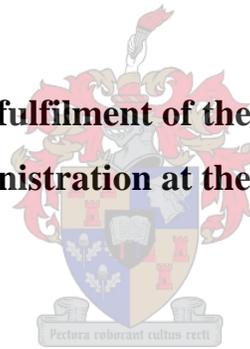


**Decentralisation for community development – a Rwanda Case study**

**Paul MUTAGOMA**

**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
of Master of Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch**



**Supervisor: Mr. F.Theron**

**December 2006**

**Declaration**

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

Signature:.....

Date:.....

### **Abstract**

A community-centred development which can be qualified as authentic development leads to the sustainability of the community. This must be understood as a process of economic, political and social change springing from the efforts of people themselves working for the benefit of themselves, their families and, hopefully, their communities, which process can be referred to as a self-reliant participatory development. This calls for active mutual self-help among people working together in their common struggle, at the grassroots level, to deal with their common problems.

It is also acknowledged that if development efforts are to be effective, then the participation of problem-affected groups is necessary, with support from local government, NGO's, local resource people and donors, willing to live and work among them. The success of this self-reliant participatory development approach accompanied by inner conviction, a shared understanding, and awareness or consciousness-awakening that people have of their common problems, and finding ways of mobilising resources, planning, implementing and eventually controlling their own development activities.

Against this background, however, the roles of government as well as of NGOs, in fighting against poverty and social transformation that leads to the development of the community, remain indispensable. Government roles should be enabling and supportive, and create a space for communities' needs.

This study aimed to explore the decentralisation process to boost the community efforts towards participation in local development management. As the public participation processes in local government do not yield the outcomes that reveal a fully optimised process, the role of the community developer is merely to create an environment of freedom within which the latent development potential of the community can bloom

(Schutte, 2000:5). This Rwandan case study offers an overview of its decentralisation and community development policies.

The literature review provides the definitions of key concepts regarding the topic, in both the international context as well as Rwandan context. It discusses the topic and highlights definition, objective, different forms of decentralisation, community development and its delivery framework.

The findings show that community development depends on the political will that establishes effective and favourable institutions to sustain the self-reliance of the community as well as the awareness of the community of its daily problems and its participation in planning and implementing solutions. The SWOT analysis provides a situation from which to adopt new alternatives and strengthen the existing one in order to face challenges.

## Opsomming

Gemeenskapgesentreerde ontwikkeling wat kwalifiseer as oorspronklike ontwikkeling, lei tot die volhoudbaarheid van die gemeenskap. Dit moet gesien word as 'n proses van ekonomiese, politieke en sosiale verandering wat sy oorsprong het in die pogings van die mense self, wat werk tot voordeel van hulself, hulle gesinne, en hopelik hulle gemeenskappe. Hierdie proses kan na verwys word as selfstandige deelnemende ontwikkeling. Dit vereis aktiewe, onderlinge selfhulp waar mense saamwerk en saamstreef op voetsoolvlak, om hulle gemeenskaplike probleme te oorkom.

Daar word ook erken dat om doeltreffend te wees, die deelname van die voordeeltrekkers nodig is, met die ondersteuning van plaaslike regering, Nie-Regerings Organisasies (NGOs), plaaslike kundiges en donateure wat gewillig is om tussen die mense te woon en te werk. Om die sukses van hierdie deelnemende ontwikkelingsbenadering te verseker, moet dit gesteun word deur innerlike oortuiging, 'n gesamentlike siening, en die bewuswording van die mense self van hulle gesamentlike probleme. Hulle moet maniere vind om hulle hulpbronne te mobiliseer, om te beplan, die planne te implementeer en uiteindelik om hulle eie ontwikkelingsaktiwiteite te beheer.

Teen hierdie agtergrond, egter, is die rolle van die regering en die nie-regerings organisasies in die stryd teen armoede onontbeerlik en is dit nodig om sosiale transformasie wat kan lei tot die ontwikkeling van die gemeenskap, te bewerkstellig. Die regering se rol is om die gemeenskap te bekwaam en te ondersteun, en om spasie te skep vir die vervulling van die gemeenskap se behoeftes.

In hierdie studie word die desentralisasieproses wat die gemeenskap se pogings tot deelname in plaaslike bestuur bevorder, ondersoek. Aangesien die uitkomst van publieke deelname prosesse in plaaslike regering nog nie ten volle geoptimaliseer is nie,

moet die gemeenskapontwikkelaar 'n omgewing skep waarin die latente ontwikkelingspotensiaal van die gemeenskap vryelik kan blom (Schutte, 2000:5). Hierdie Rwandese gevallestudie bied 'n oorsig van die desentralisasie en gemeenskapontwikkeling beleid in Rwanda.

Definisies van sleutelkonsepte rakende die onderwerp, in beide die internasionale konteks en die Rwandese konteks word in die literatuuroorsig verskaf. Die onderwerp word bespreek en die definisie, doelwit, verskillende vorme van desentralisasie, gemeenskapontwikkeling en die raamwerk waarbinne dit moet plaasvind, word beklemtoon.

Die bevindinge toon dat gemeenskapontwikkeling afhang van die politieke wil om doeltreffende instansies te skep vir gemeenskappe wat op hulleself kan steun en wat bewus is van hulle daaglikse probleme asook hoe hulle moet deelneem in die beplanning en implementering van oplossings. Die SWOT ontleding verskaf 'n situasie waaruit nuwe oplossings kan ontstaan en bestaande oplossings versterk kan word, om sodoende nuwe uitdagings tegemoet te gaan.

## **Dedication**

To my dear wife, Marie Beatrice Karemera, and to our lovely sons:  
Brice Cyuzuzo and Armel Cyusa.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to individuals and institutions whose contribution made it possible to complete this thesis.

I would like to address my appreciation the School of Public Development and Management, especially to my study leader, Mr. Francois Theron, for his guidance and assistance. I am very grateful for his very constructive, valuable and enriching inspiration, comments and suggestions.

I acknowledge and extend my thanks in general to officers of MINALOC and in particular to Mr. Mushinzimana Apollinaire for their assistance in data collection.

I wish also to pay tribute to the Rwandan Government and the National University of Rwanda for sponsoring my studies and granting me study leave to complete my master's programme

To Mrs. Bailey who assisted me with language editing and proofreading

To the Kungune family for their friendship during my journey in South Africa.

Thanks are extended to all my extended family and friends for supporting me morally throughout. My absences from key events, lapses in remembering important dates and negligence to stay in touch have been accepted with no acrimony.

In general, I would like to thank all those who have contributed in so many ways to the completion of this thesis.

Last but not least, I thank God the Almighty for his wonderful grace, blessings, strengths and wisdom that enabled me to pursue my studies and for keeping my family safe during my studies.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
Declaration	ii
Abstract	iii
Opsomming	v
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Table of contents	ix
List of figures	xiii
List of tables	xiii
List of boxes	xiii
Acronyms	xiv
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background and rationale of the study	1
1.2. Research problem statement and objective	5
1.3. Hypothesis	6
1.4. Research methodology	6
1.5. Research limitations	7
1.6. Structure and sequence of the study	8
<b>Chapter 2: Context of decentralised governance and development</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1. Introduction	10
2.2. Key analytical concepts	11
2.2.1. The international context of decentralisation	11
2.2.1.1. Objectives of decentralisation	12
2.2.1.2. Different forms of decentralisation	13

2.2.1.2.1. Deconcentration	14
2.2.1.2.2. Delegation	15
2.2.1.2.3. Devolution	16
2.2.1.2.4. Privatisation	18
2.2.2. Contextualising community development	18
2.3. Theories and strategies for delivering development to the grassroots levels	21
2.3.1. People-centred development	22
2.3.2. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs)	23
2.3.2.1. Definition of IKS	23
2.3.2.2. Indigenous Knowledge Systems in practice	24
2.3.3. The four building blocks of integrated development	26
2.3.4. Community participation	30
2.3.4.1. Guiding principles of community participation	33
2.3.4.2. Obstacles to community participation	34
2.4. Summary	34

### **Chapter 3: National framework for decentralisation and community development in Rwanda**

3.1. Introduction	36
3.2. Decentralisation policy in Rwanda	37
3.2.1. Legal provision for and the political foundation of decentralisation	38
3.2.2. Objectives of decentralisation in Rwanda	39
3.2.3. The local government structure and functioning	40
3.2.3.1. The Cell organizational functioning	41
3.2.3.2. The Sector organizational functioning	42
3.2.3.3. The District organizational and functioning	43
3.2.3.3.1. The District Council (DC)	43
3.2.3.3.2. The District Executive Committee (DEC)	45
3.2.4. Sectoral collaboration and integrated management tools	46
3.2.5. The role of the central government	48
3.2.6. Principles of the decentralisation approach towards community development	49

3.2.6.1. Accountability relationship framework	51
3.2.6.2. Strengthening the clients' power	53
3.3. The Rwandan context of community development	54
3.3.1. Definition of community development	54
3.3.2. Description of the development planning process	55
3.3.3. District Development Plan (DDP)	58
3.3.4. The role of Community Development Committees in local government structures	59
3.3.4.1. Cell Community Development Committee	59
3.3.4.2. Sector Community Development Committee	60
3.3.4.3. District and urban area Community Development Committee	60
3.4. Summary	61

## **Chapter 4: Evaluation of decentralisation policy, planning and community development 63**

4.1. Introduction	63
4.2. New Decentralisation Implementation Programme	63
4.3. Ongoing Decentralisation Implementation Programme approaches	67
4.4. Community participation within the decentralisation policy	68
4.4.1. Strengthening participatory approaches	68
4.4.1.1 Community level structure	68
4.4.1.2 Sector level	69
4.4.1.3 District level	69
4.4.2. Appreciation of the participatory process	71
4.4.3. Functioning of the Community Development Committee at different local levels	72
4.4.4. Decentralisation and the Ubudehe approach in development	73
4.4.5. Local leaders' participation in community development	76
4.5. SWOT of decentralisation to community development activities	80
4.5.1. Objective and principles of community development	80
4.5.2. Evaluation of current capacities, opportunities and challenges	82

4.5.2.1. Strengths	82
4.5.2.2. Weaknesses	84
4.5.2.3. Opportunities	87
4.5.2.4. Threats	89
4.6. Institutional development and capacity building	92
4.7. Sectoral decentralization	92
4.8. Role players and partnerships between actors in Rwanda	95
4.9. Local Government and Community Planning	101
4.9.1. Action-Experience-Knowledge Cycle for Locals	102
4.9.2. Current state of local government development planning	103
4.9.3. Local government planning prospects	105
4.10. Summary	106

## **Chapter 5: A normative approach to decentralisation in community development programmes** **108**

5.1. General conclusion	108
5.2. Recommended strategies and actions	109

## **Bibliography** **114**

## **Appendices** **122**

Appendix A: Individual interviews	122
Appendix B: Focus group interviews	123
Appendix C: A case study from Butare Province: Ubudehe in Vumbi Sector, Cell of Kidahile	125

**List of figures**

Figure 1.1: Analytical mind map of the study	9
Figure 2.1: Spectrum of participation	32
Figure 3.1: Government structure	41
Figure 3.2: Cell organisational chart	42
Figure 3.3: Sector structure	42
Figure 3.4: District Council composition	43
Figure 3.5: District organisational chart	46
Figure 3.6: Participatory planning framework	47
Figure 3.7: WDR model of accountability relationships	52
Figure 3.8: Validation and approval of community development plan at local government level	57
Figure 4.1: Rwanda Territorial Reform	65
Figure 4.2: CDC structure at the grassroots level	71
Figure 4.3: Citizens rehabilitating their school across Ubudehe programme	75
Figure 4.4: Interactions among the various actors of community development	96
Figure 4.5: Accountability relationships among main role-players in community development in Rwanda	97
Figure 4.6: Action-Experience-Knowledge cycle	102

**List of tables**

Table 4.1. The configuration of the new structure of local administration, summarised roles and responsibilities between levels is the following	65
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

**List of boxes**

Box 3.1. The case of Nyagisagara	50
----------------------------------	----

**Acronyms**

CBO:	Community-based development
CEC:	Cell Executive Committee
CC:	Cell Council
CDC:	Community Development Committee
CDF:	Common Development Fund
CRC:	Citizen Report Cards
CSC:	Community Score Cards
CSO:	Civil Society organisation
DC:	District Council
DDP:	District Development Plan
DEC:	District Executive Committee
DIP:	Decentralisation Implementation Programme
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
IKS:	Indigenous Knowledge System
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
KCC:	Kigali City Council
LED:	Local Economic Development
LDP-HIMO:	Local Development Programme - High Intensity of Manpower
MDG:	Millennium Development Goal
MINALOC:	Ministry Of Local Government
MINECOFIN:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTEF:	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NGO:	Non Government Organisation
PAC:	Political and Administrative Committee
PPA:	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PPP:	Public-Private Partnership
PRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA:	Parents and Teachers' Associations

SC:	Sector Council
SEC:	Sector Executive Committee
SWAp:	Sector Wide Approaches
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
WB:	World Bank
WDR:	World Development Report

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background and rationale of the study**

Development actions usually require the transformation of all or a part of the factors that have an impact on a society. A development policy requires a conscious action on all major factors that affect the structure and the life of society. This calls upon all stakeholders i.e. politicians, developers, practitioners, consultants, change agents and beneficiaries of development to plan their interventions in order to benefit the community. Theron and Barnard (1997:37) suggest a number of questions that can guide development actions, such as *Development from what? Development by whom? Development from whom? and Development in what way?*

Development is said to fail if change agents, especially so government (local government) officials do not comprehend the role of development actions and the use of the indigenous knowledge systems. Local communities can and must play a leading role in responding to local needs especially in reducing poverty and in the reconciliation process. The other institutions intervening in the development process should work in partnership with the local communities in order to attain the expected output for developing the community. To do that each institution needs to design proper procedures, and set out common strategies for a common goal.

According to the Republic of Rwanda (2001:3), through its community development policy, these working procedures and common goals should allow the local communities to access information, knowledge and other resources necessary for development. They should stimulate the community towards innovations and to practice entrepreneurship within grassroots structures.

The history of Rwanda shows that, much as the population is willing to work, it has never sufficiently participated in its own development. Before colonisation, the people of Rwanda lived in harmony and had their own vision of community development. The

interaction with outsiders was limited. The people based development strategies on the exploitation of locally available resources using various collective methods of solving the socio-economic problems they faced. It was a strong society with a hierarchy structured in a coherent manner with organized leadership (top down), which permitted vertical and horizontal participation in the areas of socio-economic interests. The society was organized on the basis of national interests such as defence, agriculture, livestock and arts and craft industry.

The participation and collaboration, which existed in these areas, were not formalized. The same document (Republic of Rwanda 2001:4) tells how the colonizers exploited this centralised structure and introduced a design for supervised development based on the establishment of socio-economic infrastructure. This focused mainly on foreign interests and was supported by forced labour e.g. the growing of cash crops for export, building schools, churches, administrative buildings, and roads. The people were expected to implement all these procedures without prior and proper participation.

The exposure of Rwanda to the outside world through the introduction of a monetized economy; new religions and an imported educational systems have all contributed to the diminishing spirit of teamwork, which characterized the development model of the country previously. For example individual work or wage-earning replaced communal agricultural tasks (“Ubudehe”<sup>1</sup>), thus introducing an individualistic vision of development. It could be much better to develop this model in order to strengthen and reshape participation as people were already working as a team.

Since independence, the country has inherited a politico-administrative structure, which is hierarchical, centralized, and authoritarian. More specifically, community work

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ubudehe* or community solidarity for the carrying out of activities in favour of a household is an ancient tradition in Rwanda. It is an approach consisting in involving local communities in the identification of their priority problems and in the implementation of actions meant to solve these problems and mainstream them in strategic plans.

(“umuganda”)<sup>2</sup> introduced by the Second Republic was directed to political mobilization rather than community development and thus excluded the participation of the population (Republic of Rwanda (2001:4). This is supposed to be a key mechanism in the building blocks of development in the management process of the government’s development affairs.

This is the reason why all the achievements of the nation over a long period of time were destroyed during the war and genocide of 1994 by the population, which regarded them as more state-owned than theirs. Furthermore, during the same period, development plans were elaborated but unfulfilled and numerous development projects conceived in this centralised authoritarian frame were implemented without participation and thus had no durable impact on communities.

The authoritarian attitude still persists among some leaders. It’s due to the behaviour embedded in the Rwandan system of development which does not accommodate people participation in decision-making processes, and consequently, has led the beneficiaries to regard the state as the provider of everything.

The community has therefore never had an opportunity to exercise its powers in decision making in the affairs concerning its own development. This situation of dependence on the government for everything was accentuated by humanitarian interventions during the emergency period, which followed the war and genocide.

To date, despite efforts made in the field of development for the last three decades, significant results cannot be noticed. This can be attributed to the fact that Rwanda’s development was conceived more in terms of economic growth and less in terms of the building blocks of integrated development; with the result that development projects were inappropriate and left no sustainable effects on the population.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Umuganda* is a traditional activity in Rwanda, where all residents of every village set aside one day of each month to collectively work on a project or an activity of community importance. Such activities include: general cleaning (waste clearing and disposal), opening up or repairing bridges/or roads, tree planting, repairing public buildings, etc.

However, it is important to mention initiatives geared towards people's participation. For example, the restructuring of the country into administrative units close to the people (cells) was a positive initiative on which an effective system of community development can be based.

After analysing the "commune" level (currently called district), it was noticed that the communes consisted of resource persons who were not available for the district development because of various reasons like being far away on their jobs, and therefore not available. Sometimes they did not share concern about the development of their district. The absence of tangible results can be explained by the fact that they did not really worry about the situation or all aspects of poverty in their districts, and to come there for them was like to come and explore without feeling really affected. Indeed, the communal (district) development councils, which were established, consisted of:

- Sector Councillors who were too busy with their personal commitments at the sector level.
- Members of technical committees who were mainly intellectuals, the majority of whom staying far away involved with their ordinary jobs.
- Heads of departments (representatives of ministries) at district level that were technicians and depended directly on their mother Ministries instead of depending on the local government authority.

The same explanation is also given by the Manila Declaration about people's participation and sustainable development, referred to by Meyer and Theron, (2000:156) who support the claim of an *Australian Aborigine Woman*: "*If you have come to help me you can go home again. But if you see my struggle as part of your own survival we can work together*".

According to the Republic of Rwanda, (2001:5), this unfortunate situation, which has lasted for long, necessitated the nation to launch a reform process, which focused on the establishment of mechanisms that would ensure the participation of the population in development processes for its sustainability.

## **1.2. Research problem statement and objective**

The Community Development Policy for Rwanda was designed in order to bring together stakeholders in development that operate at various government levels and within grassroots structures (cells and sectors). The aim is to combine their efforts in order to enable members within these structures to live in harmony and have access to a better standard of living.

In this context, a number of initiatives have been undertaken for improving living conditions of people and strengthening meaningful economic growth, poverty reduction and reconciliation processes, through active participation of the people in public life. This is a cornerstone of the building blocks of development and is seen as a main approach to implementing this range of initiatives and reforms undertaken by the government, targeting community development. These are especially the decentralization of government systems, a poverty reduction strategy, and the creation of institutional networks and organs of decentralized entities. To succeed in this, each entity has to design proper procedures that are to chart out common strategies for a common goal.

The overall purpose of this study is to analyze the role of local government structures across a decentralisation process, as facilitators of community development in local government. A number of questions reflecting specific objectives need to be responded to in order to explore what is intended to be done by the stakeholders to reach sustainable community development. These related research questions are:

- What role does the community play in sustaining local development?
- What should the decentralisation structure be for empowering communities to be self-reliant in their local development programme?
- What is the appropriate channel and framework for community participation to ensure that the community develops and local living conditions improve?

The selection of the case study area is motivated by one of the points of departure in Coetzee (1997:13), which states “development is for people”. One needs to analyse government programmes, and check whether they will benefit the communities as people

are intended to be at the centre of any development effort. This is the main interest of this study. It attempts to analyse the community development effort within the context of decentralisation policy.

### **1.3. Hypothesis**

The sustainability and effective delivery of community development in decentralized entities will depend on the empowering character of the decentralisation policy towards beneficiaries and all stakeholders, a high degree of community participation, and a clear community development framework.

### **1.4. Research methodology**

The methodology is mainly based on an integrated approach that includes historical and descriptive aspects. A critical-analytical approach will be adopted to comprehend the findings and the functioning of decentralisation and community development structures.

Bearing in mind that this study is using a qualitative approach, the research methods and techniques to be used in data collection for this study are those suggested by Gabriellian (1999:190-191). According to him, qualitative research employs a host of techniques for collecting and analysing data. As Punch (cited in Gabriellian, 1999:190-191) observes, three of these techniques are central-observation, interviewing and documentary analysis, that are employed across a variety of disciplines.

***Participant observation:*** This method requires that the researcher makes observations and keeps records of the activity experienced in the actual community context. The benefit of this technique is that patterns and trends can be noted and captured by the researcher. The observation will concern mainly how community representatives are empowered. Their skills, opinions, and attitudes in accomplishing their mission are key determinants of their everyday performance. This implies that, as a member of the District Council, the researcher will have to perform a dual role: one of experiencing the activities as an insider and the other of observing and recording complications that

members encounter while executing their duties. These complications can be the result of political or economic affairs or relationships and hierarchical manipulations might be involved.

***Individual interviews:*** For the sake of consistency and objectivity, different sets of questions will be prepared as interview frameworks for individuals based on whether they are the key informants or role-players working in local government institutions, Ministry of Local Government and Territory Administration.

***Focus group interviews:*** Members of the Ruyumba District Council will be interviewed. As the District Council encompasses three commissions, each one will be represented by three relevant members including their heads. The interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed for analysis. If tape-recording is not permitted, notes will be taken.

***Use of documentation:*** A number of documents kept by various ministries, NGOs and local government institutions, will be studied. Those are mostly related to previous studies linked to this topic. Such sources include theories, policies of community development, territory administration, decentralization, memorandums, books, websites and published data from government's reports.

### **1.5. Research limitations**

The research focuses mainly on the ongoing decentralisation process in Rwanda for promoting community development based on the beneficiary's participation. As decentralisation and community development policies date from 2000, the analysis emphasises facts realised from the beginning up to 2005. It was previously intended to do a comparative analysis of two districts, one an urban area and another one a rural area. Because the first phase of decentralisation (from 2000 to 2003) focused on countrywide institutional organisation and capacity building for its implementation, no tangible facts were available to be compared. Secondly, during the research period, territory reform was taking place and the personnel were not working efficiently as they were demotivated by

the downsizing of the number of personnel that went with the reform. This was going to impact negatively on the research.

### **1.6. Structure and sequence of the study**

The structure of this study will be as follows:

After the introductory chapter that integrates the background and the rationale of the study, the statement of the problem, the hypothesis, methods and limitations, chapter two presents globally an overview of decentralised governance and community development. This chapter highlights decentralization across its international context and across its different forms. It also provides a context of community development.

Chapter three provides a picture of the national framework for decentralisation and community development in Rwanda. It intends to explain the decentralisation policy, through its objectives, principles and values pursued by the government via decentralization.

Chapter four provides all findings and their discussion illustrating an evaluation of decentralisation. It offers an overview on decentralisation implementation programme approaches and description of the participatory process in Rwanda's development planning.

Chapter five is concerned with a normative approach to centralisation in community development programmes. It points out some conclusions and provides certain recommendations in order to address met challenges.

Figure 1.1: Analytical mind map of the study



## Chapter 2: Context of decentralised governance and development

### 2.1. Introduction

Developing countries have generally regarded unified, centralised, and regulatory government as highly desirable. Centralisation has tended to be the norm and the idea that pervades concepts of political, economic, and administrative organisation in the Third World. Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema (1985:1) argued that it is not difficult to understand why this was the case. They state that in most countries that were formerly colonies, centralised political and administrative institutions were a direct legacy of the colonial rulers, and until 1980s, these systems were largely left untouched or were further centralised. Centralisation was viewed by national government authorities as the correct path to follow in order to maintain central control and intervention as the market was accused of working imperfectly. Despite frequent and increasingly detailed accounts of negative effects of centralisation, many political leaders emphasised the primacy of the public sector.

Despite these pressures for increasing centralisation, a large number of developing countries that are politically, economically, and ideologically diverse began decentralising some development planning and management functions during the 1970s and early 1980s. They did so because of dissatisfaction with the result of national planning and administration, and because the underlying rationale of international development strategies changed during the 1970s. Rondinelli *et al* (1985:2) state that the goal of development policies in most countries was to distribute the benefits of economic growth more equitably to increase the productivity and income of all segments of society, and to raise the living standards of the poor. Rondinelli's (1983:15) greatest criticism of the rational planning method is that it assumes a stable and predictable environment, but in the depressed societies where community development is operative the exact opposite is true. He points out that when uncertainty is a fact, planning must be viewed as an incremental process. Methods of analysis and procedures of implementation must be flexible and incremental, and then planning should facilitate continuous learning and interaction (in De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:52). The incremental character of planning

that calls for a learning process is due to many unknown, unpredictable and complex factors.

