries) considered, as in the words of Mr. Beyene Misgina, as category A by the DoE and which have to be closer to the urban areas or inside urban vicinity of the main towns. Even for these types the requirement of environmental information assessment is not taken seriously since officials fear that it could discourage investors. In the case of the B and C criteria, the local government officials do the issuing of acquiring land and the implementing of projects, at times in cooperation with ministries' branches under its jurisdiction.

Another public office that is of great importance and must play a decisive role is the Water Resource Department. However, according to Mr. Yohannes Michael his office has seldom participated in any development decision-making; and so if any projects of any sort were undertaken in the rural areas, most of them were without the pre-knowledge of the department and those involved in the project carried them out in their own way.

For instance, the Date Farm was not followed up and was given the approval of its feasibility study by the Rural Enterprise Unit, before granting the owner free-interest money, without the plans being presented to or consultation with any of the above three departments. The only

relationship he built was with the regional administration and its subordinates. And as he boldly spoke of, not even he made the necessary approach to the Ministry of Agriculture that could have dealt with him and set out procedures. If he had done so, they would have instructed him and checked his plans against their riverbank conservation requirements or directives of 1992 and 1994 which were renewed with more distance (from the river-bank) restriction in 1999 (Negassie, 2002: 66-67).

In the case of the Azien water project, one could anticipate the necessity of the Water Resource Department's support and investigation in identifying the right site and to assess the water capacity of the would-be water sources. But none of this was done, so it is not surprising that if some respondents claim that the location of one source could be in a dangerous site and others point out that one of the wells internal wall show sign of crumbling. This may be due to soil type and/or poor construction work. Likewise, the Department of Environment may be considering it as category B or C or was not being notified, did not participate in the project identification or decision-making phases. In this case the consultant was a private firm called GEDECC by whom the site decision and design of the project were taken. The plan should have been submitted to the Environment office where, as Mr Fisehaye and Mr Beyene say, a committee would have had the last word to confirm and give clearance. But as mentioned, all these did not happen and the decision was taken by somebody else somewhere without the due process of legal authentication.

Regarding the other research venues, in addition to similar complications and transgression of regulations and public official policies and procedures, there is the infringement of law that occurred in Wara after the construction of the dam. According to the new land law whatever land is used for development has to be compensated for. In the case of dam irrigation, areas under the influence would be shared among the communities despite ownership type. And people who lose land as a result of projects have right for compensation via exchange of equivalent type and size of land (FAO, 1994: 4). Certainly these in any form did not happened in Wara. In Korbariy and Ade-awhi also lands were not valued for reparation where the other beneficiary villages have to pay for the services they are gaining not only from the institution itself but also from the land taken for this purpose.

There are crucial points most would agree on, namely that

1. The local governments' upper hand in initiating and deciding projects for their own regional developments' sake,
2. The lack of legislation for water and environment that could empower the designated offices to get full mandate, and

3. The need for structuring and synchronising all information so that the flow of information would allow comprehensive and common decisions could be approved by all parties, also enhancing the manpower shortage which every sector is facing.

Besides these there are other concerns, such as the issue of the land law. This act has not been implemented fully due to lack of details and procedures in the law itself; shortage of both materials and human capacities, and institutional mechanisms; and the absence of specification between the different government bodies concerning their share of responsibilities. The delay in implementing the law fully, though the reasons behind it cannot be denied, is impeding many development activities. Many developers could respond reluctantly to investment invitations because there is no suitable legal atmosphere to implement land use related programmes. It is also becoming very difficult especially to carry on effective and lasting environmental programmes, although the country is in great need of conserving its resources and sustaining them. On the other hand, with regard to the land use, though the old system is no longer effective legally or formally and was expected to be substituted by the new law, yet the old system still is an instrument and norm with a great degree of influence. In other words, the different land ownership types are still in effect, while the new law's enforcement capacity does not cover every area of development.

The intentions of the new administrative law are to shift power from centre to the periphery where people together with government bodies would be able to take local actions and feel empowered in developing their own programmes or plans, concurrent to the national macroeconomic plans. In this matter the people are also supposed to draft their by-laws in harmony with their positive customary norms and laws that could determine their socio-economic issues. But these decentralisation objectives are not realised due to lack of opportunity or space for the people to address their needs rather than the administration to act on behalf of them, in a situation where government bodies are not in mutual cohesion at policy and implementation level. At the same time those in the executive posts are acting both as representatives of the people and as government officials with great inclination to remain faithful to the central authority. This atmosphere creates confusion and mistrust between people and the government; and the administration, instead of being conducive to cooperation and open for more participation, on the contrary becomes restrictive, closed and use one-way flows of instruction that discourages the people from attempting to proclaim their opinions, opposition, or support and to complain to concerned institutions without due approval of the local government.

## **Chapter Ten. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **10.1. Conclusions**

Rural development as strategy has been used for many years under different types of development theories and planning. This is because of the undeniable importance of the rural economy, regardless of the reasons behind the attempts to transform it and to relieve the people's hardships and poverty and to solve major problems. However, the continuous inability by developing countries to lift people out of poverty and to improve their lives, confirms the difficulty faced by these countries (Obi, 1999: 2). Thus, the rate of alleviating rural poverty reached its slowest momentum in the past three decades, and culminated in the present number of rural poor which is more than 3/4 of the 1.2 billion people who are in extreme consumption poverty (IFAD, 2001: 1).

Usually the means applied to intervene against the main constraints and to target rural poverty reduction is by launching multiple rural development projects. These would consider the most needed basic necessities and facilities, which could enable the country to break the deadlock of the poverty trap, by initiating the path of socio-economic and environmental promotion. These projects could be operated in an individual or in an integrated manner, either for specific groups of a society and/or for the general use of the rural community.