Because policymakers found it difficult to formulate and implement these strategies entirely from the centre, they had to seek new ways of eliciting greater participation in development planning and administration, and became interested in finding ways of using limited resources more effectively. Thus, decentralisation became a partial solution to problems such as the inability of project managers to receive resources from the central government in time. This took place because of the need for approval by multiple levels of higher administration, led to delays in implementation, and caused serious cost overruns.

Central governmental administrators do not understand the complex variety of factors that affect the success of a project in local communities throughout the country. When central planners design rural development projects in the national capital without thoroughly understanding local social, economic, physical, and organisational conditions, they often generate opposition among local groups or encounter such apathy that the projects are doomed to fail from the outset.

This chapter is intended to describe the key concepts reflecting the international context of decentralised governance and theories and strategies of delivering development at the grassroots levels.

## **2.2. Key analytical concepts**

Throughout history, the evolution of concepts that reflect decentralisation has been linked with the government leadership style. Responsibility was said to be left to the local levels. However, Governments still held in their control some forms of decentralisation as it will be seen in this section. In this section, community development is also looked at as one of the main aims of decentralisation at the grassroots level.

### **2.2.1. The international context of decentralisation**

In accompaniment of the evolution of the concept of development and its goals, early notions of what to do show that states concentrated on government leadership, where development would be the result of centrally planned, state-dominated strategies. The failure of the state to deliver in most cases provoked new thinking, which led to the familiar strategies of today's international development policy agenda (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2005:10). These emphasise market-led approaches to growth and poverty reduction with the state as a supporter and a regulator of private and community efforts rather than the sole or predominant actor. It is in this same context that the concept of decentralisation finds its meaning.

#### **2.2.1.1. Objectives of decentralisation**

As pointed out by Rondinelli and Cheema (1983:14), the growing interest in decentralised planning and administration is attributable not only to the disillusionment with the results of central planning and the shift of emphasis to growth with equity policies. It is also attributed to the realisation that development is a complex and uncertain process that cannot be easily planned and controlled from the centre.

The main objective given to decentralisation is to reduce overload and congestion in the channels of administration and communication (Rondinelli *et al*, 1985:5). Programmes are decentralised with the expectation that delays will be reduced and that administrators' indifference to satisfying the needs of their clientele will be overcome. It is thought that decentralisation will improve government's responsiveness to the public and increase the quantity and quality of the services it provides.

Decentralisation has been advocated by a number of authors with a long list of reasons for transferring more responsibility for development planning and administration to local governments:

- Managing national economic development more effectively and efficiently
- Mobilising support for national development policies by making them better known at the local level

- Creating a larger number of skilled administrators and managers with meaningful responsibilities
- Responsibility of central ministries or agencies are performed poorly because of the difficulty of extending central services to local communities
- Development of greater administrative capability among local governments and private institutions in the regions
- Better representation of various political, religious, ethnic, and tribal groups in development decision-making that will lead to greater equity.

Decentralisation has become a buzzword in developing countries following the failure of top-down approaches to development (Bazaara, Legal and policy framework for citizen participation in East Africa, accessed on 12/08/05).

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/resources/downloads/regionalreports/RegionalReportBazaaraEastAfrica%20final.doc>.

Discourses on decentralisation from the 1980s associate decentralisation with increased people participation, democracy and poverty reduction. However, decentralisation is not a new word and has been used to mean different things. This concept first gained widespread use after the Second World War when the British Secretary of State for Colonies (Creech Jones) strived to introduce reform in the manner in which colonised people were ruled. Decentralisation was then linked to ideas of communities approving policies through elected representatives and holding those representatives to account.

#### **2.2.1.2. Different forms of decentralisation**

According to Bazaara, the literature on local governance throws up at least three conceptions. The first is the one termed by Mamdani as *decentralised despotism* referring to the indirect form of government that the British established in their colonies. This local form represents the chief who was neither elected nor accountable to the citizens. The chief wielded all types of power: legislative, executive and judicial. Referring to Burke

and Mukandala, he says that because of the absence of checks and balances, chiefs abused these powers tremendously to oppress and exploit citizens.

The second is what has been termed *administrative decentralisation* by Mukandala (1998), Bazaara (2002a) and Burke (1964) (Bazaara, Legal and policy framework for citizen participation in East Africa, internet accessed on 12/08/2005:6). Here decision-making powers are transferred to local branches of the central government and can be withdrawn by the central government as and of when it deems fit. Administrative decentralization is also seen as *decongestion* or *deconcentration* within the state.

The above reference provides the third conception of decentralization, called *political decentralization*. This essentially means that decision-making powers are *devolved* to elected local authorities. In this arrangement, community participates in the decision-making processes through their representatives. Because of the election element, representatives have to account to the electorate for their policies and can be recalled.

For Rondinelli and Cheema (1983:18), decentralisation refers to four major forms of decentralisation, namely deconcentration, delegation to semi-autonomous or parastatal agencies, devolution to local governments, and privatisation or transfer of functions from public to non-government institutions.

#### **2.2.1.2.1. Deconcentration**

According to Rondinelli and Cheema (1983:18), and Rondinelli *et al* (1985:10), deconcentration is a handing over of some part of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries and agencies. It is a shifting of workload from centrally located officials to staff or offices outside of the national capital, without also transferring to them the authority to make decisions or to exercise discretion in carrying them out. Fesler cited by Rondinelli and Cheema (1983:18-19) argues that shifting workload may not always be real decentralisation at all. He further mentions that “To move workload out of the capital may be efficient and convenient for the public and may even promote a feeling that government is close to the

people.” He adds however that it may not involve any decentralisation of power, i.e. the opportunity to exercise substantial local discretion in decision-making.

Although deconcentration does not transfer authority to plan, decide or manage to individuals or organisations that are outside of the structure of central government, the administration is brought closer to the people. Therefore, citizens will have a better understanding of what government proposes and be more likely to include the new ideas and practices, use the services offered, contribute their own efforts and resources to the programme, thereby giving vitality to new institutions and making constructive adjustments in their lives (Officials of United Nations Technical Assistance Program cited by Rondinelli and Cheema, 1983:20).

#### **2.2.1.2.2. Delegation**

Delegation is said to transfer managerial responsibility for specifically defined functions to organisations that are outside the regular bureaucratic structure and that are only indirectly controlled by the central government (Rondinelli *et al.* 1985:15). It implies that a sovereign authority creates or transfers to an agent specific functions and duties, which the agent has broad discretion to carry out. However, ultimate responsibility remains with the sovereign authority. In developing countries, responsibilities have been delegated to public corporations, regional development agencies, special function authorities, semi-autonomous project implementation units, and a variety of parastatal organisations.

In some countries, delegation is looked upon as a way of removing important functions from inefficient government bureaucracies. In others, it has been viewed as a way for government indirectly to provide goods and services for which user or unit charges can be made but which are not effectively provided by the civil service. Moreover, delegation is seen as a way of offering public goods and services through a more “business-like” organisational structure that makes use of managerial and accounting techniques normally associated with the private sector.

In East Africa, delegation has been used extensively as public corporations and special authorities have been used to finance, construct, and manage physical infrastructures such as highways, dams, hydroelectric facilities, railroads, and transportation systems. Furthermore, it has been used to organise and manage large-scale agricultural activities such as cotton growing in the Sudan and tea raising in Kenya (King 1967; and Khalil 1970 quoted by Bazaara, Legal and policy framework for citizen participation in East Africa,

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/resources/downloads/regionalreports/RegionalReportBazaaraEastAfrica%20final.doc>, internet accessed on 12/08/2005).

### **2.2.1.2.3. Devolution**

Devolution is the creation or strengthening - financially or legally - of subnational units of government, the activities of which are substantially outside the control of the central government. Under devolution, local units of governments are relatively autonomous and independent, and their legal status makes them separate or distinct from the central government. Central authorities exercise only indirect, supervisory control over such units. Normally, local governments have clear and legally recognised geographical boundaries within which they exercise an exclusive authority to perform explicitly granted or reserved functions. They have corporate or statutory authority to raise revenues and make expenditures. They should be perceived by the public as organisations providing services that satisfy their needs, and as governmental units over which they have some influence.

Devolution establishes reciprocal and mutually benefiting relationships between central and local governments. That is, the local governments are not merely subordinate administrative units, but they have the ability to interact reciprocally with other units of government in the political system of which they are a part. In most developing countries where devolution has been tried, the local governments have met some of these criteria (Sherwood cited by Rondinelli *et al* 1985:20).

Manor (2004:10), adds that local councils adapt government policies and programmes to distinctive local conditions that they understand best. Because ordinary people gain some voice in decisions about development projects, they acquire a sense of ownership of them, so that projects (and development) become more sustainable. Elected councils also tend to catalyse greater participation and civil society activity, and to reduce apathy, alienation and cynicism. Manor (2004:10) urges that three things are essential for devolution to work well:

- Adequate powers must be devolved
- Adequate resources (administrative and especially financial) must be devolved,
- A reliable mechanism to ensure downward accountability must be created.

Central governments have devolved development planning and management activities for a number of reasons. In some countries, the intention was to place the mechanisms of governance much closer to, or in direct contact with, the citizenry. The idea was to reduce the levels of administration through which activities had to pass, and to enhance productivity of and participation by the public increasing their self-mobilisation in development activities. In other cases, local governments were assigned functions that were considered to be predominantly or entirely local in nature or that were difficult to manage from the centre.

Relatively few developing countries have decentralised through devolution during the past three decades. Those making the attempt have transferred quite a broad range of activities to local governments. One of the most extensive attempts at devolution has been made in the Sudan as state by Rondinelli *et al* (1985:21). He reveals that this is where the provincial councils and provincial commissioners have been given responsibility for nearly all public functions except national security, posts and communications, foreign affairs, banking, and the judiciary. These were reserved for the central government. The country has been divided into administrative regions, each with a governor and a regional assembly that have semi-autonomous legislative and executive responsibilities. Rondinelli *et al.* (1985:21) reveal that provincial governments have the power to impose local taxes and fees, maintain law and order, finance public projects,

prepare annual budgets, recommend development projects to central government agencies, and establish and administer self-financing development activities. They oversee all the work of central ministries and government departments within the province. Devolution was undertaken to shift responsibilities for local services to the localities and to provide broader participation in development planning and management in the country.

#### **2.2.1.2.4. Privatisation**

Some governments have divested themselves of responsibility for functions and have either transferred them to voluntary organisations or allowed them to be performed by private enterprises. In some cases, governments have transferred responsibility to “parallel organisations” such as national industrial and trade associations, professional groups, religious organisations, political parties, or cooperatives (Rondinelli and Cheema 1983:24). These parallel organisations have been given the responsibility to licence, regulate, or supervise their members in performing functions that were previously performed or regulated by the government.

In some cases, government may decentralise by shifting the responsibility for producing goods and supplying services that were previously offered by parastatal or public corporations to privately owned or privately controlled enterprises. More often, government transfers responsibility to organisations that present various interests in society and that are established and operated by members of those organisations. These include farmers’ cooperatives, credit associations, mutual aid societies, village development organisations, trade unions, or women’s and youth clubs.

#### **2.2.2. Contextualising community development**

Coetzee in Coetzee *et al.*(2001:119) mentions that most definitions of *development*, whether they are of the modernization theory or dependency theory, refer to action plans, strategies and programmes aimed at improving the situation of the so-called less developed or underdeveloped countries. The emphasis is on institutional and organizational issues, and the changing thereof. He states that their characteristics include

to be poor, backward, traditional, rural (or in more optimistic mode) industrializing. It is assumed that by implementing specific plans or programmes, it is possible to introduce factors that will move a society along on the development path, with a favourable change of moving from worse to better, evolving from simple to complex, or advancing away from the inferior.

It is said by Stewart (1997:1) that development is concerned with positive change in existing human societies and the success of development efforts is measured by the results seen in the society. Stewart (1997:1) further questions that “if we claim that development is positive change in countries and communities, how do we define “positive”? How do we determine when a change is positive rather than negative; constructive rather than destructive? Even though it can be difficult to define what exactly constitutes positive change, the idea of development is inevitably connected with the idea of social, economic and political improvement, advancement or change. It is a form of those processes, preceding and accompanying political, economic and social transformation that will lead to the progress of the intended beneficiaries, which is the community in this specific context.

Though many definitions of development, which do not differ greatly from each other, have been given by a number of authors without clear difference between them, the definition that is taken into consideration here is the one given by Todaro (1994:16). Todaro (1994:16) states that “development must therefore be conceived of as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitude, and national institutions, as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and poverty”. Todaro (1994:16) emphasises that “development, in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of changes by which an entire social system, tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves towards a condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better”.

There is also a need to clarify in which way this “development” or this “better future” is delivered. Many concepts can have different meanings to different people given various

fields. The concept “community” is one of these. One can define community as a geographical entity, or as a group of people with same social values and traditions. One can also speak of urban or rural communities or classify them according to lifestyle.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:17) provide the definitions given by Edouards and Jones that explain community as a grouping of people who reside in a specific locality and who exercise some degree of local autonomy in organising their social life in such a way that they can, from that local base, satisfy the full range of their daily needs. This definition is supported by Zentner quoted by De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:17), who says that “the community must have certain measures of local autonomy... and a degree of local responsibility”.

With the intention of finding an explanation from the diversity of definitions, David, Gregory and William (1991:50) give three elements retained as relevant to document the understanding of community. David *et al* (1991:50) note, 1) Community is generally seen as delineated by a geographically, territorially, or spatially circumscribed area. 2) The members of the community are seen as bound together by a number of characteristics or attributes held in common (values, attitudes, ethnicity, and social classes). 3) The members of a community are engaged in some form of sustained social interaction” (Bangwanubusa, 2002:50).

In this study, the definition of community used will be “a group of people within a particular geographical area, considering its heterogeneity as the basis of finding solutions for community problems”.

Throughout its history, the term “community development” is sometimes ambiguous. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:1) state that “community development” is an idea that evolved and developed. Quoting Cornwell, De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:1) add, “Considering that the concept community development has no firm, precise and generally agreed upon meaning, it can be used arbitrarily to indicate a number of policies or programmes”.

The more recent use of the term of “community development” is attributed by some American authors<sup>3</sup>, to the practice of agricultural extension, the aim of which was the transfer of knowledge regarding agricultural practices and techniques (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:2). Community development can also be said to have the aim of establishing community organisation in order to promote better living, better farming, more education, more happiness, and better citizenship. This aim can be regarded as a method of stimulating community organisation to communicate the needs and wishes of communities to the administration.

The UN designates community development as a process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to the national progress (Groenewald, 1989:257). The accent is placed on the combined efforts of both the community and the government, as contributing partners during the process. In other understandings, development professionals are brought together with the community and the governmental authorities to form partnerships with them. In this way Sites (1998:58) notes that “community development initiatives are efforts made by professionals and community residents to enhance the social bonds among members of the community, motivate the citizens for self-help, develop responsible local leadership, and to create or revitalise local institutions”.

### **2.3. Theories and strategies for delivering development to the grassroots levels**

Different authors have pointed out different theories and strategies for local development. Some of them highlighted here are People-centred development, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), the four building blocks of integrated development and community participation.

---

<sup>3</sup> Bronkessha & Hodge (1969:36-37), and Mayo (1975:134).

### 2.3.1. People-centred development

People-centred development thinkers, referred to by Bosman and Marais in Theron (2005:139), argue that a fundamental part of the development process is the people themselves with their Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). If everyone believes that development is about people; then professionals, experts, project managers, consultants, policy-makers and local development planners, should work together closely within the community. Furthermore, Kotze (1997:9) assumes that humanist thinking on development views development as more than economic growth and that it includes transformation of institutions, social-cultural and political systems and structures. Moreover, for Brinkerhoff and Coston (1999:348), development includes equity, capacity, empowerment, self-determination and sustainability.

With this in mind, practical community development planning needs to understand the everyday life-world of people and their social reality if it is meant to succeed. It is the approach to development that looks at the creative initiative of people as the primary development resource, and at their material and spiritual well-being as the end that the development process serves (Korten and Carner, 1984:201). They add that a major failing of conventional development models, both socialist and capitalist, is that they become so *production-centred* that the needs of the production system assumes precedence over the needs of people. Little attention is paid to human potential beyond requiring beneficiaries to provide volunteer labour in support of centrally initiated schemes.

Korten and Carner (1984:202-209) say that the experience of the USAID Mission to the Philippines illustrates how a development planning approach that focuses attention on *people*, their *potentials* and the *constraints* they face, in their self-reliant development efforts, can influence a developer's programme in ways that makes it more responsive to the needs of the poor.

The meeting of the basic needs of poor people has become an important element in alternative development strategies. Regarding the approach, Bangwanubusa (2002:64) reveals that some analysts have come to conclude that "development without the element

of choice is questionable”. Not only do the real basic needs of the community require identifying and satisfying, but also an order of priorities needs to be established from within the community. Those basic needs, as indicated by Burkey (1993:31), are adequate food, shelter and clothing as household equipment, and essential services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

### **2.3.2. Indigenous Knowledge System**

Within a community, there is a complex set of knowledge and technologies that exist and developed around specific conditions of populations and communities. It is this complex named Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) that is discussed in this section. There is a need to understand IKS and its role in community life from an integrated perspective. At the same time, it is necessary to understand and to explore the potential contribution of IKS to local development, and its utilisation for the benefit of its owners and the communities.

#### **2.3.2.1. Definition of IKS**

Sometimes referred to as local knowledge, local technical knowledge, and technical knowledge systems, the term *Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS)* is, in this thesis, preferred because it is more comprehensive and conveys the connotation of a system of knowledge - empirical, theoretical and philosophical - with its own methodology (Treurnicht, 1997:93). He adds that Shumacher and other protagonists of the appropriate technology movement explained that indigenous knowledge should occupy an important place in the development debate. The Western capital-intensive technology is accused of creating more problems than it solved in the Third World where it made the people more dependent on its industrialization (Treurnicht, 1997:94). In the recognition of their values; basic, cost effective and need-oriented technology, IKSs are based on social reality, which derives from social knowledge and the local culture.

On the one hand, Garcia-Zamor (1985:16) states that social reality is deeply embedded in customs, traditions, and beliefs of human beings in communities. It is not fixed or unchanging as allegedly are physical phenomena. It is dependent on value and action

commitments of individuals who make up societies. This implies that IKSs are also dynamic and open to change. On the other hand, Treurnicht (1997:93) citing Verhelts, states that culture is the sum total of the original solutions that a group of human beings invent to adapt to their natural and social environment, where the culture informs development. IKSs therefore reflect indigenous ways of doing things, which are strongly embedded in local culture with regards to the social and economic aspects and other structures of their users.

IKSs refer to intricate knowledge systems acquired over generations by communities as they interact with the environment. They encompass technology, social, economic, philosophical, learning and governance systems. Odora-Hoppers, one of the foremost advocates of IKS, says that it is about excavating the technologies such as looms, textiles, jewellery and brass-work manufacture. She adds that IKSs are about exploring indigenous technological knowledge in agriculture, fishing, forest resource exploitation, atmospheric management systems, knowledge transmission systems, architecture, medicine, pharmacology, and recasting the potentialities they represent in a context of democratic participation for community, national and global development in real time (Hardison. 2001. Indigenous Knowledge Systems List, accessed on 03.05.2005 <http://www.brain.org.za/SUPPORT/indigenous.html>).

### **2.3.2.2. Indigenous Knowledge Systems in practice**

It is said that the world has suffered and continues to suffer from a profound loss of indigenous peoples and rural groups and their knowledge about the natural world. This loss is accompanied by negligence and the marginalisation of their practices and beliefs, often figured as inferior forms of knowing to be replaced by universalized knowledge derived from the western scientific tradition. This practice leads in many cases to failures.

In recognition of these issues, there is a dramatically growing national and international interest in incorporating IKS into participatory approaches to development. Community development needs to be driven by the local community. It is not something that happens by hiring outside consultants, or to be left in the hands of one organization or a few

individuals. The success of any community development process is dependent on the energy and commitment of the local community willing to be self-reliant.

In recent years, many international development agencies and non-governmental organizations have renewed their efforts to provide and promote indigenous knowledge orientation in development planning and practice. These efforts emphasize local knowledge systems and practices as valuable resources in global development. They give to the community the opportunity to design development projects that emerge from problems identified and assigned priority by the beneficiaries themselves. They also build upon and strengthen community level knowledge systems and organizations. The desirable direction or focus of a development initiative should be prompted by the people's own experience of their reality by incorporating IKS and appropriate development technology to impact positively on development planning and management at the micro-level. The need to reclaim and establish indigenous knowledge that has been suppressed is critical because of the intrinsic value of the knowledge itself as well as the important part it can play in restoring individual and collective dignity and confidence in a society. The Rwandan history in the rationale of this thesis explains how community development not driven by beneficiaries fails. Theron (2005:106) say that this desirable direction for development as a body of theory and practices includes public participation in project planning, implementation and evaluation. People become more actors than simple beneficiaries and shape their own development.

Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, (2005:62) state that "when you step into a community as a change agent ... seeking to make things better in some way, you arrive with some advantages: resources, technical expertise, option and decision-making power. Some of these advantages derive from what you personally bring; others flow from the organisation that supports the work you are doing. The community has power too. The community members bring their knowledge and local understanding, their motivation and commitment, and their power to mobilise themselves to organise and act". They add that, to succeed in this, a change agent must listen more than talk, learn more than teach, and facilitate more than lead.

### **2.3.3. The four building blocks of integrated development**

Building blocks of development are said to be comprised mainly by public participation, the social learning process, empowerment and sustainable development for a coordinated and systematic policy whose aim is to organize the global progress of a specific region, with the participation of the concerned population (Theron and Barnard 1997:38; Meyer and Theron 2000:5).

**Public participation** calls for an understanding that there is a logical and systematic sequence between the blocks. In a dynamic process, this approach of building blocks is supposed to be considered as a route for all change agents, managers, consultants, professionals and beneficiaries, the community and the poor (Chambers, 1983:168-198; 1997:33-73), at all levels, i.e. cell, sector and especially at District level. The District Council in Rwanda (DC) is the key player mainly responsible for all major decisions taken for district development as a whole.

First of all, and as stated previously, the community must be aware of its problems. In Rwanda an effort is made in this respect owing to the Rwandan experience with the successive centralist regimes. In community development, it is essential to attach value to the knowledge and skills of the population (Korten, 1983:214; Kotze and Kellerman, 1997:44). People should use their IKSs to participate in their own development process and these should be taken into consideration while making decisions. As long as the community does not understand those problems, the development process will be impossible.

The community is afterwards intended to be able to define its problems, and to design and specify solutions, taking into consideration the identified local potentialities from the grassroots to the district level for approval. Initiatives will thereafter come from the community themselves to translate these ideas into integrated actions. Members of the community must contribute to the success of the action undertaken by the local community institutions in order to ensure ownership. Initiatives in this sense are there and

policy makers are anxious to formalize the participative methods in the planning at all the levels.

During the planning, it will be necessary to face facts by considering firstly the local potentialities. In this way, it will be possible to avoid the bitter experience witnessed during the Rwanda genocide of 1994, where infrastructure and other community assets were destroyed. The regional and national plans should have as base the plans of Sectors and Districts as approved by the District Council. Some of these plans are selected and used as rungs in a ladder when further plans are compiled.

The plans of the district and urban areas that must be approved by District Council for implementation incorporate the plans of communities and large-scale projects of districts. The plans bring solutions, in the form of programmes and of projects, of the problems considered priority. Districts are asked to make strategic plans for at least 3 years, but these plans will be adapted according to circumstances and to how the situation evolves. The plans focus on four fields of activity: The improvement of the socio-economic services; regional development and environmental protection; generation of incomes; and measures intended for the vulnerable. Chambers (1997:174-175) raise an issue of the common prejudice among those who are not poor, that poor people are improvident and ‘live hand-to-mouth’. He states that in part this is seen as a moral defect, in part as a strategy for survival. Those who are indigent and desperate, who “do not know where the next meal is coming from” cannot and do not take the long view of professionals and elites.

However, much empirical evidence is strikingly contrary. There are those who are displaced, refugees, destitute, abandoned, and chronically sick and disabled who are forced to focus on immediate survival but they wish to take a long view, and struggle to do so by safeguarding their livelihoods and investing labour for the long term. In practice, poor people show tenacity and self-sacrifice in conserving the basis of their livelihoods.

This above approach leads to the principle of learning from other people's experiences or past mistakes. This second block, which is the *social learning process* approach, as indicated by Kotze and Kellerman (1997:41) and Theron (2005:121), is said to extend the principle of bottom-up planning and public participation. Change agents and development organizations should adopt a learning attitude that will make them aware of the changes that occur in the environment and adapt their behaviour. This could involve cultural change or innovation in their daily activities. Knowledge is shared and democratised. The technicians and advisors would like decision-makers to be open to change and to meditate on their priorities.

Certain donors or institutions exacerbate themselves these problems of not appropriating the community by placing signboards putting them in the first place in stead of the beneficiaries, and thus preventing an appropriation of development activities. The successive stages of building blocks of development cannot be achieved solely by the efforts of the community. An organization and specialists in community development are necessary to play the role of catalyst. They also help in raising awareness, evolving ideas, creating the necessary conditions for a dynamic learning attitude. This facilitates the emergence of community leaders and enables the creation of economic, social and educational institutions, which respond to needs and increase the self-esteem and self-reliance of people.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:62) argue that when the ownership is devolved to the people, the matter of coordination will become less of an issue. Development will not be the domain of a ministry or other line functionary and therefore the duty of establishing coordination will not lie with any of them, but with the community. The personal, professional and institutional challenge is learning how to learn, learning how to change, and learning how to organise and act in order to enable sustainable well-being for all (Chambers, 1997:14).

Therefore, in Rwanda, the community needs empowered Council members, leaders and partners who are change agents, able to awaken the desire to participate in the process of

change in other members of the community that are living with them. Added to this the third building block, *empowerment* creates self-awareness, which in turn addresses abstract development needs.

Swanepoel (1997: 16) notes that “an awareness of itself in terms of objectives is one of the greatest strengths a community can enjoy. When a community sees itself not as a suffering entity but as an active, doing organism able to change its environment”. The members of District Councils are supposed to be in charge of transformation of all-important aspects of the socio-economic life through public participation, so that people “share in”, “belong to”, “establish dignity and self esteem” and own their own development process (Bryant and White 1982:205-228), put people first and poor people first of all (Chambers, 1997:14).

Today, people no longer want to tolerate development guided by blind and scattered initiatives that are often contradictory. They want to be masters of their development, i.e. to achieve a self-sustaining improvement in medium to long-term life quality. Both District Council and Executive Committee members should undergo training to understand the philosophy of developmental local government as well as the benefits of accommodating the building blocks of development. They must have an understanding why they should focus their efforts and the councils’ resources on improving the quality of life of communities who were previously marginalized. Chambers (1997:210-211) mentions challenges to those who have the upper hand, to the powerful, to the structure of power. He says that it is to upend the normal, to stand the convention on its head, to put people before things and lowers before uppers. Furthermore, he states that imbalance is needed to establish balance. So children come before adults, women before men, the poor before the rich, the weak before the powerful, and the vulnerable before the secure. Development-oriented officials and councillors will not only see the building blocks in the planning system as a legislative obligation but as one that is beneficial to developmental local government. If district council members become developmentally oriented, they will eventually value community participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability.

When community development as a process is carried out adequately, the community will no longer be affected by the country's problems, of which poverty is the most serious one. For this reason, the durable solutions need to be thoroughly studied and refined from grassroots level, thus ensuring *sustainability*, which is the fourth building block of development, and said to be a focal point between the interests of development and the interests of resource conservation. The World Commission on Environment and Development Report, "Our Common Future" in 1987, as cited by Balance and King (1999:4), and the Constitution of South Africa, No 108 of 1996 (Bill of Rights: Art.24) add that sustainable development is to meet the needs of the presents without compromising the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs. That is why the overall objective and principles of the community development strategy states that projects should be implemented under the supervision of the communities and generate durable impact on the improvement of the standards of living of the communities. To be successful, they should originate from within the communities themselves.

#### **2.3.4. Community participation**

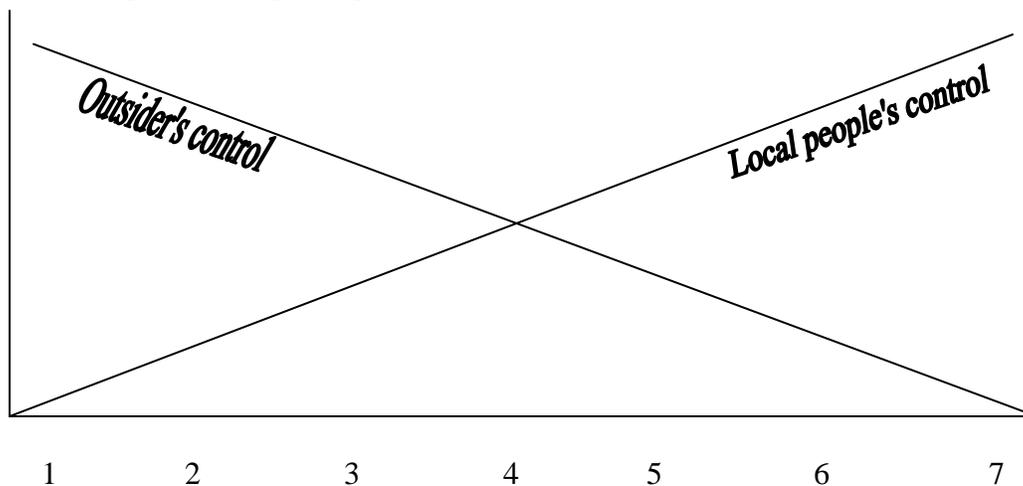
Ambert quoted by Theron (2005:111) state that participation as a buzzword, got its popularity from a growing recognition of the need of stakeholders to participate in development interventions. This made participation to occupy a central place in development thinking and practice. For Kumar (2002:23), governments, funding agencies, donors and civil society actors including NGOs and multi-lateral agencies like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have all arrived at a near consensus that development cannot be sustainable and long lasting unless people's participation is made central to the development process. Kumar (2002: 23) adds that while there is virtual unanimity about the need for community participation in development, there is a wide spectrum of views on the concept of participation and the way of achieving it.

A number of authors have given similar definitions regarding the concept of public participation with slight differences and there is confusion in understanding the

application of this concept. This is because there is a misunderstanding of community participation for involvement and community participation with empowerment as clearly discussed by Theron (2005:117). The indiscriminate use of community participation to describe strategies that have little to do with authentic participation by the poor has created misunderstanding and blown-up expectations amongst the community regarding development planning. According to Theron (2005:113), this frustration has provoked sceptical responses that led to publications like *Participation: The New Tyranny* by Cooke and Khotari in 2001, exploring the gulf between the rhetoric of community participation and what often happens in practice.

Although community participation means different things to different people, it is generally held to mean a collective effort of communities in the entire decision-making process to attain objectives regarding their well-being. Theron (2005:133) argues that the international rationale for the promotion of community participation and partnerships rests on the belief that if the community participates in development programmes these programmes will be seen as legitimate. This statement is also supported by Chambers (1997), Burkey (1993) and Korten (1990) by saying that if stakeholders are included in decision-making, they will become self-reliant. Oakley (1991:7) argues that participation can be considered as a means to an end, meaning that, it starts as a process of passive participation and progresses to active participation (or self-mobilisation). Stating it differently, it is a process that takes local people from where they are told what to do to where they are in total command as shown in the spectrum of participation with seven typologies given by Pretty *et al.* (Kumar, 2002:25).

Figure 2.1. Spectrum of participation



[1=Passive participation, 2=Participation in information giving, 3=Participation by consultation, 4=Participation for material incentives, 5=Functional participation, 6=Interactive participation and 7=Self-mobilisation]

*Source: Kumar (2002:25) and Theron (2005:116)*

In this regard, community participation is viewed as an active process in which the participants take initiatives and take action that is stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation and over which they can exert executive control. This should rest on Paulo Freire's classic formulation of the conscientisation principle, (Burkey, 1993: 53-55, 209), where people become aware of their local needs and dispose their local knowledge to design the way forward and can choose appropriate technologies to rely on and reject development interventions which do not address their well being.

The problem of non-existence of popular participation has been heightened further by the colonial heritage of African countries. The administration's role under colonial rule was to subjugate citizens and exclude them from participation. The post-colonial administration's elite lifestyle and the political regimentation prevailing in most countries encourage the community to withdraw from an active role in government (Garcia-Zamor, 1985:31). There was also a withdrawal of the use of IKSs, cultural and natural heritage in handling social, economic and political development issues.

Community participation is an important component of successful planning. The community needs and deserves ongoing communication regarding projects and issues that affect their communities. Some of advantages of community participation are:

- *Efficiency*: by ensuring effective utilisation of available resources;
- *Effectiveness*: by granting people a say in deciding the objectives and strategies, and by participating in implementation, thereby ensuring effective utilisation of resources;
- *Self-reliance*: With the active participation of local people, can break the mentality of dependence and increase their awareness, self-confidence, and control of the development process;
- *Coverage*: by the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society and
- *Sustainability*: Community participation is regarded as an essential prerequisite for the continuity of activities. Participation and the utilisation of local resources generate a sense of ownership over the development interventions, which are essential for their sustainability even after external funds cease to flow (Kumar, 2002:27-28).

#### **2.3.4.1. Guiding principles of community participation**

The community participation programme follows several principles that help ensure that planning efforts obtain sufficient community input and support. These principles are:

- A sound community participation plan is critical to the success of any planning process. It must include techniques to share information and create lines of communication between interested parties.
- Community participation must be a genuine effort to encourage the community in the decision-making process by providing community participation opportunities.
- Information must be disseminated to a broad range of stakeholders.
- An effective community participation process must incrementally address issues that arise when planning recommendations do not adequately consider the concerns of the people affected.

#### **2.3.4.2. Obstacles to the community participation**

If community participation is to succeed, some obstacles need to be tackled at the very start. The crucial ones are those related to structural factors, administrative factors, and social obstacles, as pointed out by Oakley (as cited by Kumar, 2002:28). Structural obstacles comprise those factors, which form part of centralised political systems, and are not oriented to community participation and using a top-down development approach. The administrative structures that are control-oriented operate by a set of guidelines and a blue-print approach without significant room for local people to make their own decisions. The social obstacles are linked to the dependence attitude of the domination of upper by lower categories or gender inequalities as discussed in Chambers (1997:223) and the attitude of government officials in Burkey (1993:169).

#### **2.4. Summary**

From the colonisation era up to 1980s, the centralisation system has been seen by Third World governments as the correct way to maintain central control and interventions. As the negative effects of centralisation increased, on the other hand, the political and economic systems and ideology changed in a number of developing countries. Along with the evolution of the concept of development, and what its goal is or should be, there have been significant changes in thinking regarding how to achieve it, with the state as a supporter and a regulator of private and community efforts.

The decentralisation of some development planning and management began in 1970s, with the objective of reducing the overload and congestion in the channels of administration and improve government's responsiveness to the community. Decentralisation refers mainly to different forms that are aimed to provide more choices to beneficiaries. These forms are deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatisation.

If in humanist thinking, development is about people; all forms of government should be aimed to boost community development capabilities. In this way, government and other developers need to interact with communities in ways that enable them to develop their

own comprehension so that they can have a shared vision for change. The community members bring their knowledge and local understanding, their motivation and commitment, and their power to mobilise themselves to organise and act.

The theme decentralisation is universal with the more successful approaches at local community and District level recognising the need to mobilise in support of their own upliftment, and the necessity to provide the means for community ownership of development process (Ackron, 2004:130). This development process in the context of community development calls upon an integrated and incremental procedure that ensures linkage between four building blocks of development.

## **Chapter 3: National framework for decentralisation and community development in Rwanda**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Rwanda is divided into Provinces, Districts, Sectors, and Cells. The province serves as a coordinating organ of the central government to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the government's planning, execution, and supervision of decentralised services. As a deconcentrated body, the provincial level is not identified as a local government level. The central government retains a strong degree of authority over the Provinces and the decision-making remains with it.

Local government structures referred to are the districts, and within them, the sectors and cells. Presently, the important political features of districts are their elected councils and mayors, and the preparation of their own budgets. On the revenue side, this implies that districts have their own taxing powers and receive subsidies from higher levels of government. Given the electoral system, the cells and sectors serve as constituencies in their own rights, and hence an important entry point for communities' voice. The districts were originally created as the centre for the decentralised delivery of services. The sector is the next level of administration where people participate through their elected representatives. Within the ongoing context of local government reform, the Government of Rwanda intends to provide itself with more fiscal and service delivery responsibilities. Finally, the cell is the smallest political administrative unit of the country. Its main responsibility is community mobilisation.

In this context, the term "Local Governments" (LGs) is used to describe districts, whereas local government structures are used to refer to all three levels (Districts, Sectors and Cells). This distinction is important and will be used when referring to community development processes and the current territorial reforms. Furthermore, the Capitale of Kigali is exclusively named Kigali City while other regions remain called Provinces. Finally, District and urban area are used as names of the same level in Local Government

but urban area is used to refer to Districts located in Kigali City and other Districts considered as towns in other Provinces.

### **3.2. Decentralisation policy in Rwanda**

The decentralisation process moves competencies from central government agencies to decentralised entities. Decentralised entities are eager to obtain those competencies (although not necessarily capable), while central government agencies are reluctant to release competencies (although decentralised entities have the capabilities).

In May 2000, Rwanda adopted a policy and strategy for decentralisation and embarked on a process geared towards empowering Rwandan communities at all levels to participate actively in the political, economic and social transformation of Rwanda to overcome this challenging mission and to achieve three main goals:

- Good governance,
- Pro-poor service delivery, and
- Sustainable development.

This process was grounded in nationwide grassroots consultative processes to determine the causes of genocide and to chart out lasting solution. Bad governance, extreme poverty, and exclusive political processes have been identified as some of the main underlying causes of the genocide.

The Decentralisation Implementation Process, (DIP) is being undertaken in three phases: The first phase (from January 2001 to December 2003) established democratic and community development structures and attempted to build their capacities. In a bid to facilitate the functioning of these structures, a number of legal, institutional, and policy reforms were undertaken. These reforms defined the roles and responsibilities of central and decentralised structures, held elections, financed services and accountability mechanisms, and undertook institutional and human resources capacity building activities. They also ensured extensive sensitisation of the population on the legal and administrative aspects of decentralisation.

During the period 2004-2008, Rwanda is meant to adopt a five year Decentralisation Implementation Plan (DIP) to consolidate and deepen the decentralisation process by emphasizing service delivery to communities through a well-integrated accountability network. This is through community empowerment by ensuring greater participation in the planning and management of their affairs. As a mechanism to facilitate effective implementation of poverty reduction programmes, decentralisation principles and practices are mainstreamed in the ongoing work to update the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), sectoral strategies and plans, and District Development Plans (DDPs). The strategy and activity in this phase are thus, building on the achievements, lessons and challenges of the first phase, as well as on emerging concept and priorities in the service delivery systems.

The third phase will be a continuous process of improving, supporting and sustaining the achievements of the first two phases.

### **3.2.1. Legal provision for and the political foundation of decentralisation**

The decentralisation emanates from the commitment of Rwanda to empowering its people to determine their destiny. In addition the policy has its foundations in the fundamental laws of the country as well as in the political and administrative pre-dispositions that the government has already taken:

- Acceptance of the power sharing as expressed in the Arusha Peace Agreement between the government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front. Up to now, power has remained in the hands of the political elite at Parliament and Executive levels. The decentralisation policy will reinforce power sharing by ensuring that the Rwandese people themselves are empowered to shape their political, economic, and social destinies.
- The Ministry for Local Government was mandated to formulate and implement a policy of democratic decentralisation.
- Constitutional provision that all power emanates from the people and that the national sovereignty belongs to the Rwandese people (Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 1991, first title, Article 6). The decentralisation is intended

to make this constitutional provision materialise into the people's exercise of their power over their leaders both at the central and local levels. It is the most indicative feature of the government's willingness to promote democracy and popular participation among Rwandans. Journal Officiel of the Republic of Rwanda (Official Gazette) number 7 of 01/04/2001, grants citizens the right to take part in development by providing an opportunity to everyone to express his/her idea and to participate actively in any activity aimed at the promotion of development and growth of the country especially the district in which he/she works or lives. Article 45 of the Constitution provides that all citizens have the right to participate in the governance of their country whether directly or through freely chosen representatives.

- Presidential consultations held from May 1998 to March 1999 resolved that decentralisation and democratisation will be some of the policies to reconcile the Rwandese people and to fight poverty.

### **3.2.2. Objectives of decentralisation in Rwanda**

Decentralization in Rwanda has been urged by a range of actors to counter the perceived passivity of the population in face of the previously high concentration of the power in the capital. According to the Republic of Rwanda (2000:7), the overall objective of the decentralization policy is to ensure political, economic, social, managerial/administrative and technical empowerment of communities to fight poverty by participating in the planning and management of their development process.

In addition to other international objectives of decentralisation as given in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Rwanda has five specific decentralisation objectives:

- To enable and reactivate local people's participation in initiating, implementing and monitoring decisions and plans that concern them;
- To strengthen the accountability and transparency in Rwanda by making local leaders directly accountable to the communities;

- To enhance sensitivity and responsiveness of public administration to the local environment by placing the planning, financing, management and control of service provision at the point where service is provided;
- To develop sustainable capacity for economic planning and management at local levels and
- To enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the planning, monitoring and delivery of services by reducing the burden of central government officials who are distant from the point where needs are felt and service delivered.

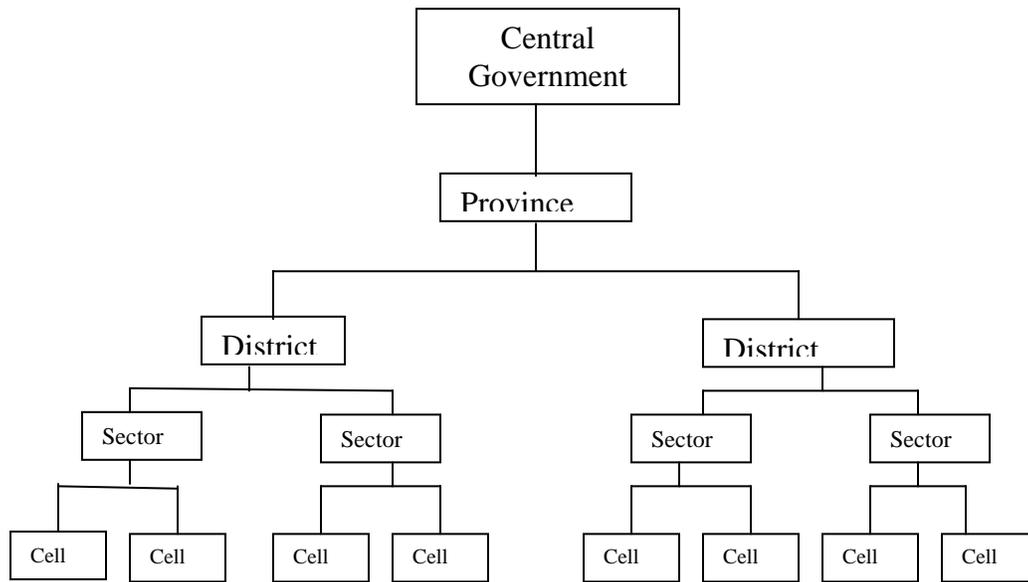
To realise the above objectives, it is imperative that decentralisation is pursued as a mechanism for effective and efficient service delivery for community development.

### **3.2.3. The local government structure and functioning**

Rwanda's current local administration is based on a five-layer structure i.e. Central government, Provincial administration, Districts and urban authorities, Sectors and Cells.

Rwanda decided on 26 May 2000 to divide into 12 Provinces (Intara) and city of Kigali, Former Prefectures; 106 Districts (Akarere) formerly Communes; 1545 Sectors; and 9,165 Cells as one can see it on figure 3.1 below. The District is considered as the basic political and administrative unit of the country. Before this time, the Cell level was considered as the basic unit of development because they were closest to the people, but nothing was done to promote local development.

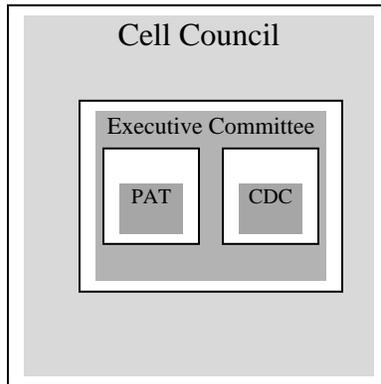
Figure 3.1: Government structure



### 3.2.3.1. The Cell organizational functioning

The Cell is the smallest politico-administrative unit of the country and hence is closest to the people. It is the unit through which the problems, priorities and needs of the people at the grassroots level are identified and addressed. The key organizational bodies are *the Cell Council (CC)* of which all citizens resident in the Cell are members, and *the Cell Executive Committee (CEC)* that is elected by the Cell Council. It is composed of ten members and is broken down as follows: The Political and Administrative Committee (PAC) and the Community Development Committee (CDC). The CEC through its components executes functions related to administration and community development including the day-to-day administration of the Cell and the implementation of the decisions taken by the Cell Council. The Cell Executive Committee works through its technical committee (the Community Development Committee) to identify and prioritise needs, design development plans, mobilize development resources and implement the plans.

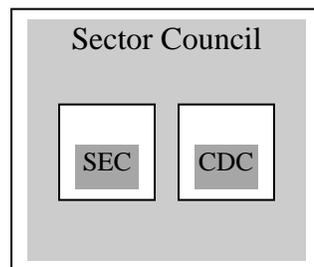
Figure 3.2: Cell organisational chart



### 3.2.3.2. The Sector organizational functioning

The Sector is the next level of administration in which people participate through their elected representatives executing duties on Sector or District Levels. The following is the administrative structure at the Sector level: ***The Sector Council (SC)*** is a political organ for policy-making decisions. The number of Cells forming the Sector determines the number of Sector Council members. The Sector Council's functions include approval of Sector plans and action programmes, and ensuring the follow-up of their implementation. ***The Sector Executive Committee (SEC)*** is elected by the Sector Council (SC) to support the preparation and implementation of its policies, plans, and decisions. The number of SEC members is the same number of Cells. Its mission is the same as at the Cell level but on a larger scale. CDC at Sector level ensures development activities.

Figure 3.3: Sector structure



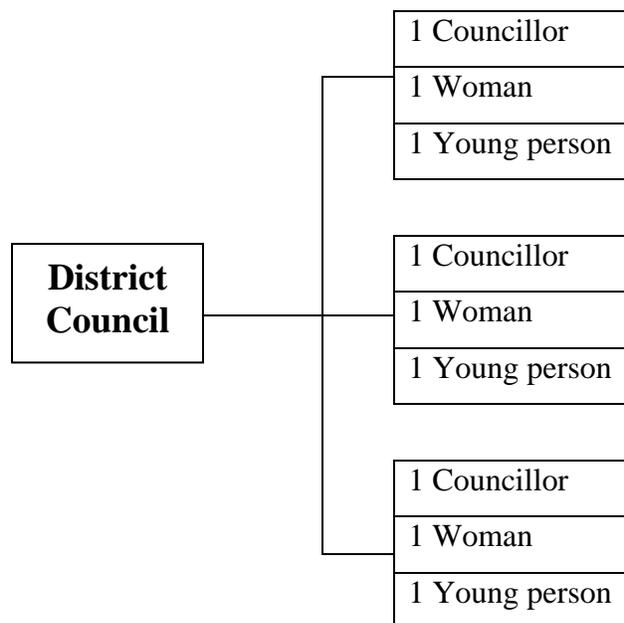
### 3.2.3.3. The District organizational functioning

At the District level, the picture is quite different. The District is said to be the centre for the delivery of services, and is directly concerned with the well-being of the local population. The territorial community is a natural unit, because it is possible to have a direct drive on all the factors of the development and the inhabitants who live there share numerous common community interests. The management structure is described below.

#### 3.2.3.3.1. The District Council (DC)

Each District Council is composed of the following three categories of members: one Councillor elected by everybody (men, women and youth) at the Sector level, one elected woman representating all women of her Sector at District level, and one young person elected by and representating all the young people of his or her Sector at District level. This is done regardless the number of Sectors per District.

Figure 3.4: District Council composition



The District Council is the policy-making and legislative body at the District Level. It functions as the Parliament of the District through which the people via their representatives can exercise their decision-making, planning and control powers to determine the development of the District. To avoid accumulation of mandates and

concentration of power in the hands of a few individuals, people who are members of the Sector Executive Committee are not Councillors at the district level.

Meyer and Theron (2000:64) argue that the role of Council as the legislative authority is to ensure that all policies comply with financial, legal, constitutional and technical requirements. They add that since community participation is a mandatory requirement, the Council has a duty to ensure that it adheres to all major policy and development issues. The Council as the political body is held accountable for the success or the failure of mandatory requirements. There is no place for ivory tower politics from Councillors. They should be the vehicles through which the community speaks. They should be in touch with the needs of those they have the responsibility to represent. If the Councillors act the way they are expected to, the quality of local government capacity building will show improvement.