Realising the big gap in income, poverty, nutrition, health, education, transport and communication and other services, the Government of Eritrea has, from its day of independence, launched rural development programmes to minimise these differences between rural and urban areas. Moreover, it acknowledged the contribution of the rural people in the struggle and present as well as future economy, as the majority of the population are farmers and the highest share of GDP is agricultural products; hence, the rehabilitation and recovery programme in project forms heavily focussed on the rural sector, which definitely has an influence on the urban poverty too.

Based on these projects, the research on five sites highlights some issues on the planning process and its implications. Despite the good intentions from the government side and considerable commitment to transform the rural sector, the level of involvement by the beneficiaries in the project cycle (i.e. identifying, designing and implementing of rural development ventures) has been very low or was insignificant. The people are always at the receiver end of the project and for the most part their contribution is limited to financial aspects and sometimes in implementation as they offer their assets. This is contrary to what participation principles endorse as the people's right actively to be part of the whole planning process (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1996). The main contacts, dialogues and resolutions occur among development sponsors and the committees who finalise the whole plan, but presume to represent the villagers

for reporting purposes. However, in the case of Sheeb the situation is completely different as negotiation took place between the individual and the local government while the residents of that area were completely uninformed and excluded.

To a certain extent, it is natural for any development project, be it for private or public purposes, to have positive impacts regardless of its planning process. Notwithstanding the theory of direct proportion between participation in development projects and benefits, it is very possible benefits could be derived from the weakest forms of participation especially in developing countries (Smith, 1998: 197). Likewise despite the lower level of participation of the Eritrean rural sector, where relatively speaking all the vital public services, support, access and improvement were missing for many decades, development projects' impact on its poor and ravaged socio-economic conditions are significant. These results could be verified by the feedback of the research, since many claimed that introducing rural projects have diminished some of their heavy burdens as they are now able to save their income, time, assets and improve their life style and standard.

But the projects in general have not fulfilled their goals maximally and there are many things remaining that should be done parallel with their initiation. This means utilisation is at the lowest level in terms of spreading the benefits, exploiting projects' capacities, expanding to various activities that could meet both basic concrete and basic abstract needs. The beneficiaries could have boosted their current gains into more results had they been properly engaged, in the real sense of participation, throughout the whole process of planning. At the moment efforts are only focusing on how to provide for basic concrete needs that should not be at the expense of beneficiaries' abstract needs, as they are both inseparable (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1996: 24-25). And even at times the objective of enhancing basic material needs of the most vulnerable ones means that the surrounding rural people as a whole are overlooked. Therefore, in this case the State's most important task in fostering people's organisation is to promote, persuade and stimulate the readiness of the people in cooperating more for better benefits from the projects. On the other hand the people must form a mechanism with which to materialise their expectations in a practical manner and put their responsibilities in motion consistently without disengagement from the partnership they form with the development agents and especially the State.

There are also some unwanted consequences that resulted due to lack of proper planning, implementation and consultation with the people and the legitimate government institutions. These influence the very poor, in terms of income and access to sources, such as water or health institution, that could reverse the trend of rural development by compelling them to rely on

traditional practices, if the necessary measures concerning this section of the community are not in place. In addition the loss of assets, especially land and all benefits from it, could make life difficult and consequently in the future might lead to conflict and migration as well as unnecessary pressure, either by invasion or other means, on the environment in search of agricultural land, grazing, fuel and other sources of livelihoods.

For these consequences and problems, government institutions are directly and/or indirectly responsible since they have not created coherent policies and implementation mechanisms to control and evaluate projects in relation to socio-economic and environmental impacts. At the same time, there have not been common ground to synchronise information to lay an effective decision-making foundation. Each institution seems unaware what the other is doing and how its policies are related within the horizontal and vertical government administrative structures. This allows for loose control and the manipulation of many development agencies that finalise their plans with certain bodies alone, such as the local government, which often tend to think of its regional development only and issue permission without thorough investigation and consultation with concerned government institutions.

## **10.2. Recommendations**

Eritrea is a new nation with very low institutional capacity, facilities distribution and resources accumulation. Therefore, it is logical, to some extent, to see the existence of the above mentioned findings and to experience problems especially in rural areas. But these do not mean that there are no spaces for reform, improvement, evaluation with the intention of furthering the development efforts in the right way and learning from past experience in order to draft a well framed and comprehensive plan for the future. Therefore, the following suggestions might help in this regard and contribute to change.

- It's a fact that economic development when it's sustained for a long time could have a durable positive influence in reducing poverty, although it's not an end in itself. The creation of employment opportunities is necessary, especially for those poor people who may not be able to participate in self-help employment due to some economic and social reasons such as vulnerability, lack of sufficient income, possession of too few assets, shortage of financial and technical support, etc. At the same time inequality must be addressed by providing equal opportunity to attain economic benefits that can enhance the fight against poverty. So rural development projects should open up more possibilities for the poorest people of the community and any kind of exclusion that could appear by imposition or unintentionally, must be avoided, since the poor are often susceptible to low-education, low-skills, and low-income.

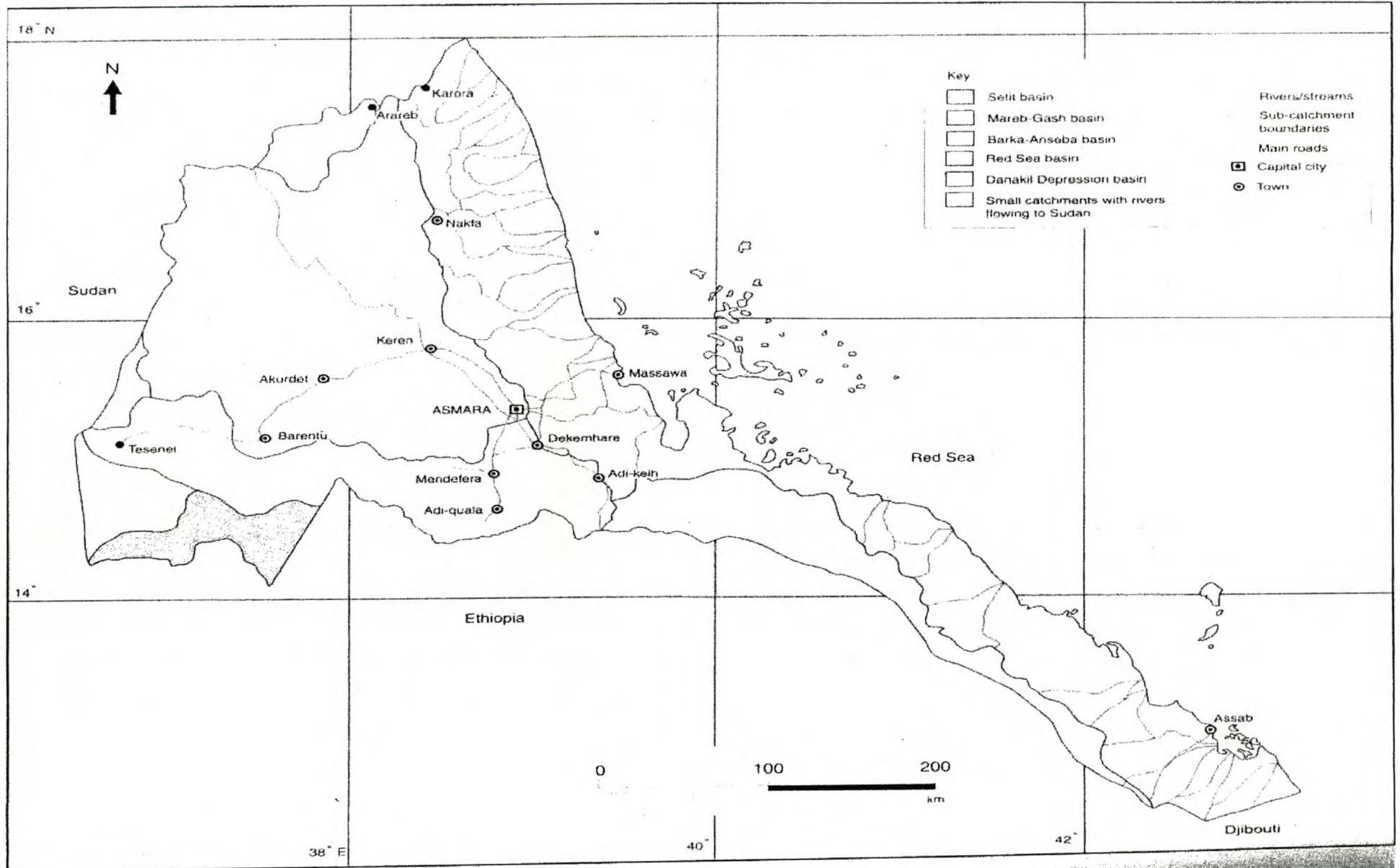
- Another fact is that like most LDCs, where most of the population are peasant farmers, many people in Eritrea are farmers and/or pastoralists. Any rural development strategy should always include aspects relating to agricultural development. This is because in the rural areas people are highly dependent on agricultural activities as their main economic source; hence it is one of the sectors that the poor should have access to, since a large number of the poor reside in the rural areas. In this case it is necessary to incorporate in all rural projects linkages to agriculture so that poor people will be empowered, improve their efficiency in managing and using their human, land and water resources, introduce appropriate technologies and so sustain their development. This could be done by updating their knowledge via adult educational programmes focusing on resource management, environmental protection, health and sanitation, income generation, sustainable agriculture and maintaining and improving their common projects or facilities.
- Policies intended for the development and expansion of rural public and economic services are drafted and implemented by different government departments or ministries. In a country with a small population it would be better if one department is responsible for coordinating efforts of all concerned departments and for the formulating, regulating and supervising rural development policies and programmes. This could prevent unwanted duplication of jobs, wasting resources and equally create a coalition of human resources that could facilitate or speed up the process of investigation and planning, while solving personnel and experts scarcity. This is not to replace the mandate of each public sector but to harmonise and narrow the gap of misunderstanding and lack of information. It would also make it easier to follow up and examine the implications, progress and risk of any project and at the end would enable to take the necessary management decisions to be taken either to mitigate or plan other contingent devise or inject further support to speed up the operation. Otherwise, policies or plans made for the development of a region and known only to a certain section of the government, could end up worsening people's lives and have adverse effects on communities as a whole, especially those related to agricultural and pastoral lands that accommodate a great number of people as their main source of livelihood. Furthermore, there must be compatibility with the customary life, behaviour and traditional administration of the intended beneficiaries of a programme before it is implemented. Then there would not be conflict with the policy or plan and also among the population itself as their ideas and their way of life would be respected.
- For any institution to be effective one of the core prerequisites for it is to have its own mandate clearly defined by legislation. This would enshrine it with the power to safeguard

its main policies in terms of law and so at the end it can be respected by developers and other institutions who presume that specific task could be carried out by their branches and/or some other private consultants. Agreement among different sectors, investors and residents of a certain area will not guarantee implementation of safe development initiatives. This must be complemented and endorsed under specific laws of the country and the responsibility must be given to an institution to oversee that all parties adhere to the rules. In the case of Eritrea this requirement must be put in place urgently by enacting laws regarding water, environment and land. The last one was already enacted in 1994, but not put into effect fully yet, due mainly to lack of details and procedures of the law itself (in addition to shortages material and human capacities, and institutional mechanisms) that does not specify share of responsibilities between the different government bodies concerned. So it must be revised and expounded so that the act should explicitly indicate the authority of the ministries and the responsibilities of other in-line government sectors. It must also have a good application mechanism where every one gets the same message and ultimately respects it as the final binding law for development.