In addition to other responsibilities stipulated by the law and general regulations, in Law N° 04/2001 (2001:7) of Republic of Rwanda, which establishes the organization and the functioning of the District as modified and complemented up to date, the decentralization policy stipulates that the District Council has the following duties:

- To discuss the development policy, plans and budget and approve them,
- To enact by-laws for the District in line with the laws of the country,
- To mobilize the District to participate in development activities,
- To oversee and monitor the work of the sector executive committee, and its accountability,
- To follow-up the activities of the Executive Committee,
- To co-ordinate activities of Sectors.

For scrutinizing proposals forwarded to it by the Executive Committee, the Council utilizes its following commissions:

- The Economic and Technical Commission;
- The Commission for Culture and social Welfare;
- The Administrative, Political and Legal Commission.

### **3.2.3.3.2. The District Executive Committee (DEC)**

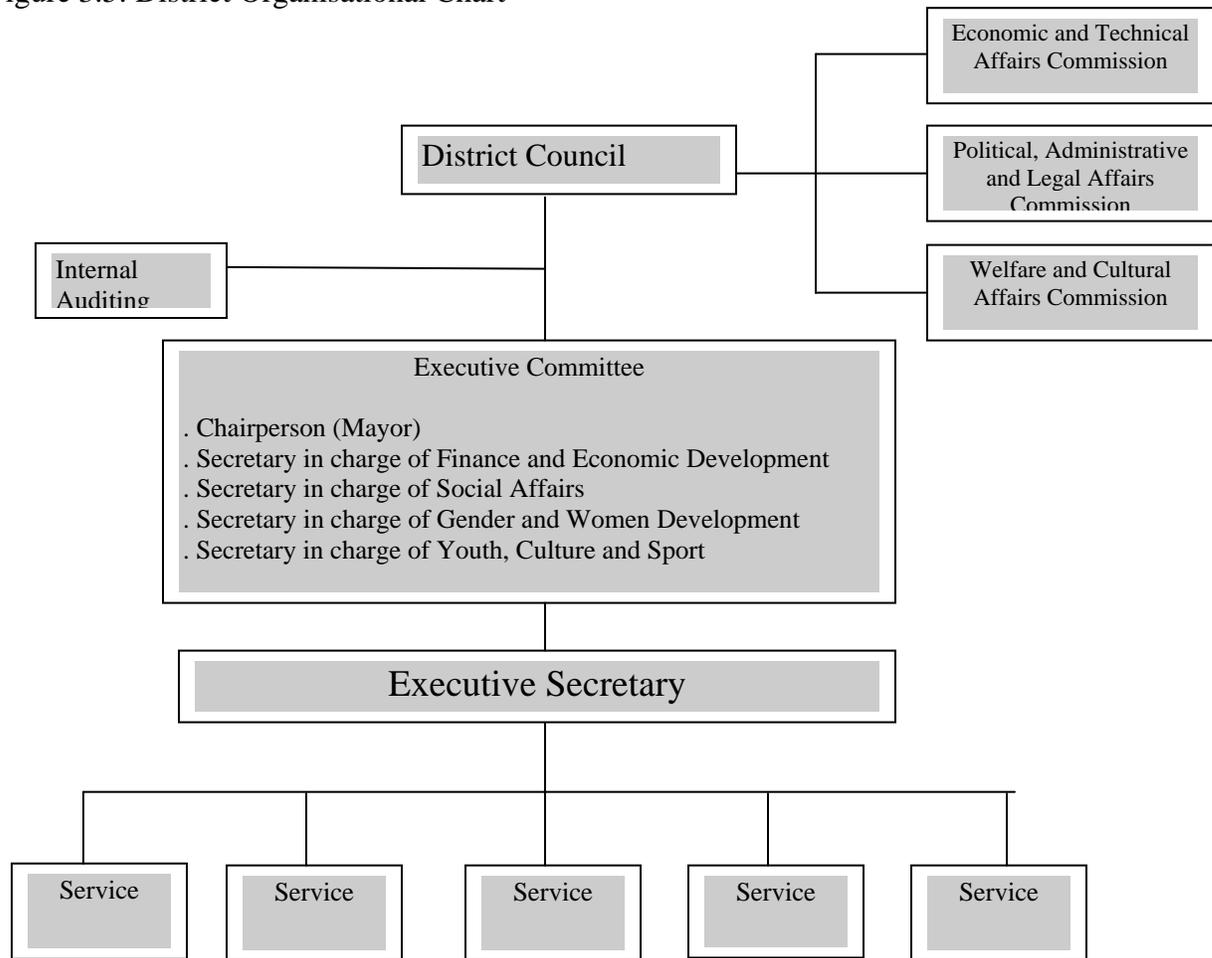
The District Executive Committee that is elected by the District Council together with all the members of the Sector Executive Committees and Chairpersons of the Cell Councils constitute an electoral college to elect the chairperson of the District Council among the elected Councillors of the District and four members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is the day-to-day contact point between the people of the District and their elected Council in matters pertaining to service delivery and development. The head of administration in the District is the *Executive Secretary* that heads the management and technical units of the District and is the overall supervisor of the public servants employed in the District.

The DC and CDC are meant to correct the bad habit of non-participation and non-availability of the people, which characterized the former structures in charge of development at District Level such as the Development Council and the Technical Committees. The responsibilities of the District Executive Committee are:

- To prepare the District's development action plan and budget taking into consideration the needs received from the sectors;
- To follow-up and control activities and development projects of the District;
- To supervise the administration and finances of projects in the District;
- To prepare the draft of the development budget of the District;
- To organize the sensitisation of the population with regard to development activities.

Analysis of the above information related to the composition, responsibilities and functioning of DCs, DEC's and CDCs, shows that there is an overlap. However, this can produce good results if all those teams are skilled enough, trained, and are committed to accomplish their missions accountably.

Figure 3.5: District Organisational Chart



Source: Republic of Rwanda (2000:20)

The Province, as a deconcentrated level of Central Government, does not have Council. It serves as a coordinating and advising organ to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of Central Government in the planning, execution and supervision of the decentralized services in Local Government Structures. This does not fall under local government structures. That is the reason why it is not discussed in details with decentralised entities.

#### 3.2.4. Sectoral collaboration and integrated management tools

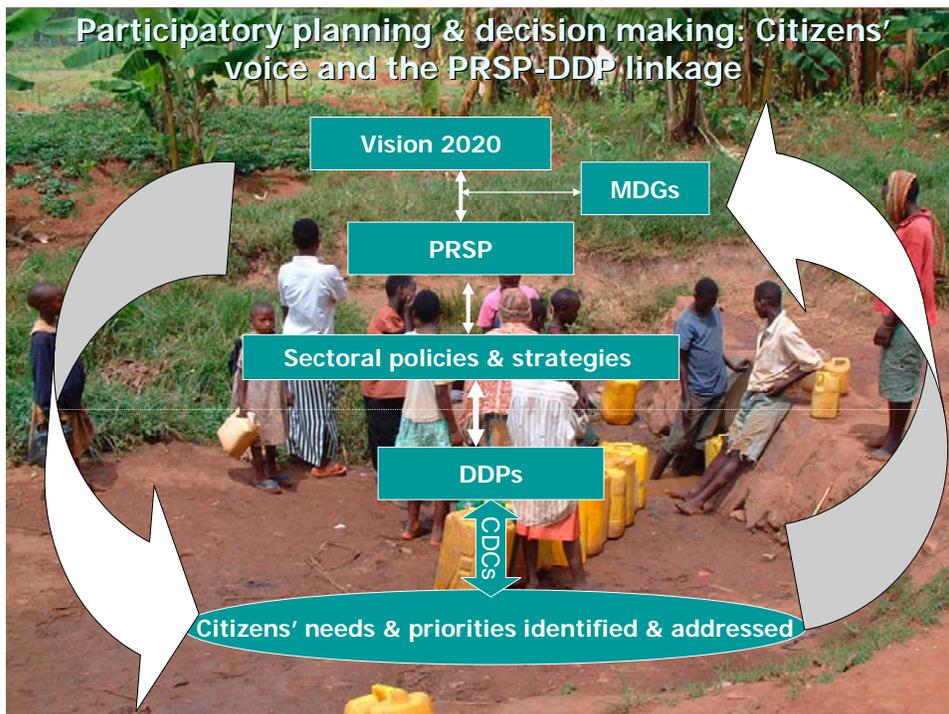
The integrated service delivery management can be promoted through sectoral collaboration. The national framework of the PRSP, local frameworks of the District Development Plan and community level structures are good examples of integrated

management tools that must be followed and implemented in order to align sectoral strategies with national policies and resources. (See figure 3.6. below). This interconnectedness of services must be entrenched at policy level but this will require a shift in thinking among policy-makers, planners, service providers, and even donors, from institutional (or Sector) oriented to client focused.

Sectoral collaboration should be undertaken in:

- Harmonisation of inter-sectoral activities to enhance standardisation and to avoid duplication of efforts and wastage of resources;
- Resource mobilisation and reallocation to priority areas. PRSP is the main mobilisation tool and DDPs are expected to be the main framework for mobilising and financing decentralised services. Rwanda will strengthen the Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) to promote coherence in sectoral activities so as to bring together all actors within a sector and assist the local governments determine how much of the resources are allocated to various sectors;
- Enhance capacity of local governments to coordinate with the ministries.

Figure 3.6: Participatory planning framework



Source: Republic of Rwanda (2005b:29)

### **3.2.5. The role of the central government**

Since participatory development has not been free from state manipulation, there is little evidence that it can rely on community initiatives only. Midgely (1986: 157-158) argues, “If the critical problems of mass poverty and deprivation in the Third World are to be dealt with, concerted action by the state will be needed. Local people do not have the resources to solve these problems through their own efforts alone. Participation is highly desirable but the poor cannot survive on rhetoric and idealism”.

Rwanda’s vision for decentralised service delivery seeks “to ensure effective and sustainable use of public resources, to guarantee transparent, democratic and participatory decision-making, and to enhance equitable delivery of basic services. Underlying this vision is the firm belief in a society which offers a peaceful social environment to its people along with the conditions for developing collective and individual potentials of all Rwandans to contribute to poverty reduction and economic development” (Minister of Local Government, Republic of Rwanda, 2005b:4). The overall responsibility of the central government is to promote and ensure good governance for socio-economic development of the country and the general welfare of its citizens. In the context of decentralised service delivery, the central government will:

- Set the national development vision, conceive, design and formulate national policies and strategies to attain it;
- Ensure that sectoral strategies (i.e. health, education, water, agriculture) at national level reflect the needs and priorities of the citizens as contained in the consolidated local government development plans;
- Mobilise resources from domestic and external sources;
- Set national standards, procedures and guidelines for planning, financing and implementation of service delivery;
- Establish a legal and regulatory framework to ensure adherence to transparency and accountability in service delivery

- Monitor and evaluate the relevancy of the standards set and the effectiveness of the strategy for delivery of services.

By having the power to shape and determine the nature of community participation activities, the government also has an enabling role where it assists citizens to function as problem-solving communities. This creates more opportunities for crafting self-governing institutions which also contribute to the exercise of constitutional choice in developing polycentric and multiple level institutions. It is this experience of working with others in a group towards a mutually acceptable purpose, which is the building block of self-organising institutions. The more facilitators can help to increase this experience of working within self-organising institutions, the greater is the yield in the condition of people as enterprising citizens who are capable of reasoned thought, consent and purposeful action.

Botchway (2001:148) argues that most advocates of community participation understandably reject state involvement in the promotion of community participation. State involvement perpetuates the old top-down approach to social development, thus stifling initiatives and self-reliance. This view is popular and is currently being reinforced by structural adjustment policies, which advocate complete state withdrawal from development. This statement ignores the fact that the state is today a major provider of social development services.

### **3.2.6. Principles of the decentralisation approach towards community development**

Rwanda in collaboration with many multilateral and bilateral donors and non-government organizations conducted a joint assessment mission after which the central government proposed a decentralization strategy to reinforce power sharing. The purpose was to ensure that the people themselves are empowered to shape their political, economic, and social destiny. The strategy was that Districts would plan and implement development projects as a means to facilitate community development. The Minister of Local Governance mentions the following principles (Conference on Decentralisation and Service Delivery on 16<sup>th</sup>, September 2005):

- *Putting citizens at the centre of service provision and community development programmes* by enabling them to identify and decide what services they should have, and to select, monitor, and discipline service providers through their power as users/clients or beneficiaries
- *Strengthening the incentives for providers to serve the poor* and to improve accountability and transparency,
- *Increasing the effectiveness of all resources available* from government, donors, service providers, civil society and the community itself.

The Government's vision reinforces the ongoing decentralisation process in Rwanda as it focuses on empowering citizens and increasing their influence and control over the basic services that are normally delivered locally or regionally like judicial services, social services, economic infrastructures, agricultural services, environmental management, information and some administrative services

#### Box 3.1. The case of Nyagisagara

##### **The case of Nyagisagara**

Community initiatives to bring services closer: *The case of health posts in the Nyagisagara district*

Nyagisagara is a remote district in the Gisenyi province, in the west part of the country. Local communities faced the problem of the long distance to health centres, which is aggravated by poor road networks. Because of the far away locations of the health centres and the lack of motorised transport, people, even those who subscribed to health mutual associations, felt they did not benefit. The local leaders mobilised the communities and established health posts (to serve as outposts to health centres) and recruited staff, using contributions from health mutual associations. This initiative paid off: health services came closer to the people, and this resulted in increased subscription to health mutual associations. Because the health posts and the staff are managed by the communities, the level of services is satisfactory. All sectors in Nyagisagara have established health posts.

The Nyagisagara innovation has been applauded by the Ministry of Health which is planning on trying to get it adopted to other areas.

There are two major observations from this case: The community identified their main problem as the long distance to health facilities, and that the local community mobilisation was effective because of the visionary and trusted leadership all of which are fruits of decentralisation.

### **3.2.6.1. Accountability relationship framework**

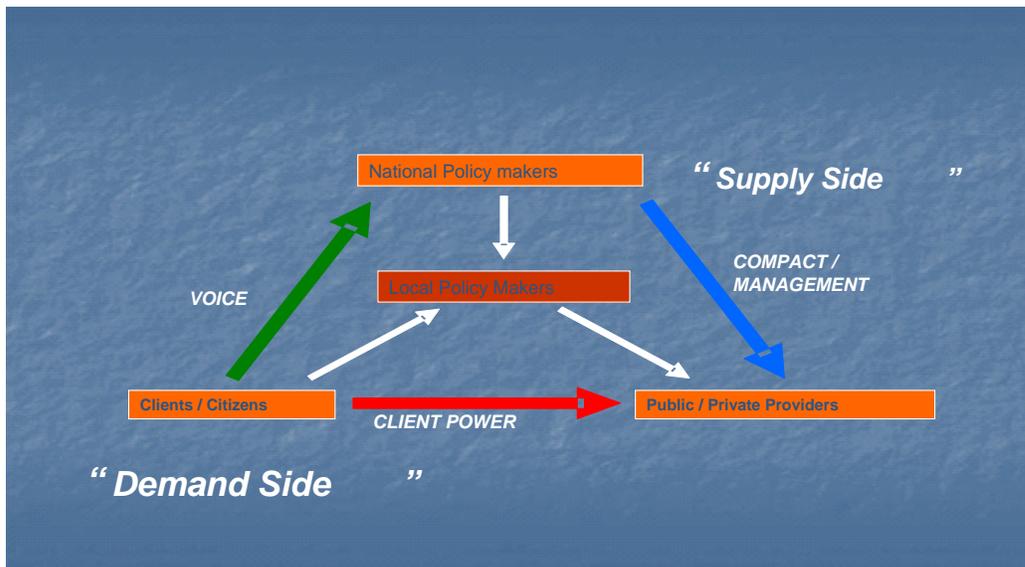
To make the principles of decentralisation a reality, the government strategy is to develop and enhance “accountability relationships” between institutional actors. However, this requires that policymakers and planners, service providers and facilitators (e.g. donors, advocacy CSOs) and the beneficiaries themselves (individuals, households, and communities) think about services from the perspective of client/beneficiary needs, rather than individual sectors or institutions. According to the Republic of Rwanda (2005b:7), the main actors in Rwanda’s service delivery are:

- Citizens: Population and communities making private choices as users of services and actors in decisions over collective choices in their role of participation.
- Policy makers: Government at various levels (central, provincial, local structures) including elected or non elected officials who are in charge of setting general directions, supervising and monitoring the implementation of service delivery.
- Service providers: Institutions (schools, universities, clinics, hospitals, firms, etc) both private and public (autonomous or not), local CSOs, and international NGOs that provide services.

The framework advocates that both policy-makers and service providers be accountable to citizens who should have a strong influence over the availability and quality of services, and the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of service delivery will be a function of accountability between these three actors. The World Bank, in its World Development Report (WDR), 2004, provides a model which has been adopted to analyse

the accountability relationship in Rwanda's decentralized service delivery. It is presented in figure below.

Figure. 3.7: WDR model of accountability relationships



Source: World Bank 2004 as quoted by the Republic of Rwanda (2005b:8)

The Republic of Rwanda (2005b:7) urge that communities can exert their collective *voice* to influence policy, strategies and expenditure priorities at different levels of policy-making (national and local levels) according to their aspirations and preferences. Their voice enhances the accountability of policy makers and motivates them to be responsive to the needs of their communities and stimulates demand for better service delivery from providers.

Citizens can also exercise their powers as users/clients/beneficiaries (*client's power*) over service providers and hold them responsible for the access to, the quantity and the quality of services. Local communities have been empowered by law to recall their leaders, which motivate them to be more responsible to the needs of their communities.

Finally, the policy makers exert influence on the providers through some implicit or explicit contractual relationship (*Compact and management*). The provider is to deliver

some given level of performance following administrative instruction or contract. The policy-makers use the instruments of financing, regulation and monitoring.

In this decentralisation context, the relationship of accountability will include policy makers from both national and local level. Citizens may exert their voice vis-à-vis national and local policy makers. The last are often closer to the day-to-day concerns of the citizens and hence may have an important role to play in ensuring better services. Ultimately, however, the quality of services will depend on the accountability of the front-line service providers, be they public or private. This will be the key challenge to each sector, i.e. education, health, infrastructures, water, and agriculture.

### **3.2.6.2. Strengthening the client's power**

What is expected from the service providers is to respond to the demand that reflects the interest of the communities/users. This means building mechanisms that enhance the leverage of citizens over service provision, including strengthening users' cooperatives, associations, users' advisory and management boards, and providing financial help to the poor so as to enhance their financial leverage over providers.

In strengthening the client's power over service providers, Rwanda made substantial progress especially in the education, water and health sectors. Thus, Republic of Rwanda (2005:9) states that there have been created:

- *Parents and Teachers' Associations (PTAs)* with mandate to take charge of the school management together with school managers (head teachers), which mandate brought in beneficiaries-parents in the management of the schools. Through PTAs, parents and communities have improved their knowledge and skills in education management and have, in some provinces, mobilised and recruited additional teachers, paid for by the parents, to reduce the teacher/pupils ratio. Other achievements of PTAs are the creation of nursery schools to cater for pre-primary education not provided by the government, and the introduction for subsidies to poor children to pay for secondary education grants.

- *In the water sector*, local communities identify and select the sites for the construction of safe water points. They hire local technicians and mobilise funds for maintaining the

water facilities. The vulnerable groups (very poor, widows, genocide victims/survivors) are exempted by the community from contributing to these projects.

- *In the health sector*, there is experience of introducing performance-based incentives via contractual arrangements. Local NGOs manage funds for health services providers and issue guidelines for access to funds. Health providers have to explain in action plans how they will increase health coverage, compete for resources and they are paid on the basis of their performance. CBOs and individual members of the community are responsible for counter-checking claims by service providers. Many private and public health care providers are involved and instead of waiting for patients, they go out to the communities to mobilise them to come and attend health centres. Local communities no longer complain of the poor attitudes of health workers as the workers see them as important and treat them well. Incentives are based on numbers of clients attended to. The scheme has worked due to a numbers of conditions such as availability of funding, qualified local NGOs, CBOs and private service providers. There has been training and awareness rising as part of the intervention.

### **3.3. The Rwandan context of community development**

After exploring the decentralisation framework of Rwanda, one needs to explore also its contribution across Local Government Structures. As decentralisation process is aimed at bringing the power closer to the people and at providing a workable structure of community development, this section mainly focuses on the description of the Rwandan context of Community Development Policy. It analyses the definition of community development and its different concepts, the development planning process and the role of Community Development Committees at all levels of Local Government.

#### **3.3.1. Definition of community development**

There are various ways to define community development as indicated in chapter 2 but all definitions have something fundamental in common, which is the support of the

community. Though it is not an easy task, it is a very important aspect, whatever the socio-economic level of development of the country may be.

The following definition seems to be the most complete and is used to define community development in this case:

*“Community Development is a coordinated and systematic policy the aim of which is to organise the global progress of a specific region, with the participation of the concerned population” (Rezohazy, quoted by the Republic of Rwanda in its Community Development Policy 2001:11).*

**A coordinated and systematic policy** refers to an action, which pursues specific objectives determined within a given time frame, provides means and tools, arranges measures to be taken in a successive manner, conceived, elaborated and implemented under the guidance of qualified people.

**Organise the global progress** means to be in charge of transformation of all important aspects of the socio-economic life. Today, people no longer want to tolerate a development guided by blind and scattered initiatives that are often contradictory. The people want to be the master of their development. The community development policy (Republic of Rwanda 2001:12) states that some experts tend to limit their understanding of community development to material aspects such as the organization of technological progress, increasing outputs, increasing revenues and the search for efficiency. Contrary, others tend to limit their understanding of community development to the socio-cultural aspects such as the resolution of community conflicts, adapting the population to change, integrating it into national life, educating it and providing it with health care services.

### **3.3.2. Description of the development planning process**

To ensure effective participation of the community in their development, the Government introduced a planning mechanism that involves all levels. The people themselves through the Community Development Committees at Cell, Sector and District Level make the identification and prioritisation of needs. The establishment of Community Development

Committees provides an effective link from grassroots level to the District level, thereby facilitating participatory bottom-up planning.

Under decentralisation the planning process is expected to be characterised by the following:

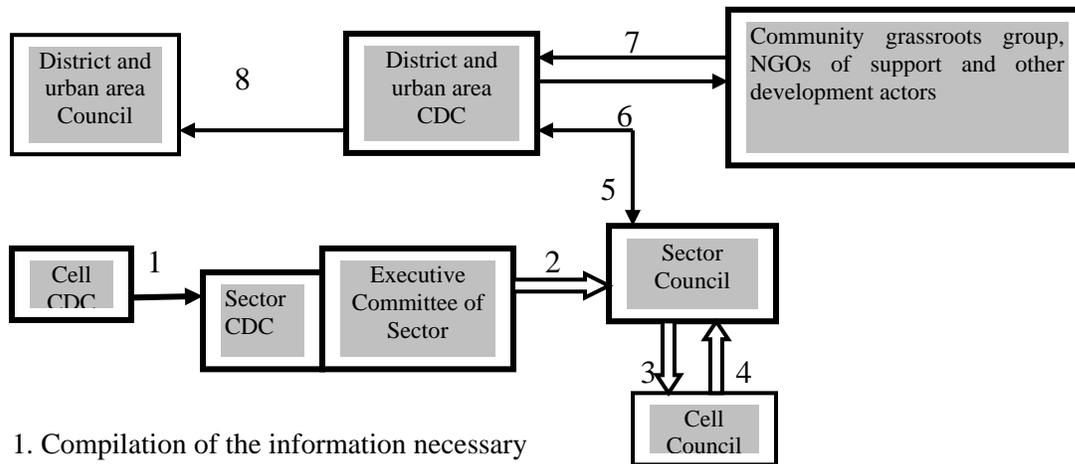
- *Medium term planning* where the Districts make three – year development plans, which are then rolled over and updated annually in accordance with the priorities and the resource envelope. Resource allocation accordingly follows a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).
- *Bottom-up planning* where the development needs and priorities are identified by the communities themselves at Cell level, and prioritized through the CDC channels that stretch from Cell-Sector to District level, where they are put in project form in the District Development Plan.

At the District level, the planning process is described to involve:

- Identification of development needs at grassroots level through monthly meetings of Cell councils. The CDC at Cell level consults with the community to identify needs and community development priorities. The Cell CDC then makes a report of the development priorities approved by the Cell Council and submits it to the CDC at Sector level;
- The sector CDC analyses the priorities from different Cells and decides on priorities, and consolidates the community development priorities of the different Cells with the needs at Sector level. These priorities are then taken to the Sector Council for approval;
- The approved sector development priorities are then submitted to the District CDC, which considers priorities from the different Sectors.
- The selected priorities are then submitted to District Council for approval
- The development priorities approved by the District Council are then constituted into specific projects/ proposals for implementation in the District Development Plan.