- To build up strong and sustained participation based on people's need and priorities requires allowing them to practice their rights and traditional management system in harmony with the central government programme. It must be a slow process of conviction and continuous dialogue that could help to create favourable situation for all parties and to allow flexibility in their decisions when striving for common goals. This necessitates empowering the people to see the benefits and costs of a plan and its short and long term implications. In other words, they have to be part of the planning procedure from the very beginning. In principle, i.e. according to the proclamation of 86/1996, rural areas in Eritrea through their village administration have the right and responsibility to take appropriate steps to ensure their needs are met by any development projects. The legislation's core concept of decentralization is to empower people with the right to decide on its own plan, to control and monitor development activities in its jurisdiction and to share power among the council and its administration bodies and then save more financial and other material resources. Therefore the veto power of the governors or administrators which the new structure has bestowed on them must be excluded to create room for more check and balance. This should be regardless of the fact that rural development is financed by the central government, as they do not yet have their own means of raising funds (creating a source of income that could enable them to exercise a sort of financial independence and autonomy in decision making) that could enable them to control their development action.

- Development is a steady progress towards improvement of specific objectives. In the sphere of rural projects it aims at alleviating the level of poverty with persistent endeavours by taking all dimensions of development into consideration. But if there is a lack of or insufficient community awareness as to proper management of the project, then the noble aims of investors and development planners will be short lived or a waste of resources. This implies the need of capacity building, which includes training as an integral component and must be undertaken as part of the development programme so as to ensure the ownership of the project. In addition, the introduction of the project must enable the development of some other initiatives which could run parallel with the main aim. For instance, if a health centre is built not only medication but all health related matters must be dealt with and the centre must be used for educational purposes. Likewise for educational facilities, it would be more feasible if the programme of adult education and technical trainings are instituted. This could promote national plans of expanding preventive health strategies and decrease the adult illiteracy rate. Dam construction should be a source of income and meet demands for agricultural products more than just being a water supply for animals. All these would strengthen the capacity of rural people so that the initiation of the project could yield its maximum results and people can be encouraged for the project's sustainability by contributing to cover the running cost, maintenance and other costs in order to keep the project intact or expand it into a more advanced level.
- The present farmers or peasants of LDCs face the problem of employment opportunities, access to land, means of production, low income or underdevelopment and so on, which contribute to hardship and make it difficult for them to better themselves without consistent assistance from outside. The worst of all is their disability to use effectively and efficiently existing resources at their disposal, often due to socio-cultural reasons and misunderstanding among community members. In relation to this fact in Eritrea, as the researcher observed, dam-projects constructed in the hope of increasing agricultural production and helping to conserve soil and water, are not in use or have stagnated. Encouraging the setting up of cooperative or communal farming seems imperative in order to solve the issue of landholdings, and at the same time for efficient use of common water and some land. This could have multiple effects and the question of maintenance and sustainability could in some form enjoy some back-up from the community when they realise the effectiveness and the income they could generate. It would be better to allow people to establish their own type of farm associations rather than to take away a large tract of ground from them, as happened in the case of the Date Farm. Then the farmers and pastoralists could gain peace and some income. It would be remarkably successful now

and particularly in the future, if people are mobilised and have the opportunity of participating in farming the same land with their resources. This will allow for peaceful development. It will minimise conflict and strengthen the people financially. Through the use of advanced but appropriate technologies the farming could be diversified and efficient and the scarce resources could be effectively managed. Moreover, this could lessen the pressure on land use and the destabilisation of the environment and also the remaining biodiversity, as more people would not be allowed to compete for land and natural resources, as is happening now.



Ma 3 2. Major drainage basins of Eritrea

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Budget and Its Utilisation for Regional Reconstruction and Development 1992 - 2001

Budget Utilisation (%)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total (MUS\$)	Total%
Health	24.07	16.33	24.51	16.69	24.25	1.07	8.3	17.7	3.4	0.2	22.35	10.11
Education	12.54	24.88	17.19	11.87	18.93	12.3	17.3	18.9	30.4	15.2	42.32	19.15
Water Supply	29.19	2.65	7.35	8.97	17	24.7	6.9	13.5	12.7	15.1	30.35	13.73
Administration #	11.23	17.99	16.54	18.05	14.28	8.6	7.3	9.9	11.3	6.9	23.45	10.61
Various Buildings	-	-	-	5.43	6.09	8.4	4.6	7.3	6.4	16.1	16.83	7.61
Agriculture	1.34	13.31	22.22	19.63	9.69	13.9	30.7	14.9	10.7	14.7	34.92	15.8
Feeder Road	3.42	6.55	5.34	17.32	3.33	28.7	19.8	15.4	22.68	30	42.11	19.05
Vocational Training	-	-	-	-	3.64	1.4	0.8	1	1	1.1	2.36	1.07
Environmental Sanitation		0.37	1.05	0.29	0.91	0.03	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.3	1.32	0.6
Facilities & Other expenses*	8.77	7.45	6.85	1.76	1.88	1	2.9	0.7	1.9	0.4	5.03	2.27
<b>Total Budget (million US\$)</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>12.62</b>	<b>15.08</b>	<b>22.38</b>	<b>23.82</b>	<b>31.19</b>	<b>25.39</b>	<b>23.54</b>	<b>43.44</b>	<b>19.35</b>	<b>221.02</b>	<b>100</b>
From Government %	43.95	56.5	46	63.75	44.82	38.6	60.6	46.4	52.5	23.14	46.64	
" External Fund %	13.1	24.47	34	26.48	50.28	59.93	33.9	48.7	43	73.84	46.44	
" Community %	42.95	19.03	20	9.77	4.9	1.47	5.6	4.9	4.5	3.02	6.92	
<b>Utilisation Rate %</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>92</b>	

Source: MoLG, 2002, Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001appendix

NB. 1994-1996 Exchange rate was 1US\$=6.68 Ethiopian Birr

1997-2000 " " " " " 1US\$=7.20 Eritrean Nakfa

\* For 1992 it includes rehabilitation of ex-combatants & flour mills, while for 1993-1995 it also includes town planning, but for 1996 & 1997 it only includes town planning

# For 1992-1994 it includes the expense of building various constructions

Appendix 2 Agricultural Activities In distribution of Assets, Extension Services, and Soil Conservation in 1992 – 2001

RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES			1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	TOTAL
DISTRIBUTION	Livestock	Free	-	3309	172	47565	8048	1992	50122	-	400	387	111995
		Loan	-	2095	4200	670	1857	619	26	316	-	-	9783
	Grain Seeds	Free	-	43438	70445	20565	2942	1666	2914	169	5	27	142171
		(Quintals) Loan	-	79	1647	1487	2205	3313	14059	11058	4481	1736	40065
	Motor (Water Pump)	Free	-	-	3	14	-	-	-	-	4	4	25
		Loan	-	8	82	84	102	60	146	21	16	15	534
	Fertilizer	Free	-	-	4015	681	12	15	239	-	391	1390	6743
		(Quintals) Loan	-	-	7030	6691	4692	3436	10042	12973	33147	25999	104010
	Agriculture	Free	-	-	8399	14595	36626	52562	95227	1805	46	4707	213967
	Tools	Loan	-	-	-	-	439	1170	17114	9595	3501	5355	37174
	Beehives	Free	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	40
		Loan	-	-	-	-	-	-	4062	153	119	-	4334
Crop Protection	Sprayed area	Hectare	-	21227	-	-	x	4070	54356	4076	9598	5575	98902
	Sprayed	KG	-	1542	4934	1896	2365	1590	1770	3906	1166	2258	21427
	Insecticides	Litre	-	7261	17341	122046	85024	-	55342	13254	28880	6825	335973
Soil Conservation	Terraces	Km	625767	10769	9639	14348	232726	158570	29422	2615	1838	4816	1090510
	Prepared	Hectare	377	506941	8196	5093	547	3185	8053	13903	913	2966	550174
		Number	38022	99040	235482	249939	75106	96162	297866	100654	455197	120551	1768019
	Forestation	Seedling	1655315	15232804	10730518	5936127	3168676	6058397	6005605	2637803	3579012	4053972	59058229
		Holes Dug	3603001	2882901	7639949	8539146	2428037	3739650	4604143	3889113	5721849	2719513	45767302
Livestock	Medicated	Number	176991	424228	1425126	815692	686717	1007145	1425990	1320965	3009920	2227841	12520615
	Vaccinated	Number	384468	591564	733969	902207	1138980	962996	441341	460288	2030238	1502083	9148134
		<b>Total</b>	561459	1015792	2159095	1717899	1825697	1970141	1867331	1781253	5040158	3729924	21668749

Source: MoLG, 2002, Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001appendix

Appendix 3: Number of Livestock (in '000)

Type of Livestock	1992	1997	% Increase
cattle	1258	1927	53.2
Sheep	851	2129	150.2
Goat	4153	4662	12.2
Camel	185	319	72.4
Equine	268	518	93.3
Poultry		1134	
Bees		26	

Source: MoF, 2001

Appendix 4: Number of Newly Constructed, Rehabilitated, Distribution of Health Establishments & the Number of People Served During 1992 - 2001

Health Establishment		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	TOTAL
Hospital	New	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
	Rehabilitated	-	3	1	3	1	5	1	2	-	1	17
	Distribution	12	12	12	13	13	13	13	13	15	15	131
Mini Hospital	Distribution	6	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	76
Health Centre	New	2	9	12	7	7	7	-	-	1	-	45
	Rehabilitated	1	1	-	1	2	-	5	2	-	-	12
	Distribution	21	23	36	39	47	48	48	48	49	49	408
Health Station	New	0	21	34	31	27	17	14	1	-	-	145
	Rehabilitated	6	4	-	-	1	1	1	2	1	2	18
	Distribution	64	83	110	150	167	182	194	197	197	197	1541
<b>No. of People Served</b>		910449	1065548	1329636	1708648	1709133	2078107	2127121	1961059	1423340	2233349	16546390

Source: MoLG, 2002, Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001appendix

## Appendix 5: Leading Causes of Deaths in Hospitals and Health Centres in 2000

SN	Under 5 Years			5 Years & Above		Total	
	Diagnosis	Death	%	Diagnosis	Death	Death	%
1	Acute respiratory Infections	142	24.57	Malaria, all types	178	320	17.7
2	Diarrhoea, all forms	122	21.11	HIV/AIDS	162	284	15.71
3	Anaemia & Malnutrition	95	16.44	TB, all types	94	189	10.45
4	Septicaemia	49	8.48	Acute respiratory Infections	94	143	7.91
5	Malaria, all types	30	5.19	Hypertension, Essential	77	107	5.92
6	Heart Failure	13	2.25	Intra-carnal Injury	73	86	4.76
7	TB, all types	12	2.08	Anaemia & Malnutrition	68	80	4.42
8	HIV/AIDS	11	1.9	Other Liver Diseases	44	55	3.04
9	Burns	3	0.52	Septicaemia	43	46	2.54

Source: MoH, Eritrea Health Profile 2000

## Appendix 6: Number of Schools Newly Constructed &amp; Rehabilitated, Distribution, Student By Gender and General Training in 1992 -2001

Schools		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Kindergarten	New	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	2	-	10
	Rehabilitated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Elementary	New	8	40	55	31	46	32	32	13	5	2
	Rehabilitated	15	43	32	7	13	34	26	18	9	59
	Distribution	387	423	462	499	548	592	619	637	642	644
Junior	New	-	2	4	4	8	5	20	12	-	-
	Rehabilitated	-	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
	Distribution	85	88	92	95	101	108	128	137	137	137
secondary	New	-	1	3	1	-	-	1	2	-	-
	Rehabilitated	-	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	3
	Distribution	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	39	39	39
General Training	Agriculture	-	13523	103168	34988	683	1569	3478	1390	1556	4321
	Home Economics	-	7154	41906	12065	1229	5077	2075	1917	1753	3320
	Tailoring	-	-	-	-	-	85	-	-	-	30
	Fishing	-	-	-	-	-	108	-	-	-	-
	Demobilised & Returnees	-	-	-	-	1604	723	2411	232	340	813