This planning process is characterised by intensive participation of the different stakeholders, the communities concerned, the technical entities of District, and non-governmental organisations and private sector organisations active in these Districts.

Figure 3.8: Validation and approval of community development plan at local government level



1. Compilation of the information necessary for the preparation of the development plan
2. Presentation of the plan proposal by CDC and SEC
3. Consultation with the Cell Council
4. Return in the Sector Council, reorganisation and approval
5. Presentation for agreement, consolidation and its integration in development plan of the District by their CDCs
6. Consultation of community groups, NGOs and other development actors of the Districts and urban area
7. Return in the CDC of the District and urban area for reorganisation
8. Presentation in the Council of the District and urban area for exam, reorganisation and approval.

Source: Republic of Rwanda. Community Development Policy (2001:36)

In this way the Districts prepare a Community Development Plan that has a five-year execution period and a medium term expenditure framework for a three-year period, with an, as realistic as possible, estimation of own revenues and an, as realistic as possible, assumption of other resources that are expected from central government and the donor community.

Based on the three-year medium term expenditure framework, priority activities are identified for the annual action plan, with a higher level of certainty, for which the resources can be mobilised.

Despite this progress, several issues are of serious concern to stakeholders. The main ones that were raised from discussions and analysis of District Development Plans during this study include:

- *The limited participation* of the local leadership especially the CDCs who should have taken the lead in the planning process, as well as an almost total lack of participation of district and provincial technical staff and DCs. This study, has observed that the planning process in most Districts has been controlled and dominated by the consultants and intervening agencies at all levels of local government. In some Districts, disagreements with District authorities are reported. This raises serious questions for local ownership and sustainability of the planning process.
- *Limited coherence with national priorities*: In all the Districts found with DDPs, the selection of projects for consideration in the DDPs has been based on the local needs and the priorities of intervening agencies with little or no reference to the PRSP. Most NGOs and donors supporting Districts come with specific areas to support e.g. construction of health centres. This has influenced the District authorities to change priorities according to available funding.
- *Non-uniformity of the planning approaches used in different Districts*: This is because of different influences from consultants and political figures.

### **3.3.3. District Development Plan (DDP)**

The DDP is the framework in which community development needs are prioritised and financed. When the Common Development Fund (CDF)<sup>4</sup> shifts from project to budget

---

<sup>4</sup> The CDF is an important mechanism for mobilising local development resources. Development programmes are financed by central government transfers or donors through CDF. A number of donor agencies have expressed interest to provide budget support to Local Governments through the CDF and some donors have already provided funding.

support, development grants are based on priorities reflected in DDP. If the District Development Plan process is strengthened, it should be an appropriate model for managing decentralised services in an integrated way. Some of the areas for strengthening the DDP process are mentioned by Republic of Rwanda (2005b:30).

- Strengthening the capacity of Community Development Committees (CDCs) to properly identify and prioritise development needs, and identifying strategies for addressing them;
- The local council's capacity to represent the voice of their people and play their accountability roles through setting the right development priorities expenditure over-sight;
- Mobilising other actors (e.g. NGOs) to work through and support the DDPs, as all development programmes will be based on district levels.

The weaknesses in decentralised service delivery are reflected in the weak linkage between the local planning process (DDP) and central level planning (Sector strategies and PRSP). In some cases, one can question to what extent the PRSP implementation reflects the needs and priorities of the poor.

### **3.3.4. The role of Community Development Committees in local government structures**

As community development committees are the main role-players in planning and monitoring the implementation of development programmes, the accomplishment of their role is channelled across three layers (Cell, Sector and District) as discussed in the policy (Republic of Rwanda, 2001:24-26).

#### **3.3.4.1. Cell CDC**

- By using the participative approach, it helps the Cell to identify the problems and the needs of the community and to look for solutions suited to the local resources and if possible to find complementary incomes;
- Assign priorities to problems by taking into account the needs of the community to contribute to the elaboration of the development plan;

- Sensitive the population in its participation in all the activities of development of the Cell;
- Introduce and coordinate the execution of large-scale development projects of the Cell;
- Inform the households of the opportunities offered such as profitable economic activities, which can find a local or outside outlet;
- Oversee the use of the development budget of the Cell, which integrates the community fund assigned to the Cell and the rates of the various partners who work towards the development of the Cell;
- Serve as moral guarantee to the community;
- Report to the Executive Committee, which is responsible to the Cell decision-making council.

#### **3.3.4.2. Sector CDC**

- On the basis of the needs articulated at the Cell level and large-scale ones at the Sector Level the CDC co-ordinates the Sector Development Plan, which will contribute, to the elaboration of the district and urban area development plan;
- Initiates and co-ordinates the implementation of the large-scale development projects at Sector level;
- Assists the population in that Sector level in the search for solutions to their development problems starting with the local resources available;
- Follows-up the implementation of the projects by the community (CBO, individuals), including the duty to offer tenders and the following of contracting parties;
- Ensures the follow-up and evaluation of the use of development funds allocated to the sector;
- Submits the report to the Executive Committee, which in turn must submit it to the Sector Council for decision-making.

#### **3.3.4.3. District and urban area CDC**

- On the basis of sector plans and large-scale ones at District level and with the help of technicians in charge of district development, prepares a district or urban area development plan;

- Establishes a chronology of the activities of the projects of the development of the District or the urban area;
- Fixes the budget of execution of the large-scale projects of the District, and ask for quotations and determine the operating budget of the District or urban area;
- Prepares a development budget and collaborates with District accountant to establish a financing programme for the development projects at the level of Cells, Sectors and even that of District or urban area;
- Trains the population in matters concerning community development activities.
- Encourages the population for productive activities;
- Co-ordinates all the development activities of the different stakeholders at the District or urban level, in line with the development plan;
- Is answerable to the Executive Committee which must in turn be answerable to the District Council regarding the performance of technical, financial, environmental and social affairs relating to the projects, which have been financed;
- Reports, via the Executive Committee of the District or urban area, to the central government and to the financiers regarding the financial status of the Community Development Fund, the progress of the activities of the projects as well as programmes of maintenance of the realised physical investments;

### **3.4. Summary**

On 26 may 2000, Rwanda adopted the Decentralization Policy and a strategy for its implementation. The main thrust of the Policy is to ensure political, economic, social, managerial, administrative and technical empowerment of local populations to fight poverty by participating in planning and management of their development process. This policy was given a legal framework that regulates its implementation.

Below the central level, non-elected provincial governments were constituted, legally autonomous elected District Councils and Community Development Committees (CDC's) were established, and below that level, a network of Sectors and Cells was set up.

After the first phase of Decentralisation focused on establishing democratic and community development structures, the years 2004 to 2008 can be identified as the second phase dedicated to consolidate and to deepen the decentralisation policy. The various elements of the structure must be made to work. This involves *capacity-building* at the institutional, organisational, and individual level, and *delegation* of real decision-making authority, accompanied by realistic levels of decentralised human and financial *resources*.

The Rwandan context of community development is also designed in parallel with the decentralization structure, from the grassroots to District Level. The Community Development Committees are technical co-coordinators of community development at decentralized entities level. It is Community Development Committees (CDCs) and District Councils (DCs) that are mainly concerned with the community development delivery system at the Cell, Sector and District levels. This however, does not imply that they replace technicians and other actors in development, such as NGOs, CBOs, and the private sector, who are specialized in one field or the other, but they serve as a core in co-ordination of all development activities. The CDC is designed to remedy the problems of non-participation and non-availability of human resources, which characterized the former structures in charge of development at district level such as the Development Council and the technical committees. This study showed that some potential resource persons were not easily available to give their contributions because of other responsibilities at national level; the district administration has always tried to get them to attend local meetings.

## **Chapter 4: Evaluation of decentralisation policy, planning and community development**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In the previous chapter, an overview of Decentralisation and Community Development Policies in Rwanda was provided. The local government structure and its legal functioning were highlighted. This chapter deals with how these policies work in reality. Community participatory approaches are discussed with regard to different levels of local government structures, as well as CDCs and Ubudehe. It also shows how local leaders' participation in community development is practised, the impediments that are met, strategies and opportunities to overcome them.

### **4.2. New Decentralisation Implementation Programme (DIP)**

The Decentralisation Implementation Programme (DIP) is executed in an incremental manner. The reform that is being undertaken currently in the second phase of decentralisation process, concerns the size of a decentralised entity. However, the functioning structure will be the same.

Under the proposed territory reorganisation, the proposal is to have 4 Provinces, Kigali City, 30 Districts, 416 Sectors, and 9 165 Cells. It should be noted that the proposed reforms focuses on provinces, districts and sectors with the long-term goal of eliminating the Provincial Level and strengthening the Sector Level as the main point of service delivery.

The current reorganisation of administrative units is in itself not new. The present structures are a result of earlier mergers in which one layer between Province and Communes (called sous-prefectures) was removed and communes reorganised to form current Districts.

Under the DIP phase 2, Rwanda is strengthening the decentralised structures, with a focus on more effective service delivery to the community. This together with findings of

several evaluations calls for a review of the current decentralisation implementation strategies and updating them for its successful implementation.

The findings of individual interview with Sebihaza on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2005 on Rwanda's decentralisation process have come up with a number of conclusions of which the critical ones are:

- Lack of capacity at District Level to develop well integrated development and action plans,
- Weak awareness of national laws and regulations among local government leadership,
- Inadequate financial resources management,
- The need to build Local Government capacities and facilitate them with adequate resources if they are to meet their obligations to the citizens,
- Inadequate coordination of interventions, un-integrated plans at all levels, and the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation systems,
- The tendency for externally funded projects to operate in parallel structures to the decentralised structures, thus denying Districts the opportunity to build on synergies and eroding the already weak capacities in Local Governments,
- Lack of ownership of community development plans by citizens,
- Low access to basic services.

In order to face these obstacles, the interviewees state that one of the strategies considered so far as a more effective administrative support is Territory Administration Reform. The intention of the territory reorganisation is fourfold:

- Taking services closer to the community by strengthening administrative levels that are within their reach. In this regard, the reforms target the Sector Level as the main points of service delivery, and the Cells as the main source of information on community needs and satisfaction level, and the coordination point for community initiatives,
- Creating more economically viable local governments,

- The establishment of administrative units that take advantage of economies of scale,
- Improving information flow, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation by narrowing the gap between central government and the local government unit.

Figure 4.1: Rwanda Territorial Reform

**Error! Objects cannot be created from editing field codes.**

Source: Adapted from Republic of Rwanda, 2005b

Within the context of the ongoing reforms to improve and enhance good governance, and to ensure effective and efficient decentralised service delivery to communities, the various governmental and administrative entities are to have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and legal frameworks in which to function.

Table 4.1: The configuration of the new structure of local administration, summarised roles and responsibilities between levels is the following:

Entity	Number of Units	Roles and Responsibilities	Administrative structure
Province	4	Ensuring that local government development planning is in line with the national policies Promoting socioeconomic development of the Province, based on its resource endowment	Governor
Kigali City	1	Local development plans coordination Strategic planning for urban development Monitoring and Evaluation, provision of complex services and those cutting across district Local Governments	Mayor
District	30	Economic development coordination	Elected council

		Planning and coordination of services Consolidation of Sector development plans and promotion of development	Mayor Executive Committee Technical staff
Sector	416	Administration of basic services (planning, implementing and monitoring service delivery) Managing community development Providing statistical data Collecting taxes (50% of collected taxes by the sectors will be handed to the districts)	Elected council Technical staff
Cell	9 165	Community mobilisation	Council (all adult population) Executive Committee

Source: Research results

This Territory Administration Reform involves changes in the present legal framework of community development that is currently in place. Below are the main orientations to guide the setting up of a legal framework:

- Updating of the ministerial directive concerning the composition and functioning of CDCs
- Institutionalisation and functioning of the CDF (Community Development Fund)
- Institutionalisation and functioning of the common fund for development.
- Putting in place a forum and research on a decentralised community based system of financing.
- Strengthening local participation in development planning by enhancing the capacity of community development committees at all levels to identify, analyse and prioritise problems, plan and mobilize resources for the development of local communities and

through this bottom-up process incorporate these local development programmes into the national development programme.

The definition of community development itself, as discussed in chapter 3, shows that it is a gradual and dynamic process. In order to maintain this dynamism, there has been established a working group that will review this policy whenever need arises. This working group comprises of representatives of all the ministries, local governments, private sector and civil society.

### **4.3. Ongoing Decentralisation Implementation Programme approaches**

Decentralisation and community development policies are an ongoing implementation process. The research findings show that they are planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated by using the participatory approaches, and the incremental process.

- *The participatory approach:* Both policies are designed to promote the participation of the local communities in the management of their political, social and economic affairs. Everyone involved in the process of its implementation, monitoring and evaluation must practise what they preach so that the process of implementation becomes the practice ground of getting people used to participation. Stakeholders are identified, consulted and encouraged to participate in the process of each policy.
- *The incremental approach:* Even if decentralisation is designed to transfer powers, functions, responsibilities and resources from central to local governments, it does not mean that the central government just dumps powers, functions, responsibilities and resources on to local communities abruptly. A gradual transfer is used to avoid a slide back effect or spectacular failure.

### **4.4. Community participation within the decentralisation policy**

This section investigates participatory approaches within the framework of decentralisation in Rwanda.

#### **4.4.1. Strengthening participatory approaches**

The Government is committed to put in place the appropriate participatory mechanisms to ensure full participation by the citizens in the design and monitoring of development programmes concerning them. In this context, *participation refers to a broad range of actions that citizens, communities, and civil society organisations can use to hold government officials, bureaucrats and service providers accountable*. This includes community participation in the process of public policy-making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen monitoring of public service delivery, lobbying and advocacy.

Local government structures play an important role in enhancing the voice of citizens. Nevertheless, to hold these various structures to account the community must be made aware of what the roles, responsibilities, and resources of these various actors are (Burkey, 1993:39). The participatory approach is mainly found in community development committee structures from grassroots levels to District Levels.

##### **4.4.1.1. Community level structure**

A forum at community level holds monthly general meetings after the *umuganda* (translated as community work) to discuss general issues affecting the development of the Cell. After the community work is finished, there is usually a general meeting where participants discuss issues of community concern and evaluate their performance in terms of development.

Another community development forum is *Ubudehe*, which promotes participatory planning and budgeting at the community level. This process is a unique policy to nurture the communities' collective action in partnership with the Government commitment to decentralisation. It builds on the concept of Poverty Reduction Strategies and Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) (Republic of Rwanda 2005b:11). In some Cells, it has been used to create a benefit like access to water, transport service, credit programmes, livestock rearing, etc. The various forms reflect different priorities in different villages. All forms have a common denominator of collective community

planning and budgeting. The success of the *Ubudehe* is to a large extent dependent on the government's programme of training of trainers – local NGOs have trained one or two members from the communities, these in turn are training other community members to plan, budget, and prioritise in a collective way.

#### **4.4.1.2. Sector level**

The Community Development Committees (CDCs) were created in the first phase of the DIP at Cell, Sector and District Levels. The community development policy stipulates that CDCs are required to assume the local leadership of the community planning process.

The Local Development Programme - High Intensity of Manpower, as a strategy aiming at poverty reduction, is a new job creation approach. It also contributes to the increase of the population's income. This approach contributes at the same time to the creation of new infrastructures and to environment protection while contributing to the training of beneficiaries in crafts and new techniques of production.

#### **4.4.1.3. District level**

In order for decentralised service delivery to benefit communities, local government will incorporate participatory approaches at all levels to promote bottom-up planning, where communities can decide what their development needs and priorities are. Some useful examples include Citizen Report Cards (CRCs)<sup>5</sup> and Community Score Cards (CSCs)<sup>6</sup> (Republic of Rwanda 2005b:12). Both are designed to elicit feedback from citizens concerning services, and then to use this feedback to improve services.

CRC introduced in 2004 and CSC that is under preparation in 2005, are such participatory tools for monitoring people's satisfaction with public services. The

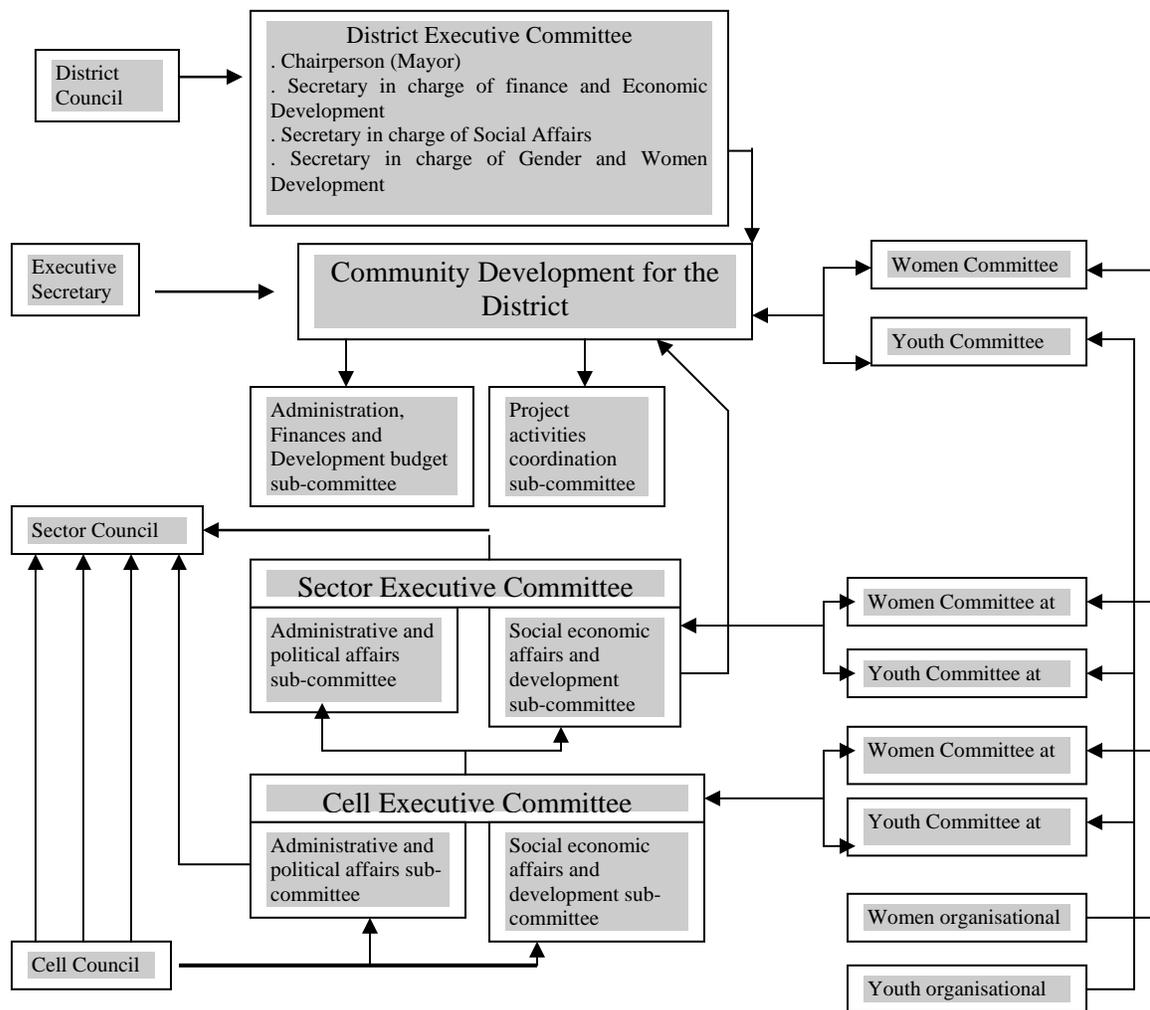
---

<sup>5</sup> The citizen Report Card approach is a tool to get feedback on service quality, collected on an individual bases through a sample survey. It provides quantitative feedback on user perceptions on the quality, adequacy and efficiency of public services.

<sup>6</sup> A Community Score Card is a qualitative monitoring tool that is used for local level monitoring and performance evaluation of services, projects and even government administrative units by the communities themselves. The information is collected through focus group discussions.

government is using these tools to get clarity from the actual users on whether services are reaching the citizens and how they propose that services can be improved. Individuals and communities are involved in a participatory way in the process, which will ensure that monitoring and evaluation findings are relevant to the local context. The CRC/CSC promotes individuals' and communities' ownership of the evaluation outcomes and it broadens citizens' understanding of policy strategies and processes.

Figure 4.2: CDC structure at the grassroots level



Source: Republic of Rwanda (2001:20)

#### **4.4.2. Appreciation of the participatory process**

The level of participation, particularly in planning, is different at different levels. At the Cell Level, local communities have participated actively in stating their needs and development priorities through the CDCs, and other forums (e.g. organised by NGOs) planning to support them.

The other positive aspect is the improvement in local contribution to community development projects. Based on the focus group interview held in Ruyumba District on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2005 with its District COUNCIL members, in some cases, the local population have contributed as much as 20-25% in terms of local materials and labour. In Butare, participation is high, especially in the *Ubudehe* programme as mentioned by Kayira during the interview on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2005. Local communities appreciate the new approach of participation in identification of their needs and priorities before a development project is established.

#### **4.4.3. Functioning of the CDC at different local levels**

The CDCs are constituted of six members at Cell, Sector and District Level, with different responsibilities as follows:

- Community development (CDC president);
- Women;
- Finance;
- Youth;
- Health;
- Education, culture and training.

The CDC structure ensures that different levels are linked i.e. a District CDC is constituted by presidents of Sector CDCs; a Sector CDC is constituted by Cell CDC presidents. This ensures that the priorities identified at lower levels effectively are incorporated in the priorities at high levels. The general observation, however, is that

CDCs especially at Cell and Sector Levels are not yet very effective. According to the interview with Twesigye on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005, a researcher consultant in the Ministry of Local Government, less than 10% of the Sectors visited had identified and implemented projects through CDCs. The main concerns raised about CDCs in general include:

- Low literacy level of most CDCs limits their conceptual understanding and capacity building efforts.
- Roles and responsibilities of different CDC members are not yet clear for most CDCs. According to the above mentioned interview, Twesigye revealed that more than 80% of Sector and Cell CDCs interviewed in previous research claimed that only the CDC president is recognised, and had not been guided on what their roles are and what they are expected to do. Most training and capacity building interventions so far have focussed on CDC Presidents, leaving others to feel they have no role to play.
- There is limited interaction and working linkages with technical officials. There are also no guidelines on the conduct and operations of the CDCs, and how they relate with technical officials in the Districts.
- At lower levels, political/ administrative functions tend to be fused. No specific CDC meetings have been held. Local leaders claim the development needs are identified at general meetings organised by the PAC. This implies that development activities are not always discussed, as Cell and Sector general meetings tend to be dominated by administrative and political issues. No minutes or records of meetings for CDCs were available.
- At District Level, CDC officials (mostly the presidents) tend to be more concerned with financial management issues (control of accounts, award of tenders,) than identifying and monitoring projects and supporting lower level CDCs to develop capacity.

- In Ruyumba District, CDCs have received limited (if any) technical or logistical support from the Provincial Administration.
- Presidents of CDCs are, in most cases, the only signatories of the CDC accounts, and no financial reports of how CDC funds are utilised are prepared by the managers. Some CDCs' accounts have no particular signatories but funds are continually withdrawn, making control of expenditure difficult.

Besides the role played by CDCs in community development there is another alternative used in local development even though not yet widespread in the countrywide. It is practiced in Butare Province. This is the Ubudehe approach, which is discussed in the next section.

#### **4.4.4. Decentralisation and the Ubudehe approach in development**

The research findings reveal that the key policy relating to governance, public administration and poverty reduction is the Decentralisation Policy of 2000. The Decentralisation Policy was developed after widespread consultation on the causes of disunity and long-lasting underdevelopment among Rwandans. In those countrywide consultations, the citizens showed a remarkable desire to have a voice in decision-making and development at all levels. The objective of the Decentralisation Policy 2000 is *'to ensure political, economic, social, managerial/administrative and technical empowerment of the local populations to fight poverty by participating in planning and management of their development process.'*

The Ubudehe process fits perfectly with Rwanda's decentralisation objective. In effect, what makes Ubudehe so unique is that it purposely tries to work with and reinforce the on-going political and financial decentralisation process. This will also provide a direct injection of financial capital into the rural economy, and will thus overcome one of the

main obstacles to pro-poor economic growth. By targeting communities at a cell level, it penetrates right down to the lowest decentralised structure. The ultimate aim is that Ubudehe will become the tool of bottom up planning. Furthermore, it will feed into the decentralised policy process and finally into sector strategies at the national level (Republic of Rwanda, 2003:6).

This approach is made up of two distinct processes, one at the community level and one at the household level. Both processes use in essence the same methodology. In this section, the community level is discussed, whilst the next section focuses on Ubudehe for households.