Source: MoLG, 2002, Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001appendix

Appendix 7: Enrolment & Number of Teachers BY Level of Education 1991/92 - 2001/01, the Rate of Increase between 1991/92 & 2000/01, and Student-Teacher Ratio

<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>1991/92</b>	<b>1992/93</b>	<b>1993/94</b>	<b>1994/95</b>	<b>1995/96</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999/00</b>	<b>Jan-00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Elementary	150870	184492	208199	224287	241725	240737	247499	261963	295941	298691	2354404	49.49
Junior	27917	28427	32781	34995	39751	47460	57152	67021	74317	76564	486385	63.54
Secondary	27627	31531	32756	36728	39151	40594	41615	47533	59626	63951	421112	56.8
TTI	1268	2580	398	2185	93	359	478	471	606	961	9399	-31.95
Tech & Voc.	480	537	589	546	536	546	406	908	1018	1866	7432	74.28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>208162</b>	<b>247567</b>	<b>274723</b>	<b>298741</b>	<b>321256</b>	<b>329696</b>	<b>347150</b>	<b>377896</b>	<b>431508</b>	<b>442033</b>	<b>3278732</b>	<b>52.91</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>1991/92</b>	<b>1992/93</b>	<b>1993/94</b>	<b>1994/95</b>	<b>1995/96</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>	<b>1998/99</b>	<b>1999/00</b>	<b>Jan-00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Elementary	3647	4954	5272	5583	5828	5476	5799	5576	6229	6668	55032	45.31
Junior	783	854	978	948	992	1017	1162	1208	1312	1377	10631	43.14
Secondary	758	905	1015	1081	1039	942	959	982	1047	1188	9916	36.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5188</b>	<b>6713</b>	<b>7265</b>	<b>7612</b>	<b>7859</b>	<b>7435</b>	<b>7920</b>	<b>7766</b>	<b>8588</b>	<b>9233</b>	<b>75579</b>	<b>43.81</b>
TTI	31	87	34	44	32	33	38	38	32	37	406	16.22
Tech & Voc.	67	75	63	74	80	79	66	101	104	173	882	61.27
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5286</b>	<b>6875</b>	<b>7362</b>	<b>7730</b>	<b>7971</b>	<b>7547</b>	<b>8024</b>	<b>7905</b>	<b>8724</b>	<b>9443</b>	<b>76867</b>	<b>44.02</b>
E. Students per Teacher	41	37	39	40	41	44	43	47	48	45	43	7.65
J. Students per Teacher	36	33	34	37	40	47	49	55	57	56	46	35.88
S. Students per Teacher	36	35	32	34	38	43	43	48	57	54	42	32.29

Source: MoLG, 2002Annual Report of Regional Reconstruction and Development Activities, 2001

## Appendix 8: School Levels by Region and Ownership Rate By Location

Region	Ownership Rate (%) In Rural					Ownership Rate (%) In Urban				
	Government	Mission	Public	Awkaf	Community	Government	Mission	Public	Awkaf	Community
ANSEBA	76	24	-	-	-	60	25.7	-	14.3	-
DEBUB	92	8	-	-	-	69.2	28.8	-	1.9	-
S. RED SEA	84	-	-	-	-	75	12.5	-	12.5	-
GASH BARK	96	3	-	1	-	80	20	-	0	-
MAEKEL	97	3	-	-	-	70.3	11	8.8	4.4	5.5
N. RED SEA	100	0	-	-	-	87.1	6.5	-	6.5	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>

Source: MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics 2000/01, November 2001, p.26

- Government Schools: are those administered by the Ministry of Education
- Community " " " " " " " Foreign communities
- Mission " " " " " " " Christian Churches
- Awkaf " " " " " " " Islamic religion association
- Public " " " " " " " Municipalities or Village Committees

## Appendix 10: Types of Forest and Woodland Cover

Type of forest cover	Area (ha)	% of Total Land
Disturbed forest	60,000	0.55
Riverine woodland & Bush-land	195,024	1.88
Dense Shrub-land	1,099,448	10.14
Open Shrub-land	1,182,333	10.91
Bushed shrub grassland	865,419	7.98
Wooded grassland	158,457	1.46
Wooded farmland	35,000	0.32
Plantations	10,000	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,605,681</b>	<b>33.25</b>

Source: World Bank, Environmental Strategy Paper, 1996, p.12

Appendix 9: Surface and Ground Water Resources Distribution in Eritrea

	Highlands ("Kebesa")	Western Lowlands	Eastern Lowlands & Coastal Stretch
<b>Altitude Range</b>	1500-2500 m above sea level (a.s.l.)	500-1500 m a.s.l.	<0- 500 m a. s. l.
<b>Annual Rainfall</b>	500-800 mm/year	200-500 mm/year	<200 mm/year
<b>Evapotranspiration</b>	<1700 mm/year	1700-1900 mm/year	>1900 mm/year
<b>Drainage</b>	Intermittent seasonal streams, artificial lakes, springs	Drained by intermittent, ephemeral, seasonal streams or rivers	Drained by seasonal and ephemeral streams and perennial hot springs
<b>Groundwater Depth</b>	7 - 15 metres	5 - 100 metres	3 - 70 metres
<b>Static Water Level</b>	2 - 100 metres	5 - 80 metres	---
<b>TDS</b>	300 - 2000 PPM	500 - 3000 PPM	>3000 PPM, Locally fresh ground water TDS = 500 - 100 PPM along alluvial fan areas and river beds
<b>Groundwater Recharge (estimate)</b>	50 - 150 mm/year, mainly from infiltration of rainfall and rarely surface runoff	<50 - 100 mm/year, mainly from flood runoff, and direct recharge from rainfall	<50 mm/year, mainly from flood runoff, in small quantity from rainfall
<b>Problems</b>	Groundwater may easily get depleted due to heavy pumping for irrigation	Low rainfall, inadequate recharge, salinity, high evapotranspiration and siltation	Low rainfall, inadequate recharge, saline and hot groundwater, salt water intrusion

Source: DoE, 1997, *Environmental Information System Project; Pilot Report, State of the Environment* 41 - 42

**Research Questionnaires**

**1.1. Questions for Community Residents**

1. Gender; Male \_\_\_\_\_, Female \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age group; <20\_\_\_\_, 21-30\_\_\_\_, 31-40\_\_\_\_, 41-50\_\_\_\_, 51-60\_\_\_\_, >60\_\_\_\_
3. Education; None \_\_\_\_, 1-3 \_\_\_\_, 4-6 \_\_\_\_, 7-9 \_\_\_\_, 10-12 \_\_\_\_,
4. How many children do have?
5. Do some of your children live outside your household? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_  
If Yes, How many, \_\_\_\_, and in town \_\_\_\_ or other places \_\_\_\_.
6. Where were you born? In this area \_\_\_\_, in other rural area \_\_\_\_, in town \_\_\_\_.
7. Have you attended adult literacy & education programme? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
8. Do any one in your household attending adult literacy and education programme? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
9. Would you say that your occupation is farmer \_\_\_\_, unemployed \_\_\_\_, other \_\_\_\_.
10. Beside your principal occupation do you often work in another activities that bring s you money? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
11. Have you ever thought seriously about changing your job?  
Very much \_\_\_\_, Sometimes \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
12. Is it available, (if Yes) Source of availability

Resources	No	Yes	Own	Rent	Borrow	Gov't
Tractor						
Oxen						
Farming Tools						
Fertilizer						
Insecticides						
Seeds						

13. Which of the above do you wish to possess much? Do you feel not owning much of them hinder you in your operations? Very much \_\_\_\_, At times \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
14. Do you irrigate any part of your farm? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
15. Do you think you have enough land to grow all crops you need? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.

16. Was your land under cultivation? Often \_\_\_\_, Sometimes \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
17. Do you hire labour to assist in your farm? Often \_\_\_\_, Sometimes \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
18. Do you find it difficult to find a suitable labour to help in your farm?  
Often \_\_\_\_, Sometimes \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
19. Do you exchange labour with others for any farm work?  
Often \_\_\_\_, Sometimes \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Never \_\_\_\_.
20. (If Positive) For which of the following jobs do you exchange labour?  
Ploughing \_\_\_\_, Planting \_\_\_\_, Weeding \_\_\_\_, Harvesting \_\_\_\_, For all \_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_.
21. People in this area are making a lot of progress due to the project? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
22. Identifying your own objectives in the planning process of the project.
23. Government & NGOs' involvement importance within the project.
24. In which activities within the project planning cycle did you take part?
25. How does the project enable you to feed your family?
26. In which of the following ways do you express your responsibilities within the project;  
Coalition \_\_\_\_, Volunteer group \_\_\_\_, Committee \_\_\_\_, employed \_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_.
27. How does the project facilitate the environmental protection?
28. How long has the project been operating?  
1-2 \_\_\_\_, 2-3 \_\_\_\_, 3-4 \_\_\_\_, 4-5 \_\_\_\_, 5-6 \_\_\_\_, 6-7 \_\_\_\_, 7-8 \_\_\_\_, 8-9 \_\_\_\_, 9 & above \_\_\_\_
29. How long do you envisage the project will continue operating/  
1-2 \_\_\_\_, 2-3 \_\_\_\_, 3-4 \_\_\_\_, 4-5 \_\_\_\_, 5-6 \_\_\_\_, 6-7 \_\_\_\_, 7-8 \_\_\_\_, 8-9 \_\_\_\_, 9 & above \_\_\_\_
30. How long did the project take to finish?  
1-2 \_\_\_\_, 2-3 \_\_\_\_, 3-4 \_\_\_\_, 4-5 \_\_\_\_, 5-6 \_\_\_\_, 6-7 \_\_\_\_, 7-8 \_\_\_\_, 8-9 \_\_\_\_, 9 & above \_\_\_\_
31. How many times have officers come to evaluate the influence of the project?
32. Are you satisfied with the introduction of the project and its provision of services?  
Very much \_\_\_\_, Somehow \_\_\_\_, Rarely \_\_\_\_, Not at all \_\_\_\_.
33. Do you agree with the initiation of the project and its location?  
Agree \_\_\_\_, Disagree \_\_\_\_, Indifferent \_\_\_\_, No idea \_\_\_\_.

34. Do the project donor/s keep providing necessary and adequate assistance and follow ups?

Frequently\_\_\_, Sometimes\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Not at all\_\_\_.

35. Did you have meetings with project donor/s before the project commencement? Yes\_\_\_,

No\_\_\_.

If yes, how many times? Many\_\_\_, Few\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Not at all\_\_\_.

36. Did you have meetings with your community before the project commencement? Yes\_\_\_,

No\_\_\_.

If yes, how many times? Many\_\_\_, Few\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Not at all\_\_\_.

37. How often do project donor/s seek ideas and suggestions from you and use them constructively? Frequently\_\_\_, Sometimes\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Not at all\_\_\_.

38. Have the project agents encouraged you to participate and be productive?

Very much\_\_\_, Occasionally\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Never.

39. Do you think you were adequately involved in making the decision? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_.

40. Do you think it is essential for you to be involved? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_.

41. How does the location of the project affect your community? Positively\_\_\_, Negatively\_\_\_.

42. Who holds major decision making power? The agents\_\_\_, Community\_\_\_, Both\_\_\_.

43. Is the introduction of the project according to the community needs & priorities? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_.