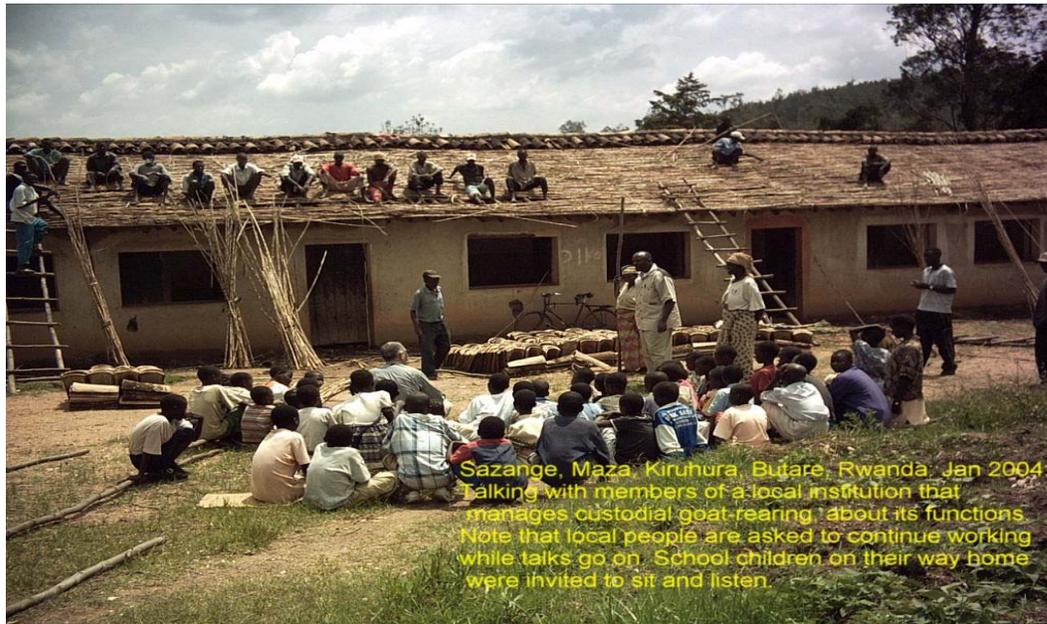
#### a) Ubudehe at the Cell level

The community takes – with the help of facilitators/trainers – the following steps:

- Determine the poverty profile as perceived by the people themselves;
- Determine the causes and consequences of poverty;
- Draw up the social map of the Cell, which includes the names of household heads, their social category (different categories are again decided by the people themselves), development infrastructure, material of each house's roof;
- Identify and analyse the problems facing their community and determine a priority problem to be addressed;
- Plan the activities and relative means needed for addressing the prioritised problem through a collective action plan (Ubudehe);
- Put in place a system to manage the identified collective action (soft system check list);
- Submit the action plan to a pertinence test for all stakeholders to see if the retained strategies are the best to solve the identified problem;
- Check if collective action principles are respected as planned;
- The management committee elected by the community, local technicians, local authorities and other stakeholders approve the execution of the collective action and engage to safeguard and respect the principles of collective action.

After this process, funds are made available to support the identified Ubudehe collective action.

Figure 4.3: Citizens rehabilitating their school across Ubudehe programme



Source: Sam, J. (2004:1).

#### b) Ubudehe at the household level

As mentioned before, the Ubudehe process is also applied to a poor household selected by the community. The idea is to have some kind of model in the community that shows that poverty can be overcome if one is determined to fight it. For the household, the methodology consists in analysing and identifying the household's survival (coping) strategies. The members of the household, together with the facilitators/trainers:

- Determine their coping strategies throughout the year (seasonality);
- Analyse these strategies in order to come up with a strategy favourable to the promotion and improvement of the living conditions within the household (preference scoring);
- Plan activities and budget the necessary means to execute the chosen strategy;

- A pertinence test is then carried out by wise men in the Cell (Inyangamugayo) to make sure that the retained strategy is appropriate and will be of good use to the household;
- The household members finally accept and sign for the funds that are accorded to them. They agree that the funds supporting the execution of their strategy will have a rotating character.

After this process, funds are made available to support the identified household strategy.

#### c) Monitoring the Ubudehe process

In each Butare's districts, there is a person trained in the Ubudehe approach who is responsible for the day-to-day follow up in all the District Cells. It has been proposed that every month all these District people should gather at the province level to discuss and evaluate Ubudehe implementation. As funds for Ubudehe itself (opposed to funding of the training mechanism, see next section) have only been disbursed in Butare, this monitoring process has only been started up in that Province (*op cit*: 7).

#### **4.4.5. Local leaders' participation in community development**

According to the Republic of Rwanda (2001:15), community development is designed in such a way that projects should be implemented under supervision of communities and generate durable impact on the improvement of the standards of living of the communities. In order for the development programmes to be meaningful and have a tangible result, they should originate from the members of the communities themselves.

Therefore, the process will need local leaders, able to awaken the desire, to participate in the process of change on behalf of the other members of the community. Two categories are needed for the process to succeed:

- The group of role-players who must create a favourable environment for the development. This includes Local Government Structures, which conceive the plans for development and which mobilize the internal and outside resources

- necessary for the realisation of the projects. It encompasses mainly the mayor of the District, all vice-mayors and technical staff of Districts and Sectors.
- The second group is composed by those who realise development activities within communities. Those are individuals, CBOs, NGOs, and groups of entrepreneurs who want to make a supplementary effort to produce a change within the community by launching development sites (Republic of Rwanda 2001:15).

Obviously besides local leaders the community should work hand in hand with them. However, there are also vulnerable groups and the poor that will not contribute adequately to the development effort and that need to be identified and helped. The situation of these vulnerable groups and the poor must be taken in consideration during the process of implementing the development programmes.

Therefore, it is important to set up mechanisms reassuring the participation of the community, which constitutes the base of community development. The Rwandan community is still sceptical because in the past it was not fully participating in its development. It becomes evident that people's participation in their own development is the main solution on which all the other solutions rely in order to fight poverty.

The main programme of the Ministry is promoting the well-being of the population through good governance reflected by an appropriate local government structure aimed at community development and improving the social affairs of all citizens. Through an analysis of the study findings, this programme is being achieved through:

- Follow-up and evaluation of national policies and programmes regarding good governance (decentralization), community development and social protection.
- Follow up and evaluation of the functioning of decentralized administration units and reinforcement of their capacities
- coordination of the incremental process of restructuring decentralized administrative units in order to improve their functioning, synergy and their partnership with other institutions

- Implementation and coordination of community development mechanisms in order to improve the well-being of the population, implementation and coordination of social protection mechanisms based on solidarity, insurance and social security.

The findings of this study show that the main problem is the lack of enough capacity in the Districts and towns as far as human resource is concerned. In addition, there is an insufficient financial resource in the Districts and towns. This is due to inequalities in income generating capacity, so some Districts depend totally on the 3% of the funds given by the Ministry of Local Governance. There is an exercise in administrative reform, which is now enabling the local levels to support their projects financially. This time even the Sector will have some money to put in its account. This is something that has never happened before. Now that these levels can sustain themselves financially, it is possible to recruit skilled personnel capable of delivering adequate and prompt services.

The community, local leaders, and all the well-wishers (developers, facilitators, development professionals) of Rwanda should participate equally in all the national activities. Allowing everyone in Rwanda to be accountable for whatever is done in the country, bearing in mind that every Rwandan is a stakeholder in whatever is done, is supported by the golden rule by Burkey (1993:211) recommending: "Don't do anything for people that they can do for themselves".

The local leaders in local governments have not shown initiative and resolve in the way they execute their duties and responsibilities. As it is shown by findings, the success of local leaders must be measured by, firstly, the extent to which local priorities and needs drive local decision making and secondly, by the outcomes, which is tangible benefits in terms of services provided as well as the intangible benefit of "empowerment", to use a common buzzword. Being able to influence public affairs in at least some modest ways that directly affect the people empowers them and gives them a sense of control and autonomy in their development affairs. If local governments are familiar with local circumstances, they may be in the best position to distribute public resources and target

poverty within their jurisdictions more equitably. Basic services, such as the provision of low cost housing, sanitary facilities, and the provision of clean drinking water, recreational facilities and a host of others are far from adequate in many Districts.

According to Kanyamanza, in “Kigali's challenges of local governance”, [http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=2283&Itemid=35](http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2283&Itemid=35), accessed on Saturday, 19 November 2005, the President of Rwanda addressed residents of Kigali city at the Amahoro stadium on Saturday 29 October. From many questions asked by the public, it was clear that the local leaders have not done their homework. There were problems raised that required simple intervention by local leaders and their committees to resolve. Many of these problems should not wait for the intervention of the Head of State. They fall squarely within the mandate of the local leaders who in the first place are expected to work in close liaison with other institutions of government. The local leaders are supposed to be able to make decisions and hold themselves accountable to the people they lead and must demonstrate beyond doubt that they have the goodwill, capacity and resolve to be where they are.

It should be normal that if leaders like these fail to deliver, they tender their own resignations by taking this bold step and show their honesty. It should be a good sign that leaders can take individual responsibility for their actions. This is accountability.

For any nation to develop, it must have institutions and mechanisms through which the problems of community can be resolved. Concerning challenges that face local leaders in decentralised governments, they must also be trained in matters of administration, finance, governance, and administrative law and in other fields that will help to make them more effective. Furthermore, local leaders need to develop mechanisms for coordination and build viable linkages to the people under their jurisdiction. Some local leaders are more capable than others and can manage greater responsibility, while others will require more control and substantial support from the central government. Furthermore, local leaders need information, education and incentives to deliver effectively. This will make them more responsible for their failure to deliver while being

capable of making decisions and holding themselves accountable to the people. They should be in the position to navigate the frontiers of the numerous challenges that confront them.

#### **4.5. SWOT of decentralisation to community development activities**

The analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats focuses on decentralisation's contribution to the success of community development. One needs first to look at the objectives and principles of community development policy and then evaluates the SWOT of decentralisation.

##### **4.5.1. Objective and principles of community development**

To ensure the realisation of the main objective of the Community Development Policy, it is intended to allow the implementation of the national policy of decentralization by suggesting ways and means assuring the actual and durable participation of the community in its own development (Republic of Rwanda, 2001:16). From this objective, it is community development that is the tool for achieving decentralization. However, from analysis it is clear that the opposite is more reasonable since decentralization is aimed to put in place appropriate structures that allow communities to participate effectively in their development programmes. Thus, the decentralization structure is the pillar of community development.

This understanding affects people participation since policy makers conceive policies without considering the degree of awareness of beneficiaries, the framework, and the level of ownership of the community in planned development activities. However, the policy is guided by relevant principles that should boost the improvement of living conditions of communities if properly implemented. Those are:

- The community at grassroots level is the pillar of a durable development and its effective participation is paramount.

- With respect to the participative principles, investment should be made in projects that benefit a large part of the population, enhance revenue generation and create employment opportunities.
- Investment should first target the primary sector (agriculture, livestock) for purposes of production and then the distribution and processing sectors (trade, transport, small-scale industries). It is important to mention here that in 1998 the gross production according to sectors revealed 40% in agriculture, 21% in the industry, 12% in trade, 7% in the administration, 5% in the transport and 15% for other services as it is pointed out in the Community Development Policy (Republic of Rwanda, 2000:17)
- Few gratuities should be given to individual projects or community groups at the grassroots level (CBOs). Gratuities are only acceptable when given to the vulnerable groups in the form of start-up funds aimed at assisting them to emerge from the situation of vulnerability.
- The national infrastructure projects (trunk roads, airport) will be managed by central government. All other projects shall be managed, supervised and controlled at the level of local governments. Even in those projects of national scope, the local governments concerned in these projects should be involved and collaboration contracts envisaged involving the local population and thus making sure that the sustainability of already begun actions is ensured.
- Emphasis must be put on reliance on own resources in the form of human energies, knowledge and local skills, cultural endowment and natural resources of the areas.

This above can be linked with the values of Freire construction “Principle of conscientisation” as discussed by Burkey (1993:53-55) and Theron (2005:106). The humanist school argues also that in redefining development as a micro-level approach it follows that the point of departure needs to be people and their experience of social reality (Coetzee cited by Theron, 2005:107). They must play a dual role, the target of development and the “tool” with which to attain it. They must be able to shape their own development and create a world of meaning that enables them to understand their social reality.

## **4.5.2. Evaluation of current capacities, opportunities and challenges**

### **4.5.2.1. Strengths**

The network of governance units that stretch down to household level creates a strong link for the identification of individuals and their needs, and for bringing coherence and unity through regular meetings and community action. According to the Director of Community Development Unit in the Ministry of Local Government, the major impact of the governance structures on service delivery include:

- Creation of local authorities with effective decision-making power in planning, resource mobilisation and expenditure allocations. The reconstitution of Rwanda's local administrative units demonstrates that services provided by local authorities are much closer to the population.
  
- Democratisation of local leadership – local people appreciate the fact that they elect their own leaders in whom they have trust and confidence. Moreover, because the leaders are elected and voluntarily make decisions to serve their people, community mobilisation for development actions is effective. Local communities have also been empowered by law to recall their leaders. This empowerment gives confidence to demand accountability and also motivates elected leaders to be responsive to the needs of their communities.
  
- Coordination and effective delivery of administrative services has been greatly enhanced by the recruitment of full time administrative personnel at Sector Level. An Executive Secretary and Office Secretary have been recruited in all the Sectors observed, and these are helping to coordinate activities at Cell Level and provide a bridge between the local government (District) and the community level (Cell). The Government of Rwanda's initiative to strengthen the Sector as a centre of service delivery (through staffing, infrastructure establishment and devolving more responsibilities) is a good strategy to collaborate with the community and to bring basic services and control of resource mobilisation and utilisation even closer to the beneficiaries – the population.

- To facilitate communication, Districts have installed fixed telephone lines to ease communication with the centre. Local authorities have also provided Sector Coordinators and Executive Secretaries with mobile telephones. These facilities are also assisting in emergency communication between Sectors e.g. medical or crime cases.
  
- The legal framework has been put in place for financing of operational and development activities and new financing mechanisms considered– CDF through budget support.
  
- Framework and guidelines for accountability in Local Governments have been developed and operationalised. Financial management and accountability guidelines with reporting arrangements have been distributed to Local Governments and all Local Government officials trained. There is an operational internal audit system, and all the districts have recruited Internal Auditors, who report directly to the District Councils and Provincial Administrations on the implementation of development programmes.
  
- All Districts have developed three to five-year District Development Plans (DDPs). These DDPs have been developed through participatory processes involving CDCs from Cell, Sector and District Levels. The DDPs form the main mechanism for financing service delivery, and are also a tool for mobilising external and internal development resources. Local Governments have established mechanisms for financing their recurrent and development budgets.
  
- Community participation and ownership have been enhanced through democratisation and expansion of local leadership, integration of traditional value systems (*Ubudehe*), and the bottom-up planning approaches, which have motivated local community mobilization to start own initiatives, make contributions to development projects, and put in place mechanisms to finance maintenance.
  
- There has been political will and commitment to decentralization: the establishment of the CDF and the subsequent increase in resource transfers through the CDF to local governments even under severe national resource constraints, as well as the continuous

commitment to support local authorities is simply an understatement. If this can trickle into service ministries/ agencies, decentralized services will work better.

Despite this progress, decentralised planning is still characterised by a number of weaknesses. These mainly relate to weak institutional linkages; inadequate sectoral integration and limited capacities of local actors.

#### **4.5.2.2. Weaknesses**

Despite the achievements enumerated above, a number of bottlenecks continue to undermine the process of consolidating decentralized entities in development and service delivery. The commonly reported weaknesses indicated by the Republic of Rwanda (2004:18), Republic of Rwanda (2005a:34) and confirmed by the findings of this research include the following:

- The CDCs and DCs are still weak, and their appreciation and participation in the planning process is limited. The Community Development Policy stipulates that CDCs are required to assume the local leadership of the community planning process at all levels. The findings from the study, however, indicate that their participation and ownership of the process, in most Districts, is low. Inadequate capacity and low literacy levels are frequently pointed out as the main limitations of the CDCs. The same situation has been observed with the DCs.
- In relation to the weak participation of CDCs and DCs, there are concerns that the community planning process, in most Districts, tends to be controlled and dominated by intervening agencies, a situation that has implications for local ownership and the sustainability of the planning process.
- Limited participation of the provincial administrations: It is also observed that the involvement of the provincial administrations in the local development planning process so far is limited. In most of the districts where DDPs have been prepared, the planning and finance directorates of the province have not been actively involved. Yet, providing technical support and guidance to Districts is one of the duties of provincial administration under decentralization. Several reasons are given for their low

participation but the most frequently pointed out are the inadequate technical and logistical capacities and the limited appreciation and understanding of the role of the provincial administrations in community development.

- The absence of appropriate data and information on which to base the planning projections remains one of the main constraints of the community planning process. The culture of not keeping or utilizing statistical data, even where it is generated, has been observed by the researcher, not only at the local level but also at national level. Without comprehensive appropriate information systems in the Districts, it remains difficult to plan properly.

- Inadequate technical capacities in planning at the local level are a constraint to future community and local government planning, as well as poverty monitoring. Most of the District authorities are not yet motivated to appreciate the importance of planning, and there are too few personnel with planning skills in Districts.

- Limited coherence with national priorities. Although the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has produced guidelines for local development planning, these are often not followed by practitioners. Needs identification and prioritization often does not take into consideration the national priorities on which resource allocation is usually based. Because of this, for instance, a number of District authorities have complained that the CDF often rejects some of their projects, which are identified by the local population. Incoherence in DDPs would be checked by validation of the DDPs by central authorities, but presently, it appears, there are no independent mechanisms or systems to validate the DDPs and the planning process.

- Unreliable funding tends to frustrate the efforts of local communities and authorities in planning. In most Districts, few of the projects elaborated in the DDPs are implemented due to inadequate funding. The participatory planning processes have tended to raise many expectations from the public so that where planned projects are not implemented, the expectant communities get frustrated. This threatens to undermine the process of confidence building among actors.

- The District Councils (in most Districts) are still too weak to analyse plans and budgets effectively, undertake local legislations, and provide expenditure over-sight on the District executive (Mayor and team). For most, especially remote districts, District

Councillors receive invitations to attend Council sessions late, often due to communication difficulties. In addition, due to logistical constraints, no copies of documents for items on the agenda are available either before or during council sessions, a situation that further renders meaningful debate and discussions rather difficult.

- Internal revenue collection bases are still weak in nearly all but more so in rural Districts. As a result, some Districts cannot pay salaries to their few and unqualified staff on time. Salary payments to local government staff are frequently delayed for up to six months, as well as obligations to the Social Security Fund and Rwanda Revenue Authority dues (*“pay as you earn taxes”*).

- Central government grants, the major source of local government revenue, are grossly inadequate and untimely. Inadequate and late release of grants implies severe disruption of planned activities. Some Districts reported that there is little they can do to review the annual workplans because most of the planned activities in the previous year are not implemented and they have to budget for them again. This is a problem that could undermine the outcome of community development planning.

- There are concerns that the process Districts having to submit council decisions to the province for approval is an inconveniencing bureaucracy that deters initiative and motivation. The role of the province has remained that of coordination, supervision, monitoring and approval of Local Government activities. This is done to a limited extent. This is an unnecessary duplication especially considering the severe human resource capacities that they are facing. Several stakeholders have also raised questions regarding the role of the provincial administration, and expressed concerns that it could undermine the local authorities' autonomy. It is aimed to ensuring that LA's decisions comply with national policies and laws.

- Logistical capacities remain low, and this has critical implications for effective service delivery. Building a highly skilled work force is not enough if it is difficult for them to do their work. In one District studied, an internal auditor has to undertake audits in all

schools, health association funds in Sectors, as far apart as 60 km, in addition to several District projects. She has obligations to submit reports to the District Council, yet she has no transport and no computer to use. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to enforce accountability even though the legal framework and institutional structures are in place.

- According to the Republic of Rwanda (2005a:35), there are insufficient administrative infrastructures at the Sector and Cell Levels. In many Districts, a large number of Sectors – as many as 50% in some Districts – remain without premises, and have to rent offices or use dilapidated structures. Few cells have offices. This coupled with near to total absence of communication and energy infrastructures further constrain the delivery of administrative and other related services.

- Local Governments are still along way from integrating Information Communication Technologies applications. It is disappointing to learn that even Local Governments in the Capital have not adopted modern accountability software.

- Low levels of education and literacy undermines the process of building strong local leadership and empowering communities that are able to hold their leaders accountable. Almost all elected leaders have received functional related short-term training and sensitisation, but because of their weak educational background they have not gained from them. The situation is further aggravated by the lack of an enabling environment and attractive incentive packages to attract productive, creative and innovative local leaders.

#### **4.5.2.3. Opportunities**

The last four years of decentralization has raised a curtain on opportunities for enhancing service delivery in Rwanda through building mutually productive, transparent and accountable relationships. The key lessons that can be learnt to make decentralization an effective tool in delivering services to the Rwandan population include the following:

- Local communities, if mobilised and appropriately motivated can initiate, manage and sustain their own development programmes even without external support. This can be demonstrated by several cases of community based initiatives.
  
- Visionary and committed local leadership is critical in ensuring that services work. This accounts for most of the local initiatives.
  
- Appropriate performance-oriented incentives foster efficiency in service delivery, especially where public-private civil society partnerships are involved. Although the general observation is that private service providers (in education and health) tend not to serve rural areas, they can be attracted to serve rural populations if appropriate incentives are in place to motivate them. This is important for Rwanda where the public service delivery system is grossly inefficient and undeveloped. A performance monitoring system is being developed for local governments by MINALOC, with support from the Royal Netherlands Embassy.
  
- Clear information flow and strong feedback mechanisms are critical in establishing an efficient and effective decentralised service delivery system.
  
- Without pro-poor sectoral policies that are responsive to the population's needs, and a holistic approach to programme design that addresses all dimensions of poverty<sup>7</sup>, no meaningful achievements can be made. Indeed, the local population are now able to raise concern over their children learning under trees or the absence of teachers because there is free universal primary education; they are in a position to comment on the poorly constructed bridge or feeder road thanks to the rural development strategy that emphasizes rural feeder roads and off-farm mass employment. Focus therefore, ought to be on expanding access to basic service facilities by the poor especially those who live in remote areas.

---

<sup>7</sup> Several poverty reduction projects (including the Social Infrastructure project in MINALOC, SALA IDA, etc) distributed domestic animals to poor households in some provinces. Because the extreme poor who received these had no land or sometimes shelter on which to rear such animals, and could not afford veterinary services, many lost their livestock. Some, however, sold them to solve domestic problems such as paying for medical services. The social and economic dimensions of poverty in Rwanda need an integrated approach not simple solutions.

- Sustained political will and commitment is critical to democratize, devolve power and resources, and manage the difficult process of changing institutional norms associated with centralized service delivery.

The lessons highlighted above were drawn by the researcher from analysis and observation of selected approaches and innovations during this study. There are, however, many other innovations that have been made through various donor or NGO interventions, local authorities or even community initiatives that provide opportunity to learn from good or inappropriate practices. There is, therefore, need to document and share these innovations so that they can be appropriately replicated in various service sectors throughout the Country.

#### **4.5.2.4. Threats**

There are numerous challenges, though, that remain and continue to undermine decentralised service delivery; there are still inadequate capacities in the decentralised units as well as the sectoral agencies to handle their new roles under decentralisation. The institutional coordination remains weak and this creates bottlenecks to effective implementation of decentralisation; and owing to the long legacy of centralised authority, many leaders and communities are yet to appreciate the values of decentralisation, a situation that limits their effective participation.

- Financing decentralised services: Inadequate funding remains the single most pressing challenge facing decentralised service delivery. Although the central government has increased grant transfers to Local Governments, given greater autonomy to local resource mobilisation, these still remain grossly meagre and often unpredictable given the over-reliance on donor support. Local revenue generation is generally low in nearly all Districts and inadequate to support a substantial proportion of service delivery. However, the recent study on fiscal potentials of local governments has indicated that most Districts have underutilised potentials, which if exploited, could substantially increase revenues. It

is worth noting also, that there are a number of Districts, which have almost no potential at all and are not viable (Republic of Rwanda, 2005a:75).

- Inadequate institutional and human resource capacities: it is widely observed that many Local Governments are unable to hire and pay staff. For a number of Districts, it was observed that staff went for up to six months without pay, which has implications for efficiency and effective service delivery. While many Local Governments are laden with the weight of salary arrears, some (e.g. Nyarugenge in Kigali city province) are able to top up their staff salaries. Subsequently, more qualified and experienced personnel are willing to work in Districts like Nyarugenge while resource constrained rural districts, remain understaffed or have under-qualified personnel.