44. Are you active now in matters that relates with the project than before the initiation? Yes\_\_\_,

No\_\_\_.

45. Should people get together or wait for the help of government in order to improve the community's conditions? Get together\_\_\_, Get government help\_\_\_, Both\_\_\_.

46. Is the community contributing and able in maintaining the project? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_.

47. Does the community work together in activities related to the project? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_.

48. (If yes) Do you participate? Fully\_\_\_, Sometimes\_\_\_, Rarely\_\_\_, Not at all\_\_\_.

**49. Economic questions;**

49.1 Acquire benefits from the project

49.2 Project assistance in relation to education for your children.

49.3 What type of social investment (infrastructure) has been delivered in relation to the project?

- 49.4 In what way does the project provide you services?
- 49.4 How does the project enable you to earn income for your family?
- 49.5 Has the project increased public and private investment and confidence?
- 49.6 Is the community benefiting from their investment?
- 49.7 Has the project fostered and supported new enterprise?
- 49.8 What problems have been encountered?
- 49.9 Has the government provided support (finance) and allowed control?
- 49.10 Has income in the community been improved and who are the beneficiaries?
- 49.11 Has the project promoted self-sufficiency? For how many people?
- 49.12 Are there other projects or services that complement with the project

**50. Employment aspects;**

- 50.1 How many new jobs have been created and what kind of jobs?
- 50.2 How many previously unemployed people have now found new jobs?
- 50.3 How many local people have found jobs?
- 50.4 How many short-term and permanent jobs have been created?
- 50.5 Have people learnt new and relevant skills for employment?
- 50.6 Has income made major difference in the lives of the low-income members of society?

**51. Training questions;**

- 51.1 Which skills have you acquired from the project?
- 51.2 Government & NGOs' facilitation with training & skills improvement.
- 51.3 Allowing for indigenous knowledge to be employed in your project.
- 51.4 Utilising the knowledge you acquired from the project in other development activities.
- 51.5 Applying the skills you have acquired from the project in other development activities.
- 51.6 How do you share the knowledge that you have gathered from the project with the members of the community?
- 51.7 What knowledge have you acquired from the project?
- 51.8 Have people got training from the project?

51.9 Are there broad opportunities for community development and education?

**52. Empowerment;**

52.1 Making decisions in relations to the various activities in the running of the project.

52.2 Able to exercise your rights & choices within the project

52.3 Have direct involvement, participation & leadership of the project.

52.4 Commitment to the project.

52.5 How do the government or NGO agencies educate you within the project and its planning phases?

52.6 Has the project encouraged involvement? How broad a cross-section of the community is involved?

52.7 Has the project encouraged ownership? How broad a cross-section of the community is involved?

52.7 Is the project controlled by the host community or by outsiders?

52.8 Do any of the youth, women and the aged benefit directly from the project and have a major say in its plans and operation?

52.9 Who decides what is needed locally? Who is consulted and what is the process for assessing the need?

52.10 How many people are involved in the community activities? And how people many in economic development? To what extent do they control resources and decision making?

52.11 Are people more confident and interested of agencies' initiatives?

52.12 Has the initiatives promoted a sense of ownership, empowerment and belonging in the community?

52.13 What new services have been provided and maintained which otherwise would have disappeared?

52.14 Have any independent services/facilities developed as the result of the project?

52.15 What improvements have been made to transport and other infrastructural services?

52.16 Due to the project's influence have rural-urban linkages been improved?

52.17 Have the overall quality of life in the community improved?

52.18 Has the local environment (natural and social) improved?

### **53. Assessment**

- 53.1 What are the primary successes of the project?
- 53.2 What are the primary weaknesses of the project?
- 53.3 Has the project been successful?
- 53.4 Is the project sustainable? Detail which features are/are not.
- 53.5 Is the project a new growth track or is it only a survival strategy?
- 53.6 Can local communities successfully address their problems or do they need to rely on external support? If outside support is needed, is it critical and what form should it take?
- 53.7 What role is there for gov't/external agencies/private sector/community groups in such endeavours?
- 53.8 What role should/could local government play in these endeavours?
- 53.9 How important is people's attachment and its future development in relation to the project?

### **1.2. Questions for Community Leaders**

- 1. When was the project started?
- 2. What caused it to develop?
- 3. Was it caused by some type of local problem or socio-economic change in the area? If so, what was it?
- 4. Who initiated the project?
- 5. Did the nature of the pre-existing skills base affect the direction that the project took?
- 5. Was the launch of the project inspired by socio-political change in the country?
- 7. Was the launch motivated either by the inability of the government to provide sufficient support for the community and/or the curtailment of previous State development support?
- 8. Was the project internally triggered or was it initiated from outside?
- 9. Does the project only focus on the local area or is the area coverage far broader? Does the project support rural-urban linkages? What mutual benefits are being/can be derived from their interactions?
- 10. Who were the key participants?

11. Are partnerships important in the initiative? If so, describe what partnerships exist and what the purpose and achievements of such partnerships are.
12. Who are the local leaders and what positions do they hold?
13. How did they acquire such positions (i.e. election/nomination)?
14. What were the original goals of the project? How were they agreed to and by whom?
15. What are your goals now or are they the same? If they have changed, why did they change?  
(Uses in subsequent interviews)
16. What are the key projects which have been undertaken? Do they address basic needs in the community?
17. Have participants joined or left the initiative since it was started, who and why?
18. Was external support secured? What form is it take?
19. If external support was secured how important was it to the success of the initiative?
20. Is control of the project dominated by
  - a. the community
  - b. community leaders
  - c. outside agencies
  - d. funders
  - e. a combination of groups.
21. How many funds were secured? Where were they secured from?
22. Are there any other development initiatives in the area which are benefiting the local community? Do you have a good working relationship with them?