- Inadequate capacity of service providers: weak private sector and local Civil Society Organisations: One of the challenges that decentralized services face is the shortage of competent service providers at local level. Under the Government of Rwanda's decentralization and private sector led economic transformation strategy, most of service delivery functions are expected to be carried out by the private sector and organized civil society.

- Absence of a clear framework to guide sectoral decentralization: One of the bottlenecks to effective decentralization of service delivery is the absence of a framework to guide sectoral decentralization. Although the policy and legal framework for decentralization reflects the roles of sectoral ministries/ agencies on the one hand and decentralized units on the other, there appears to be no guidelines, performance targets and measurable indicators for measuring progress. In the absence of this framework, there has been slow commitment on the part of service ministries to decentralise, a number of which continue to execute their sector activities in a top down manner.

- Widespread poverty is a challenge: The accountability relationship framework demonstrates that the measure of effective and efficient service delivery and the strength of accountability in the service delivery chain is the voice that the clients (beneficiaries)

have; the ability to demand or reject a service or decide who delivers a service (choice). Despite the Government of Rwanda's efforts in creating such an environment through decentralization, privatization and community empowerment through various legal and policy instruments, much of the Rwandan population, particularly in rural areas, are unable to appreciate and exercise their rights because they are too poor to think beyond immediate survival. This tends to undermine their empowerment process.

- Limited appreciation of community contributions in monetary value: It is observed that local community contributions are often not quantified in equivalent monetary terms, except for specific interventions where such contributions are given a nominal percentage value (usually 10%). Because the in-kind contributions of communities are not usually quantified in monetary value, there is a tendency to under-appreciate them even by the communities themselves. Monetary valuation of community contributions could increase their stake, responsibility to the facilities developed, and ultimately, the power, control and ownership of the development activities. Ongoing efforts to develop techniques for monetary valuation of community contributions are still at conceptual level.

- Challenges for sustainability: Decentralisation has created many accountability centres. Public expenditure decisions are currently made at 107 centres (local government councils), and in many areas, expenditure is done at Sector Level. While this has yielded positive dividends in allocating public resources to community needs, the transaction costs (in the form of administration and otherwise) are high. Moreover, most of the local government units are too small or too poor to raise sufficient local revenue to finance even 50% of their recurrent expenditure budgets, and there is no indication that this situation will improve in the next 5-10 years. This raises concerns for the sustainability of local government operations.

#### **4.6. Institutional development and capacity building**

In the context of decentralisation, the sustainability of community development will depend on the institutional appropriateness viability and capacity of decentralised units.

The communities are intended to be empowered to participate in poverty reduction and the whole development process. Currently, a number of institutional structures have been established in the context of local governance, resource mobilisation, capacity building and poverty reduction.

However, these institutions are still weak and the functional linkage between and among them and other actors are to be developed (Republic of Rwanda, 2004:24). Local governments of Rwanda have few skilled personnel and most staff members require further training. They also lack financial capacity to afford the necessary material and equipment to sustain their efforts. Ordinary citizens and the CSOs that participate in participatory approaches do not always have the capacity to play their role. Low literacy levels, limited knowledge of the right to receive services of appropriate quality, and limited power to voice concerns are often obstacles to effective participation.

From this study, it is also clear that while many of the donors and development partners are committed and enthusiastic, they operate within the confines of inadequate knowledge of the Rwandan socio-political-economic and cultural environment. Therefore, the DIP needs to focus on operationalising and strengthening these institutions to enable them to handle and sustain decentralisation through enhancing their capacities in all relevant aspects, in a holistic approach if decentralisation is to promote community development successfully.

#### **4.7. Sectoral decentralisation**

During the last 3 years of decentralization, the observation is that planning and execution of service delivery activities in decentralized units have been adversely affected. The problem has been associated with:

- *Inadequate sectoral budgets and delayed disbursements*
- *The tendency of centralization of budgets in most provincial administrations.* It has been observed that directors have limited say over their sectoral budgets, and that the budgets are controlled by the Prefects and the Executive Secretaries instead being given

to local levels, where needs are felt. This raises concerns for transparency and efficient execution of sectoral activities.

- *Weak horizontal and vertical linkages involving line ministries, MINECOFIN and MINALOC.* This affects the monitoring of how planned sectoral activities are implemented.

- *Roles and responsibilities of the Provinces and Districts in service delivery have not yet been internalized by all actors.* This tends to create communication gaps between district authorities and some provincial administrations. In the Education Sector, for instance, it was reported in some of the provinces that supervision of secondary Schools has often not been covered by the District Inspectors of schools. Indeed, some of the District Inspectors of Schools, interviewed during the research, argued that they were only responsible for primary schools while they are also supposed to supervise secondary schools.

- *Inadequate supervision of service delivery in most Districts generally tends to be more of a perceptual problem on the part of the local government leadership than inadequate facilities or human resources.* The general observation is that in some of the Districts where elected leaders have internalized their roles in decentralized service delivery, technical staff are supervised and seem to be well integrated within the local District administration. On the other hand, in Districts where local leaders still have difficulties in appreciating their responsibilities in decentralization, technical staff are inadequately supervised or supported.

The Republic of Rwanda (2003:27) states that in line with the Sector Wide Approach initiative, each sectoral ministry needs to guide the implementation of sectoral decentralisation to ensure that the activities taking place at a local government level are in line with the larger Sector Wide Approach. Similarly sectoral ministries have the role of providing technical support to the decentralised entities and building their capacities. This process needs to be planned in a phased and incremental manner, taking into account the scarcity of resources (human, financial and physical).

Decentralisation will be more successful when two things succeed: Firstly, the extent to which local governments take over the roles that are legally decentralised to them, and the efficiency and effectiveness with which they perform these roles and responsibilities. Secondly, the extent to which local governments facilitate and support grassroots economic development not only in areas of developing service delivery infrastructure, but in increasing economic activity (enterprise and employment creation and household income generation). In order for the above to be possible, local governments have to be allowed and facilitated to take over service delivery planning, development and prioritisation especially starting with the following critical services; Health, Education, Agriculture and Infrastructure (Republic of Rwanda 2003:27).

This, however, needs to be done in a well-planned, scheduled and co-ordinated manner so that there is no disruption of service delivery in the process of transferring the responsibilities from ministries to local governments. All players especially development partners involved have to intervene in a collaborative and complementary manner, always ensuring synergy of efforts and avoiding duplication of functions and responsibilities.

As stipulated in the national decentralisation policy, the different technical ministries are responsible for the elaboration of sectoral policies, specification of the quality standards that must be followed and ensuring that they are respected. Besides this regulatory role, the technical ministries shall act as “facilitators” in the development of human resources, the transfer of technology to local governments, the grassroots communities and the private sector. Technical ministries may also, though rarely, in a subsidiary manner provide some services in the event that the local government, grassroots communities and the private sector are not in a position to do so.

The Sector policies should be conceived or reviewed in order to be in harmony with the community development policy. This is regarded as a guideline for the different sectoral policies towards effective and sustainable participation of the population in its own development. Moreover, these sectoral policies should take into account the experience and information from the grassroots level.

#### **4.8. Role-players and partnerships between actors in Rwanda**

Integrated community development calls upon a number of stakeholders in a multidisciplinary and a holistic approach. Some of the role-players have been discussed above.

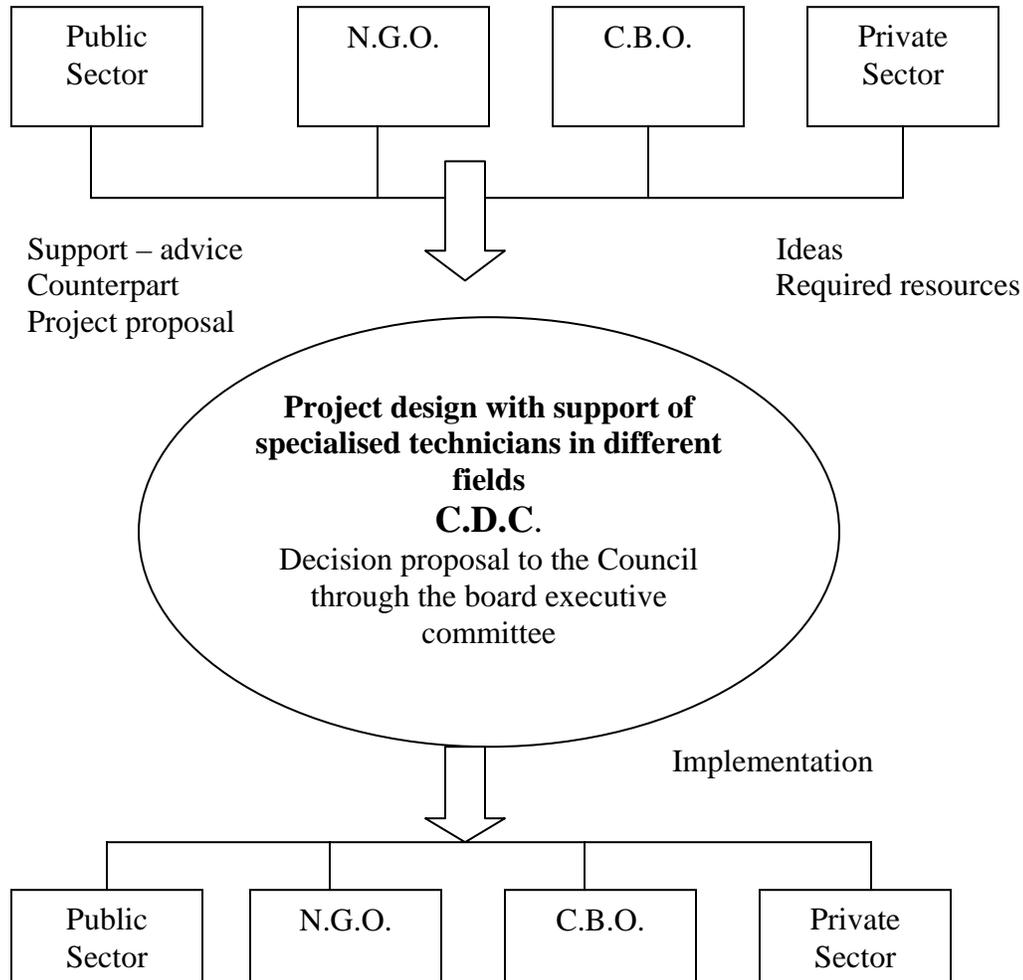
Under decentralization and community development (Republic of Rwanda, 2001:23), the main actors in Rwanda's service delivery system to the community are:

- The central government and its different ministries (who set national and sectoral policies);
- Local governments (who make local development plans and implement government policies);
- The community (ultimate beneficiaries of services) at the grassroots level or represented in different forums as CDCs;
- Parastatal institutions;
- Service providers (private sector, local CSOs);
- Technicians of Districts, urban areas, cities and the province

International NGOs (who mobilize external resources, design intervention programmes);  
and

- Donors (who provide financial and technical assistance).

Figure 4.4: Interactions among the various actors of community development

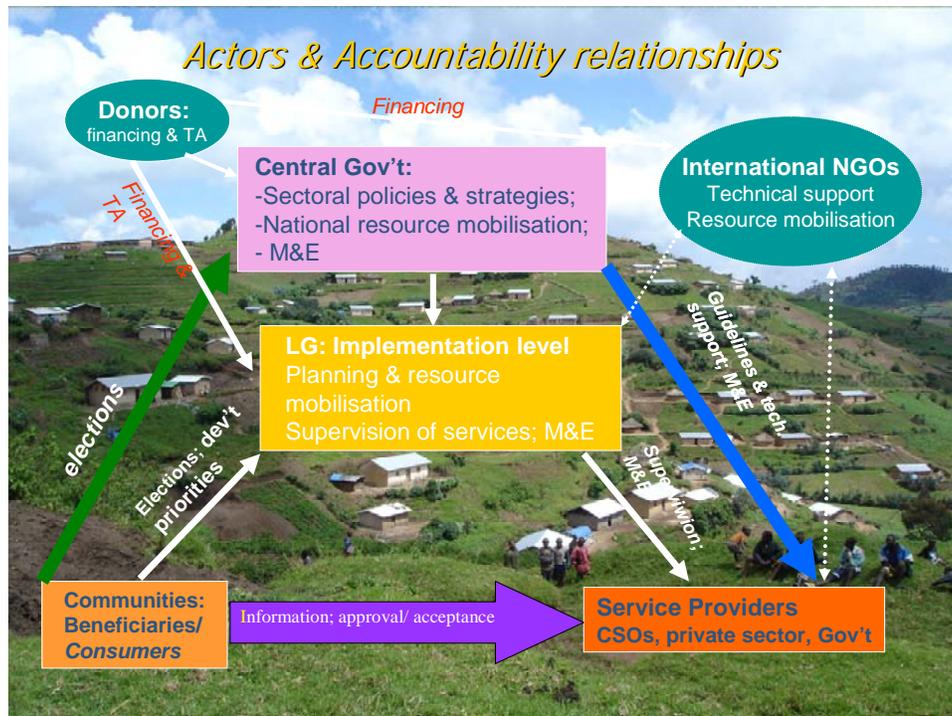


Source: Republic of Rwanda 2001:23

Focusing on the general relationships between actors in Rwanda and based on the WDR model seen in Chapter 3, it is possible to identify the actors in service delivery at all levels and to describe their responsibilities and how they are inter-linked (Republic of Rwanda, 2005a:25)

The relationship linkages between these actors and how they influence service delivery are graphically analysed in figure below.

Figure 4.5: Accountability relationships among main role-players in community development in Rwanda



Source: Republic of Rwanda (2005a:25)

Besides these role-players, in local government the Districts can have bilateral, multilateral cooperation or twinning systems, with any other Districts in the Country as well as in other countries.

The various actors presented above, relate with each other in various ways:

(a) *Citizens – policy makers*: At central level, the citizens directly elect the President. Occasionally, he spends time with communities finding out how the national policies and strategies have been translated into real actions to benefit the communities. There are also mechanisms, through the provincial administration, to follow-up unresolved issues such as presidential pledges. At local government level, local people elect all their leaders from Cell to District level. It is perhaps at local government level that the populations have amplified their voices. In this regard, there are cases where leaders have been voted

out of office, and sometimes entire District Executive Committees have been voted out because of dissatisfaction with their performance. Because of this power, local leaders are sensitive to people's needs. The District Development Plans (DDPs), which are the main mechanism for public investments in local governments now reflect the needs and priorities identified by local communities, through community development committees (CDCs) at Cell, Sector and District levels.

The major weakness in the system is that local communities often are not aware of their rights and thus this undermines their confidence to exercise their voice. This situation is compounded by high levels of illiteracy (the majority of the literate are primary school dropouts) and poverty.

(b) *Community (citizens) – service providers*: In Rwanda, service providers include the public sector, private sector and civil society organizations. The public sector and CSOs dominate service delivery in the social sectors (education, health, water and sanitation). Private sector involvement in the social sector is still at low levels, and mostly takes place in urban areas. The private sector is mainly engaged in areas where economic benefits are forthcoming, and where public sector involvement is limited to policy and regulatory framework (telecommunication, marketing, and construction).

In the social services, there are management committees representing various stakeholders including the citizens. In most cases, however, it is observed that local communities have limited influence on the quality of service provision, except perhaps in private schools. In the health sector, communities contribute to financing of services through the health insurance scheme. Even with this arrangement, the client power is low. This is mainly due to the same factors that limit the citizens' voice mentioned above.

In infrastructure establishment (rural roads, markets, bridges, schools, health centres, and water supply facilities), the services are contracted to private providers and the communities have to decide where to locate the facility and often contribute to their costs (usually 10%). On completion, the local government structures certify the works and put

in place mechanisms for operation and maintenance (community mobilization and setting up of management committees). There are other emerging initiatives involving communities in which the communities themselves mobilize the labour and sub-contract other functions to private companies.

*(c) Policy makers – service providers:* The relationship between the central government agencies and service providers is mainly through contract management i.e. supervision and monitoring.

For big projects, sectoral agencies/ ministries request a service and the National Tender Board awards tenders. The sectoral agency responsible (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture in case of livestock drugs) has the responsibility to monitor and certify the quality of services/ goods provided. Local authorities may be delegated to take the responsibility for supervision and monitoring, but have to report regularly to the responsible central government agency/ Ministry.

There is another tier of accountability that some times operates outside the “box” and this relates to interventions by international NGOs that have tended to implement their projects through or in partnerships with local NGOs and private sector agencies. These arrangements often have their own implementation and accounting procedures. Their monitoring and reporting frameworks are often not compatible with established public sector monitoring and evaluation systems. There are concerns that often the NGOs and direct donor interventions place too much emphasis on strict financial accountability and reporting, with less impact on the beneficiaries. Indeed, cases of donor or NGOs projects where as much as 80% of project resources are spent on administrative overheads are not uncommon. For social services (education, health) the central government is the main provider alongside civil society organizations (faith based NGOs) and to a lesser extent, the private sector.

The research results have shown that a number of structural weaknesses in the current framework limit effective service delivery:

- Supervision and monitoring of public service delivery in, e.g. school inspection, and health centres, is weak partly because of inadequate capacity for supervision and monitoring but also because of lack of clarity of roles.
- Appropriate institutional structures are in place but are weak;
- The NGOs and donor projects sometimes impose their own monitoring and evaluation procedures and formats – sometimes beneficiary Districts have to maintain separate bank accounts and work with different accounting systems, which overstretch their capacities rather than enhance their capabilities.
- Many citizens are illiterate and too poor to amplify their voice. Moreover, civil society activities in advocacy and capacity building at local level are few and in many areas non-existent. Often they do not fully appreciate their rights and may not have sufficient information on what quantity and/ or quality of social services to expect. The only areas in Rwanda where people have sufficient knowledge and information is in administrative services such as registration, civil marriages and dispute resolution.
- A tradition of top-down decision-making about almost every aspect of life, still abounds despite the fact that the legal framework grants decision making power to decentralized levels. Reluctance to delegate or to devolve responsibilities tends to persist, reflecting the slow progress of change from a centuries old tradition.
- Although local authorities are now well aware of their responsibilities with regard to decentralization, often they lack the necessary means and resources to provide them. Indeed, all stakeholders interviewed expressed a view that increasing capacities for local revenue generation should be a top priority of Rwanda.

With regards to these obstacles above, the relationship between service providers, facilitators, and users need to be strengthened:

As has been demonstrated by the current situation, confirmed through interviews and observed by the researcher, client power over service delivery could be enhanced by:

- Increasing the communities' (beneficiaries) role in the accountability process. Relying on the communities to verify the records (invoices) submitted by service providers for payment, could strengthen the accountability process. In the contractual model of health service delivery, the health providers have realized

that their pay depends on the number of clients handled, a situation that has increased the client power. The use of community representatives to verify information consolidated their power over service providers. In the health sector, the most effective strategy will be to ensure increased coverage of health associations.

- Strengthening community institutions - CDCs; facility management/ user committees (water, schools, health, and markets), so that they can effectively represent their community interests.
- Strengthen community-based organizations – associations, cooperatives, to reach out and mobilize the communities. A collective voice has been effective in negotiating markets, and protecting farmers against unscrupulous businessmen who exploit them, but sometimes the exploitation is a result of the high transaction costs in agro-produce marketing. In this regard, there is need to strengthen public-private partnerships to ensure mutual benefit. This, however, calls for increased support from relevant central government agencies such as the Ministry of Commerce.
- Increasing demand – few people are using the health insurance scheme and there is generally low utilization of health services.
- Monetizing community/ local contribution - communities will then value their contribution and the service providers will regard them as financiers and real stakeholders.

#### **4.9. Local Government and Community Planning**

The local Government planning that integrates all role-players is supposed to be done across a learning process, where all actors learn from one another. This section reflects the Action-Experience-Knowledge cycle for locals as it in the figure 4.6. It also describes the current state of local government development planning and its prospects.

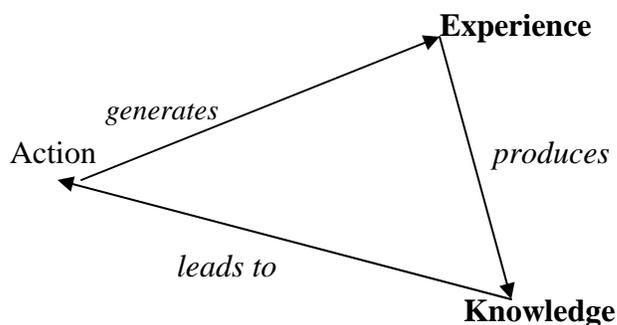
##### **4.9.1. Action-Experience-Knowledge Cycle for Locals**

Local ownership can be built by linking analysis and action to local knowledge. The assumption here is that almost all people regardless of where they live have some

knowledge of working together with others in working towards commonly accepted goals. Local people are helped to come together to make mutually agreed plans, and implement them, including resource commitments to deal with some problems. Research has found that non-locals assist deficits in resources but the resource managed is under the control of a local self-governing institution. Once the first version of the plans is in place and the resource availability picture is clear, the group engaging with it is in the process of moving from a disconnected set of individuals to a group beginning to self-govern within rules of their own design (Sam, 2004:1). The implementation of this plan yields experience of working in a self-governing institution, which in turn enlarges local pools of knowledge as it is the case in Ubudehe process.

In the framework of collective action, each action generates an experience, which, in turn, produces knowledge. This knowledge leads to a new action and the circle begins again. Through self-reflection on their experience and problems, people become more aware of the dimension of their reality and of what can be done by themselves to transform it. With this awareness, they decide upon and take collective action, and analyse its results to promote their awareness (knowledge) further.

Figure 4.6: Action-Experience-Knowledge cycle



Source: Sam J. (2003:7)

The community has to manifest their willingness and agree on how the action will be maintained and sustained. This will help the community to own the end product. The corner stone is resource availability under local control.

“In order to walk our talk about participation, we have to put our money where our mouth is”, said Sam, the Coach of Ubudehe team, during the interview on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2005. He adds “if we believe that local people have knowledge and experience in dealing with local problems, then we have to make resources available under the control of their own self-governing institutions”. In order for this to happen, other systemic links need to be activated. For people to take part in making local problem solving plans, opportunities need to be created to craft self-governing institutions. Resources can be brought under local control only when resource allocations to centralised budgets have budget lines for ensuring this. This also depends on the provision of specific resources to implement final agreements between all actors as policy measures. Such policies can emerge only when government takes on an active role as enabler of problem-solving communities.

#### **4.9.2. Current state of local government development planning**

In the context of poverty reduction, as it is mentioned by the Republic of Rwanda (2004:18) in 5 years DIP, one of the Government of Rwanda’s expectations from decentralisation is the creation of a framework that promotes bottom-up planning where communities decide what their development needs and priorities are, and participate actively in the design and implementation of such development programmes. In this way, it is argued, pro-poor decision-making on resource allocations, and community ownership of development programmes is enhanced.

The other pursued approach to local development planning is through medium term planning, where development priorities are revised continuously as resources become available or as population needs change. Significant progress has been made in this regard:

- The administrative structure for community development from the Cell to District Level is in place. The Community Development Committees (CDCs) have been created and the positions are filled through democratic elections, implying that they are controlled by and answerable to the population. In some areas, development agencies are working through or in partnership with CDCs. Efforts have also been made to develop the capacity of CDCs through training. In some areas, CDCs act as conduits or checks for community

development actions e.g. in the administration of micro-finance activities. Thus, they represent an important institutional structure for monitoring development activities.

- A number of Districts have been assisted by different donor and NGO interventions to prepare District Development Plans (DDPs), through participatory processes. These DDPs reflect felt needs of the population in Districts, and provide a framework for donor and NGO support in development activities.

At sectoral and policy level (national), the main achievements towards integrated local community planning include:

- a) The deconcentration of sectoral budgets to provincial level constituted an important step towards sectoral decentralisation. However, as observed in the field, provincial involvement in local development planning has remained low. There is limited planning activity at the level of the province, and little technical support is provided to Districts.
- b) Adoption of Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs<sup>8</sup>), by a number of key ministries such as health, education: This approach to move from institutional sector based planning and action, and to include all stakeholders in the process, enhances the allocation of resources and coordination of activities at all levels. In addition, it will facilitate sectoral decentralisation. It is also observed that the planning under SWAs is being undertaken in the decentralized setting.
- c) In relation to procedures and operational guidelines, Ministry of Finance and Economy Planning (MINECOFIN) has produced standard guidelines for developing sector strategies under decentralised plans. The idea of these guidelines is to facilitate the gradual shift from present project approaches to planning and resource allocation towards the sectoral approach envisioned under Vision 2020 of Rwanda.
- d) Institutionally, the expansion of the Focal Points Units and the Decentralisation Support Units is expected to widen the membership and diversity of ideas in coordination of decentralised services. There is, however, little progress to assess.

---

<sup>8</sup> Sector-Wide Approaches is a strategy conceived to promote coherence in sectoral activities so as to bring together all actors within a sector and assist Local Governments to analyse how much resources go into various sectors (whether through national budget or separate NGO projects or local initiatives (Republic of Rwanda 2005b:iii)

### **4.9.3. Local government planning prospects**

The biggest and immediate challenge is to strengthen the CDC structures so that they can appreciate, own and manage the planning process. It is required that local governments prepare comprehensive and integrated development plans that incorporate and take into account the priorities of the local communities. The strategic objective is to strengthen participatory and inclusive local government planning for local ownership of the development process.

The immediate concerns for planning will include:

1. *Strengthening local planning structures* – the CDCs at all levels, DCs, and technical staff, need to appreciate their important roles, particularly in owning and sustaining the process. Immediate activities would include preparation of standard capacity building guidelines, following the planning guidelines prepared by MINECOFIN; training of CDCs and DCs in planning. What is also critical is to develop a sustainable training programme so that CDCs can regularly be trained in new ideas or for new duties. This requires creating a critical mass of trainers who are reliable and competent, and a mechanism put in place to evaluate continuously the training activities through quality of work.
2. *Coordination of the planning frameworks* -As noted earlier, the present status of local community development planning reflects disjointed efforts, often using different approaches, and different timelines. The immediate actions could include taking stock of the DDPs in place and evaluating their quality, and preparing standard methodologies, criteria and indicators that can in future be used by all actors. As the financing moves to budget support, it will become necessary to standardise planning processes including the timelines, to facilitate performance measurement and monitoring the process. As a start, the MINECOFIN guidelines need to be circulated to all practitioners in the field so that different stakeholders can get used to standard approaches.

#### **4.10. Summary**

Rwanda adopted the policy of decentralization and democratization, and within this policy framework, participation and empowerment of the local people in various affairs affecting their lives, was expected to be enhanced as much as possible. Among the objectives of decentralization was “To enable and reactivate local people to participate in initiating, making, implementing and monitoring decisions and plans that concern them, taking into consideration their local needs, priorities, capacities and resources by transferring power, authority, and resources from central to local government levels” (Republic of Rwanda, 2000:7).

The community development policy introduces the planning structures within the decentralised framework, while the fiscal and financial decentralisation policy provides a mechanism for financing the process. To ensure effective participation of the community in their development, the government introduced a planning mechanism that involves all levels. The people themselves through the community Development Committees at Cell, Sector and District level identify and prioritise their needs.

In this way, the local governments prepare a Community Development Plan that has a five-year execution period and a medium term expenditure framework for a three-year period, with an, as realistic as possible, estimation of own revenues and an, as realistic as possible, assumption of other resources that are expected from central government and the donor community.

The labour intensive works scheme (PDL-HIMO) and the collective-actions scheme (Ubudehe) have been launched in order to allow communities to adopt their own problem-solving system.

However, a SWOT analysis shows that some challenges and weaknesses are still obstacles. One needs to work successfully with existing strengths and opportunities within an integrated and learning process. Role-players and partners need to have an effective framework that ensures accountability relationships. A local government

planning system that is mainly done within a CDC framework reflects concerns like strengthening local planning structures, coordinating them, and adapting them in order to meet community needs.

## **Chapter 5: A normative approach to decentralisation in community development programmes**

### **5.1. General conclusion**

Decentralisation has been embraced by all the countries in question as a crucial means of poverty reduction. The concept appears in all the PRSPs (or Interim-PRSPs), in more or less elaborate terms. In all the papers, the two main thrusts in favour of decentralisation appear to be better service delivery and greater community participation in development policy formulation and implementation. It is seen as both a means to development, through better service delivery, and as a democratic end in itself.

Decentralisation is based on the assumption that it will bring government decision-making on priorities, plans and budgets closer to the intended beneficiaries, which should make it responsive to the poor. However, the reality is often different, and the process of decentralisation clearly has short-term costs. Indeed, there is little evidence that any decentralisation process actually leads to better service delivery or to pro-poor outcomes. Nonetheless, the role of local governments in improving service delivery is deemed central to the implementation of pro-poor policies set out in the various PRSPs. The rhetoric used in most cases is for central government to serve as a policy and monitoring centre and for local government to deliver services according to local need.

Rwanda stresses the centrality of decentralisation in creating democratic structures of governance, through the participation of communities in development activities targeting them. However, a number of impediments hinder the process despite good will from all stakeholders. Poor skills, weak institutional capacity and inadequate remuneration have hindered public service delivery at the local level. The deconcentration of tasks to the province and devolution of tasks to the local level is to be accompanied by transfer of staff from central to provincial and local government institutions. The challenge will be how to make lower levels attractive and not seen as a punishment working place. Change may also fail for other reasons: poor vision, inadequate communications, insufficient planning and resources, failure to make a compelling case, and inconsistent messages

with leaders not following through. This is why a change management strategy must be incremental and carefully designed with the idea of assessing and controlling the risk of failure in order to adjust (Republic of Rwanda, 2005b:34).

To be effective, the change management strategy will need to address the following issues:

*Leadership:* One of the most important issues will be the level of support behind decentralisation and community development policies from the high-level management to the local level.

*Employee readiness and resistance:* Change management may present a threat to the civil servants. It is important to understand the situation as the more informed the employees are, the more likely they will be to contribute to the success of all decentralised programme implementation.

*Empowerment of stakeholders for action:* It is important during this phase to pay greater attention to bringing on board all major stakeholders. They should participate in all ways possible otherwise they will become bottlenecks, once they are excluded.

Building accountability relationships will require trust and confidence, besides capacities. Through interviews and observation, it is evident that not all government institutions/agencies share the same view of the decentralization policy and its ideals. Therefore, sectoral analyses should be undertaken as part of the dialogue to establish the perceptions and approaches in the different sectors and identify realistic ways in which decentralisation principles can be integrated in the sector strategies, plans and approaches. The process of decentralizing services will take more than policy statements.

## **5.2. Recommended strategies and actions**

This section presents recommendations on the strategies and actions that should be undertaken to strengthen decentralization for community development in Rwanda. Considering the challenges that face the decentralisation process and the

reform that is in progress, the main policy measures that should be immediately considered to strengthen decentralized community development delivery include:

- Developing a comprehensive framework (roadmap) for planning and implementation of decentralised service delivery to guide sectoral decentralization:
- Creating capacity building, institutional strengthening and community empowerment;
- Increasing resource transfers to local governments, to support particularly the weak districts to deliver essential decentralised services;
- Putting in place a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) framework/ system emphasizing coordination, participatory M and E, and optimal information sharing/ management;
- Developing and implementing a clear and shared strategy for information management;
- Coordination of development activities between Sectors and intervention agencies; and
- Fulfilling the need for an operational strategy to mainstream youth in development interventions (donor/ NGO interventions, LG initiatives).

➤ ***Developing a Comprehensive Framework for Sectoral Decentralisation***

The first phase of decentralization made significant achievements in creating a policy and legal environment as well as the required administrative machinery through which services can be planned and executed closer to the population. Sectoral decentralization was expected to translate decentralization from policy and strategy into real services, by devolving responsibilities and resources from ministries to the new structures, and by empowering communities to control the services they get. This has been pursued slowly and without a clear roadmap and it is difficult to measure progress.

As Rwanda's decentralization enters the consolidation phase, and if decentralization is to delivery effective and efficient service delivery to the population, there is need to go back to the drawing board – and create a realistic framework for all actors (particularly service ministries) to set commitments and performance targets, against which to measure progress.

To develop this framework, however, there is a need to review progress made in each sector including sector-wide approaches (SWAs), and to recognize and harmonise the diversity of approaches used in different sectors (e.g. health and education).

➤ ***Strengthening Human and Institutional Capacities***

Strengthening accountability relationships between actors i.e. communities and service providers; communities and central level policy makers; communities and local authorities; and between policy makers and service providers require capacity. The capacity building required relates to the roles and responsibilities of each and the constraints identified above:

- a) ***Local government authorities*** must be responsible for programme implementation to respond to the local people's needs, and to implement development policies and programmes. These responsibilities include planning, budgeting, priority setting, resource mobilization, supervision, monitoring, and reporting. Most Districts lack this capacity, and realistic measures are needed to develop it. There is optimism that if sustainable capacity for project design and execution is created, many of the Districts will be in a position to finance their DDPs through external resources over and above the grants from central governments.
- b) ***Empowering communities*** as the ultimate beneficiaries of services (clients), local communities need to know their rights with respect to quality and access; their

efforts in service delivery need to be given appropriate values; and need real power to control service providers. They need to be empowered to participate in monitoring and evaluation of their own actions and of the policies and programmes of central and local governments. This requires transformation of mindsets – of both the local population and their leaders; overhauling of systems, structures and procedures at various levels of service delivery; and creating effective channels of communication i.e. through regular interactions, service delivery satisfaction surveys, and putting in place appropriate instruments (indicators and techniques) to supervise and monitor service providers. The citizens' report cards still under pilot study, and joint monitoring schedules which enable central level authorities to interact with local communities, are part of the initiative to empower local communities to ensure access to quality services.

As the first phase of decentralization has put in place appropriate administrative mechanisms, the capacity building support at community level now needs to focus on strengthening the community based accountability structures e.g. school management committees, health facility management committees, water user committees and local community development committees (Cell and Sector CDCs). The first step to empowering these structures is attitudinal change - for national and local government leaders to recognize that local people are the most important stakeholders in the development programme processes. For instance, if a District Inspector of Schools requests or utilises a PTA or CDC report on the state of primary education in a Sector or Cell, the head teachers will know that PTAs and CDCs have real power and that the information they provide can have an influence on whether s/he retains their job. In this way, the PTA or CDC will be motivated to work even harder, and the parents and community members will put in extra efforts to facilitate the CDC/PTA to work, and appreciate their role in improving the quality of learning for their children.

It should be borne in mind, nonetheless, that human competencies and skills will in themselves not delivery services. An institutional approach that emphasizes accountability at all levels is important. To make the best of the human resource so

developed, it will be necessary to introduce management techniques such as performance-based pay; results-oriented management and robust supervision mechanisms.

➤ ***Reviewing the Local Governance Structures to Increase efficiency and ensure Sustainability***

To address the challenges of efficient performance of local administrative structures, and to sustain local government operations, the following options could be explored:

(i) *Merge unviable Districts to strengthen local governments.* In this respect, the fiscal potentials can be used as the main criteria. This has the double advantage of increasing fiscal capacities of local governments, while reducing the public administration costs in terms of personnel, which would free more resources to support service delivery activities at sector level.

(ii) *Decentralize most service functions to Sector levels-* starting with basic ones e.g. population and census activities. Some of the initiatives by some local governments to conduct certain service functions in sectors on a rotational basis are interesting innovations. However, as all Sectors get adequate office space, there is a need to devolve functions and corresponding budgets to them. While some local governments have devolved some revenue to Sectors, a number of others need to be encouraged to do so, possibly through some incentives (or disincentives).

(iii) *Reduce the size of executive committees* – to create small but effective and efficient committees that can be easily and better motivated within the limited available incentives. For instance, CDC positions for health, water and sanitation and education can be merged into social sectors, while infrastructure and planning can be merged.

## Bibliography

Ackron, J.C. 2004. *Emergence good practice approaches to business support: Implications for local government*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Stellenbosch.

Argawala, R. 1983. *Planning in developing countries: Lessons of experience. Management and Development*. Washington: World Bank.

Balance, A. & King, N. 1999. State of the environment South Africa: An overview of the national state of the environment report on the internet for South Africa. <http://www.ngo.grida.no/soesa/> [25/07/2004].

Bangwanubusa, T. 2002. *Participation of rural communities in development policy and practice: The South African experience and its relevance for Rwanda*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Stellenbosch.

Bazaara, N. Legal and policy framework for citizen participation in East Africa. <http://www.ids.ac.uk/logolink/resources/downloads/regionalreports/RegionalReportBazaaraEastAfrica%20final.doc> [12/08/05].

Bosman, M & Marais, L.J. 1998. Local knowledge – Untapped resource in the development saga. *Focus forum*, (6): 19-23.

Botchway, K. 2001. Paradox of empowerment: Reflexions on a case study from Northern of Ghana. *World Development*, 29(1):135-153.

Bryant, C & White, L.G. 1982. *Managing Development in the Third World*. Colorado: Westview Press.

Brinkerhoff, D.W. & Coston, J.M. 1999. International development management in a globalised world. *Public Administration Review*. 59(4): 346-361.

Brinkerhoff, D.W & Brinkerhoff, M.J. 2005. *Working for change: Making a career in international public service*. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press.

Brown, C.J. 1997. The Societal Dimension of Project Management. Management Dynamics: Contemporary Research. *Journal of the South African Institute for Management Scientists*, 6(3): 68-87.

Burkey, S. 1993. *People first: A guide to self-reliant participatory rural development*. London: Zed Books.

Cernea, M. 1991. *Putting people first: sociological variables in rural development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chambers, R. 1983. *Rural Development: Putting the last first*. Hong Kong: Longman.

Chambers, R. 1997. *Whose reality counts? Putting the first last*. London: ITDG.

Chambers, R. 1993. *Challenging the professions: Frontiers for rural development*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Coetzee, J.K. (Ed.) 1989. *Development is for people*. Johannesburg: Southern Books.

Coetzee, J.K., 2001 A micro foundation for development thinking. In Coetzee, J. K., Graaff, J., Hendricks, F. & Wood, G. *Development: theory, policy, and practice*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Conyers, D. & Hills, P. 1990. *An introduction to development planning In the Third World*. New York: John Wiley.

Davids, I. Theron, F. & Maphunye, K. 2005. *Participatory Development in South Africa. A Development Management Perspective*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

David, A. K., Gregory, P.S and William, C.Y. 1991. *Being urban. A sociology of city life*. 2ed. Westport, Connecticut London: Preager.

De Beer, F. and Swanepoel, H. 1998. *Community Development and Beyond. Issues, structures and procedures*. Goodwood: J.L.van Schaik.

Farrant, M. and Clarke, J. PRSPs in decentralized government. <http://www.sti.ch/pdfs/swap294.pdf> [23-09-2004].

Gabriellian, V. 1999. Qualitative research methods: An overview, in Miller, G. J & Whicker, M. L. (Eds). *Handbook of research methods in public administration*. 167-205. New York: Marcel Decker.

Garcia-Zamor, J.C. 1985. *Public participation in development planning and management: Case from Africa and Asia*. Boulder and London: Westview Press.

Groenewald, C.J. 1989. Community development. In Coetzee, J.K. (Ed.), *Development is for people*. Johannesburg: Southern Books.

Gumbi, Themba 2001. *An assessment of the extent of empowerment through community participation*. A Kwazulu-Natal rural development comparison. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. University of Stellenbosch.

Hardison. 2001. Indigenous Knowledge Systems List <http://www.brain.org.za/SUPPORT/indigenous.html> [03.05.2005].

Honadle, G. and Vansant, J. 1985. *Implementation for sustainability: Lessons from integrated rural development*. West Hartford: Kumarian Press.

Kanyamanza, P. 2005 Kigali's challenges of local governance [http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=2283&Itemid=35](http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2283&Itemid=35) [19/11/2005].

Korten, D.C. 1983. "Social development: Putting people first" in Korten, D.C. and Alfonso, B. *Bureaucracy and the poor. Closing the gap*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Korten, D.C. and Carner, G. 1984 Planning frameworks for people centred development, in Korten, D & Klauss, R. (Eds). *People-centered development: Contributions towards theory and planning framework*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Korten, D.C. 1990. *Getting to the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Voluntary action and the global agenda*. West Harford: Kumarian Press.

Kotze, D.A (ed.) 1997: *Development Administration and Management. A holistic approach*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

Kotze, D.A and Kellerman, G.E.J. 1997. Participation and managerial approaches to development, in Kotze, D. A. *Development administration and management. A holistic approach*. Cape Town: J.L.van Schaik.

Kumar, S. 2002. *Methods for community participation. A complete guide for practitioners*. London: ITDG.

Liebenberg, S and Stewart, P. 1997. *Participatory development management and the RDP*. Cape Town: Juta.

Lisk, F. 1985. *Popular participation in planning for basic needs. Concepts, methods, and practices*. Hampshire: Gower Publication.

Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Manor, J. 2004. Democratisation with inclusion: Political reform and people's empowerment at the grassroots. *Journal of human development*, Vol.5, No.1, March 2004.

Martinussen, J. 1999. *Society, state, and market: a guide to competing theories of development*. London: Zed Books.

Meyer, I and Theron, F. 2000. *Workbook: Public Participation in local government. A framework for action*. SOPM & P, US, Bellville.

Midgely, J. 1986. Community participation, the state and social policy, in Midgely, J., Hall, Y., Hardiman, M. & Narine, D. (eds.) *Community participation, social development and the state*. London: Methuen.

Oakley, P. 1991. *Projects with people: The practice of participation in rural development*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

Oxfam Britain in Rwanda. 2002. Survey of decentralization policy and practice in Rwanda. <http://www.usaid-rwanda.rw/SO2/OXFAM%2002.pdf>. [27/09/2004].

Parnel, S., Pieterse, E., Swilling, M. and Wooldridge, D. 2002. *Democratizing Local Government. The South African Experiment*. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Republic of Rwanda. 1991. *Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 1991, first title, Article 6*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2000. *National Decentralisation Policy*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2001. *Journal Officiel (Official Gazette) number 7 of 01/04/2001*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2001. *Community development policy*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. *Law N° 04/2001. 2001. Establishing the organization and the functioning of the District*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2003. *Ubudehe mu kurwanya ubukene (Ubudehe in poverty reduction)*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2004 *Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme, 2004–2008*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2005a. *Decentralisation and service delivery in Rwanda*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of Rwanda. 2005b. *Making decentralised service delivery work*. Kigali: Government Printers.

Republic of South Africa. *Constitution of South Africa 1996. No 108 of 1996. (Bill of Rights: Art.24)*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Rondinelli, D.A. 1983. *Secondary cities in developing countries: Policy for diffusing urbanisation*. CA: Sage.

Rondinelli, D.A. and Cheema, G.S. 1983. *Decentralisation and Development: Policy implementation in developing countries*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Rondinelli, D. A., Nellis, J. R, and Cheema, G. S. 1985. *Decentralisation in developing countries*. Washington: The World Bank.

Rondinelli, D.A. 1993. *Development projects as policy experiments. An adaptive approach to development administration*. London: Routledge.

Sam, J. 2003. *Ubudehe in Rwanda: Community Collective Action*. Kigali.

Sam, J. 2004. *Understanding UBUDEHE from a development lens*. Kigali.

Schutte, D. W. 2000. *People first: Determining priorities for community development*. Parow East: Ebony Books cc.

Schuurman, F. J. 1993. *Beyond the impasse: New directions in development theory*. London: Zed books.

Sites, W. 1998. Communitarian Theory and Community Development in the United States. In *Community Development* 33 (3):57-65.

Stewart, P.D.S. 1997. What is development? In. Kotze, DA (ed.) 1997: *Development Administration and Management. A holistic approach*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

Swanepoel, 1997. *Community development: putting plans into actions*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Theron, F. and Barnard, D. 1997. Participation and development planning, In Liebenberg, S. & Stewart, P. (eds), *Participatory development management and the RDP*, Cape Town: Juta.

Theron, F. 2005. Trends in micro-level development. In Davids, I., Theron, F. & Maphunye, K. *Participatory Development in South Africa. A Development Management Perspective*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

Theron, F. 2005. Public participation as a micro-level development strategy. In Davids, I., Theron, F. & Maphunye, K. *Participatory Development in South Africa. A Development Management Perspective*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

Theron, F. 2005. Integrated development planning as a micro-level development strategy. In Davids, I., Theron, F. & Maphunye, K. *Participatory Development in South Africa. A Development Management Perspective*. Pretoria: JL van Schaik.

Theron, F., Van Rooyen, A & Van Baalen, J. 2000. *Good Governance for people: Policy and Management*. Bellville: SOPM & P, US.

Todaro, M.P. 1994. *Economic development*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman.

Treurnicht, S.P. 1997. Indigenous knowledge systems and participatory learning and action. In Kotze, D. A. (Ed.). *Development administration and management. A holistic approach*. Cape Town: J.L.van Schaik.

World Bank. 2004. *World Development Report*. Washington.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Individual interviews**

For the sake of consistency and objectivity, different sets of questions are prepared as interview frameworks for individuals, based on their positions as key informants or role-players working in local government institutions.

1. What is the role played by the community through its representative members in different bodies to sustain local development?
2. What should the profile be of a community representative to be a potential change agent of local development?
3. What is the effective frameworks of community participation for people to improve their living conditions?
4. What are the regulatory framework for community participation at the decentralized level?
5. In what local processes is community participation expected to happen?
6. What are the opportunities/potentials and constraints/ challenges for community participation?
7. Do you wish to make any other comment on the decentralisation structure concerning effective community development?

## **Appendix B: Focus group interviews**

The interviews will be conducted amongst members of the District Council. As the District Council encompasses three commissions, each one will be represented by three members including their heads.

The types of research questions will be exploratory and predictive, intended to examine the process and to predict its shortcomings.

1. Does the historical background and legacy of Rwanda influence community participation?
2. Does the Constitution of Rwanda provide for community participation?
3. Which legal frameworks provide for community participation?
4. In what local processes is community participation expected to happen?
5. What are the opportunities/potentials and constraints/ challenges for community participation?
6. How knowledgeable are citizens regarding community participation at the local development level?
7. Does their awareness or lack of it affect community participation?
8. Does decentralisation policy provide a favourable framework for community development?
9. Is there support from central government to civic organizations so that they can participate in municipal affairs?
10. What is the perception that leaders of decentralized entities hold regarding community participation?
11. What is the perception that citizens hold about the decentralization policy?
12. What are the requirements to enable/enhance collaboration between the citizens and local leaders?

13. Do you wish to make any other comment on the decentralisation structure concerning effective community development?

### **Appendix C: A case study from Butare Province: Ubudehe in Vumbi Sector, cell Kidahile**

Alex Hakimana is the co-ordinator of the Ubudehe process in Sector Vumbi, cell Kidahile. He narrated the following story:

“In the past, the community lived in very desperate conditions. They had lost all hope of ever being able to meet the needs they felt. We were so used to living in poverty and people tended to accept it that way. But since July 2002, our lives have taken a different turn altogether. First of all, it was the training in the Ubudehe process, which opened our minds and eyes. We started seeing things clearly. We realised that the main cause of all our poverty is poor soil quality because, no matter how much we till the land, the yields remain poor. The process was as follows:

a) Two persons in each Cell were selected and trained in the Ubudehe participatory process. Government of Rwanda partner ministries and Actionaid provided the materials and logistical support.

b) We invited the entire community at the Cell level and drew the village social map using participatory problem analysis tools and were able to identify the poor, vulnerable groups etc.

c) The community identified the poorest families in the Cell. These projects targeted the most vulnerable groups who were identified according to the following categories:

- Child-headed households
- Widows with children
- People living in abject poverty
- People living on a small piece of land and who have no other source of income
- Illiterate and vulnerable people
- Poor people but with proven capacity to engage in productive activities

d) Management committees were organised and relevant training imparted to equip them with management, leadership and decision-making skills. Care was taken to ensure clear responsibility, gender balance and youth representation.

e) Each Cell committee opened a bank account and the money was transferred into that account to start the implementation as per laid down plans.

The total population in our Cell are 224 families. One thousand Euros was dedicated to each of the 53 Cells for community-based projects such as protection of potable water sources, rehabilitation of the market, animal restocking; whereas, the individual destitute families from each Cell were advanced 200 Euro's for projects at the household level. Some families have been able to buy 2-3 goats, most of them have since given birth and the new born goats passed on to other needy families. This way, we shall gradually ensure that all families have animals at the household level to provide the much-needed manure to fertilise our farms.

In the same spirit, we made a collective decision to mobilise our resources and buy cows, which could produce enough manure. We were able to mobilise our resources and we bought four cows and kept them with families, and the community has mutually agreed and prepared cow feeding and manure collection schedules where all members of the Cell participate.

At this point, he was asked what holds the community together in spite of the fact that the resources available can only benefit 20% of the population. He continued:

You see the management of these activities is organised very well. First at the Sector level, we have five committee members who co-ordinate activities with the Cell committee made up of 7 persons (4 men and 3 women). All the monies withdrawn from the community bank accounts are agreed upon the monthly meetings and all three signatories must sign. Unlike in the past, there is some hope that in due course, we shall be able to manage the socio-economic problems facing us today.

He continued: The most important outcome of this process is the strong community cohesion, and capacity enhancement encompassing the most vulnerable groups. Caring

for widows and orphans are some of the old Rwandan traditions that need to be reinforced at this point where we are faced with the challenges resulting from the genocide and HIV/Aids. With this support, it's merely a question of time, before we shall be able to feed our families".